WILMINGTON, DE (March 27, 2012) – Due to the overwhelming popularity of the Outlooks Exhibition Beyond Words: The Symbolic Language of Plants, the exhibition closing date—originally scheduled for April 8—has been moved to July 29, 2012. Beyond Words, which was created by a group of D.C.-based botanical artists known as Studio 155, features approximately 60 works in various media that emphasize the historic and symbolic meanings of plants.

Beyond Words has drawn visitors from across the region that have an interest in botanical art. This exhibition also spurred a partnership between the Museum and The Delaware Center for Horticulture (TheDCH). Located just blocks from the Museum in Trolley Square, TheDCH is a statewide membership organization that promotes horticulture, education, and conservation. Through the end of July the members of both organizations will be offered special cross promotions, such as half-price Museum admission for TheDCH members, and a reduced ticket price at TheDCH’s popular Flower Arrangement of the Month classes for Museum Members.

About Beyond Words

Beyond Words is inspired by artists’ use of plants as symbols across cultures and throughout history. In the ancient world, Roman artists used roses to represent Venus, the goddess of love; Egyptian art connected the lily to Isis, the goddess of fertility; and Asian art included lotus flowers to convey beauty. Plant symbolism reached a high point in Medieval Christian art when religious craftsmen and artists used plants to explain the meaning of church parables and doctrine to a largely illiterate population. The lily and rose, for example, were used to denote perfect purity and love. Inspired by Medieval artistic quality, the Victorian Pre-Raphaelite artists revived the use of this ancient plant language to provide additional layers of meaning in their paintings.
This exhibition, which includes over 60 works in watercolor, oil, tempera, and colored pencil, features a variety of symbolic natural subjects – flowers and trees, fruits and vegetables, and herbs and vines. For example, Wendy Cortesi’s whimsical watercolor *Pumpkin* recalls Dia de los Muertos, the Hispanic tradition of Day of the Dead and the autumn season; Neena Birch’s painting *Rose* symbolizes ancient spiritual contemplation and centering; and *White Oak* by Michael Rawson stands for strength and endurance.

**About Studio 155**

The 17 artists of Studio 155 all reside and work in the Washington D.C. area. Their collaboration began during the 2006 Corcoran Gallery of Art exhibition *Botanical Treasures of Lewis and Clark*. Since then, they have continued to paint as a group in a shared studio and show their work together in Washington-area galleries. Their mission is to realistically capture the natural world while expanding the boundaries of botanical art.

Studio 155 members have participated in numerous widely-celebrated projects and exhibitions. Wendy Cortesi created a series of watercolors depicting Camp David’s native plants for First Lady Laura Bush; Roberta Bernstein, Vicki Malone, Kappy Prosch, and Eva-Maria Ruhl joined Cortesi to illustrate the 2010 White House Holiday Tour Book; Cortesi, Malone, Debbie Bankert, and Eileen Malone-Brown contributed plant portraits for Monticello’s 2009 Lucy Meriwether Lewis Marks exhibition; and Debbie Bankert is currently working on a series of projects in the Columbian rainforest.

Learn more about Studio 155 at [www.studioonefiftyfive.blogspot.com](http://www.studioonefiftyfive.blogspot.com).

**About the Outlooks Exhibition Series**

*Beyond Words: The Symbolic Language of Plants* is part of the Delaware Art Museum’s Outlooks Exhibition Series, which encourages community involvement in the creation of exhibitions that will be hosted by the Museum. The Delaware Art Museum accepts proposals for Outlooks exhibitions from organizations, community groups, and residents of the surrounding area, contributing to the Museum’s mission of providing an inclusive and essential community resource. All Outlooks exhibitions are displayed in the Ammon Galleries on the Museum’s second floor. For more information, please visit [www.delart.org/exhibitions/outlooks/index.html](http://www.delart.org/exhibitions/outlooks/index.html).

**About the Delaware Art Museum**
The Delaware Art Museum, located at 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806, is open Wednesday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Sunday noon – 4:00 p.m. Admission fees are charged as follows: Adults (19 – 59) $12, Seniors (60+) $10, Students (with valid ID) $6, Youth (7 – 18) $6, and Children (6 and under) free. Admission to the Museum is free to all visitors on Sundays. The admission fee is waived thanks to generous support from Jessie Ball duPont Fund.

For more information, call 302-571-9590 or 866-232-3714 (toll free), or visit the website at www.delart.org

Founded in 1912, the Delaware Art Museum is best known for its large collection of British Pre-Raphaelite art, works by Wilmington-native Howard Pyle and fellow American illustrators, and urban landscapes by John Sloan and his circle. Visitors can also enjoy the outdoor Copeland Sculpture Garden and a number of exhibitions throughout the year.

About the Delaware Center for Horticulture
The Delaware Center for Horticulture cultivates greener communities by inspiring appreciation and improvement of the environment through horticulture, education and conservation. Founded in 1977, the Center’s headquarters in Wilmington’s Trolley Square is an oasis in the city. The venue hosts many weddings and corporate events and includes a public demonstration garden that backs up to Brandywine Park, an art gallery, lecture hall, and a greenhouse. TheDCH plants thousands of trees and leads regional projects to enhance Delaware’s urban forests; supports 23 community gardens, urban farms, and school gardens; organizes city park improvement projects; beautifies Delaware’s roadsides with native vegetation; maintains the landscaping of many traffic medians and streetscapes; and provides educational programs for children, teens, and adults. Members of TheDCH and more than 700 active volunteers come from Delaware and the surrounding region. For more information, visit www.TheDCH.org

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