



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

EMBARGOED UNTIL TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20 AT 5 AM

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MEIJER GARDENS ANNOUNCES THE LANDMARK GIFT OF BEVERLY PEPPER PRINT AND DRAWING ARCHIVES AND CAREER-SPANNING RETROSPECTIVE IN 2018

Meijer Gardens will become the permanent home to Beverly Pepper's personal archive of hundreds of drawings, prints, sketchbooks and works on paper.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – December 20, 2016 – In conjunction with the 94th birthday of iconic American sculptor Beverly Pepper, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park is honored to announce the gift of Pepper's expansive print and drawing archives to its permanent collection. Seven decades of work are included. The extraordinary gift from Pepper, one of the pioneering Contemporary sculptors, includes hundreds of drawings, prints, works on paper and notebooks – many containing sketches of her major sculptural endeavors. Meijer Gardens will become the repository of her two-dimensional legacy spanning her career, beginning in the 1950s.

Pepper is world-renowned for her work, which often incorporates industrial metals like iron, bronze, stainless steel and stone into sculptural of a monumental scale, but her vast drawing and print repertoire is lesser known. Although never formally associated with any particular "school", her concern for abstraction and commitment to materials ran parallel to David Smith with whom she was very close, developing with those of Richard Serra, Mark di Suvero and Richard Hunt.

In his recent monograph on Pepper, the noted art historian Robert Hobbs writes, "an American living mainly in Italy since the 1950s and an artist with an enviable reputation beginning in the early 1960s, Beverly Pepper, together with the two "Louises" – Bourgeois and Nevelson – heads the list of outstanding American women sculptors achieving artistic maturity in the mid-twentieth century."

"The enormity of Beverly Pepper's gift cannot be understated," states Joseph Antenucci Becherer, Chief Curator and Vice President of Meijer Gardens. "Drawing has been an integral part of her artistic practice, but like her printmaking, is little known even to scholars." Meijer Gardens engagement with Pepper began with 2009 commission of the colossus, Galileo's Wedge – an iconic work central to the world-renowned collection."

"Over the last two decades, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park has clearly demonstrated a strong commitment to my sculpture and I am enthusiastic to now have this major body of my work there." states Pepper. "To have in one location a space to study, compare and sequence my drawings and prints is an exceptional opportunity; I am most grateful to leave this record and have the curatorial team there looking after my work."

In honor of her remarkable gift and life, Meijer Gardens will be hosting a retrospective exhibition of work drawn from the archives in 2018. This exhibition will run from February 2 – April 19, 2018 and will display sketches,

studies, prints, experimental drawings from across her entire career. These works will be on display in the Holton, Balk, and Bank of America Galleries. An on-line catalogue of the oeuvre is planned.

"The 2018 retrospective surveying sixty-five years of work is a rare luxury, and an unbelievable opportunity." said Pepper.

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[Images available HERE](#)

About Beverly Pepper

Beverly Pepper (b. December 20, 1922, Brooklyn, NY) is a world-renowned sculptor and one of the most prolific artists of our time. She lived and worked in Italy. Along with Louise Bourgeois, Louise Nevelson and Barbara Hepworth, Pepper is one of four pioneering female artists.

Her repertoire includes sculptures created in bronze, steel, cast iron and stone; site-specific installations, drawings and prints. Her works have been exhibited and collected by major arts institutions and galleries around the world, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, The Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., Les Jardins du Palais Royal in Paris, France and The Museum of Modern Art in Sapporo, Japan. Beverly Pepper established her career in the 1960s in the wake of Abstract Expressionism, and has been a major force across the international art scene since she first captured widespread critical acclaim in the 1960s.

About Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

One of the world's most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park serves over 650,000 visitors annually. Meijer Gardens was recently ranked in the top 100 most-visited art museums worldwide by *Art Newspaper*, the leading publication in global art news. The 158-acre grounds feature Michigan's largest tropical conservatory; one of the largest children's gardens in the country; arid and Victorian gardens with bronze sculptures by Degas and Rodin; a carnivorous plant house; outdoor gardens; and a 1900-seat outdoor amphitheater, featuring an eclectic mix of world-renowned musicians every summer. The internationally acclaimed Sculpture Park features a permanent collection including works by Rodin, Oldenburg, Ai Weiwei, Moore, Serra, Bourgeois and Plensa, among others. Indoor galleries host changing sculpture exhibitions with recent exhibitions by Picasso, Degas, di Suvero, Borofsky, Calder and Dine. In June 2015, the 8-acre Richard & Helen DeVos Japanese Garden at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park opened. Created by renowned designer Hoichi Kurisu, the garden features sculpture by Anish Kapoor, Zhang Huan and Guiseppe Penone, among others.

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