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Park designer Michael van Valkenburgh speaks to Houston gardeners about plants

By **Molly Glentzer** Updated 4:20 pm, Tuesday, February 20, 2018



IMAGE 1 OF 5

Landscape architect Michael Van Valkenburgh will give the Garden Club of Houston's biennial Nancy Thomas Horticulture Lecture Feb. 21 on the topic, "Why I love plants!"

Michael van Valkenburgh, whose company is shaping some of Houston's most talked-about new park spaces, is in town to talk something even more down-to-earth: Why he loves plants.

Van Valkenburgh has been asked to talk about his personal relationship with plants when he gives the **Garden Club of Houston's** biennial Nancy Thomas Horticulture Lecture at 10 a.m. Wednesday.

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Club representative Jane Curtis said van Valkenburgh's "exuberant, joyful and dense" planting sensibility -- sometimes called "hyper-nature" -- comes partly from his upbringing in a family of dairy farmers. She expects the internationally-known landscape architect will also share other aspects of his history and projects, which include Brooklyn Bridge Park and Hudson River Park in New York City, and Maggie Daly Park and the 606 in Chicago.

His current Houston projects include Hermann Park Family Commons at Hermann Park (whose master plan the firm completed last year), the Menil Drawing Institute grounds and consulting for Buffalo Bayou Park's East Sector.

Wednesday's lecture at St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 717 Sage Road, is free and open to the public; no tickets are required. The doors open at 9:30 a.m. for coffee.

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