

# Maeve Turner Appointed Head of Gardens and Horticulture at The Frick Collection

**TURNER JOINS THE FRICK IN NEWLY CREATED ROLE AS THE MUSEUM AND LIBRARY PREPARE FOR REOPENING IN EARLY 2025**



**New York (August 8, 2024)** — The Frick Collection announced today that it has appointed Maeve Turner as its Head of Gardens and Horticulture. With more than fifteen years of experience working on major horticultural initiatives at esteemed New York City institutions including the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and the High Line, Turner joins the Frick at a critical juncture as it looks ahead to the reopening of its Fifth Avenue home, following the completion of a comprehensive [renovation and enhancement](#) designed by Selldorf Architects in conjunction with the preservation firm Beyer Blinder Belle. The museum and library are slated to reopen to the public in early 2025.

In this newly created position within the Frick’s Curatorial Department, Turner will manage and maintain the institution’s three historic green spaces: the Fifth Avenue Garden, known for its signature magnolias; the interior Garden Court, created in 1935 by John Russell Pope; and the walled viewing garden on East 70th Street added in 1977 by Russell Page. She will also coordinate related educational programming for the public and members. Turner’s first day at the Frick will be September 16, 2024.

Comments Ian Wardropper, Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Director, “We are so pleased to welcome Maeve Turner to our staff at this exciting time, knowing that she brings a wealth of experience to her new role. She will be a great asset as we identify innovative ways to interpret our gardens and share their history and beauty with the public.

She will be only our second full-time horticulturist to focus entirely on these spaces, following the recent retirement of Galen Lee, who was hired to work with Russell Page more than four decades ago.”

Adds Xavier F. Salomon, Deputy Director and Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator, “A highly skilled and deeply knowledgeable horticulturist, Maeve will not only help us prepare our gardens for reopening and maintain them moving forward, but will also create public programming that takes a fresh look at these beloved indoor and outdoor spaces. This is particularly exciting given that the renovation project celebrates our gardens by offering visitors more vantage points than ever before from which to view and enjoy them. We know that her input will be invaluable and will highlight and enhance the many ways in which these magnificent spaces are an integral part of the Frick experience.”

Turner comments, “I am thrilled to have this opportunity to bring my knowledge and perspective as a seasoned horticulturist to this newly defined curatorial position. The Frick is home to three remarkable, beloved gardens, each with its own character, history, and unique way of enriching the visitor experience. I am honored to be a part of the collaborative vision that will bring these very special spaces back into the public eye, not only through their ongoing care but through fresh interpretation and programming.”

She comes to the Frick with more than fifteen years of experience in horticulture at institutions in New York City. For a decade, she served as curator of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden’s Herb Garden, where she designed, installed, and maintained displays of annuals, perennials, trees, and shrubs. Turner led a wide range of talks and tours for the Garden’s many constituents, highlighting seasonal features and elements. She also participated in the institution’s strategic planning process alongside board members and executive and senior staff.

Previously, Turner was one of the original gardeners for the High Line, which was established in 2009 and quickly became one of New York’s most popular destinations, enjoyed for its combination of views and diverse landscaping. There, she assisted in planning large-scale horticultural initiatives such as an organic management program, while helping to cultivate and maintain 1.5 acres of planting beds. She graduated cum laude from Boston University with a B.A. in environmental analysis and policy.

## **ABOUT THE FRICK’S THREE GARDENS AND THEIR RESTORATION**

The Frick residence was constructed in 1914 according to the architectural design of Thomas Hastings of Carrère and Hastings. Its major ground-floor rooms (converted into the museum’s original galleries) and the second-floor family living quarters overlooked an elevated, set-back garden on Fifth Avenue, which featured a grand lawn, limestone steps, neoclassical urns, and Mediterranean-style mosaic paths bordering the plantings.

In 1935, the residence was expanded and converted into a museum, a project undertaken by architect John Russell Pope. The institution's Trustees hired as its garden designer Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., son of the famous planner of Central Park. In 1939, the Fifth Avenue Garden was enhanced with the addition of three magnolia trees, which today are some of the largest in the New York area. The garden has been maintained throughout the current renovation project, and the mansion's Indiana limestone façade that serves as its backdrop is being cleaned and restored. Upon reopening, visitors will be able to enjoy new vistas of this green space from the mansion's second floor, which will be accessible to the public for the first time.

The interior Garden Court, also designed in the 1930s by Pope, replaced the open carriage court of the original Frick residence. Its Ionic columns and symmetrical planting beds were echoed in Pope's later designs for the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. This interior space is beloved as a year-round oasis in New York City and is being restored in a number of critical ways: The aged exterior skylights have been replaced, and the original curved laylight ceiling has been restored and now incorporates LED lighting that improves energy efficiency and lighting quality. The Garden Court's limestone interior and central fountain have also been cleaned and repaired, and the court is being replanted with the atmospheric mix of palms and annuals for which it is known.

In 1977, at the same time the museum added a reception hall, the 70th Street Garden was created. A rare public commission by British landscape architect Russell Page, the serene patch of green was not only his first project in the United States, but also one of his last. Intended as a viewing garden rather than one entered by the public, the space was conceived by Page to create a sense of depth. It includes a central reflecting pool set within a small lawn, pea-gravel paths, and trees of different species that provide dappled shade. The garden is framed by three classical façades designed by Bayley, Van Dyke & Poehler: The north and east Indiana limestone walls include carved panels from the mansion's original 1914 porte-cochère, while the east-facing façade is modeled after the Grand Trianon at the Palace of Versailles.

After the garden was completed, Page provided detailed maintenance notes, which are still in use today. Over the years, Page developed the space through iterations and experiments, changing plantings to suit environmental conditions.

In collaboration with public garden designer Lynden B. Miller, preservation architects Beyer Blinder Belle, and landscape architects MPFP, the Frick is in the final phases of reinstalling the 70th Street Garden in preparation for the institution's grand reopening in early 2025. In order to create new public spaces below the garden, while upgrading waterproofing and improving structural supports for trees and soils, the garden was removed in winter 2020–21. The reinstalled garden features conserved limestone masonry and stonework, reinforced pathways, and a water-efficient irrigation system. Trees, flowers, and

other greenery are being carefully replanted in accordance with Page’s notes. To improve the appearance of the garden’s backdrop, the southern exterior of the Frick Art Research Library was faced with Indiana limestone to match the museum building. The project not only revitalizes this beloved space, but also celebrates Page’s design by offering the public new vistas from which to enjoy it including a new education room on the museum’s ground floor and an upper lobby and museum café on the second floor, with windows overlooking the tranquil scene.

## **ABOUT THE FRICK COLLECTION**

Housed in one of New York City’s last great Gilded Age homes, The Frick Collection provides intimate encounters with one of the world’s foremost collections of fine and decorative arts. Open since 1935, the institution originated with Henry Clay Frick (1849–1919), who bequeathed his Fifth Avenue residence and collection of European paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts for the enjoyment of the public. The museum’s holdings, which encompass masterworks from the Renaissance through the early twentieth century, have grown over the decades, more than doubling in size since the opening of the museum. The Collection’s Frick Art Research Library (recently renamed from the Frick Art Reference Library) was founded more than one hundred years ago by Henry Clay Frick’s daughter Helen Clay Frick. It is today a leading art history research center that serves students, scholars, and the public.

For more information, please visit [frick.org](http://frick.org).

### **IMAGES**

Maeve Turner.  
Photo: J.Ferrara Photography

### **INTERACT**

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### **BASIC INFORMATION**

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