

**PATRICIA LASPINO PAINTS TWO NEW WORKS FOR THE
UNITED STATES BOTANIC GARDEN'S "ORCHID SYMPHONY"
EXHIBITION**

Patricia Laspino was asked by the United States Botanic Garden at the Capitol in Washington, D.C. to design two original oil paintings interpreting this year's orchid exhibition theme of orchids, classical music, and fountains. Entitled "Orchid Symphony", the show opened February 22nd and runs through April 27, 2014. Two vibrant orchids in the U.S. Botanic Garden collection were photographed and used as the subjects. One of which is *Cattleya 'Michelle Obama'* from the First Ladies Series. From the original 48" x 60" oil paintings, the artist produced two 60" x 75" fine art monoprints on canvas which hang in the exhibition's entry foyer at the USBG Conservatory.

To emphasize the classical music theme of "Orchid Symphony" in her paintings, Laspino poised the two stunning orchids against a background of swirling aqua blue. Her painting process involves 60-80 layers of oil color using undulating energetic brushstrokes which overlay textural botanical impressions, giving the feeling of flowing water. The botanicals appear like notes dancing through the compositions as if animated by a lively musical score. Her signature style is to use layers of paint to capture light, animating the surfaces to achieve vibrancy, luminosity and drama.

She views the aesthetics of art and music as seamlessly intertwined dealing with the appreciation of beauty through compositions that affect our emotions and intellect. By interweaving elements of color, texture, rhythm and harmony, both disciplines engage the senses to incite our passions. Orchids exude grace, elegance and perfection of form as do great classical music and art compositions.

"Orchid Symphony" features orchids from around the globe in exuberant displays nestled among the US Botanic Garden's permanent, living collections. The orchid family contains thousands of members that are as different as their native environments and a multitude are on display. The exhibition features beautiful orchids displayed among whimsical topiaries, with classical music and synchronized fountains providing a water and light show.

The exhibition is part of an annual collaboration with Smithsonian Gardens. As part of the U.S Botanic Garden's educational programming, Patricia Laspino will also give an artist lecture discussing her painting style and use of the orchid as a metaphor in her work to explore cultural and biological evolution, biodiversity and environmental stewardship. Patricia and her husband Andrew Laspino will discuss their project, the Orchid Alliance Project-Bridging Art & Science and its significance in increasing awareness for the beauty and diversity of nature through art.

Visit: www.usbg.gov/programs-and-events for the detailed calendar of events at the US Botanic Garden.

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