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**“The Wild” Chinese Lantern Festival Will Light up the Night in Huntsville**

*Thousands of Handcrafted Lanterns Create Beautiful Displays of Color and Light*

**Wednesday – Sunday, March 20, 2019 – May 19, 2019**

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For the first time, Huntsville Botanical Garden and PNC Bank will co-host “The Wild” a Hanart Culture Chinese Lantern Festival, a fully immersive multicultural experience showcasing more than 1,000 lanterns, live entertainment, and authentic Chinese crafts for the entire family to enjoy. Debuting March 20, 2019, Hanart Culture will present a stunning display of handcrafted lights and wildlife that will transform more than 112 acres at Huntsville Botanical Garden into a magical landscape of glowing animals from around the world.

“Through intricate craftsmanship, interactive workshops and live-art performances, Hanart Culture and Huntsville Botanical Gardens have created a truly unforgettable opportunity for visitors to explore China’s rich and dynamic arts culture,” said Nick Willis, PNC regional president, Greater Alabama. “This is one of the largest exhibits of [Zigong] Chinese lantern art in the country and through engaging events like this, PNC helps bring authentic, global experiences into the communities we serve.”

“The Wild,” showcases larger- than- life lanterns, ranging in size from 12 to 23 feet tall, representing wild life from America, Oceania, Asia, Antarctica and Africa. Cheetahs, jellyfish, lions, panda bears, majestic cranes, and even dinosaurs from the five different regions will create a visually stunning display of art, tradition, and culture for garden visitors to explore during the nine-week exhibition. Not only will these displays be magical in the moonlight, but also enchanting in the sunlight, making this festival enjoyable any time of the day.

In addition to the spectacular lanterns, the festival will feature food, live Kung Fu shows and demonstrations, and shadow play. Guests can also explore and shop in the craft marketplace where authentic Chinese jewelry, artifacts, dough figurines, as well as Chinese embroidery art, sugar art, paper-cut and fabric art will be available for purchase.

Huntsville Botanical Garden will also offer an assortment of educational programs and exhibitions for all ages to enhance “The Wild” experience and to honor the Chinese culture. Guests can select from an eclectic variety of daytime educational programs such as Feng Shui designs, Tai Chi, the art of shadow puppetry, DIY Chinese lanterns, Chinese water color, and more. Additional exhibits include four ceramic elephants made of 3,200 kitchen utensils such as dishes, bowls, spoons and wine cups will also be on display.

“We are thrilled to have this opportunity to partner with PNC and share this unique festival with our community” said Paula Steigerwald, president and CEO of Huntsville Botanical Garden. “It not only offers an

occasion for people to see all that the Garden has to offer, but also encourages our guests, volunteers, and staff to learn about and celebrate a different culture.”

The Lantern Festival is one of China’s most traditional celebrations with the art of Chinese lantern making dating back to the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. – 220 A.D.). Today, these lanterns are made of modern materials and technology with brilliantly lit colored LED lightbulbs, musical enhancements and sound effects, and visual moving parts to create larger-than-life imaginative shapes.

“These gorgeous lanterns have evolved through the centuries, from when they were used for lighting, to an art form all their own. Chinese lanterns are a cherished part of festivals and celebrations world-wide and we are proud to bring the Hanart Culture Chinese Lantern Festival to Huntsville, Alabama” said George Zhao, president of Hanart Culture.

Produced by Hanart Culture and presented by PNC Bank, the Chinese Lantern Festival will open every Wednesday-Sunday from 5:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., through May 19<sup>th</sup>. Advanced tickets must be purchased and are available online at [www.hsvbg.org/lanterns](http://www.hsvbg.org/lanterns) for \$15 - \$25. Garden members receive an additional \$5 off each ticket purchase.

For more photos please use this link: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmu4VG17>

#### **About PNC Bank**

PNC Bank, National Association, is a member of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC). PNC is one of the largest diversified financial services institutions in the United States, organized around its customers and communities for strong relationships and local delivery of retail and business banking including a full range of lending products; specialized services for corporations and government entities, including corporate banking, real estate finance and asset-based lending; wealth management and asset management. For information about PNC, visit [www.pnc.com](http://www.pnc.com).

#### **Huntsville Botanical Garden**

Huntsville Botanical Garden, located at 4747 Bob Wallace Avenue in Huntsville, AL, is open year-round and features the nation’s largest open-air butterfly house, a picture-perfect aquatic garden, spectacular nature trails, numerous specialty gardens – including an interactive children’s garden - and a variety of plant collections. This beautiful 112-acre Garden is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization run by only 35 employees and over 2600 active volunteers. With five distinct festivals each year; Beaks and Barks, Huntsville Blooms, Summer Butterfly House, Fall Scarecrow Trail and Holiday Galaxy of Lights, you’ll soon see why we say there’s Always Something Growing On at Huntsville Botanical Garden!

#### **About Hanart Culture**

Hanart Culture is a producer/management agent of live theatrical entertainment. They exclusively represent performing artists and attractions, and arrange touring throughout North America. Hanart Culture handles different aspects of performance solicitation, negotiation and contracting engagements, as well as post-booking services (i.e. supplying press, photos, etc.) to make every performance a success. "Han" is the largest nationality of China; "Art" stands for a variety of art styles, including Kung Fu, Acrobatics etc.

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