

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[Hi res images available upon request](#)

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Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens to Host its First Ever Installation of Art in the Gardens

Philip Haas's sculptures bring a monumental interpretation of Giuseppe Arcimboldo's celebrated botanical paintings to Hillwood this fall

WASHINGTON, D.C., July 31, 2016—Contemporary American artist and filmmaker Philip Haas's larger-than-life, three-dimensional sculptures inspired by the series, *The Seasons*, by Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1526-1593) will emerge from the ellipse lawn at Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens, for the special exhibition *Four Seasons*, from October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017.

Haas's re-creations transform Arcimboldo's intriguing works, greatly enlarging the scale, altering the materials, and adding dimensionality to shed a contemporary perspective on the popular paintings. "I started the *Four Seasons* project wanting to bring Arcimboldo's sixteenth-century nature imagery into the twenty-first century physical world," explained Haas, who describes his process as "sculpting by thinking."

"This is an exciting and new venture for Hillwood," explains Kate Markert, Hillwood's executive director. "*Four Seasons* represents the third contemporary art exhibition at Hillwood, following the notable presentations of works by Eva Zeisel in 2005 and Isabelle de Borchgrave in 2012. However, it is the first time Hillwood has presented an installation of art in the gardens."

Giuseppe Arcimboldo's *The Seasons*

Arcimboldo, an Italian Renaissance painter born in Milan, likely studied the works of Leonardo Da Vinci before he left Italy to paint for the imperial courts of the Habsburg rulers in Vienna and Prague. During the reign of Austria's Emperor Maximilian II, Arcimboldo created the series *The Seasons*, comprising *Spring*, *Summer*, *Autumn*, and *Winter*. The portraits, painted in 1563, depict faces composed of plants associated with each season. Rosebuds form the lips of *Spring*, while a ripe peach stands in for a plump cheek on *Summer*. The portraits also represent the ages that are often linked with each season of the year. *Spring* is a youthful face crafted from flower blossoms and lush greenery. A wizened old man's face, constructed out of twisted tree branches, is the subject of *Winter*. The strange series was greatly appreciated for its



humor as much as for the artist's technical skill, and the paintings became quite popular in the Habsburg court.

Philip Haas's *Four Seasons*

Unveiled in 2012, Haas's sculpture series is an engaging work of art in its own right. *Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter* stand fifteen-feet tall with giant flowers, fruits, vegetables, and branches forming their massive features. The smile on *Summer* is constructed of two pea pods several feet long, and grapes larger than basketballs hang in bunches from *Autumn's* head in lieu of hair. The towering figures feature Arcimboldo's blend of the natural and the fantastical on a remarkably grand scale.

For Haas, having the sculptures on view in Washington, D.C. brings his vision full-circle. *Winter* was first displayed at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. in 2010, before traveling to the Piazza del Duomo in Milan and the Garden of Versailles in 2011. In 2012, all four sculptures in *Four Seasons* were shown together for the first time at the Dulwich Picture Gallery in the United Kingdom. Since then, the show has travelled to museums and botanical gardens throughout the United States.

"Hillwood's installation of the *Four Seasons* will be the first time all four sculptures have been displayed together in Washington, D.C." explained Haas. "I can't think of a more intriguing venue than Hillwood, where the sculptures will stand in juxtaposition with the collection, uncertain whether they should climb back inside the museum—or flee."

Haas's exhibition at the Kimbell Museum of Art, *Butchers, Gods, Dragons & Skeletons*, was listed by *Time* magazine as one of the ten best U.S. museum shows of the year. He is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Venice Film Festival's Premio Open, as well as other awards. His feature film, *Angels & Insects*, was nominated for the Cannes Film Festival Palme d'Or and an Academy Award."

Presented on the ellipse lawn at Hillwood, viewers will be invited to explore the intricate details of the sculptures from all angles, discovering the previously unseen sides of Arcimboldo's two-dimensional interpretations. Beginning in October and remaining on view through March, the installation will weather the changing seasons, as the surrounding gardens transition from late summer, through fall, winter, and into early spring.

Exhibition Programs and Events

Several programs and events will be presented in conjunction with the special exhibition. The exhibition opening will be celebrated on Wednesday, September 28, 2016, with a special fall garden party. A heavily-illustrated talk with Haas on Wednesday, November 21, 2016 at 6:30 p.m., will explore how he embarked on the project, how the works were made, and how they arrived and were installed at Hillwood.

Sponsors

Four Seasons is supported to date by Lucy Street Rhame, The Honorable and Mrs. John E. Chapoton, Henry H. Goldberg and Carol Brown Goldberg, Linda and Bill Goldman, Gloria Hidalgo, Martha Johnston and Robert Coonrod, Betsy Scott Kleeblatt, Amy and Marc Meadows, Dr. and Mrs. Michael J. Petite, Toni A. Ritzenberg, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick S. Rolandi III, and Leonard L. Silverstein. Additionally, all

exhibitions and programs are funded in part by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts through the National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs program.

About Hillwood

When art collector, businesswoman, social figure, and philanthropist Marjorie Merriweather Post left to the public her northwest Washington, D.C. estate, she endowed the country with the most comprehensive collection of [Russian imperial art](#) outside of Russia, an [exquisite 18th-century French decorative art collection](#), and 25 acres of serene landscaped [gardens](#) and natural woodlands. Opened as a public institution in 1977, today Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens offers a gracious and immersive experience unlike any other. Highlights of the collection include Fabergé eggs, Russian porcelain, Russian orthodox icons, Beauvais tapestries, and Sèvres porcelain, and Post's personal collection of apparel, accessories, and jewelry. Thirteen acres of enchanting formal gardens include a [Japanese-style garden](#), [rose garden](#), [French parterre](#), and a [greenhouse](#) full of orchids.

General Information

- Location:** 4155 Linnean Avenue, NW, Washington, DC
Metro: VanNess/UDC, Red Line (20 minute walk)
- Information/Tickets:** 202.686.5807 for information or www.HillwoodMuseum.org
Facebook.com/HillwoodMuseum
- Hours:** Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Mondays, most holidays, and for several weeks in January.
- Café:** The Hillwood café serves lunch Tuesday through Saturday from 11a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Afternoon Tea is served on Sundays only from 11a.m. to 3:30p.m.
Express Dining, featuring a quick selection of sandwiches, salads, snacks, and beverages, is available Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Call 202.686.5807 for café reservations.
- Suggested Donation:** \$18, \$15 seniors, \$10 college students, \$5 for visitors age 6 to 18.
No donation is suggested for children under 6.
Adults and seniors receive \$3 off the suggested donation for weekday visits and \$1 for weekend visits when reservations are made online.

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