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***FOLLOWING IN THE BARTRAMS' FOOTSTEPS:
CONTEMPORARY BOTANICAL ARTISTS EXPLORE THE BARTRAMS' LEGACY***

ATLANTA, March 5, 2014 - The nationally traveling exhibition *Following in the Bartrams' Footsteps: Contemporary Botanical Artists Explore the Bartrams' Legacy* will open at the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center on March 19th. A collaboration between the American Society of Botanical Artists (ASBA) and Bartram's Garden in Philadelphia, the exhibition features world-class contemporary botanical artworks depicting plants discovered and cultivated by 18th century naturalists John and William Bartram. Early American explorers, John Bartram and his son, William, traversed the wilderness of the American colonies from the 1730s to the 1790s, recording the region's flora, fauna, and Native American culture. The exhibition reflects John and William's passionate observation and discovery of nature, which has influenced generations of artists and explorers.

Following in the Bartrams' Footsteps, presented by the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center, is on display in McElreath Hall, March 19 - June 17, 2014. The exhibition is open Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Sunday, Noon – 5:00 PM; free to the public.

The original artworks have been selected from a field of nearly 200 entries submitted by ASBA members from around the world. The exhibition allows a fresh look at the Bartrams' seminal body of knowledge and art. William's illustrations were often the first images seen of North American plants and animals. Depictions of beautiful native rarities including *Franklinia alatamaha* (commonly known as the Franklin tree), now believed to be extinct in the wild, *Dodecatheon* (commonly called shooting star), and American lotus are included in the display. Other subjects include foxglove, morning glory and cockscomb – examples of introductions the Bartrams made to American gardens through their dedication to botany.

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Following in the Bartrams' Footsteps also seeks to illuminate the role contemporary artists play in depicting these same plants for today's audience, preserving their record for generations to come. The exhibition promises to appeal to a wide audience as it ties together art, science, history, nature, and culture. Artists enthusiastically sought out their chosen plants, with some having gone so far as to track down heirloom seeds and cultivate them in their own gardens in order to be able to paint a particularly appealing subject.

A companion exhibition featuring holdings from the Cherokee Garden Library, Kenan Research Center, and Atlanta History Center collections will include historic books, such as William Bartram's *Travels* (1791) and William Stork's *A Description of East-Florida with a Journal Kept by John Bartram of Philadelphia, Botanist to His Majesty for the Floridas* (1769); rare maps of the Southeast; and artifacts of Native American culture

An outdoor living component in the Mary Howard Gilbert Memorial Quarry Garden of the Atlanta History Center brings the exhibition artwork to life, featuring the very plants that are depicted and many more the Bartrams studied and documented. The State Champion Franklin tree is in the Quarry Garden and will be a central feature to this outdoor exhibition.

The opening event on Wednesday, March 19, includes a lecture at 7 PM followed by a reception and an opportunity to explore the exhibition. Joel Fry, Curator of Bartram's Garden in Philadelphia will present a survey of William Bartram's illustrations and examine the scope and influences of his career as a seminal American natural history illustrator. Fry, who is widely published, is a leading scholar on both John and William Bartram and their botanic and collecting careers in the eighteenth century. Tickets for the lecture are \$25 and reservations are required; call 404-814-4150 or purchase online at AtlantaHistoryCenter.com/Bartram.

For more information visit AtlantaHistoryCenter.com/Bartram. Docent led group tours are available for a fee and by appointment; Please email GroupTours@AtlantaHistoryCenter.com.

About the Cherokee Garden Library: Founded by the Cherokee Garden Club of Atlanta, the Cherokee Garden Library, one of the special subject libraries of the Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, opened in 1975 to serve as an educational resource center for those interested in gardening, landscape design, garden history, horticulture, floral design, botanical art, cultural landscapes, natural landscapes, and plant ecology. Over 28,000 books, photographs, manuscripts, seed catalogs, and landscape drawings are included in the Cherokee Garden Library collection. Serving over 6,000 researchers annually, these rare and valuable resources tell the story of American horticulture and botanical history in the Southeastern United States and areas of influence throughout America, Europe, and Asia. While the collection is a focal point, the Garden Library also attracts a community of people who enjoy the year-round calendar of lectures, exhibitions, tours, and collaborations with partner agencies. For information about the Cherokee Garden Library, call 404.814.4046 or visit AtlantaHistoryCenter.com/Research/Cherokee-Garden-Library.

About the Atlanta History Center: Founded in 1926, the Atlanta History Center is an all-inclusive destination featuring the Atlanta History Center Museum, one of the Southeast's largest history museums; two historic houses, the 1928 Swan House and the 1860s Smith Family Farm; the Centennial Olympic Games Museum; twenty-two acres of Historic Gardens; the Kenan Research Center; the Grand Overlook event space; Chick-Fil-A at the Coca-Cola Café; and a museum shop. In addition, the History Center operates the Margaret Mitchell House. Located in Midtown Atlanta, the two-acre campus features tours of the apartment where Margaret Mitchell wrote her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *Gone with the Wind*; an exhibition highlighting the life of Margaret Mitchell; a *Gone with the Wind* movie exhibition; and a museum shop. For information on Atlanta History Center offerings, hours of operation, and admission prices, call 404.814.4000 or visit AtlantaHistoryCenter.com.

About the American Society of Botanical Artists: Cultivating the field of botanical art since 1994, the American Society of Botanical Artists is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting public awareness of contemporary botanical art, to honoring its traditions, and to furthering its development. Celebrating its 20th year, ASBA has 1300 members in over 20 countries around the world. For more information, visit asba-art.org.

More information about the artwork, artists and the stories behind the works on display can be found at asba-art.org/exhibitions/bartram. Images for media use are available.

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