

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ST. PETE

Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg Launches New Outdoor Art Initiative with Installation by Yvette Mayorga

Magic Grasshopper staged in front of the museum entrance alongside an exhibition pairing Mayorga's works with historical paintings from the MFA collection



Yvette Mayorga's *Magic Grasshopper* installed in Times Square. Photo Michael Hull. Courtesy Times Square Arts.

St. Petersburg, FL — March 18, 2026 — The Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg will debut a new outdoor public art initiative this spring with the presentation of *Magic Grasshopper*, a monumental sculpture by Chicago-based artist **Yvette Mayorga** (Mexican-American Latinx, b. 1991). Opening March 26, the installation will be placed directly in front of the museum's main entrance, marking **the first project in a new public art series** designed to extend the museum's programming beyond its galleries and into its surrounding landscape.

Originally commissioned by Times Square Arts and presented in New York in 2025, *Magic Grasshopper* is a 30-foot-long kinetic sculpture that resembles a surreal carriage pulled by carousel-style horses. Rendered in Mayorga's signature candy-pink palette and embellished with her distinctive "faux-frosting" piping technique, the sculpture combines elements of childhood nostalgia with layered narratives of migration, labor, and colonial history.

A first-generation Mexican-American Latinx artist whose family emigrated from Mexico, Mayorga frequently draws on personal and cultural histories in her work. Her recurring technique—piping acrylic paint through pastry bags to create ornate, frosting-like surfaces—was inspired by her mother’s work as a baker after immigrating to the United States. Through this style that the artist calls “Latinxoco,” Mayorga brings together Latinx and Rococo aesthetics as a vehicle for addressing the often-invisible labor of immigrant and working-class communities, embedding stories of migration, feminized labor, and belonging.

"Seeing my *Magic Grasshopper* find a new home in front of the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg feels like a wonderful continuation of its ongoing journey," said artist **Yvette Mayorga**. "The work is rooted in community, pride, and the transformation of the familiar into something extraordinary—and I can't think of a better setting for that conversation than a museum space open to the community where it can be experienced by so many. I am truly thrilled for the St. Pete community to engage with this piece and everything it represents."

Positioned in the plaza leading to the museum’s original 1965 entrance, the installation will create a dramatic juxtaposition of architectural styles, while also extending the museum outward and inviting the public to encounter contemporary art before entering the building.

"From the moment I arrived at the Museum in 2024, I wanted to find new ways to invite the public into the museum and extend our programming beyond the traditional gallery setting," said **Klaudio Rodriguez, Executive Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg**. "Launching this outdoor installation series allows us to activate the spaces surrounding the museum while creating new opportunities for visitors and the broader community to encounter contemporary art in unexpected and welcoming ways."

To accompany the public installation, the Museum will present a focused exhibition later this summer of Mayorga’s works in dialogue with historical paintings from its permanent collection. Several of these new works draw inspiration from the portraits and painterly traditions of Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, placing Mayorga’s visual language in conversation with European art history.

Through these comparisons, the exhibition highlights how Mayorga reinterprets Rococo aesthetics and decorative excess through a contemporary lens, weaving together personal and collective histories.

"Yvette Mayorga’s *Magic Grasshopper* is a joyful and visually captivating work that immediately draws people in while offering deep layers of meaning," said **Katherine Pill, Senior Curator of Contemporary Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg**. "Its playful imagery and vibrant color make it accessible and engaging for audiences of all ages. It’s the perfect work to inaugurate this new series and invite visitors of every generation to experience contemporary art together."

This presentation inaugurates a new series of outdoor installations at the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg. Through these projects, the museum aims to activate its outdoor spaces while introducing audiences to ambitious contemporary artworks in a highly visible public setting.

Related Programs

[Public Opening and Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for Yvette Mayorga | Magic Grasshopper](#)

Thursday, March 26 at 6:00 PM

Plaza in front of the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg

255 Beach Drive NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

About the Museum of Fine Arts St. Petersburg

[The Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg \(MFA\)](#) has an encyclopedic collection of art from around the globe and across the centuries, with almost 5,000 years of civilization represented in thousands of objects extending from antiquity to the present. The collection includes works by Georgia O'Keefe, Claude Monet, Berthe Morisot, Auguste Rodin, Kehinde Wiley, Jacob Lawrence, and many others, as well as ancient Greek and Roman, Asian, African, Art of the Americas, and Native American art. The museum's photographic collection is one of the largest and most well-respected in the Southeast. The museum's rotating exhibition galleries feature a diverse selection of temporary exhibitions from all over the world, as well as exhibitions curated from the museum's extensive collection. In addition to its robust exhibition program, the MFA engages the community through exciting public programs and events and serves students through youth programs and a partnership with the Pinellas County School System.

About Yvette Mayorga

[Yvette Mayorga](#) is a multidisciplinary artist based in Chicago, Illinois. Her work links feminized labor and the aesthetics of celebration to colonial art history and racialized oppression through the guise of using pink as a weapon of mass destruction. She fuses confectionary labor with found images to explore the meaning of belonging. Mayorga holds an MFA in Fiber and Material Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Notable solo exhibitions include *Pu\$h Thru*, moniquemeloche, Chicago, IL (2025); *The Golden Cage* at the Museo de Arte de Zapopan, Guadalajara, MX (2024); *Dreaming of You* at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT (2023-24); and *What a Time to Be* at The Momentary, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR (2023). Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in group exhibitions at the Museum of Arts and Design, NY; Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), CA; John Michael Kohler Art Center, WI; El Museo del Barrio, NY; Museum of Fine Arts Boston, MA; DePaul Art Museum, IL; Vincent Price Art Museum, CA; The Center for Craft, NC; Museo Universitario del Chopo, Mexico City, among others. Mayorga's work is currently included in the landmark contemporary Latinx painting group exhibition *Let us Gather in a Flourishing Way* at the Buffalo AKG, NY which will travel nationally and is accompanied by a catalogue. Her large-scale installation, *Pilgrimage to the Isle of Pink*, is on view for the next 25 years for the City of Chicago's permanent public art collection at O'Hare International Airport's Terminal 5.

Mayorga has been featured in *Artforum*, *Artnet*, *Art in America*, *Art News*, *Cultured Magazine*, *DAZED*, *Galerie Magazine*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Hyperallergic*, *Latina Magazine*, *Teen Vogue*, *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *Vogue*, *W Magazine*, and *Women's Wear Daily*. Her works are

in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum and Renwick Gallery, Washington, D.C.; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR; El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY; John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Chicago, IL; Museum of Fine Arts Boston, MA; 21c Museum Hotels, Louisville, KY; Cerámica Suro, Guadalajara, MX; DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, IL; and New Mexico State University Art Museum, NM.

Image: Yvette Mayorga, Mexican-American Latinx, b. 1991, *Magic Grasshopper* (detail), 2025, Silicon piping, steel frame, polycarbonate resin, metal, casts, mechanical engineering, #D printed plastics, and marine grade plywood. Images courtesy of Times Square Arts. Photography by Michael Hull.

Media Contacts

Local: Darcy Schuller, DSchuller@mfastpete.org

National: Alexander Droesch, Alex@culturalcounsel.com

marketing@mfastpete.org

727.896.2667

The Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg
255 Beach Drive NE,
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

mfastpete.org

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