

CACTUS



02.03.24 ,

07.07.24

MUSÉE YVES SAINT LAURENT
MARRAKECH

الجارديني

musée
YVES SAINT LAURENT
marrakech



FONDATION
JARDIN MAJORELLE

CACTUS

The Musée Yves Saint Laurent Marrakech (mYSLm) is pleased to announce the upcoming opening of *Cactus*, an exhibition co-curated by Marc Jeanson, botanist at the National Museum of Natural History in Paris, and Laurent Le Bon, President of the Pompidou Center in Paris. The exhibition will run from from March 2 through July 7, 2024 in the mYSLm's temporary exhibition gallery.

INFO

FROM SATURDAY, MARCH 2, THROUGH SUNDAY, JULY 7, 2024

OPEN EVERY DAY EXCEPT WEDNESDAYS FROM 10:00 AM TO 6:00 PM

INFOS: PRESSE@JARDINMAJORELLE.COM
@MYSLMARRAKECH
WWW.TICKETS.JARDINMAJORELLE.COM

A CATALOGUE ACCOMPANYING THE *CACTUS* EXHIBITION, IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH EDITIONS, WILL BE PUBLISHED BY ÉDITIONS JARDIN MAJORELLE IN MARCH 2024



MARC JEANSON

Marc Jeanson is a botanist and agronomist with a degree from the Institut National Agronomique Paris-Grignon and a doctorate in plant systematics from the National Museum of Natural History in Paris and the New York Botanical Garden.

He is the author of numerous scientific articles as well as publications intended for the general public, including his book *Botaniste*, published by Grasset in 2019.

Involved in numerous events linked to the plant world and gardens, Marc Jeanson was associate curator of the *Jardins* exhibition, held in Paris in 2017 at the Grand Palais National Galleries, and exhibition curator for *Végétal*, organized by Maison Chaumet at the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris in 2022.

LAURENT LE BON



An art historian with a degree from the Paris Institute of Political Studies (IEP) in Paris and the École du Louvre, Laurent Le Bon has been president of the Pompidou Center since 2021. He was formerly Inspector General of plastic arts at the delegation of the Ministry of Culture and Communication. In 2010, he became director of the Pompidou Center Metz before serving as president of the Musée National Picasso–Paris from 2014 to 2021.

He has curated close to fifty exhibitions and is the author of related works, notably *Dada* at the Pompidou Center (2005–2006), *Jeff Koons Versailles* at the Palace of Versailles (2008), *Jardins* at the Grand Palais National Galleries (2017), *Dioramas* at the Palais de Tokyo (2017) and *Picasso: Blue and Pink* at the Musée d'Orsay (2018–2019).

As an extremely impressionable teenager, I devoured design-related publications, many of which are now relics of a past century, but which were highly influential in my formative years. The periodicals *Réalités*, *House & Garden*, and *Sunset* that would arrive in the mailbox every month piqued my curiosity and desire to discover a world beyond the San Francisco Bay Area where I grew up.

I would often restyle my bedroom in a poor imitation of the fashionable trends I'd see in those magazines. I clearly remember a modest barrel cactus, planted in a simple terra cotta garden pot that sat very unhappily in a corner of my room, a pale copy of the chic interiors in which lived such cutting edge Americans of the mid 1970s as Halston, Elsa Peretti and Joe D'Urso.

When my career as a garden designer took flight in Paris some years later, I was completely under the spell of crisp, sharp-lined, rectilinear French design and fascinated by spatial organization and perspectives set against an evergreen palette: cacti were certainly not part of the picture.

Many decades later, as providence would have it, I unexpectedly became the custodian of one of the world's most famous gardens, which has, despite its very modest dimensions, a diverse and burgeoning collection of cacti and succulents, undoubtedly one of the most important of the African continent. As gatekeeper of this collection, I feel it is important not only to share and highlight the beauty of this plant family, but also to share its history and adaptation to the evolving world environment in which we live; hence my passion for mounting this exhibition.

It is an immense honor to have two of the world's most illustrious individuals in their respective professions – the botanist Marc Jeanson and the art historian Laurent Le Bon – as co-curators of *Cactus*, and I sincerely thank them for having accepted the challenge and for the marvelous exhibition they offer us.

A number of years in the making and drawing from the four corners of the globe, this exhibition highlights the vast importance and continued fascination with this plant family that people have held for centuries. We are equally intrigued by the immediate way in which cacti evoke a cultural identity, a distant region, even a certain stalwart attitude through their strong silhouettes, which often conjure up evocative and rich symbolism seen throughout history, whether in primitive pottery, ornate textiles and silverware or even in children's cartoons. This generously filled exhibition echoes the vast diversity in both artistic and scientific expression found within the disparate regions of the world where cacti are found.

PREFACE

It was indeed a daunting task to collect and collate this rich array of pieces; I would like to thank both the dedicated team at the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Marrakech, headed by Alexis Sornin, as well as Luz Gyuali, exhibition coordinator with whom it was a pleasure to have collaborated on this complex project. I would also like to acknowledge the various contributors to this exhibition catalogue, which will remain an important testament to this Herculean feat.

As the Fondation Jardin Majorelle continues to explore the vast richness found within its own collections, which reflects the myriad of cultural layers that encapsulates Morocco, I hope the visitor who has the opportunity to see *Cactus*, as well as those who will discover the exhibition through this publication, will marvel at the seemingly unlimited diversity within this plant family that is an integral part of the core identity of the Jardin Majorelle.

Madison Cox
President
Fondation Jardin Majorelle

Simple or faceted shapes; pale, neutral or brilliant colors; spiny, fuzzy, smooth or waxy surfaces; fleshy, velvety arms and an extravagant architecture of forms: Cacti and succulents have fascinated Europeans for over five centuries.

Found everywhere in the earth's "torrid zone" as evidence of dry climates, cacti have become ideal subjects for understanding how successive expeditions and exploratory missions, together with a growing fascination with horticulture during the nineteenth century, led to the progressive introduction and propagation of tropical plants in Europe. However, a global look at the ecology of the botanical family of cacti, the Cactaceae – which brings together nearly 1,700 species – reveals an extraordinary diversity of habitats occupied by these plants. Some cacti are in fact epiphytes, which hang on the trunks and branches of large trees in tropical forests, while others withstand the freezing winters of the Canadian Northwest Territories.

The emblematic *Melocactus*, a trophy from the New World brought home by Christopher Columbus, was the first cactus to arrive in Europe. It was quickly followed by aloes, agaves and Sansevieria species, as well as mimetic stone plants. Their strange, wild appearance upended how we represented the vegetal world. Illustrations of cacti and succulents rapidly began appearing in numerous botanical publications; plant specimens were added to the collections of prestigious gardens. Deceptively easy to grow, these plants are prized by collectors and form the basis of remarkable gardens from California to Mexico to the Canary Islands.

The aesthetic qualities unique to cacti have fascinated many artists, notably at the beginning of the twentieth century and particularly during the interwar period. Cacti and other succulent plants, through their uncommon and at times evocative shapes, can become transgressive and influential figures for architects, photographers, designers, artists and creators, as well as film directors who have filled the silver screen with their graphic forms. John Cage, for his part, sought to amplify the sound of cacti in a surprising experiment. Few plant families have been the subject of so many artistic transpositions.

But beyond their aesthetic qualities, these iconic plants are, for many, sources of food, fibers and pigments. Among some peoples, they have a high ritual, mythological and cosmological importance, due to the psychedelic compounds found in some. These properties, documented by Europeans since the end of the sixteenth century – for peyote in particular – amply nourished many creative imaginations, particularly from the twentieth century onwards. In Morocco, prickly pears, introduced centuries ago, have become emblematic features of the Kingdom's landscapes and play a significant role in the rural economy.

Their gradual disappearance in recent years, due to the uncontrolled explosion of predatory cochineals, has devastated the countryside and raised concerns across the country.

Through a vast range of artworks, this exhibition aims to show the extraordinary diversity of cacti and succulent plants, as well as their rich iconographic, ornamental and ethnological history. One will discover – in dialogue with one another – ancient artefacts, works by contemporary artists, and objects of natural history.

After transitioning from a scientific dimension to artworks with a sometimes threatening artificiality that at times accentuates the “don’t touch me” aspect of cacti, the exhibition will escape the confines of the museum and assert the physical presence of these glorious plants in the Jardin Majorelle itself.

Marc Jeanson et Laurent Le Bon
Co-curators

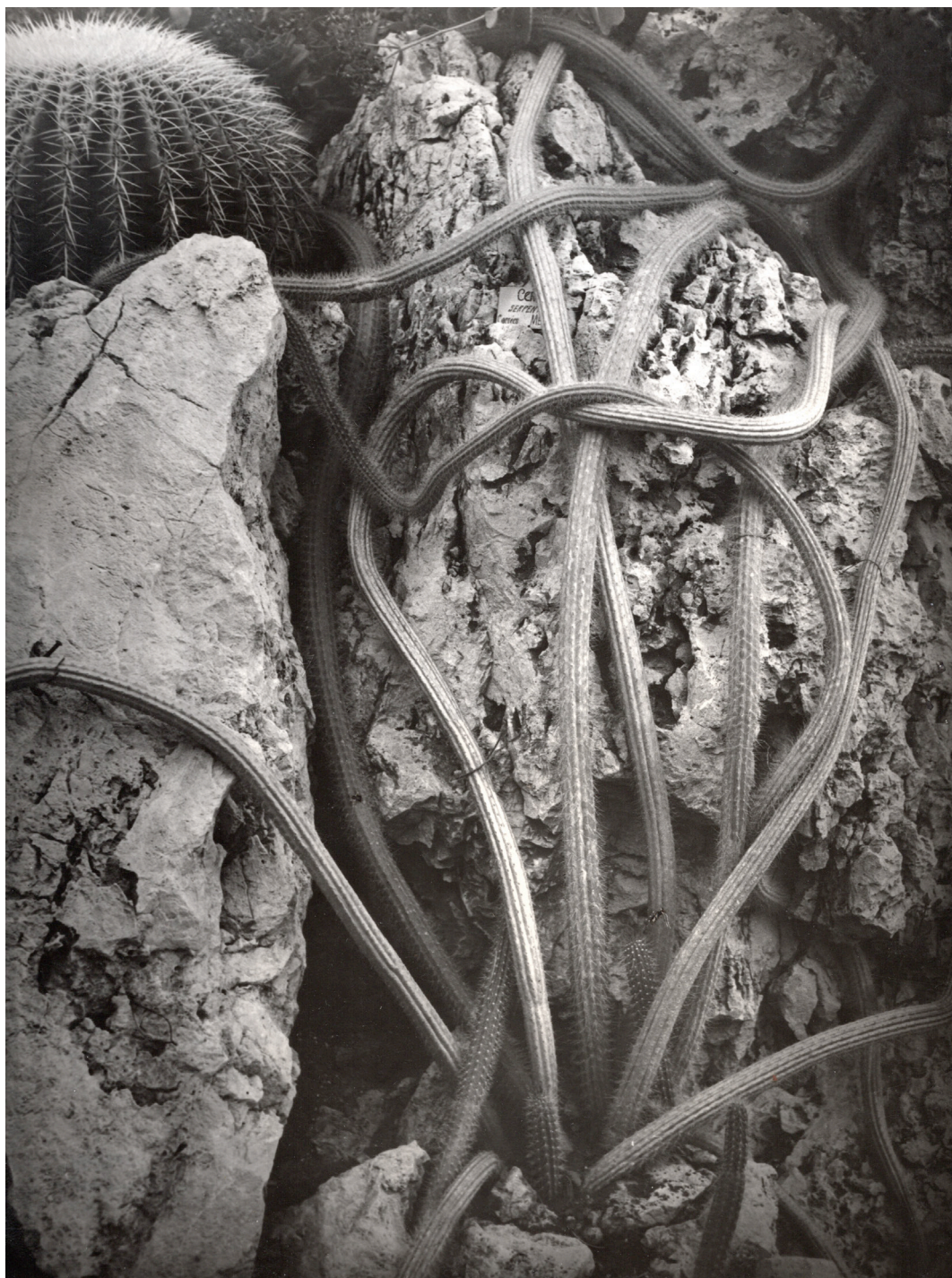


Bernard Boutet de Monvel (1881–1949)
Vanniers devant les cactus [Basket makers in front of cacti], 1920
Oil on canvas / 115 x 115 cm
Collection of the Bank Al-Maghrib, inv. n° 80473

Few plant families are as diverse as that of cacti. They can be thorny, waxy or “hairy” and appear in an infinite range of colors, which, together with their smooth, furrowed stems that serve as polymorphic reservoirs, lend these plants their extravagant yet unchanging appearance. This fascinating aesthetic, which involves an inward dimension specific to cacti and plants from other succulent botanical families (aloes, agaves, etc.), has truly marked the history of the visual arts — including photography, painting and films set in the American West — as well as the decorative arts. Even today, the adaptation and resilience of these plants in the face of erratic resources can be seen as a reflection of what we all now grapple with...the whole world seems to be like a cactus.

Omnipresent in many pre-Columbian cultures, cacti were valued for their psychotropic, symbolic and nutritional properties. Unknown to European scientists until the end of the sixteenth century, they were then very quickly collected by botanists, who began describing them. The great morphological diversity of cacti is seen here through a selection of herbarium plates shown alongside botanical illustrations from different periods.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, and particularly during the interwar period, early modernist artists became obsessed with cacti. Architects, photographers and writers were fascinated by these plants, whose sometimes provocative appearance ran counter to the aesthetic codes of the time. The ingestion of certain cacti with psychotropic effects, such as the well-known peyote — with its hallucinogenic active ingredient, mescaline — fueled the creative impulses of many artists.



Brassai (Gyula Halász, 1899–1984)
Cactus I. Cereus (Spachinacus), c. 1933
Vintage gelatin silver print, signed by the artist on verso
23.4 x 17.5 cm
Private collection

In conjunction with the exhibition *Cactus*, we will present a film cycle, “Scenes in America Deserta.” Its title makes reference to the eponymous 1982 book by Reyner Banham. Curated by Philippe-Alain Michaud, head of the film collection at the Pompidou Centre in Paris, the film cycle will run from March 9 through June 29, 2024.

CINÉ-CLUB

FREE ADMISSION: LIMITED SEATING
NO RESERVATION REQUIRED
SATURDAY AT 7:00PM
PIERRE BERGÉ AUDITORIUM – MUSÉE YVES SAINT LAURENT MARRAKECH

ON SATURDAYS – MARCH 9 AND 23, APRIL 13 AND 27, MAY 11 AND 18,
AND JUNE 15 AND 29 – AT 7:00 PM
SUBJECT TO CHANGE

09.03.24

Utah Sequences, Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson, 1970, 10’
La cicatrice intérieure, Philippe Garrel, 1972, 57’

23.03.24

Triptych in four parts, Larry Jordan, 1957, 12’
The Treasure of the Sierra Madre, (*Le Trésor de la Sierra Madre*),
John Huston, 1948, 126’

13.04.24

Cowboy Indian, Raphaël Montanez Ortiz, 1958, 5’
Winchester 73, Anthony Mann, 1950, 92’

27.04.24

Hardcore, Walter de Maria, 1969, 27’
Along the Great Divide (*Une corde pour te pendre*), Raoul Walsh, 1951, 88’

11.05.24

Stop! Look! and Hasten, Chuck Jones, 1954, 3’
The Searchers (*La prisonnière du désert*), John Ford, 1956, 120’

18.05.24

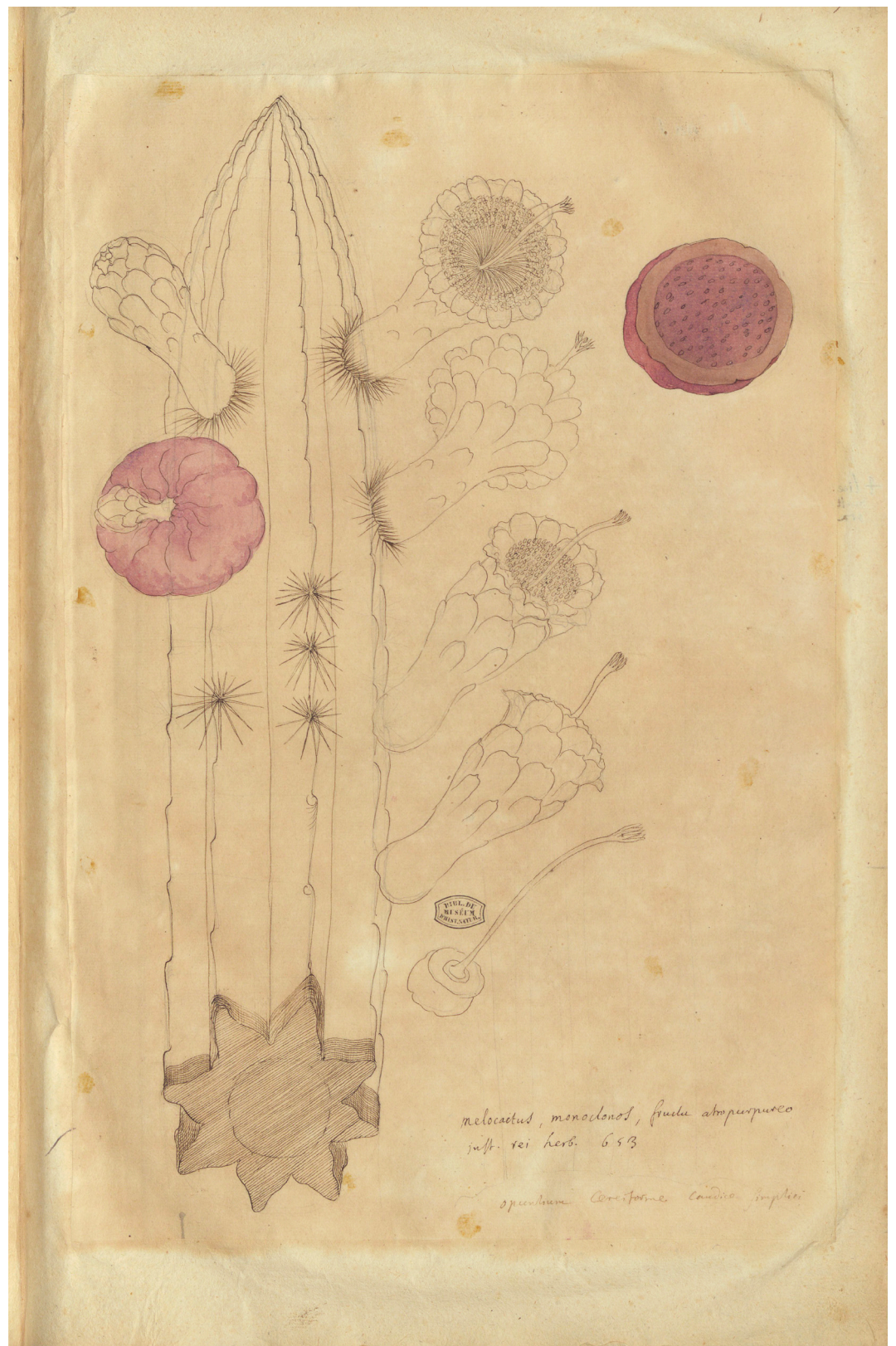
Two Lines Three Circles on the Desert, Gerry Schum and Walter de
Maria, 1970, 5’
Ride in the Whirlwind (*L’Ouragan de la Vengeance*), Monte Hellman,
1965, 82’

15.06.24

Desert Eyes, (Thisis) Redeye, 2021, 5’
Easy Rider, Dennis Hopper, 1969, 95’

29.06.24

Alaya, Nathaniel Dorsky, 1976-1987, 28’
The Wind (*Le Vent*), Victor Sjöström, 1928, 95’



Charles Plumier (1646–1704)
Melocactus monacloso fructu atropurpureo, [1689–1697], dessin, Paris,
Botanicum americanum, seu historia plantarum in americanis insulis nascentium..., ab anno 1689
 usque ad annum 1697, Manuscrits de la bibliothèque du Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle,
 Ms 3_63, environ 42 x 27 cm.

MUSÉE YVES SAINT LAURENT MARRAKECH

www.museeyslmarakech.com
Open everyday
except Wednesdays from 10 am to 6 pm
Last entrance at 5:30 pm
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The Musée Yves Saint Laurent Marrakech, which opened its doors in the fall of 2017, is a vibrant cultural center built around a central exhibition hall that showcases the work of the renowned couturier on a permanent basis. Much more than a simple retrospective of the iconic dresses YSL designed, one is led on a journey, with its focal point in Marrakech, through the many themes that inspired him. The fifty or so magnificent garments displayed – many rarely seen by the public – offer us an original reading of Yves Saint Laurent's oeuvre and of his importance to the history of fashion. The dresses and other haute couture pieces are rotated every ten months in order to ensure their conservation as well as to offer the visitor a panorama that evolves on a regular basis.

The mYSLm also includes a hall for temporary exhibitions, a photography gallery, an auditorium, a reference library, a bookshop and a café-restaurant. The basement of the building houses the museum's collection and a state-of-the-art preventive conservation center.

The hall used for temporary exhibitions at the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Marrakech was conceived as a cultural and artistic showcase. It is where the museum displays talent from all over the world, with a special emphasis given to modern and contemporary Morocco.

FONDATION JARDIN MAJORELLE

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The Fondation Jardin Majorelle is a nonprofit Moroccan institution that uses its own resources to ensure the conservation and functioning of the Jardin Majorelle, the Pierre Bergé Museum for Berber arts and the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Marrakech.

The foundation's resources were used to establish the Berber Museum, inaugurated in December 2011, and the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Marrakech, which opened in October 2017. The foundation's earnings are entirely reinvested in Morocco to finance cultural, educational and social initiatives.

JARDIN MAJORELLE

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The Jardin Majorelle and the Fondation Jardin Majorelle are delighted to celebrate the garden's 100th anniversary this year. The centennial will be marked with festivities and cultural events to be enjoyed by national and international visitors alike.

Celebrating the first hundred years of the garden will be a chance to highlight its historic and ongoing role as a world-renowned destination in Marrakech.