



**ART BY DAY. MAGIC BY NIGHT.**

*Presented by TowneBank*

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**For Immediate Release**

## **Norfolk Botanical Garden Presents LanternAsia**

*First Asian lantern exhibition in Virginia to feature more than 30 colossal works of art*

NORFOLK, Va., February 22, 2016 –In March and April, Norfolk Botanical Garden (NBG) will host **LanternAsia, Art by Day, Magic by Night**. This magnificent Asian lantern exhibition will transform the Garden’s 175-acre landscape with more than 30 illuminating colossal works of art.

Lantern Festivals are an ancient tradition that dates back to the Han Dynasty, more than 2,000 years ago in China. Tianyu Culture Communication located in Zigong, China is bringing this extraordinary event to NBG. They have traveled to Beijing, Sydney, and Rotterdam, and most recently to the United States in Spokane, Washington followed by Cary, North Carolina. This spectacular exhibition will leave guests awestruck in Virginia for the first time - Ever!

These massive lanterns are crafted from silk, steel and other eco-friendly materials highlighting traditional Asian themes that include nature, wildlife, architecture and ancient folklore. These structures – some as tall as four stories high—replicate those found in China, Japan, India, Thailand, Korea, Burma and Singapore.

During the day, guests will have the opportunity to see the detail and craftsmanship of these mystical works of art. By night, experience the art illuminated in enormous proportions. These works of art include the Beijing Temple of Heaven, China's largest existing masterpiece first built in 1400's, life-size elephants, larger-than-life flowers and a 200-foot dragon – the size of five school buses – and much more!

“The detail and craftsmanship of these mystical works of art will be awe-inspiring by day, while by night, art will turn to magic as these gigantic lanterns are illuminated,” said Norfolk Botanical Garden President and CEO Michael Desplaines.

“The City of Norfolk is proud to host LanternAsia, the first ever Chinese Lantern Exhibition in Virginia and all of the eastern seaboard at our Norfolk Botanical Garden,” said Mayor Paul D. Fraim. “This magnificent display of larger than life art will draw thousands of visitors to our City, celebrating culture and diversity.”

In late January 2016, more than two dozen artisans traveled from China to install and create these massive custom-made structures. The Garden is temporarily closed during construction as the Garden prepares for the unveiling of this two month event.

The exhibition will open to the general public on Saturday, March 5, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. with an all-day and into-the-night festival celebration. Tickets are available online for purchase.

Visit [Lanternasia.org](http://Lanternasia.org) for more information.

**About Norfolk Botanical Garden**

Norfolk Botanical Garden represents an oasis of 52 themed gardens encompassing 175 beautiful acres. From stunning plant collections to *WOW- World of Wonders: A Children's Adventure Garden*, this diverse natural beauty can be explored by tram, boat, or walking tours. The Garden is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, recognized as a Virginia Historic Landmark, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a Virginia Green attraction, and is managed by the Norfolk Botanical Garden Society supported by the City of Norfolk. Norfolk Botanical Garden is dedicated to enriching life by promoting the enjoyment of plants and the environment through beautiful gardens and education programs. For more information, visit [www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org)

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