



For Immediate Release

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LAUMEIER SCULPTURE PARK ANNOUNCES SPRING 2023 EXHIBITION, YAYOI KUSAMA: NARCISSUS GARDEN

At a Glance

WHAT: A fully immersive exhibition and sculptural installation that invites visitors to traverse the pathways of nearly 1,000 mirrored spheres throughout Laumeier’s indoor gallery and interact with the reflective aspect of the sculpture, bouncing images of self and the architectural environment from different perspectives.

WHO: World-renowned Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama (b. 1929)

WHEN: On view February 11 - May 14, 2023.
A reserved timed entry will be required for all visitors.

WHERE: Laumeier Sculpture Park
12580 Rott Road, St. Louis, 63127. Inside the Aronson Fine Arts Center’s Whitaker Foundation Gallery.

WHY: This exhibition features a historically important work by a pioneering and internationally celebrated artist, and it is the first large-scale, solo exhibition of Kusama’s work in St. Louis. The spheres in *Narcissus Garden* are laid out like a manicured garden that embraces the inherent narcissism in the viewer’s desire to see themselves reflected in the mirrored surfaces. The shape of each sphere is also indicative of the sun and moon, and when activated, their surfaces represent the union of man and nature.



Yayoi Kusama, *Narcissus Garden*, 1966/2019, stainless steel spheres. Collection of Lauren and Derek Goodman. Installation view MOCA Westport, 2019. Artwork © YAYOI KUSAMA. Photo: John Videler Photography.

Detailed release follows



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Laumeier Sculpture Park Invites Visitors to Reflect with Spring Exhibition, *Narcissus Garden* by Celebrated Artist Yayoi Kusama

St. Louis, MO – For the first time ever, a large-scale solo exhibition by world-renowned artist Yayoi Kusama will be presented in St. Louis during Laumeier Sculpture Park’s spring exhibition, *Yayoi Kusama: Narcissus Garden*. The exhibition will be on view February 11 - May 14, 2023 in the Aronson Fine Arts Center’s Whitaker Foundation Gallery. This work will be on loan to Laumeier from the private collection of Connecticut-based art collectors Derek and Lauren Goodman.

Kusama’s *Narcissus Garden* is an immersive installation consisting of 1,200 spheres with highly polished, reflective mirrored surfaces. The installation is scaled to the space in which it is displayed, and therefore, Laumeier’s presentation will contain nearly 1,000 spheres. As the title suggests, *Narcissus Garden* presents itself as a human-made garden, acknowledging and embracing the inherent narcissism in the viewer’s desire to see themselves reflected within it. The installation will fill the Whitaker Foundation Gallery, turning the space into an engrossing experience of shape, light, and reflections that will present moments of movement and stillness. The shape of the spheres is also indicative of the sun and moon, and when activated, their surface represents the union of man and nature.

First presented in 1966, *Narcissus Garden* has been reconfigured anew in recent years. With a multiplicity of meaning and interpretation, this monumental sculptural installation refers back to the fundamental trio of the art object, the natural landscape, and the viewer. This noteworthy and historically important work is a prime example of Kusama’s signature motifs of repetition and mirroring to create a sense of infinite space.

Laumeier’s Curator Dana Turkovic states: “We are so excited to host a captivating sculptural installation by one of the most popular living artists. *Narcissus Garden* is a complex work, and its original installation marked a historic moment for Kusama and the art world by creating an outdoor sculptural environment that incorporated performance along with an act of self-promotion. Here at Laumeier, the work is organized to mimic the layout of a formal manicured garden, creating a unique visual and physical experience for our audiences.”



Kusama has been called “[the world’s favorite artist](#)” (*The Guardian*, September 2018). Recent exhibitions of her work have elicited huge outpourings of visitors willing to wait in long lines to experience it. Her 2017 show at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C. broke the institution’s 40-year attendance record and welcomed over 150,000 visitors in its three-month run. In November 2022, Kusama’s 120-foot-long mosaic was unveiled in New York City’s Grand Central Station, and her work is currently featured in major solo exhibitions in London and Hong Kong.

Due to the expected popularity of this exhibition and limited capacity within Laumeier’s gallery space, a reserved timed entry will be required for viewing *Narcissus Garden*. Reservations will be free and will open in monthly increments. February reservations will be available starting January 26. Laumeier Members will have early access to reservations each month. The gallery will be open Wednesday - Sunday; visit www.laumeier.org for specific hours. Sign up for a Laumeier Membership at www.laumeier.org/membership.

Kusama has enjoyed a long and storied career. Her fantastical imagination and vivid forms stem from both personal biography and cultural history: coming of age in Japan and experiencing the terrors of World War II; the first surfacing of lifelong mental health issues, including hallucinations; and later living in the U.S. during the post-war years. Kusama repeats signature shapes and motifs in drawings, paintings, and fantastical sculptural environments, including pumpkins, polka-dots, nets, and mirrors.

In recent years, Kusama’s work has struck a chord with a new generation and has benefitted from social media to bring her global fame. Her work has incredibly broad appeal, especially in the worlds of art, design, and fashion. These connections will be explored in part by Laumeier’s 2023 Cultural Thinker in Residence, AK Brown. Brown, also known as “The Fashion Connector,” is a St. Louis-based fashion innovator and influencer. She will develop Kusama-related programming for Laumeier in the digital realm, including on social media and other platforms.

Public Programs

Multiple exhibition-related public programs—many free of charge—will be presented.

EXHIBITION OPENING / Saturday, February 11, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. / Laumeier Members Only from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. / General Public from 12 - 4 p.m. / Aronson Fine Arts Center / FREE, Reservation Required

Experience the expansive and immersive installation of *Narcissus Garden* by renowned Japanese contemporary artist Yayoi Kusama. Comprised of nearly 1,000 mirrored



spheres displayed together, the piece is formed with pathways that create individual and infinite reflections of self and space. A reserved timed entry is required for all visitors; sign up at www.laumeier.org starting January 26. Laumeier Members will have access to opening day reservations on January 19.

LECTURE / Friday, February 17, Noon / Webster University Browning Hall, Interdisciplinary Science Building (ISB), 8274 Big Bend Blvd / FREE

Join Chicago-based freelance curator and writer Dr. Marin Sullivan for *Reflective Acts and Mirrored Images: Yayoi Kusama's Narcissus Garden*, a lecture exploring the presence of the artist in photographs of *Narcissus Garden*, presenting a complex fusion of artist, image, and object.

CONVERSATION SERIES / Kado, The Way of Flowers / Saturday, March 11, 10 a.m. / Kranzberg Education Lab / FREE

Join us for a demonstration of Kado, the contemplative practice of flower arranging using classical Ikebana forms, hosted by Dr. Chikako Usui, Chairman of the Japan America Society of St. Louis. Learn about the way of flower arranging, cultivating an appreciation for nature, the harmony and balance Kado inspires, its cultural importance, and its delicate and ephemeral presentation. *Reservation required.

FAMILY WORKSHOP / Abstract Self Portraits / Saturday, March 18, 1–3 p.m. / Kranzberg Education Lab / Ages 4 to 12, accompanied by an adult / \$40

Act your silliest alongside your family member while using funhouse-like mirrors and paint! Create an abstract self-portrait inspired by Laumeier's current exhibition, *Yayoi Kusama: Narcissus Garden*, and show friends and family another side of yourself.

*Registration required

MAKERS NIGHT / Shodo, The Way of Writing / Thursday, March 23, 6-8 p.m. / Kranzberg Education Lab / \$35

Learn the way of beautiful traditional Japanese calligraphy in this workshop run in collaboration with the Japan America Society of St. Louis. Professional Shodo artist Kaori Ishijima will demonstrate and teach dramatic brush calligraphy using traditional brushes and Sumi inks. The sounds of internationally known violinist, Ms. Aska Kaneko Maret, will accompany the workshop. *Registration required.

CONVERSATION SERIES / Chado, The Way of Tea / Saturday, April 15, 10 a.m. / Kranzberg Education Lab / FREE

Join us for a Japanese tea ceremony by Yuko Kitajima, Director of the Japan America Society of St. Louis. Learn about the complexity and simplicity of Japanese spirituality and the historical and cultural significance of Chado. Music from Ms. Aska Kaneko Maret, an internationally known violinist, will complement the ceremony. Enjoy the



moment of solace away from everyday concerns over a bowl of Matcha tea prepared just for you. *Reservation required.

Visit laumeier.org for the most up-to-date information on exhibition-related programming.

About Laumeier Sculpture Park

Founded in 1976, Laumeier Sculpture Park is one of the first and largest sculpture parks in the country. Laumeier presents more than 70 works of large-scale outdoor sculpture throughout its 105-acre campus. It serves 300,000 visitors of all ages each year, with a world-class art collection, indoor and outdoor temporary exhibitions, education programs and public events. Laumeier is an internationally recognized museum, accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The 501(c)3 nonprofit organization operates in partnership with St. Louis County Parks.

Laumeier Sculpture Park's ongoing operations and programs are generously supported by St. Louis County Parks; Regional Arts Commission; Missouri Arts Council; among other corporations, foundations, individual donors and members.

2023 Exhibitions are supported by Alison and John Ferring, Ken and Nancy Kranzberg, Joan and Mitchell Markow and Two Sisters Foundation, and Emily Rauh Pulitzer.

For more about Laumeier Sculpture Park, please visit www.laumeier.org.

Images

High-resolution image available upon request.



Yayoi Kusama

Narcissus Garden, 1966/2019, stainless steel spheres.

Collection of Lauren and Derek Goodman.

Installation view MOCA Westport, 2019.

Artwork © YAYOI KUSAMA.

Photo: Johnny Fogg Photography.

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