

FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANIC GARDEN

For Immediate Release



Sebastian Errazuriz's *Calm Before Storm*

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden Presents *Design at Fairchild: Sitting Naturally*

**Seven Internationally Renowned Artists Re-envision Seating into Extraordinary
Works of Art at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden**

**On View at Fairchild
December 1, 2012 – May 31, 2013
During Art Basel Miami Beach**

Coral Gables, FL, September 24, 2012—Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden is pleased to present the inaugural exhibition of *Design at Fairchild: Sitting Naturally*.

Sitting Naturally will showcase a diverse collection of entirely new works by seven internationally renowned artists commissioned by the Cristina Grajales Gallery in New York City. Inspired by Fairchild's lush, tropical landscape, each artist is creating two sculptures for sitting to be exhibited throughout the gardens.

Fairchild's diverse collection of exotic palms, cycads, flowering trees, vines, orchids and other foliage will serve as the backdrop for works created by an equally varied group of artists. Using their unique perspectives, artists Gael Appler, Sam Baron, Pedro Barrail, Christophe Côme, Michele Oka Doner, Sebastian Errazuriz, and John-Paul Philippe have set out to change a quotidian object into an extraordinary work of art.

"These artists will bring excitement to Fairchild, each in his or her own way through the works. In keeping with the Garden's natural feel and sense of arrival at beauty that one experiences while strolling the majestic landscape, the artists' works will be thoughtfully placed throughout Fairchild's 83 acres," remarked Nannette Zapata, Fairchild's Chief Operating Officer and Art Curator.

Gael Appler, a woodworker based in Upstate New York, will present two identical objects entitled *Bench*, both made of Honduran Mahogany and noted for their clean, geometric lines. **Sam Baron**'s whimsical, playful *Romantic Benches*, with their white lacquered wood strips and various attachments including hanging plants and a parasol, beckons visitors to sit and recline while taking in the beauty of the Garden. **Pedro Barrail**'s *Walking Benches*, one made of iron and the other of marble, are influenced by the sounds of the migrating birds he heard while constructing a pavilion on the coast of Paraguay. French artist **Christophe Côme** has created *Intertwined*, a beautifully decorative bench, as well as *Path Bench*, designed to represent a barrier that one might find in the woods, blocking access beyond a certain point. Miami native **Michele Oka Doner**'s *Invasives* represent strong, sculptural works made of Australian Pine and Tropical Almond, both invasive species in Florida. By using these materials, Oka Doner sets out to replicate mass-producible public benches, establishing the urban streetscape as a new "predator" for these species. Chilean artist **Sebastian Errazuriz** introduces two new pieces, *Calm Before Time*, a beautiful, serene wood seat decorated with an overhanging chandelier, and *Marble Bust Bench*, a marble and wood bench that rests on identical busts at either side. And lastly is **John-Paul Philippe**'s *Bird Perch Bench*, a "perch" for people which incorporates into the structure an attachable perch for birds and a feeding station.

"I have always found Fairchild to be a magical place," said Cristina Grajales of the Cristina Grajales Gallery. "The idea of our artists' benches interwoven with the beautiful vegetation will be the beginning of a new dialogue between nature and design."

About the Art Program at Fairchild

Design at Fairchild: Sitting Naturally is part of an annual exhibition that celebrates art and culture. The Art Program supports Fairchild's conservation work and educational and scientific outreach programs and is committed to cultural enhancement in South Florida. Fairchild's Art Program has exhibited the works of Will Ryman, Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne, Yayoi Kusama, Mark di Suvero, Roy Lichtenstein, Dale Chihuly, Fernando Botero, Yoko Ono, and Kris Martin. The Fairchild Art Program is generously supported by The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Lin Loughheed and Aaron I. Fleischman and the Cristina Grajales Gallery.

About Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden is dedicated to exploring, explaining and conserving the world of tropical plants. Considered the greatest tropical botanic garden in the world, Fairchild exhibits some of the tropical world's rarest and most beautiful plants within the tapestry of an iconic landscape design. Fairchild is a one of the world's best science, conservation and education-based gardens and a recognized international leader in both Florida and international conservation. It has conservation programs in over 20 countries throughout the tropical world. Fairchild's palm and cycad collections are nationally recognized by the American Public Gardens Association. It is also home to the American Orchid Society. The Fairchild Challenge is the largest science-based education program in the U.S. reaching more than 150,000 schoolchildren. Fairchild hosts popular events like the Chocolate, Mango, Orchid, Food and Garden, Ramble and Edible Garden Festivals, as well as an internationally acclaimed Art Program, GardenMusic Festival, concerts, plant shows and sales, and evening events. Fairchild is a not-for-profit organization with 45,000 members and over 1,200 volunteers.

Fairchild is located at 10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables, Florida, 33156. Admission is \$25 for adults, \$18 for seniors, \$12 for children 6-17 and free to children 5 and under and Fairchild members. Additional information can be found at www.fairchildgarden.org and on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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