



Minnesota Landscape  
**ARBORETUM**

## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Arboretum Debuts A-Mazing Exhibition**

Minnesota Landscape Arboretum unveils Maze Garden  
& ‘Art to A-Maze Walk’ with 15 Juried Art Installations

**Chanhassen, Minn. (June 22, 2007)** – From bugs to birds, tree houses to secret gardens, the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum’s summertime exhibitions have captured the wonder and whimsy of a child’s view of the natural world. This year, the Arboretum celebrates the delightful appeal of another family-friendly favorite—mazes—in its **Art to A-Maze Exhibition**.

To complement the grand opening of the permanent **Maze Garden**, the Arboretum is also presenting a temporary juried exhibition of unique outdoor art installations and interactive experiences. The **Art to A-Maze Walk**, on display through September 30, is designed to make the adventure of getting to the Maze Garden as much fun as the maze itself.

### **MAZE GARDEN**

Nestled in the pine collection on Three-Mile Drive, the Maze Garden sets a new standard in maze design. Designed by Northfield-based landscape architect and artist William Frost, the Maze Garden is actually made up of two different mazes: the main maze with an intricate network of passageways and 12 dead ends, and a simpler, shorter maze for younger children that features four tunnels and four dead ends that can be viewed from above so parents can keep an eye on their little explorers.

“The design is a combination of nonlinear geometry, horticulture and chance,” Frost says, citing several features that set this design apart from other mazes. One particularly unique feature of the Maze Garden is its continually changing design. Some of the walls are made up of non-plant material, including panels of colored fabric, bamboo, and lattice. Other walls are made of combinations of deciduous and evergreen plants, so the look and feel of the Maze Garden will constantly evolve as the plants mature. “Your experience as you walk through is going to change from one turn around the corner to the next, from one season to the next, from one year to the next,” Frost says. “There’s always a new reason to come back and go through it again.”

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Where a typical maze is designed with the ultimate destination at the center, the Arboretum's Maze Garden has an entry point at one end and an exit on the other. That way, when visitors reach the end, they have a choice to either walk out the door or find their way back through the maze and pop out the way they came in. Both mazes end at the same place – the Lookout Tower – so visitors that go their separate ways through the mazes can meet together when they solve the puzzle, and watch others attempt to do the same.

Frost studied shapes, forms and patterns found in nature while developing the amorphous, amoeba-shaped maze design, a focus echoed in the pathway itself. “Due to the organic shapes of the plant clusters, the path varies in width, thus creating surprising nooks and crannies and pockets of personality,” he says.

Engraved bricks and pavers, to be used in the maze's entry plaza, are still available for purchase and will stand as a permanent personalized reminder of the community's support for this exciting garden. The bricks and pavers are a perfect way for visitors to add their own personal touch to the Arboretum, or to remember or celebrate a special person in their life. A 4-by-8-inch personalized brick will be installed in the Arboretum Walk for a \$150 donation; an 8-by-18-inch personalized paver will be installed for a donation of \$400 or more. New engraved bricks will be added each year in the fall. Those purchased now through early next spring will be installed in the fall of 2008.

### **ART TO A-MAZE WALK**

The celebration of mazes continues with the Art to A-Maze Walk, a juried collection of 15 installations of environmental art, sculpture and interactive exhibits on display along the walkway between the Arboretum's Visitor Center and the new Maze Garden through September 30. Exploring the theme of “human/nature” – the relationship between human beings and the rest of the natural world – the Art to A-Maze Walk turns the experience of getting to the new permanent garden into an adventure that's as intriguing as the Maze Garden itself. The Arboretum received a record-breaking 74 design submissions and chose 15 to be installed in the Art to A-Maze Walk—each designed to inspire visitors to see what surrounds them with fresh eyes, and to notice something they didn't see before.

“Some of the proposals were literal, some conceptual, and some quite whimsical,” says Sandy Tanck, Arboretum Manager of Interpretation. “The Art to A-Maze Walk is designed to entice people away from their cars so they can enjoy all the different aspects of the Arboretum on their way to the Maze Garden. The winning installations reflect attention back to the natural spaces visitors are passing through. They're a delightful cross-section of what the Arboretum has to offer,” Tanck says.

The panel of jurors included representatives from the Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Walker Art Center, the University of Minnesota Landscape Architecture Department, a public arts administrator and a practicing artist.

The Art to A-Maze exhibition includes:

#	Title	Designer	Concept
1	Hand-powered Fountain	Willis Bowman Minneapolis	Visitors operate a pump that moves water up through a series of “vines”; as water falls, it powers a set of mechanisms that produce bells, chimes and clicking beads. It celebrates natural rhythms such as eddies, falling droplets, rivulets in a creek bed.
2	Internal Divisions, A Land Use Garden	Monica Sheets, Minneapolis	A pie-shaped garden with representative plantings creates a visual image of how much the original natural landscape of Minnesota has been modified in response to human needs.
3	Prayer Flags for Mother Earth	Zannah Martin, St. Paul	Inspired by the design of a native sweat-lodge frame, a simple bent willow structure that is equal parts shelter, refuge and playful hideaway is tied with strips of hand-dyed silk that suggest the concept of Tibetan prayer flags. Silk strips are supplied for visitors to tie their own messages of healing and caring for the earth to the structure.
4	Word Play	Rae Van Wyhe Minneapolis	Nine oversized, brightly colored children’s blocks are arranged on the slope to spell out four different messages, depending on the direction which visitors approach them. The amusing messages relate to the Maze Garden, the Arboretum and our interactions with nature.
5	Grove/Story	Landscape Design Department of the Dakota County Technical College Rosemount	A series of seven four-sided “trees”; each tells a story of our relationship with nature, and actions individuals can take to be better stewards of our fragile earth.
6	Acorn Arboreal Arch	Cynthia Markle & Sunshine Studios - Lakeville	A series of free-hanging cast bronze acorns and steel oak leaves mounted on a rustic wooden arch frame. Bell tones will sound when the wind blows or when people “play their own music” by striking them with a stick.
7	Minnesota Monster	Barbara Ryan, Tonka Bay	What’s that strange yet familiar head atop the tall totem pole? It’s a giant mosquito head! The pole is actually a tower of hand-made wooden boxes. Each door opens to reveal a portrait of an animal that depends on mosquitoes as a food source, helping visitors appreciate the mosquito’s place in nature.
8	Wind in the Trees	Jesse Symykywicz, BKV Group Minneapolis	Metal mesh, can lids, fishing swivels and fallen branches create an interactive, playful abstraction of a tree.
9	Inverted Invasive	Richard & Vicki Bonk, Minneapolis	Visitors enter a natural gazebo created from bundles of invasive buckthorn plants inverted to represent the way native species and natural cycles have been turned upside down by invasive species. The path depicts cast imprints from native flora and fauna that have been displaced by the invaders.

10	Sitting in a Story	Jim Robin, Close Landscape Architects, Minneapolis	An oversized stainless steel ring on which a story has been written provides visitors with both a resting spot and a framed view of the surrounding landscape from a fresh perspective.
11	The Grotto of Narcissus	Mary Carroll, Minneapolis	The myth of Narcissus reminds us of the folly of vanity rooted in self pre-occupation. The gutted hull of a 1950s speed boat provides a cathedral-like arch for the grotto that explores this theme, depicting nature gone mad through vivid colors of familiar flora morphed into mutated fantasy flowers.
12	The Green Grump	Marjorie Pitz, Martin & Pitz Associates Inc. Minneapolis	Made of earth, with waving ornamental grasses for hair and penetrating eyes of metal and mirrors, the Green Grump emerges from the surrounding landscape to remind us we are born of nature too. He's big, green and mean – grumpy when we abuse the environment and there to remind us that our health is dependent on the health of the planet.
13	Pine/Cone	David Wagner, SALA Architects, Minneapolis	This invites us to contemplate the beauty of wood materials and our roles as stewards of this renewable resource. Stepping through the doorways into the shape of a floating wood box, visitors experience a wider view of the tree canopy above. The reflecting pool displays their image among the pine boughs and the sky above.
14	Chairology	Bruce Lemke, Orono	This exhibit uses a common element, the wooden chair, to trace the progression of our relationship with nature. Each example provides a place to rest along the trail while contemplating the evolution of the chair and nature's contribution to human well-being, with reference to Shel Silverstein's popular children's book <i>The Giving Tree</i> .
15	Children's Nest Egg	Jonee Kulman Brigham, Children's Nest Egg, Maplewood	The walk leads into a large spiraling nest woven of tree limbs, branches and hemp rope. Upon closer inspection, the giant "egg" sheltered within reveals itself as the Earth. First Nature seems big and people small; then seeing the egg is the whole Earth, Nature becomes small and in need of our care and nurturing.

The walk also features a "Tuscan Garden Maze" exhibit designed and built by Minnesota Landscape Arboretum staff and, installed in the large central bed in front of the Oswald Visitor Center. The Art to Amaze Exhibition is free with Arboretum admission (\$7 adults; free for members & ages 15 and younger). Arboretum hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. Free admission Thursdays after 4:30 p.m.

*The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, the largest public garden in the Upper Midwest and a premier northern arboretum, is part of the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences at the University of Minnesota and developed as a community and national resource for horticultural and environmental information, research, and public education. It is located nine miles west of I-494 on Highway 5 in Chanhassen. The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity employer and educator. The Arboretum is disability accessible; the buildings and terraces are smoke free.*

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