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## **FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS AND SCULPTURE PARK HOSTS INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE CONFERENCE**

*International Sculpture Center 2008 Membership  
Conference to be Held in Grand Rapids, Mich.*

### **Sculpture in Public: Part 2, Public Art – October 2-4, 2008**

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., July 24, 2008** – Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, the most significant sculpture and botanic experience in the Midwest and an emerging cultural destination on the national scene, will host the 2008 bi-annual conference of the International Sculpture Center, October 2-4, 2008.

Titled *Sculpture in Public: Part 2, Public Art*, the three-day event will bring together more than 400 artists, arts administrators, curators, patrons, museum directors, educators and students for dialogue and networking events focused on issues related to public art. Grand Rapids was selected as the host site for this international conference because of its long history and devotion to public sculpture.

"We are delighted to serve as the headquarters of this prestigious conference and are honored to share our collections, gardens and grounds with the ISC and its membership," said Joseph Becherer, Director of Exhibitions and Curator of the Sculpture Program at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. "Grand Rapids is a community, proud of its distinct place in the history of public art. We look forward to creating a wonderful forum for creating new discussions about the impact of public art today."

Grand Rapids was the first recipient of an NEA Art in Public Places grant in 1969. The grant enabled the acquisition of Alexander Calder's monumental sculpture, *La Grande Vitesse*, widely considered the sculptor's most important stabile. During the next 40 years, the community has continued its commitment to public sculpture, hosting major public works by Mark di Suvero, Maya Lin, Robert Morris, Dale Chihuly, Andy Goldsworthy among others.

Highlighting the conference will be a keynote address, given by internationally celebrated public artist **Jaume Plensa**, who will also be the subject of an exclusive exhibition, opening at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park on October 3, 2008. This will be Plensa's largest US exhibition to date and Meijer Gardens members will join conference attendees for this talk.

Other events planned for the conference include panel discussions by leaders in the arts, social events, pre-conference workshops, a vendor's square and Art Slam, where attendees can share slide of their work for critique by others. Additional local organization's participating in the events include the Urban Institute for Contemporary Art (UICA) and Grand Rapids Art Museum.

More details about the conference and all ISC events are available on the ISC website [www.sculpture.org](http://www.sculpture.org) or by contacting [events@sculpture.org](mailto:events@sculpture.org).

**About the International Sculpture Center**

The International Sculpture Center is the world's leading non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement, creation, and understanding of sculpture and its unique contributions to society. Founded in 1961 at the University of Kansas, the ISC was originally developed as a conference to present new technologies to sculptors. Incorporated in 1978 as a member-supported group, the ISC seeks to educate the public about contemporary sculpture through its progressive educational and community outreach program initiatives, conferences, symposia and tours. The ISC presents an annual Lifetime Achievement Award to an extraordinary sculptor, as well as grants the Outstanding Student Achievement in Contemporary Sculpture Awards to recognize talented undergraduate and graduate students. For more information about the ISC please visit [www.sculpture.org](http://www.sculpture.org).

For more than 25 years, the ISC has published *Sculpture* magazine, the premier publication dedicated to the field of contemporary three-dimensional art. With a circulation of more than 300,000, *Sculpture* features interviews with emerging and internationally renowned artists, commentary on social and political issues inherent in contemporary art, exhibition reviews, and more.

**About Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park**

One of the nation's most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park serves more than a half-million visitors annually. The 132-acre grounds feature Michigan's largest tropical conservatory; one of the largest children's gardens in the country; arid and Victorian gardens; a carnivorous plant house; outdoor gardens; and a 1750-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, Moore, Bourgeois and Plensa among others. Indoor galleries host changing sculpture exhibitions with recent exhibitions by Picasso, Degas, di Suvero and Chihuly. For additional information, please visit [www.meijergardens.org](http://www.meijergardens.org).

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