



THE GARDEN CONSERVANCY

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The Garden Conservancy Celebrates Birmingham's Gardens in May

A Garden in Conversation: Louise Agee Wrinkle's Southern Woodland Sanctuary
premieres on May 5

The Garden Conservancy Open Days™ event on May 4—featuring Wrinkle's garden—marks the first time that the area's private gardens have opened their gates for the program since 2009

BIRMINGHAM, AL—The Garden Conservancy will premiere its latest documentary film, *A Garden in Conversation: Louise Agee Wrinkle's Southern Woodland Sanctuary*, on **Sunday, May 5 at 3 p.m.** at the Virginia Samford Theatre at 1116 26th St S in Birmingham. The movie, part of the Suzanne and Frederic Rheinstein Garden Documentation Program at the Garden Conservancy, also marks the first time the Conservancy has interviewed the creator of a garden it has documented on film.

Louise Agee Wrinkle has inspired a growing appreciation for native gardening across the country, and she and her garden are well known throughout the Birmingham area. Together on film, Wrinkle and her ethereal woodland sanctuary present a unique opportunity for viewers to explore the nexus of preservation and conservation. Wrinkle's gardening philosophy focuses on "letting plants develop as they will and tend to them in a way that highlights the subtle beauties of texture, rhythm, pattern, repetition."

Wrinkle is a founding member and Director Emerita of the Garden Conservancy. She has been a distinguished member of the Garden Club of America for 40 years. She received the Foundation for Landscape Studies' Place Maker Award in 2019.

Following the 25-minute film, Garden Conservancy President & CEO **James Brayton Hall** will guide a discussion on southern gardens, native plants, and conservation with panelists **Steele Marcoux**, Editor-in-Chief of *Veranda* Magazine; **Steve Bender**, Grumpy Gardener columnist and Editor-at-Large at *Southern Living*; **Staci Catron**, Director of the Cherokee Library of the Atlanta History Center; **Pamela Governale**, Director of Preservation at the Garden Conservancy and Filmmaker **Michael Udris**.

Following the discussion, a reception and book signing for Wrinkle's *Listen to the Land: Creating a Southern Woodland Garden* will take place at the theatre. The award-winning book has been revised with a new preface written by James Brayton Hall. It is published by Design Books and distributed by the National Book Network. Copies will be available for sale.

The May 5 film event is free; registration is required. Individuals should visit the Garden Conservancy website to register. www.gardenconservancy.org

On **Saturday, May 4**, Louise Agee Wrinkle's garden will highlight the **Garden Conservancy Open Days™** event in the Birmingham area. Four private gardens will open their gates for one day for the public to visit. This is the first time that area gardens have opened for Open Days tours since 2009! Admission is \$5 for Garden Conservancy members; \$10 for non-members. Tickets will be available at gardenconservancy.org/open-days beginning in March.

For more information, contact: Cliff Weathers, Director of Communications, The Garden Conservancy; cweathers@gardenconservancy.org; 845-445-8257.

About the Garden Conservancy: *The mission of The Garden Conservancy is to preserve, share, and celebrate America's gardens and diverse gardening traditions for the education and inspiration of the public.*

About the Suzanne and Frederic Rheinstein Garden Documentary Film Program: *The Garden Documentary film program seeks to capture and share the essence of something that is largely experiential—the beauty and stories of a garden. This presents unique challenges and requires an innovative and layered approach to create a multi-dimensional portrait of a garden, a living work of art. The program uses words and pictures, letters and notebooks, drawings, and plant lists, along with stories, sounds, and experiences that have inspired garden creators.*

About the Garden Conservancy Open Days™ program: *Open Days celebrates the country's most exciting, creative, and innovative private gardens and is made up of a nationwide community of gardeners and garden enthusiasts teaching and inspiring each other and the public. Since 1995, Open Days has welcomed more than 1.4 million visitors into thousands of inspired private landscapes—from urban rooftops to organic farms, historic estates, to innovative suburban lots—in 41 states.*

About *Listen to the Land: Creating a Southern Woodland Garden*: In Mountain Brook, AL, Louise Agee Wrinkle's family holds a rich history passed through generations. In *Listen to the Land: Creating a Southern Woodland Garden*, Wrinkle reflects on her childhood memories when the property, known as "The Jungle," was densely overgrown. Today, it boasts a meticulously cultivated woodland garden. Wrinkle shares anecdotes of tending to the garden as an adult, and the humor and difficulties of managing a natural woodland space. Although centered on a specific garden, Wrinkle's book resonates universally with gardeners, addressing common challenges like weather disasters, insects, and soil issues. With wit and humility, Wrinkle details her 35-year journey, acknowledging collaborators, and providing a valuable annotated plant list.