

Ganna
Walska



LOTUSLAND

NEWSLETTER • FALL 2023

BUILDING THE GARDEN'S FUTURE

Lotusland Forever

FROM NATURE'S MARVELS TO MORAL BEAUTY

30 Years of Wonder at Lotusland

PHOTO: J.R. Eyerman, Ganna Walska. Lotusland Archives



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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Members,

I am thrilled to write to you on this joyous occasion as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of Lotusland's opening to the public. With hearts full of gratitude and a sense of awe for the efforts that have resulted in this milestone, I extend my warmest congratulations to each and every one of you who has contributed to this remarkable place.

When Madame Walska passed away in 1984, her friends and advisors fulfilled her wishes and embarked on a mission to share the beauty, wonder, and knowledge of our incredible botanical haven with the world, and in September of 1993 the Garden was finally able to



open with the County's approval and use permits. As we reflect upon the journey that has brought us to this point, we recognize that it is through the dedication, hard work, and unwavering commitment of our decades of community leaders, Members and donors – in partnership with our staff, garden volunteers, and docents – that we have been able to touch countless lives with the magic of Lotusland.

From the very beginning, our volunteers and docents have been the heart and soul of Lotusland. Your passion for plants, your willingness to share your knowledge, and your tireless efforts to ensure that every visitor's experience is

enriching and memorable have been truly exceptional. Over the past four decades, our Board members have not only guided the growth of our garden but also nurtured a sense of community that is at the core of Lotusland's spirit.

To our staff, past and present, whose creativity, hard work, and dedication shape the canvas upon which our garden's story unfolds, I extend my deepest gratitude. Your expertise, vision, and tireless commitment to excellence have turned Lotusland into a haven of beauty and a sanctuary for all who visit.

The journey ahead is filled with opportunities to continue our legacy of preservation, education, and inspiration. With your continued support, I am confident that the next thirty years will be even more extraordinary than the last.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to every individual who has been part of Lotusland's remarkable journey. Your dedication has shaped our garden into the treasure it is today, and your enthusiasm will drive our success in the years to come. As we celebrate this milestone, we cherish the contributors from the past three decades, while embracing the promise of a bright future.

With deepest gratitude,

Rebecca Anderson
Executive Director
randerson@lotusland.org

MISSION

Lotusland's mission is to preserve and enhance the distinctive botanical gardens of Madame Ganna Walska. Lotusland educates and inspires visitors with its collections, sustainable horticulture practices, and plant conservation.

FALL 2023

Contents

- 2 Letter from the Executive Director
- 3 Campaign Chair Letter
- 4 Lotusland Forever
- 6 Collections News
- 8 Horticultural Happenings
- 9 Madame's Millinery Masterpieces
- 10 30 Years of Wonder at Lotusland
- 14 *Lotusland Celebrates:*
Where The Wild Things Grow
- 17 Donor Spotlight: Kim Lagrant Hunter
- 18 Upcoming Events
- 20 The Lotus Society
- 21 New Staff
- 21 Gifts for the Garden
- 22 Volunteer Luncheon & Recruitment
- 23 Exceptional Plants:
Where Are They Now?
- 24 Eat Your Flowers
- 25 Wishlist
- 26 Donors
- 27 Garden Conservancy Commemorates
Three Decades of Support

CAMPAIGN CHAIR LETTER

Dear Friends of Lotusland,

I hope this letter finds you well and surrounded by the beauty of nature. It is with great enthusiasm and a sense of purpose that I write to you today as Chair of the Lotusland Forever Campaign, and as Past President, to share some exciting news about plans to sustain this very special botanical treasure.



As stewards of this enchanting haven, we are embarking on a journey that not only secures the future of Lotusland but also elevates it to new heights. The Lotusland Forever Campaign represents our unwavering commitment to preserving the legacy of this botanical and architectural wonderland for generations to come. We aim to raise capital to enhance our buildings and facilities, protect our archives, restore our non-living collections, and ensure the sustained beauty of our garden oasis.

Our community's deep appreciation for the natural world has been the driving force behind Lotusland's success over the years. As we stand on the cusp of the future, we invite you to join us in this ambitious endeavor. Your support, whether through a donation, volunteer work, or sharing the message, will contribute not only to the growth of our physical garden but also to the flourishing of our mission.

In addition to our capital campaign, we are excited to announce the dedicated campaign goal to grow the Lotusland endowment by \$15 million. This fund will provide a stable foundation for the ongoing maintenance and growth of Lotusland, ensuring that the enchantment we experience here remains timeless.

We understand the challenges that face the world today, but with your participation we can continue to make Lotusland a sanctuary of respite, learning, and inspiration. Your generosity will be etched into the very essence of this haven, becoming a part of its history and its future.

Thank you for your unwavering support. Together, we will ensure that Lotusland remains a place of wonder and discovery, a living testament to the beauty and resilience of the natural world.

With Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Connie Flowers Percy". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long, sweeping flourish at the end.

Connie Flowers Percy
Chair, Lotusland Forever Campaign
Past President, Trustee
www.lotusland.org/forever



BUILDING THE GARDEN'S FUTURE

LOTUSLAND

Forever

Since opening in 1993, Ganna Walska Lotusland has grown to become one of the world's premier botanical gardens and a center for horticultural education, sustainable garden practices, and plant conservation. With acres of diverse and whimsical gardens to explore, more than 3,500 plants from around the world, and historically significant Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, Lotusland is one of the South Coast's most cherished cultural institutions.

This year we celebrate Lotusland's 30th anniversary as a public garden. In anticipation of this milestone, the Board and Staff have a vision to preserve and protect the spectacular property left by Madame Walska and bring the Garden into its next era.

The Lotusland Forever Campaign seeks to raise \$15 million for capital improvements and projects and \$15 million in gifts for endowment. Funding will impact all areas of the Garden, from restoration of historic buildings to preserving living and non-living collections, as well as making enhancements for a green and sustainable campus.



THE CAMPAIGN CONSISTS OF FIVE KEY AREAS:

- Buildings and Grounds Restoration and Rehabilitation:** Many of the historically significant buildings at Lotusland are more than 100 years old. Funding will both protect and enhance these spaces and, in turn, improve the daily experience for guests and staff.
- Innovations in Environmental Stewardship:** A priority of the Lotusland Forever Campaign includes maintaining water storage and security, adding solar power, and installing charging stations.
- Preserving the Non-Living Collections:** The Lotusland Forever campaign will provide the funding needed to conserve, preserve, and restore delicate archival and garden ornament collections so they can endure and be available for future study and enjoyment.
- Investing in the Garden and Living Collections:** Capital investments maintain our deep commitment to plant preservation and conservation, while modernizing our facilities with the latest in green building, technical, and sustainable practices.
- Growing the Endowment:** As the Garden has evolved, the need for a stable endowment has likewise grown. Currently Lotusland draws approximately \$800,000 from a Board-designated fund in order to support its operations. The Lotusland Forever campaign seeks to raise additional funding in order to fortify the existing endowment and ensure the Garden's financial stability.

Planning and initial outreach for the campaign within Lotusland's leadership have been underway for two years. Connie Flowers Percy, Campaign Chair, has led a group of devoted volunteers on the Philanthropy Committee to structure a comprehensive fundraising program. Initial efforts have met with a tremendous response!

We are thrilled to announce the campaign has raised more than \$6.5 million in capital funding towards our goal of \$10 million for imminent and necessary projects. Some of these projects are already completed or underway. You will notice, for instance, new brick patios, walkways, and a shaded central courtyard at the Visitor Center. These improvements were made possible by generous early gifts from Connie Flowers Percy and Trustee Emerita Mimi Michaelis, with the support from the Alice Tweed Tuohy Foundation. A refillable water fountain was installed with the support of a grant from the Santa Barbara Foundation. When passing through the Garden, you will soon see the total restoration and beautifully repaired fountains on the Pavilion Patio – made possible by a generous lead gift from Lotusland Honorary Council Members Roger and Julie Davis.

Additional work funded by the campaign goes on behind the scenes, including planning for the Garden's Master Plan, funded by Treasurer Stephen Schiabe. Future projects are in the early planning stages, including the goal of restoring the Triton Fountain and the beloved Abalone Pond in the Aloe Garden. For this, our gratitude goes to the Manitou Fund, with special thanks to Nora McNeely Hurley. A comprehensive storm water storage program is being generously spearheaded by an anonymous donor who has offered \$550,000 as a challenge grant, to reduce water use and recycle runoff for irrigation of Lotusland's prized plant collections.

All of us who love Lotusland and revel in our time in the Garden will benefit from the generosity and foresight of donors to the Lotusland Forever Campaign. Join us to learn how you can help Lotusland remain a healthy and vibrant asset for our community, a place where future generations can experience the allure of Madame Walska's exquisite secret garden.

Did you know that a designated planned gift to Lotusland can be celebrated now as a part of the campaign? A pledge bequest written into your will or trust when combined with a cash gift of \$25,000 to Lotusland's endowment can be recognized today both in The Lotus Society and Lotusland Forever.

To explore joining the campaign and learn about naming opportunities contact Patricia Sadeghian at 805.969.3767 x125. More information can be found at www.lotusland.org/forever



COLLECTIONS NEWS

Celebrating Lotusland's Namesake Plants

By Anna Bower and Paul Mills

MADAME GANNA WALSKA made an impact on the horticultural world, using her personal touch to create her beloved Lotusland. With its world-class plant collections and avant-garde horticulture, a number of plant cultivars have been named to honor Lotusland, Madame Ganna Walska, and significant horticulturists who worked at and designed gardens on the property.

Plants originating from Lotusland:

- ***Billbergia* 'Santa Barbara'** – A green, white, and pink variegated cultivar from the 1960s.
- ***Astrophytum myriostigma* 'Lotusland'** – A monstrose cactus that has heavily flocked, warty stems. It was discovered in the Garden, presumably by Charlie Glass during his time working at Lotusland, then propagated via grafting.
- **×*Calibanus hookeri*** – This spontaneous hybrid *Calibanus* has mysterious origins at Lotusland and is thought to be an intergeneric hybrid between *Calibanus hookeri* and *Beaucarnea recurvata*. Its story begins in the late 1970s, when seed was collected from a female *Calibanus hookeri* in the Succulent Garden by Charlie Glass, Lotusland's first unofficial curator. This plant is sometimes called *Calicarnea* 'Lotusland' in the nursery trade.
- ***Bidens* 'Madame Ganna Walska'** – A hot pink flowering *Bidens* discovered in the Insectary Garden by Bob Lilly and Alice Doyle in 2003. It was distributed to the nursery trade the following year through Log House Plants in Cottage Grove, Oregon.



ABOVE: *Dyckia* 'Bill Paylen' in the nursery at Lotusland

Plants named in honor of Lotusland:

- ***Iris* 'Lotusland'** – A bearded iris that hosts large peach-pink flowers was created in 1999 by Keith Keppel who was inspired by photos of Lotusland and then personally gifted the plant to the Garden when he came to visit.
- ***Begonia* 'Lotusland'** – Without a doubt one of the most magnificent plants named for Lotusland. Renowned local begonia expert Rudy Ziesenhenné had long wanted to name a begonia for the legendary estate and when a chance seedling appeared that was head and shoulders above the rest, he had found the perfect plant, which was officially registered with the American Begonia Society in 1999.
- ***Heliotropium arborescens* 'Lotusland'** – Unique heliotrope with deep purple flowers opening to a pale lilac instead of the usual almost white. Discovered in the Insectary Garden by Corey Welles, Lotusland's Manager of Sustainability.



ABOVE: *Begonia* 'Lotusland' in the fern garden



ABOVE: *Bidens* 'Madame Ganna Walska'

Plants named in honor of Madame Ganna Walska:

- *Nymphaea* 'Madame Ganna Walska' – A tropical water lily with large and stunning pink to lavender flowers and mottled purple and green foliage named by hybridizer Jack Wood in 1992. It can be viewed when you stroll the Water Garden during the summer and fall.
- *Aechmea* 'Madame Ganna Walska' – A dark red hybrid from the 1970s named by legendary plant breeder Ed Hummel, owner of Hummel's Exotic Gardens. Madame Ganna Walska purchased her original bromeliads from Hummel in the 1960s.
- *Cryptanthus* 'Madame Ganna Walska' – Another 1970s Hummel hybrid with wine-red leaves and densely scurfy undersides.
- *Neoregelia* 'Madame Ganna Walska' – Another Hummel hybrid of unknown parentage from 1979.
- *Phalaenopsis* 'Madame Ganna Walska' – A Westerlay Orchids introduction from 2020.
- *Cymbidium* 'Madame Ganna Walska' (C. 'Magic Passion' × C. 'Eternal Flame') – This vibrantly colored orchid made its debut at the 2018 Santa Barbara International Orchid Show and was officially registered that year with the Royal Horticultural Society by Andy Easton of New Horizon Orchids.

Plants named in honor of significant horticulturists involved with the Garden:

- *Nidularium* 'Herr Fritz' – Fritz Kubisch was the owner of Jungle Plants and Flowers and the original designer of the Upper Bromeliad Garden in the 1960s.
- *Dyckia* 'Bill Paylen' – A terrestrial bromeliad with burgundy leaves heavily covered with white trichomes. Named by Bill Baker in honor of William (Bill) Paylen, who designed Lotusland's Fern Garden and redesigned and expanded the Bromeliad Gardens.
- *Tillandsia* 'Bill Paylen' – Hybrid between *T. ionantha* and *T. caput-medusae* named by Paul Isley, owner of Rainforest Flora.
- *Billbergia* 'Bill Paylen' – Another Bill Baker hybrid with heavily spotted maroon leaves, red scape bracts and purple flowers.
- *Platynerium* 'Ziesenhenné' – Staghorn fern named in honor of Rudy Ziesenhenné.
- *Mammillaria glassii* – one of 11 species named in honor of Charlie Glass, Lotusland's first unofficial curator hired by Madame Walska. Other highlights include *Calibanus glassianus*, *Graptopetalum glassii*, and *Sedum glassii*. Glass himself published 90 plant names, including *Echeveria cante* and several *Thelocactus* and *Turbinicarpus* varieties and subspecies.

Horticultural Happenings

30 YEARS OF CYCAD CONFERENCES

SINCE 1987, a select group of botanists and horticulturists from around the world has gathered to further our knowledge of the enigmatic and extremely threatened group of plants known as cycads. The International Conference on Cycad Biology has been attended by Lotusland staff since 1993, coinciding with its opening as a public garden. Past conferences were held in such far-flung corners of the world as Thailand, China, Australia, Mexico, Panama, Columbia, South Africa, and Florida. This year's Conference on Cycad Biology was held in Pampanga, Philippines, and was hosted by De La Salle University and Botanic Garden. The conference, attended by Paul Mills, Lotusland Curator and Director of Conservation, offered cutting-edge information, with topics covering everything from conservation, ethnobotany, and horticulture to genetics and systematics, to pollination biology and evolution. Our understanding of cycads has greatly improved over the last 30 years, though, unfortunately, threats in the wild continue to increase. The role of gardens such as Lotusland in safeguarding these plants is more important than ever.

The evening prior to the conference was the meeting of the IUCN Species Survival Commission's Cycad Specialist Group (CSG), of which Lotusland is a member. Focusing on the most threatened plant group on the planet, the CSG works tirelessly to conserve individual species of cycads and their habitats while also raising awareness about this unique plant group. At this year's CSG meeting, John Donaldson, Co-Chair of the CSG and Chief Scientist of Wild Cycad Conservancy in South Africa, presented a document entitled "Cycads 2050 – A Vision and Strategy," which serves as a road map for reversing the trend of increasing threats to cycads. Lotusland is mentioned prominently for our role in ex situ cycad conservation and propagation.

The post-conference tour to the islands of Palawan, Coron, and Culion to see five different species of *Cycas* in habitat was a highlight. Conference participants had the unique opportunity to visit the critically endangered *Cycas wadei*, which is only known from one population on the small island of Culion. This incredibly healthy population of cycads consisted of plants of all ages, along with specific pollinating insects. Upon learning that this area was to be converted to farmland, participants were eager for a pre-planned meeting with the mayor of Culion. After discussing their concern for the future of this incredibly rare and locally endemic cycad, the Cycad Specialist Group pledged their support for *Cycas wadei*, and Culion officials quickly understood that this plant is a local treasure and must be preserved. By the time participants boarded the boat back to Coron Island, encouraging news was already coming from the mayor's office regarding possible future protections for the species.

The conference concluded with a pledge of conservation and collaboration, reinforcing Lotusland's commitment to protecting cycads from extinction.

"I would like to extend my gratitude to the generous donors that made it possible for me to represent Lotusland at this important conference."

— PAUL MILLS, LOTUSLAND CURATOR AND DIRECTOR OF CONSERVATION



Attendees from around the world at Cycad 2023



Dr. Maribel Agoo, cycad conference organizer, and *Cycas curranii* in habitat



Local students taking measurements of a species of *Cycas* for future identification



Habitat of *Cycas saxatilis*, a Palawan Island endemic that grows on vertical limestone cliffs



Mid-conference field trip to the site of the future La Salle Botanical Gardens



Seed on *Cycas wadei*

Special thanks to these donors who provided professional development support: Mimi Michaelis, Adele and Loi Nguyen, Nita and Henk Van der Werff

MADAME'S MILLINERY MASTERPIECES

An Examination of Hats Throughout History

JOIN LOTUSLAND FOR AN INTIMATE PRESENTATION

by Kaye Spilker, Curator Emerita of Costume and Textiles at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

History has seen many kinds of crowns on the heads of kings and queens, socialites, and tradespeople. Hats have been fascinating accessories for the most luxurious (and shabbiest) dress, used both for protection and pageantry, and signifying artistry, wealth, occupation, status, and prestige. This academic retrospective will journey through several centuries of history's headwear. Kaye Spilker's talk will be accompanied by a display of a selection of Madame Walksa's spectacular hats.

A reception will follow the presentation.

Ticket Cost:

\$575 - Patron Ticket (includes a separate Behind-the-Scenes tour through the Lotusland Archive on November 4)

\$325 - General Public

\$275 - Lotusland Members

Tickets available now. Space is limited and reservations are required. View more information and reserve online at lotusland.org/events.



About Keynote Speaker Kaye Spilker: Kaye received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from Syracuse University and a Master of Fine Arts in art history from UCLA. Following her undergraduate studies, she worked for six years as an artist in Belgium, where her works are represented in public and private collections. She joined the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1987 and retired after thirty challenging and very fulfilling years. At LACMA, she curated many exhibitions on a broad range of subjects, including ancient Peruvian textiles, African costume, children's quilts, and Hollywood costume designer Adrian. She also represented the costume and textiles department in the museum-wide millennial exhibition "Made in California." Major exhibitions with catalogs that traveled internationally were "Breaking the Mode," on LACMA's contemporary fashion collection; "Fashioning Fashion," on historic European dress; and "Reigning Men," encompassing 3 centuries of menswear. Her unquestionable favorite, however, was the 2003 exhibition "Erté: Opera and Ballets Russes: Dance," which introduced visitors to the remarkable collection of Madame Walska's opera ensembles designed by Erté and other famous couturiers. She looks forward to sharing her work on Madame's glorious headwear.



FROM NATURE'S MARVELS TO MORAL BEAUTY

30 Years of Wonder at Lotusland

By Guest Writer, Kristen Kolakowski

"I FIND AWE IN THE TINIEST DETAILS [at Lotusland]— like the lichen on that tree."

So says Terri Clay, Lead Gardener of Lotusland's Japanese garden, looking up at a dawn redwood. And for Paul Mills, Director of Conservation and Curator of the Living Collections, those very large plants can ignite awe, too:

"There's a massive Chilean palm tree in the Dracaena forest that I have to pat on the trunk every time I pass by. This specimen of *Jubaea chilensis* - the most massive palm tree in the world - has been in this spot for more than a 100 years, towering over most everything."

Wonder and awe come in all shapes and sizes. And whether you find them in lichen, like Terri, or in a palm, like Paul, one thing is universal: these emotions shape our work and lives in powerful ways. That's not only an intuitive truth; it's science.

We use the words awe and wonder interchangeably, but they're not exactly the same. UC Berkeley psychologist Dacher Keltner explains that you feel awe "when you encounter something vast that challenges your current understanding of the world — something outside of your frame of reference." And awe, in turn, drives and stimulates wonder — a mix of astonishing surprise, contemplation and

curiosity. Wonder drives us to learn and understand more, to seek deeper and broader knowledge.

There's been a blossoming of research on these intertwined emotions in the last twenty years, and the science shows a range of benefits that might surprise you. The effects are psychological, cognitive, social, and physical — ranging from improved creative problem solving and critical thinking to higher resilience and deeper connection with each other. And that just scratches the surface. The bigger lesson is awe and wonder are essential in our work and our lives. They're not a luxury, they're a necessity.

1993

A docent program is established and expanded staff are hired. A Conditional Use Permit to open the garden is granted by Santa Barbara County.

The Visitor Center is completed in time for the first scheduled tour on September 15, 1993. The adjacent Australian Garden is designed by Sydney Baumgartner.

1999

A five-year plan is devised to remedy Cycad fungal infections and root rot. An area with infected soil is removed and a new drainage system is installed. The garden space is expanded and completed in 2003.

1995

Lotusland hosts its first fundraiser *Lotusland Celebrates: Twilight with Madama Butterfly*

2000

The Topiary Garden is restored by Lori Ann David, who replicates the original figures.



2001-2003

Merritt S. Dunlap's extensive cactus collection, promised to Madame Walska in 1966, is gifted to Lotusland. Eric Nagelmann donates landscape design and consultation services.



2008

Gwen Stauffer joins as Lotusland next Executive Director.

2005

Dr. Steven Timbrook retires after 19 years as Lotusland's first Executive Director. Mike Bush joins as Executive Director in the Fall.

Many of us intuitively recognize wonder and awe have long been embedded into Lotusland's mission, physical plant, and operations. What we may not realize is that awe springs not only from external sources, from the dizzying dragon tree or the trembling fern frond. Some of the most powerful and common sources of awe are found within us and between us, as humans, and that is also essential to Lotusland's story.

At this momentous 30th anniversary of Lotusland's opening, we take a moment to celebrate and understand the influence of these emotions in Lotusland's past, present and future — and our role within this timeless tapestry.

Lotusland's Present: Natural Wonder at Work

Global research from UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center, led by Keltner, has shown that we experience awe about eight things, which he calls "the eight wonders of life." They are: moral beauty (witnessing others' kindness, courage, overcoming obstacles or humility), collective effervescence (when we feel merged with an oceanic "we," like at weddings, concerts and sporting events); nature; music; visual design; spiritual and religious awe; stories about life and death; and epiphanies, or "ahas".

Keltner and his colleagues' research also clearly shows awe and wonder provide powerful benefits for us and the organizations we serve. They open

us up and expand our mental models, increase ethical decision making, sharpen our reasoning, and prompt us to innovate. They activate our inclination to share, create strong networks, and become more generous, altruistic, and cooperative.

Six years ago, I founded my company WonderWorks to help leaders, creatives, and teams experience wonder and awe — and their benefits. In August, I had the good fortune to interview some of Lotusland's staff about where they find wonder and awe in their work. These staff include some of those who have been here longest (a total of 98 years of service among just three of them!). Their stories illuminated these "eight wonders of life" far more intensely than in most organizations I've served.

"Nature" is the most obvious kind of awe on display at Lotusland. Terri sees it in the spiderwebs suspended between pine and maple branches. Rebecca Anderson, Lotusland's executive director, sees it in the childrens' groups that visit the garden, who shift from pure excitement to focused calm just by spending time here. I was awestruck when I saw an iridescent flame skimmer dragonfly land on a leaf in the koi pond. For Paul, who has worked at Lotusland for 28 years, it is often the lotuses themselves that ignite awe:

"We were looking at them just yesterday and somebody asked me: 'When do you think those are going to open?' And I said, 'Probably two or three days,' and

then, boom, they popped open just overnight, to disprove me."

These stories about finding awe through nature at Lotusland remind us that awe can strike us unexpectedly as much as it can reveal itself in something we see every day. But as we reflect on Lotusland's anniversary, it's worth noting that nature is not the only one of the "eight wonders of life" that has carried Lotusland this far. And the greatest of the eight isn't about the natural world at all.

The Moral Beauty in Lotusland's Past

Around the globe, the kind of awe we experience most commonly is moral beauty: something we create and see in other people. When things get difficult, moral beauty often shines through. My interviews revealed that this moral beauty was essential to Lotusland's survival at critical moments in the past — and to its blossoming into what it is today.

This began with Madame Ganna Walska herself. Moral beauty showed up in her courage to challenge the conventional, in her overcoming of obstacles both in society at large and in the garden. She drove towards a vision that no one else could quite see. "What I also really love is the fact that Madame had this creative, whimsical, out-of-the-box thinking," says Terri, who has worked at Lotusland for 37 years. "I mean, who thinks about putting in a whole aloe section that looks like you're underwater? It's amazing to me."

2009

The Water Stairs, Cypress Allee and foyer in the Main House, all created during the Gavit era, are renovated.

The loss of a large California live oak and the removal of a beetle-infested Monterey pine result in the need for renovation of the Lower Bromeliad Garden.

Ganna Walska Lotusland is reclassified by the IRS as a public charity.

2012

The Blue Garden is renovated to create ADA accessible pathways and thin the tree canopy, allowing sun to reach the light-loving blue plants in the understory.

2015

The Palmetum Garden, designed by Eric Naglemann, is built around a restored path and bench in a long 514-foot axis that extends through the Cypress Allee south to the Wishing Well.



2016

The Insectary Garden renovation is completed to include Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility, improved aesthetics, and optimum effectiveness in attracting pollinators and beneficial insects into the garden.



But getting there — having creative courage, pulling together resources, inspiring others to participate, and keeping the estate on its feet — took a mountain of moral beauty: grit, problem solving, and collaborative innovation that often gets forgotten, compared to the wondrous end product. As Maya Angelou reminds us: “We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty.”

Let us un-forget this moral beauty. Let me take you back to those days, through the eyes, hearts and words of the people who were there. Terri starts us off:

“Back in 1986, everything at Lotusland was broken, overgrown, and we were on a shoestring budget. It was a big deal to buy a hose! But we cared enough, and just didn’t stop.”

Moral beauty literally made up for a lack of formal resources, keeping Lotusland alive and sustaining the staff through the hard work of readying the garden for its public opening. Seeing the commitment in their colleagues motivated everyone to do more with less. It’s easy now to forget that, beyond being strapped for practical resources, the staff were given literally toxic advice on how to care for this jewel of Montecito. Corey Welles, Manager of Sustainability, who has worked at Lotusland for 33 years, recalls:

“Everything was dying. We used hundreds of gallons of pesticide every

month, hundreds of gallons of synthetic fertilizers, and every day top agricultural advisors told us we were doing it right: do more of it, do more of it. Finally there were so many dead plants, and we said, “This is not working. We are stopping all of it.”

But stopping toxic practices without an alternative wasn’t an option. Lotusland needed a new paradigm. Corey remembers how wonder and awe came to the rescue: “You had to have the awe of the natural system, and wonder about how it could be healthy, then take the time to chase the details down.”

In our modern world, shifting to more natural methods might seem obvious. At the time, it was anything but. Underfunded and alone in a chemical-centric industry, sweltering under the summer sun amid struggling plants and ragged earth, Corey and his colleagues did their horticultural research and again found their way through wonder:

“The trick at that point is to actually slow down and give yourself that moment of wonder — right when you’re at the hottest. People tend to rush things then because they want to finish the job. We didn’t do that at Lotusland. We saved that essential moment: for example, actually putting a plant in the ground [instead of a pot] because you’re gonna have to take care of this for the next hundred years.”

Progress and moral beauty at Lotusland have always been intertwined. They

appear in the shared learning that’s needed to blend traditional methods with modern science. They unfold in kindness between mentor and apprentice as the evolving community has learned to maintain and enhance the grounds. Terri remembers Frank Fujii, who survived the American internment camps of World War II and then designed the Japanese garden with Madame Ganna Walska, as “my second father, my best friend and my mentor rolled into one.” As Frank taught her the art of Japanese pruning, he told her, “You’re going to have to be here forever, because I’m teaching you what I know.”

When Lotusland opened to the public on September 15, 1993, Terri brought her newborn son. So began a new chapter of growth for the garden and for her.

Wonder at Work for LotusLand’s Future

What moved me the most in all my conversations was, you guessed it, the moral beauty of the people who support Lotusland. And I realized that the devotion displayed by the staff — along with volunteers, board members and donors — is as important to Lotusland’s present and future as to its past.

Rebecca saw its power in a recent moment, in the volunteers helping to prepare for the event “Where the Wild Things Grow.” The volunteers were on their knees, using scrub brushes to clean the slag glass alongside the paths, to reveal the garden at its most gorgeous.



• 2017

The Japanese Garden renovation begins with a capital and an endowment campaign underway.

Due to age, the grand Monterey Cypress on the Great Lawn, planted during the Kenton Stevens era, is removed and replaced with a smaller specimen.

• 2018

Ganna Walska Lotusland celebrates its 25th Anniversary of being open to the public with a special exhibition, *Building a Botanical Nirvana: The Story of Lotusland*.

• 2019

The Japanese Garden reopens, now ADA accessible and now with an endowment to support the future care of the Garden.



“Here are people doing a devotional act,” Rebecca reflected. “They’re washing glass joyfully because they know the garden needs it, and it’s kind of like a temple the beauty of the people who serve is one of my places to derive that feeling of awe at Lotusland.”

As Lotusland continues to evolve and grow, we’re going to need wonder and awe more than ever. We’ll need them to fuel our creativity, innovate and solve for the new challenges that arise and build commitment for the gardens, infrastructure, and buildings. Paul reminds us the wonders of Lotusland have powerful influence around the globe: “Just the name — for people in the botanical and horticultural world — elicits awe and wonder. I go around the world and they say “oh my gosh, I’ve heard about that place!” If we cultivate these, and work together, we can secure Lotusland’s local and global legacy for generations to come. Rebecca joined the organization in part because she believed it was uniquely positioned to achieve that vision:

“We’re big enough to be respected and recognized as a leader in the garden community, and we’re small enough to be able to be adaptive, innovative and experimental. We have to be — Lotusland has immense needs.”

A healthy and thriving future requires a commitment to all aspects of Lotusland — from the flashy and inspirational to the hidden and mundane. From

Rebecca’s point of view, all of them inspire wonder, and all of them need care and attention:

“We have these 100-year-old buildings, tile that’s gorgeous, and collectibles... and everything’s starting to deteriorate. So my calling is how do we save these treasures, so future generations can enjoy them.”

The vision is already reflected in a number of initiatives to make Lotusland even more a model of an integrated, ecologically-balanced estate. For example, Lotusland is investigating a long-term water strategy, including bold plans for water harvesting, catchment, storage, and reclamation. In Rebecca’s vision, these innovations could even position Lotusland as a teaching institution.

As we look into Lotusland’s future, we can get caught up in planning, strategy, budgets, and execution. In all that work, it’s essential we remember its beating heart. Wonder and awe gave birth to Ganna Walska’s vision and have kept Lotusland alive for decades — moment by moment, in the wondrous gardens, and in this flash of magic witnessed by Corey:

“One afternoon I was watering the roses. A hummingbird appeared, attracted by the gentle spray of water. As [it] became more used to my presence, it dove into a large pink Queen Elizabeth rose I was watering. The rose was almost

overflowing with water, forming a labyrinth of canals between its petals. The hummingbird swam, hidden between the largest petals, and emerged refreshed, dripping scented rose water! I have come to expect miracles in the garden.”

I, too, have come to expect miracles in the garden. Miracles that nature provides, given the right conditions. But these only arise in concert with the moral beauty of our own commitment to Montecito’s jewel, and to the legacy of Madame Ganna Walska. Beyond opening your lens to see the transformational nature of awe and wonder, I hope these stories inspire you to see new ways to thrive in your work and life — and to support Lotusland in thriving into tomorrow.

Author Kristen Kolakowski is Founder, Curator, and Coach at WonderWorks (www.wonderworks.works), a company that helps leaders, creatives, and teams at organizations such as Patagonia and MIT Executive Education cultivate wonder and awe through unconventional offsites and retreats as well as executive coaching. She has over 15 years’ experience as a leadership trainer and executive coach for Fortune 500 corporations, the US federal government, and nonprofits. She began her career as a clinical social worker and therapist.

2020

COVID-19 pandemic begins. Lotusland deemed an essential space for outdoor recreation during the coronavirus pandemic. Self-guided tours made available for all guests.

The 4th Grade Outreach program celebrates 20 years of education tours for Santa Barbara County students. The program is revised and renamed Junior Botanist.

Rebecca Anderson is promoted to Executive Director.

2021

“Save the Cycads,” a remediation project is launched to protect and preserve Lotusland’s Cycad collection and eliminate Armillaria.



2022

Hania Tallmadge, niece of Madame Ganna Walska, passed away, leaving behind a treasure trove of family heirlooms and Lotusland-relevant artifacts which are now proudly stored in the Archives. Additionally, her estate bestowed a \$1 million dollar bequest to the Garden, the largest received bequest since Madame Ganna Walska.

The first full-time Archives Preservation Manager is hired and begins the process to conserve and digitize Lotusland’s archives and non-living collection of art and artifacts.

2023

The Pavilion Patio is renovated and accessible pathways are added to the Pavilion.

LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES: WHERE THE WILD THINGS GROW

Preserving Nature's Beauty Through Generosity and Art

IN A MESMERIZING DISPLAY of philanthropy and creativity, the *Lotusland Celebrates: Where the Wild Things Grow* gala benefit was a resounding success. Held in support of preserving the exquisite Lotusland gardens and promoting environmental conservation, the event raised net proceeds exceeding \$800,000. The achievement was made possible through the collective efforts of the event Co-Chairs, Ashley Adelson, Merryl Brown, Joseph Marek, and Caroline Thompson, along with numerous generous sponsors, auction donors, winning bidders, attendees, and the artistic community that lent their talents to create an awe-inspiring companion art exhibit at Sullivan Goss Gallery.

The enchanting backdrop of Lotusland served as the perfect canvas for an evening of celebration and giving. The gardens provided a vivid testament to the beauty and fragility of our natural world — a reminder of the importance of stewardship. Against this backdrop, supporters of environmental conservation gathered for an evening of camaraderie, artistry, and generosity.

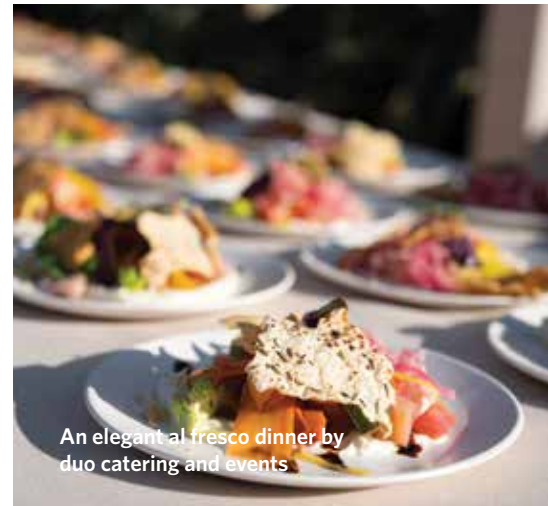
The gala's success would not have been possible without the steadfast support of the event's sponsors. Their commitment to Lotusland's mission demonstrated when individuals and businesses join forces, they can spark positive change that resonates far beyond the confines of a single evening. These sponsors recognized the urgent need to protect and preserve our planet's precious ecosystems and their financial contributions played a pivotal role in helping the gala achieve its ambitious fundraising goal.

The overwhelming success of the *Lotusland Celebrates: Where the Wild Things Grow* gala benefit sends a powerful message — one of hope, unity, and the potential for collective action. Through the convergence of art, philanthropy, and environmental advocacy, this event exemplified the strength of the human spirit and the profound impact that can be achieved when like-minded individuals rally behind a shared cause.

As the echo of the evening's festivities fades into memory, the legacy of this remarkable event lives on. The funds raised will contribute to Lotusland's continued conservation efforts, ensuring that the gardens remain a sanctuary for generations to come.



Signature Cocktails courtesy of Valerie and A.J. Rice



An elegant al fresco dinner by duo catering and events



Merryl Brown Events-designed botanical bar



Maya Mallick and Mary Ta, creative forces of nature behind the dramatic and beautiful installations at the entry and in the Bromeliad Garden



The evening concluded with a hands-on experience with the Victoria Waterlilies



Lotusland Trustees and Event Co-Chairs: Joseph Marek, Ashley Adelson, Caroline Thompson, and Merry! Brown



Committee Member Winnie Dunbar meets a wild Garden creature.



Richard Scibird, Event Sponsor Belle Hahn, and Nathaniel Gray



Bruce Heavin and Lynda Weinman, creator of the Digital Botany Table Jewelry series exhibited during the event.



Supporter Dr. Steven Gundry and friends



Belmond El Encanto General Manager Janis Clapoff with Hima Duggirala, Jeanette Williams and August Bernstein, Emcee, of Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons Raymond Blanc Gardening school.

**View more photos of
the event at
lotusland.org/celebrates**

**WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE
LOTUSLAND CELEBRATES: WHERE THE
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DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Kim Lagrant Hunter



MR. KIM LAGRANT HUNTER (right) is passionate about philanthropy. As a member of Lotusland since 2016, his love for the magic within the pink walls began when he met Connie Flowers Percy (center), and she brought him and his spouse, Dr. Paulo Lima (left), to the gardens for a tour.

"My first impression of Lotusland? Magical, invigorating, peaceful, calm, and a place to be engaged and to give back," said Kim. Since his first experience at Lotusland, Kim has been a significant supporter of the Garden in many ways.

The breadth of Kim's advocacy and generosity spans from Membership, legacy giving through The Lotus Society and *Lotusland Forever* Campaign, and special projects including the refurbishment of the decor of the Green Cottage used by the Horticultural staff.

Kim's volunteerism and ambassadorship have been instrumental in the *Lotusland Celebrates* committee and the Philanthropy Committee, which supports the *Lotusland Forever* campaign.

As the Garden commemorates its 30th anniversary, Kim strives to share the importance of giving and how philanthropic passion can be contagious. He generously pledged a \$30,000 gift to be used as a "challenge ask" during Lotusland Celebrates, with contributions going towards keeping the gates open to visitors and ensuring our world-class botanical collections thrive.

Kim's commitment was honored by our guests. On the evening of July 22, 2023, his \$30,000 challenge was met by the generosity of Connie and John Percy, Elena Urschel, and the William E. Weiss Foundation.

Due to Kim's creative philanthropy, Lotusland was able to raise critical funds to support the Garden's operations.

"Lotusland is so much more than a "garden" on so many levels," said Kim. "The variety, the vibrancy, the history and the unexpected architecture all combined to make an experience unlike anything else I've seen and experienced in my life time. I've been to lots of historic homes and gardens, and I have lived in Philadelphia, Seattle, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles (where people take historic homes and gardens very seriously), but I've never see anything to equate to Lotusland."

Please join us in thanking Kim for his incredible commitment to ensuring Lotusland continues to bloom for our current generation, and in perpetuity.

If you are interested in learning more about ways to support Lotusland, please contact Patricia Sadeghian, Director of Development 805.324.8426 or psadeghian@lotusland.org

UPCOMING EVENTS



Friday and Saturday, November 25, December 1, 2, 8, 9 **9:30 AM or 1:30 PM** **Member Appreciation Days**

ENJOY SELF-GUIDED WINTER WALKS and discover the seasonal garden treasures only on view during the colder months when Lotusland is closed for public tours. Bring a friend! Members may bring guests for a discounted \$40 admission fee.

Don't miss a chance to visit the Garden Shop for some holiday shopping and give the gift of Lotusland. This is a special opportunity reserved for Lotusland members and their guests only.

Tickets will release on October 17, 2023. For questions or reservations, please call 805.969.9990 or reserve online at Lotusland.org.

Saturday, October 7 • 1:00–5:00 PM **Exceptional Plants:** **Lotusland Auction & Sale**

THE ULTIMATE PLANT PARTY IS BACK! Join kindred plant people to enjoy camaraderie, great food, wine, and beer in an idyllic setting. This is a most unique and enjoyable day on the Great Lawn, featuring numerous rare and specimen plants offered in both silent and live auctions.

Tickets and Sponsorship Opportunities: Lotusland.org.



Wednesday, October 11 • 9:30–11:30 AM **Well-being Wednesdays: Forest Bathing and Meditation**

SKILLED PROFESSIONALS will lead a series of Well-being Wednesdays, special sessions providing regular doses of nature's healing, resilience, and a sense of wholeness. Each class consists of a 45-minute guided activity followed by a 45-minute walk in the Garden. Afterwards, you will feel more whole and aligned, with a new sense attention and awareness.

October 11 • Forest Bathing with Elena Rios

Admission is \$40 per class for Members and \$75 per class for Non-Members. Space is limited and reservations are required. View more information and reserve online at Lotusland.org/events.

Well-being Wednesdays are presented in association with series sponsor Belle Hahn.





Friday, November 3 • 3:00–6:00 PM Garden Golden Hour

VIEW THE GARDEN in the magical light of late afternoon, when the botanical colors and textures come alive. Wander at your leisure as you enjoy wine and light hors d'oeuvres. The chance to stroll the Garden as the sun begins to set is a special opportunity reserved for Lotusland Members and their guests only.

Admission is \$50 for Members and \$75 for Member's Guests. Space is limited and reservations are required. View more information and reserve online at Lotusland.org/events



Friday, November 17 and Saturday, November 18 Community Access Days

LOTUSLAND'S 2023 COMMUNITY ACCESS DAYS half-price tickets enable Santa Barbara County residents to visit the Garden who otherwise may find the admission fees a barrier. Community Access Days feature discounted admission fees for 90-minute self-guided Garden Walks. Learn more at Lotusland.org.

Community Access Days are presented in association with the generous support of Lily Hahn.



January 12 • 1:00–4:00 PM Bird and Flower Painting Course with Santa Barbara Museum of Art

ARTISTS OF ALL LEVELS are invited to paint in the garden under the heady double influence of Lotusland and Master Painter of the lotus garden, Bada Shanren. Participants gather for a brief introduction to the Chinese tradition of Bird and Flower painting, and then go off to explore the scene and site that most inspires them. Santa Barbara Museum of Art Teaching Artists and Lotusland Garden Guides are onsite to encourage and instruct. Afterwards, share your work in progress over a glass of wine or cup of Jasmine tea on the main lawn. Materials are provided for those who wish, or bring your own supplies (as long as you can carry them).

This program is a partnership between the Lotusland and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art and is inspired by the exhibition *Flowers on a River* on view through January 14.

\$125 Lotusland + SBMA Members / \$150 Non-Members

"Clouds moving, I reside my studio in the lotus." —BADA SHANREN

Tang Yuzhao, *Lotus and Egret*. Silk, hanging scroll. Changzhou Museum.



Charlene and Dave Heinz

ESTABLISHED BY ROBERT J. EMMONS
AND ARTHUR GAUDI

The Lotus Society

THANK YOU TO THOSE who joined us on June 3rd for our annual Lotus Society member appreciation reception at the beautiful garden of Susan and Brett Caine. One hundred guests gathered to connect with Lotusland and one another while enjoying live music, hors d'oeuvres, and wine generously donated by Presqu'île Winery.

With sincere gratitude to our longtime members and our 2022 and 2023 Lotus Society members:

Jeanne and Robert Anderson
Robert Blaha* and Monica Koegler-Blaha
Laura and John Bridley
Lynn Cunningham Brown and Christopher Brown
Ronald and Patricia Caird
Sheri Fults
Dorothy H. and John R. Gardner, *in honor of Paul Mills*
Andrea and Ron Hein
Joseph Marek and John Bernatz
Mitchell Opalski
Patti Prairie and Alan Hochberg
Nancy Shutt
Caroline Thompson
Lisa and David Wolf
Christina Wolfenden Woods

For more information or to learn more about joining the Lotus Society with a gift or bequest to Lotusland's endowment, please visit www.lotusland.org or email thelotussociety@lotusland.org. If you have already included Lotusland in a bequest, thank you for making your legacy our future. Please let us know so that we may recognize you.



New Lotus Society Members, Andrea and Ron Hein



Tom Farr and Diane Evans



Hosts Susan and Brett Caine

LOTUSLAND WELCOMES

New Staff



CATHERINE THIELST,
Development and Finance Coordinator

Catherine Thielst spent her childhood in the Gardens at Lotusland. Her grandfather, Gunner Thielst, was Madame Ganna Walska's right-hand man and lived in the Pink Cottage on the property with his spouse until their passing. Catherine began volunteering at Lotusland in 2012 and joined as a part-time staff member in 2013. She worked part-time in the Visitor Services department throughout her undergraduate career at Santa Barbara City College and California State University Channel Islands. After graduating, Catherine continued to work part-time at Lotusland on Saturdays while working at the Auto Club of Southern California during the week. In 2021, she returned to school to pursue an MBA with a specialization in Nonprofit Management at Louisiana State University. During school breaks, she would return to Lotusland to work in the Finance department and assist with seasonal projects and events. Upon completing her MBA this past June, Catherine returned to Lotusland to join the team as a full-time employee. Catherine's personal passions include going to the beach, attending operas and ballets with her aunt, reading, and trying new bakeries.



CHRIS ZILIOTTO, Sustainability Coordinator

Chris Ziliotto joined Lotusland in May 2023 after moving back to the area from northern California. Chris received his associate's degree in Horticulture from Santa Barbara City College in 2019 while working full-time for Seven Day Nursery as well as freelance gardening for various private residences throughout the area. After briefly working at a greenhouse in Cedar City, Utah, Chris attended Cal Poly Humboldt to begin and finish his bachelor's degree in Rangeland Resource Management with a concentration in Soil Science. During his time at Humboldt, Chris took part in the Region 6 Soil Judging and Plant ID Competition at the 2023 Society for Range Management and was also a student assistant on a research project extracting *Phytophthora ramorum* (Sudden Oak Death) DNA from bulk soils. Chris' personal passions include Aikido, hiking, paddle boarding, and surfing.

GIFTS *for the* GARDEN

Give the Gift of Nature and Beauty and Help us Bloom!

AS YOU BEGIN to plan for the holidays, sustaining the beauty of the Garden is a perfect gift. This is a special way to make a difference while paying tribute to a friend or loved one or marking a special occasion. When you make a tribute gift, Lotusland will notify the recipient of your thoughtful support in their honor.

Your support of Gifts for the Garden accelerates global plant protection and conservation efforts and advances our sustainable plant healthcare program.

Did You Know?

- Lotusland inspired nearly 2,000 school children in 2022-2023, at no cost to schools or students. These Junior Botanists learned about the importance of plants in nature, photosynthesis, and conservation.
- Our world-class botanical collections continue to grow and bloom. Our extraordinary Victoria Water Lily "performed" for our visitors this season, with leaves growing up to 24" in 24 hours!
- The Garden welcomed guests for a Well-being Wednesday Series. These special sessions provided nature's healing through meditation, Tai Chi, Yoga, and Forest Bathing.

Please visit www.lotusland.org to make a gift today, or contact Patricia Sadeghian, Director of Development, at 805.969.3767 ext. 125. Ganna Walska Lotusland is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization whose tax ID number is 23-7082550.

Together, we protect and grow this very special botanical treasure.



EXCEPTIONAL PLANTS Lotusland Auction and Sale

Lotusland's signature botanical event, Exceptional Plants, is held each fall as we celebrate the unique and collectable plants that make Lotusland their home.

Please join us in thanking our Exceptional Plants Committee:

Jeff Chemnick,
Committee Chair and Auctioneer
Randy Baldwin
Robert Bett
Mike Tully
Cristi Walden

LOTUSLAND VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Luncheon & Recruitment



EACH YEAR Lotusland honors Madame Ganna Walska's birthday by celebrating its volunteers with an annual appreciation picnic. On Tuesday, June 27th – a lovely summer afternoon – over 115 guests and staff enjoyed a wonderful lunch of poached salmon, quinoa salad, carrot cake, and chocolate cake, among other delicious foods. We recognized volunteers who have given **over fifteen years:** Chantal Evrard, Marguerite Gamo, Donnis Galvan; **ten years:** Herb Aldwinckle, Annie Athar, Judith Chandler, Anne Chewing, Kathy Hulick, Christine Gress, Kristine Lewis, Tom Morey, Bernadine Oberst, Jean Parry, and Barb Nagle Statler; and **five years:** Susan Braden, Sandy DeRousse, Carole Kennedy, Peggy Koegler, Monica Koegler-Blaha, Sylvia Limon, Deborah Meade, Richard Ross, Evie Savage, and Jodi Simpson.

We also extend a special thanks to our docents who participated in the 4th grade Outreach Junior Botanist Program during the 2022-2023 school year. Lotusland hosted close to 2,000 students from Santa Barbara County schools. We are proud to offer this program with the generosity of foundation funders, and with participation of dedicated education program volunteer docents.

SOFTWARE

One of the biggest highlights of this past year was a new online system for our volunteers, which we introduced prior to opening for the season. Many of our volunteers have logged over 100 hours since February. This online system makes it easy for volunteers to receive information about upcoming events and opportunities in the Garden while accurately keeping track of their hours; it has saved countless staff hours that used to be spent manually scheduling and calling our extensive volunteer registry.

Lotusland welcomes new volunteers throughout the year. If you are interested in volunteering, please visit our website and submit an application. We will follow up with information about training opportunities.



PHOTO: Nell Campbell

EXCEPTIONAL PLANTS

Where Are They Now?

LOTUSLAND'S EXCEPTIONAL PLANTS AUCTION & SALE is Santa Barbara's ultimate plant party! Lotusland caught up with guests who have attended over the years to see where the plants they purchased are now, and learn about why they love this popular event.

Crystal Wyatt

(Trustee, Garden Lover Circle Member)

Exceptional plant specimen: Cycad, *Encephalartos sp.*



"The Exceptional Plant sale is the most fun way to purchase beautiful, special and even specimen plants. Not only are the cycads I purchased anchors in my garden, the purchase of each left me with fond memories of a super fun and educational afternoon well spent with other plant enthusiasts.

The best part of it is that this wonderful experience also benefits Lotusland, so it's a 'win' all the way around!"

Maureen Bousa

(Garden Lover Circle Member)

Exceptional plant specimen: Chilean Wine Palm, *Jubaea chilensis*



"My visits to Lotusland always provide inspiration and a yearning to experiment in my own garden. The Annual Exceptional Plant Sale is my favorite opportunity to indulge my garden aspirations by acquiring a few rare, quirky, fabulous plants and channeling my inner 'Madame Ganna Walska'! An absolutely delightful afternoon party: great food &

drink — enjoyed with fellow garden enthusiasts — amidst the epic garden setting that is Lotusland. Never miss."

Lynn Cunningham Brown

(Garden Lover Circle Member, Philanthropy Committee Member)

Exceptional plant specimen: Cactus, *Pachocereus schotti*



"I'm a perpetual novice about gardening but am always eager to be educated. Lotusland is a great resource for introducing you to a whole new universe of plants! This lovely called to me because it was something special and unique to add to my potted succulent collection."



NOURISHING OUR SENSES

Eat Your Flowers

ON A BEAUTIFUL SUMMER AFTERNOON, flower enthusiasts, culinary aficionados, and book lovers alike gathered in the Theatre Garden at Lotusland to attend an exclusive book signing event featuring baker, botanist, artist, and author of *Eat Your Flowers*, Loria Stern. The event offered attendees a delightful fusion of gastronomy and botanical wonder, as Stern's innovative book encourages readers to explore the world of edible flowers in their own culinary creations.



The event's atmosphere was nothing short of enchanting and was highlighted by the participation of four other local businesses. Attendees were able to build fresh wildflower bouquets with Carpinteria-based

wildflower grower Sweet Mountaintop. Lompoc-based Babcock Winery donated their award-winning wines for everyone to sip during the event. Dina Saalisi led flower healing and homeopathy discussions along with tarot readings. Lastly, everyone took home a sweet seed-infused lollipop from Amborella Organics and wildflower seed packets.

The heart of the event was a captivating presentation by Stern herself, during which she shared the inspiration behind *Eat Your Flowers*. With a genuine passion for both cooking and botanicals, Stern spoke about her journey of discovery, from experimenting with floral flavors in her own kitchen to the inception of her beautifully curated book. Her anecdotes about the challenges and triumphs she encountered along the way resonated with the audience, including inspirations and ideas from her time spent at Lotusland over the years.

As she spoke, the crowd was encouraged to ask questions, one of which centered on Loria's time spent on the hit television show *Shark Tank*:

"The vetting process was very extensive; back and forth, back and forth. Eventually we filmed my episode in September [2022] and it aired in March [2023] right before my cookbook came out, which was great timing. I ended up getting a deal on the show with Barbara Corcoran and I had a great experience, though we didn't end up finishing it. We went our own way (amicably)."

The final highlight of the event, of course, was the book signing session itself. Loria sat behind a table adorned with bouquets of fresh flowers and autographed each copy of *Eat Your Flowers* with a personalized touch. She took time to chat with everyone, exchanging stories, sharing cooking tips, and even suggesting flower varieties that would complement personal tastes.



RECIPE

Loria Stern's Flower-Pressed Shortbread Cookies

This is the recipe that started it all! These beautiful cookies catapulted my career in food. Delicately sweet, with a touch of salt, my signature cookies are as delightful to make as they are to share with others. I love using a variety of colorful flowers so that when presented on a platter, the cookies give the impression of pages torn from a book of pressed flowers.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups (3 sticks/339 g) unsalted butter at room temperature
- 1 1/3 cups (300 g) granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 3 large egg yolks
- 2 tablespoons (25 g) pure vanilla extract
- 4 cups (611 g) all-purpose flour
- 2 cups mixed edible flower petals and tender herbs
- Cane sugar, for sprinkling

Instructions

Line 2 flexible cutting mats with parchment paper and set aside.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter, granulated sugar, and salt on medium speed until completely combined, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the yolks and mix until combined. Add the vanilla and stir until just combined. Add the flour and mix on low speed until the dough comes together in a ball, about 5 minutes.

Place the dough on a large sheet of parchment paper. Place another piece of parchment on top and roll out the dough to 1/4 inch thick. Remove the top piece of parchment paper and stamp out the cookies with a 3-inch round cookie cutter, then artfully decorate each round with the edible flower petals and herbs. Replace the top sheet of parchment paper and gently roll over each cookie to fix the flowers in place. One by one, remove the flower-pressed cookies with an offset spatula and place them on a parchment-lined flexible cutting mat. Reroll and repeat with any remaining dough scraps.

Put the flexible mats with the unbaked cookies in layers in the freezer for 12 to 24 hours. This allows the flowers and herbs to keep their vibrant complexions in the hot oven.

When you're ready to bake, preheat the oven to 350°F with a rack set in the middle position. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper.

Arrange the cookies on the prepared sheet pan, leaving 1/4-inch space between them. Bake for 9 minutes; rotate the pan and bake for another 8 minutes, or until the edges are golden brown. Transfer to a cooling rack and sprinkle with cane sugar. Voilà!

Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks and in the freezer for up to 2 months.



WISH LIST

Help Advance Lotusland's Mission

Rhopalostylis is a genus of prominently crown shafted, single trunk palm trees native to New Zealand and some surrounding islands. Depending on whom you talk to, there are either two or three species. The two accepted species are *Rhopalostylis sapida* and *baueri*. Some would consider *Rhopalostylis cheesemani* to be regarded as a species, while others think it's a variety of *baueri*. Each has similarities and differences, though all are beautiful and quite easy to grow in Southern California if the right conditions are met.

Cristi Walden, a member of the Plant Collections Committee, has arranged through Sea Crest Nursery for the donation of a beautiful shaving brush palm to Lotusland's living collection.

Donations of \$5,000 will support the acquisition of individual specimen trees. Join us to cultivate a new collection for the Tropical garden.

Please contact Patricia Sadeghian, Director of Development for more information at 805.324.8426 or psadeghian@lotusland.org

LOTUSLAND GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES DONORS

May, June, and July 2023

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are gifts of \$100 or more*

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*List reflects active memberships as of
August 1, 2023
**Guardian Circle memberships start at
\$5,000

LOTUSLAND: A LEGACY OF LIFE

Garden Conservancy Commemorates Three Decades of Support



IN 1990, THE GARDEN CONSERVANCY announced Lotusland was their second sponsored preservation garden in their spring/summer newsletter. Lotusland and its founder, Madame Ganna Walska, were each honored for aesthetic and scientific value among the garden community.

Then Conservancy Advisory Committee Member Dr. Richard W. Lightly said, "Lotusland is an irreplaceable national resource." Through their sponsorship, the Conservancy assisted Lotusland trustees in their efforts to open to the public, assuring long-term preservation and appreciation highlighted by remarkable creation and upkeep.

With the help of The Garden Conservancy, Lotusland became an official public garden in 1993. Fast forward 30 years, and as we celebrate our 30th anniversary of this milestone, The Garden Conservancy has once again featured Lotusland in their newsletter. This editorial by guest writer Christina Bevilacqua can be found by scanning the QR code below.



SCAN ME

ABOVE: Lotusland on the cover of the Garden Conservancy Newsletter in 1990 and today



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Fall 2023

For more detailed information about upcoming events, please see page 16 or visit [Lotusland.org/events](https://lotusland.org/events).

Exceptional Plants:
Lotusland Auction and Sale
Saturday, October 7

Well-being Wednesday Series
Wednesday, October 11

Madame's Millinery Masterpieces:
Hats throughout History
Saturday, October 21

Member's Garden Golden Hour
Friday, November 3

Community Access Days
Friday, November 17 and
Saturday, November 18

Member Appreciation Days
Saturday, November 25
Friday, December 1
Saturday, December 2
Friday, December 8
Saturday, December 9

Lotusland Tour Schedule

We look forward to welcoming you to Lotusland! Lotusland is open for public visitation Wednesdays through Saturdays with a choice of a self-guided visit or a docent led tour included in each reservation. Visit lotusland.org/visit/ to check availability and reserve your space. Space is limited and advance reservations are required. We recommend making reservations one month in advance of your desired visit.

Ticket Release Schedule

Members receive access to reservations two weeks prior to the public release.

November & December - Member's Appreciation Days

We are excited to open the garden on limited days this winter, during our regularly closed season.

Member's Release October 17

Tickets for February and March 2024 will release in early January

Ticket release dates are subject to change.

Additional information is available at www.lotusland.org/visit