

For Immediate Release
February 10, 2004

**The New York Botanical Garden Presents
Widely Acclaimed Exhibition for Second Year**

The Orchid Show Returns to the Garden
February 27–March 28, 2004

With more than 25,000 naturally occurring species, the orchid is arguably the largest family of flowering plants. It is found on every continent except Antarctica. Its flowers are often rare and fragile and under severe threat of extinction due to habitat destruction and excessive collecting in the wild. From Friday, February 27 through Sunday, March 28, 2004, The New York Botanical Garden brings these highly coveted plants within public view in *The Orchid Show: An Exhibition and Sale of Fine Orchids*.

During the month-long run of *The Orchid Show* more than 5,000 orchids hailing from Africa, Asia, the Americas, and the Caribbean—gorgeous species and beautiful hybrids—will have graced the galleries of the Garden's landmark Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, the largest Victorian glasshouse in the country. Among the diverse plants that will be on view are: *Cattleya*, *Cymbidium*, *Dendrobium*, *Epidendrum*, *Laelia*, *Miltoniopsis*, *Oncidium*, *Paphiopedilum*, *Phalaenopsis*, *Phaius*, and *Phragmipedium*.

**Dramatic new designs beckon repeat exhibition visitors
as well as Garden newcomers to *The Orchid Show***

The Orchid Show at The New York Botanical Garden carries the distinction of being the only curated and designed museum-quality orchid exhibition in the northeastern United States. The exhibition has been expanded this year to stretch beyond the entrance and *Seasonal Exhibition Galleries* of the Conservatory.

Visitors' breathtaking introduction to the exhibition takes place in the Conservatory's *Palms of the Americas Gallery*. Here, an arc of orchids slices the central reflecting pool with an elegant wave of color. The mirror image that the still, black pool presents of hundreds of colorful orchids among lush palm trees and ferns is sure to whet the appetites of visitors for the floral delights that lie ahead in the crystal palace.

In the *Lowland Rain Forest Gallery* the stunning plants will be featured in both dramatic and naturalistic habitats. This particular biome will showcase the orchids of the Americas with a multitude of the plants nestled among epiphytes and interspersed among tangles of woody vines.

In the *Seasonal Exhibition Galleries* the central, breathtaking design structure is that of a Mayan ruin in the heart of a New World orchid habitat. The concept is quite appropriate as the rain forest country of the Mayans is home to a great orchid flora that was present before that civilization arose. It remains flowering there today as the rain forest reclaims its ancient landscape.

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A tall, stepped ruin of an ancient temple ascends 20 feet into the gallery. Crumbled stone edges and crevices in the aging steps that were once the walkway for Mayans climbing up to the temple and toward the sky are now the beds for exotic lianas, bromeliads, and of course, orchids—all native plants of the Mayan region. At the base of the crumbling temple edifice lies a massive stone sculpture. On a carpet of orchids and jungle plants a fallen iconic Mayan sculpture lays quietly in repose. The cracked stone legs and feet of the once proud figure remain upright against the rich flora of the jungle floor. This dramatic design element creates an extraordinary showcase for thousands of wild and cultivated orchids of innumerable colors, shapes, and sizes that will mesmerize all.

Miniature orchids are a major feature of the 2004 show

In addition to a new grand design, this year's orchid exhibition places a spotlight, and in some cases a magnifying glass, on miniature orchids. These tiny treasures come in a kaleidoscope of colors, with textures and forms that become more dazzling upon closer inspection.

When Conservatory visitors meander into the *Upland Rain Forest Gallery* they are sure to be drawn to the terrarium there filled with miniature orchids. If that's not enough, the terrarium in the Orchid Rotunda of the Garden's LuEsther T. Mertz Library building will appear as a glass keepsake box for viewing even more specimens of these gems.

Special orchid programming enriches the exhibition experience

This year's orchid show delights visitors with displays and explains the extraordinary natural history and conservation stories of rare and endangered orchids in the rain forests of the world. A full complement of programs includes exhibition tours, orchid care demonstrations, lectures, book signings, question and answer sessions with experts, and orchid-related activities in the Everett Children's Adventure Garden.

The Orchid Show is designed by Philip Baloun of Philip Baloun Designs in New York, with expert curation by Garden staff members Darrin Duling, Curator of Glasshouse Collections, and Francisca Coelho, Conservatory Manager. Culture and growing of the orchids is by Marc Hachadourian, Gardener for the Orchid Collection at The New York Botanical Garden.

Sponsored by The Tiffany & Co. Foundation.

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road in the Bronx. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday holidays, from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. April through October, and 10 a.m.–5 p.m., November through March. The best way to enjoy *The Orchid Show* is with the *Orchid Combination Ticket* that includes the Conservatory and exhibition, grounds, ECAG, Tram Tour, and many public programs, and costs \$15 for adults, \$13 for students and seniors, \$5 for children 2–12. For information, call (718) 817-8700 or visit our Web site at www.nybg.org.

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Photos available