MISSISSIPPI CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

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(Jackson, Miss.) -- Embark on a magical journey as the Mississippi Children's Museum (MCM) in Jackson unveils the Gertrude C. Ford's "The Enchanted Land of Story." This captivating garden experience invites guests to imagine, explore, and discover a realm where stories come to life.

The Gertrude C. Ford Literacy Garden, which initially opened its doors in 2014 and has warmly received over a million visitors in the last decade, prompting significant renovations and exciting updates. This transformation into "The Enchanted Land of Story" is made possible through generous grants from the Mississippi Arts Commission (MAC) and the Hearst Foundations, in addition to the originating support from the Gertrude C. Ford Foundation.

Inspired by the whimsical verses of artist Sherry Norfolk's commissioned poem found below, the exhibit promises an immersive adventure through eleven enchanting experiences spread across the newly renovated 14,000 sq ft garden.

Throughout the enchanted journey, beautifully illustrated exhibit signs featuring dragons will guide visitors, culminating in a chance to perform in the amphitheater and tell of what they did while there. MCM's Senior Graphic Designer, Lori Nesbitt, illustrated the directional signage and murals. MCM's Exhibit team, led by Director of Exhibits, Rachel Myers, and Assistant Director of Exhibits, Shelby Sessums, worked with fabricators to design the renovated exhibit and educational experience. MCM Programs Assistant, Se'Lah Norwood, composed whimsical melodies of a topsy-turvy world, while artist Lee Harper, created "A Little Bit of Mississippi" miniature display inside the giant mushroom ring.

"We are thrilled to invite families to explore and engage with the wonders of The Enchanted Land of Story," said Rachel Myers, Director of Exhibits. "We can't wait for guests to splash in the dancing waters, make melodies on the xylophones, and find all the hidden play areas between the hedge maze and acorn home."

Experiences include:

- **Floating Clouds**
  Practice your climbing skills in the Floating Clouds treehouse.

- **Talking Trees**
  Play among the Talking Trees sound sculptures.

- **Desert Island**
  Interact with sand to make a sandcastle or build other creations.

- **Live Oak Home**
  Explore and play in the acorn house, then crawl through the maze.

- **Topsy-Turvy World**

The Mississippi Children's Museum Opens Reimagined Garden Exhibit, “The Enchanted Land of Story”
Twirl in spinning chairs and walk on balance beams to experience moments of movement and balance.

- **Mushroom Ring**
  View an original miniature house by Mississippi artist Lee Harper inside one of the life-sized mushrooms and be inspired to build your own.

- **Giant's Knee**
  Climb over giant tree roots and play under the imaginary Giant's Knee.

- **Singing Forest**
  Make melodies and explore the rhythm and power of music by playing original scores or composing your own with percussion instruments.

- **Dancing Waters**
  Dance and play under our magical rain cloud where guests can splash in puddles and explore misty portals. Bring your rainboots and a dry change of clothes to fully embrace this experience.

- **Dragon's Lair**
  Be transported into the Dragon's Lair through an interactive mural where they can write poetry, draw, dance, and interact with larger-than-life talk tubes to tell stories to their friends and family.

- **Storytellers' Circle**
  Perform in the amphitheater and tell your story “Of what you did while there.”

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**The Enchanted Land of Story**

Float with clouds across the sky,
Talk with trees and stones,
Explore a desert island,
Call a live oak home.
Discover a topsy-turvy world,
Under a mushroom ring,
Climb over a giant's knee,
Hear the forest sing.
Play in dancing waters,
Visit a dragon’s lair;
Return and tell the story
Of what you did while there.

- Sherry Norfolk

Mississippi Storyteller and Author

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**About the Mississippi Children’s Museum**

The Mississippi Children’s Museum (MCM) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with a mission of creating unparalleled experiences to inspire excellence and a lifelong joy of learning in all children. MCM’s two award-winning museums in Jackson and Meridian collectively offer over 100,000-square feet of exhibits and educational programming designed around five primary initiatives, Literacy, STEAM, Health and Nutrition, Cultural Arts, and Mississippi Heritage – the keys to helping our children mature into healthy and productive adult learners. MCM offers exceptional resources for children, families, and educators through MCM at Home virtual programming, traveling exhibits and programs, community outreach, Launch into Learning afterschool program, professional development for educators, and Talk from the Start and Reach Out and Read, initiatives for parents and caregivers to promote language development in children from birth to five years old.

MCM is honored to have received an Institute of Museum and Library Services National Medal, the Mississippi Tourism Association Governor’s Award for Travel Attraction of the Year, and USA Today’s ‘10 Best Travel Award for Best Children’s Museum. Learn more: [www.mschildrensmuseum.org](http://www.mschildrensmuseum.org)