



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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All Aboard for a Summer Trains Spectacular at Cheekwood

*Celebrate America's 250th Anniversary with a Cross-Country Journey
Through Iconic Sites*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – This summer, Cheekwood Estate & Gardens invites guests to embark on an unforgettable journey across America—no suitcase required.

From May 2 through September 6, 2026, **America the Beautiful: National Parks & Landmarks By Rail** will be the largest and most elaborate model train exhibition ever presented at Cheekwood.

In conjunction with Cheekwood's ongoing celebration of America's 250th anniversary, the immersive installation takes visitors coast to coast through some of the nation's most treasured sites. Spanning the entire center lawn of the Bradford Robertson Color Garden, the exhibition features 10 running trains, more than 850 feet of track, and 25 intricately crafted models of iconic landmarks and national parks.

Designed by Applied Imagination, the renowned creators behind Cheekwood's beloved year-round TRAINS! installation, each structure is a miniature work of art, and is handcrafted from natural materials such as willow branches, cedar, and pinecones.

Highlights include a 22-foot-long Golden Gate Bridge, complete with detailed piers fashioned from bark and finely crafted red "ironwork" made of willow, as well as a striking Statue of Liberty constructed from palm leaves. Closer to home, guests will spot beloved Tennessee landmarks like the Ryman Auditorium and Graceland, alongside three Smoky Mountains structures created specifically for Cheekwood: Cable Mill, John Oliver Cabin and Little Greenbrier School.

"This summer's blockbuster train exhibition is designed to spark curiosity and wonder for guests of all ages," said Jane MacLeod, President and CEO of Cheekwood Estate and Gardens. "From the intricate craftsmanship to the recognizable landmarks, it's an experience that blends learning, creativity and fun in a way only Cheekwood can offer."

In addition to the summer exhibition, Cheekwood's permanent TRAINS! display will also be open, offering guests of all ages even more trains to explore.

Special Opening Weekend Programming

Join us Saturday, May 2 and Sunday, May 3 to celebrate the opening weekend of **America the Beautiful: National Parks & Landmarks By Rail**. Enjoy special musical performances by **Kelsey Rae Copeland** on Saturday from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. and **Aaron Till and Mickey Justice** on Sunday from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. In addition, train-themed art activities for kids and hands-on workshops for adults, a self-guided activity in the Color Garden, and food trucks provide fun for the whole family. Visit cheekwood.org for updates on scheduling and timing.

Ticket Information

Tickets are on sale now at cheekwood.org. Reserving a timed-entry ticket in advance is required for all guests.

A special thanks to the Presenting Underwriter, the Crossman Family, and the Major Underwriter, Mary and Larry Wieck for their support of America the Beautiful: National Parks & Landmarks By Rail.

About Cheekwood Estate & Gardens

With its intact and picturesque vistas, Cheekwood is distinguished as one of the leading Country Place Era estates in the nation. Formerly the family home of Mabel and Leslie Cheek, the 1930s estate, with its 30,000-square-foot Mansion and 55-acres of gardens, today serves the public as a botanical garden, arboretum, and art museum with furnished period rooms and galleries devoted to American art from the 18th to mid-20th centuries. The property includes 13 distinct gardens including the Blevins Japanese Garden and the Bracken Foundation Children's Garden, as well as a 1.5-mile woodland trail featuring outdoor monumental sculpture. Each year, Cheekwood hosts seasonal festivals including Cheekwood in Bloom, Summertime at Cheekwood, Cheekwood Harvest and Holiday LIGHTS. Cheekwood is a 501c3 nonprofit charitable organization. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and nationally as a Level II Arboretum. It is a four-time voted USA Today Top 10 Botanical Garden, named the Most Beautiful Garden in Tennessee in 2025 by HGTV, in 2024 and 2025 received a Tripadvisor Travelers' Choice Award, and in 2021 was named by Fodors as one of the 12 Most Beautiful Gardens in the American South. Cheekwood is located eight miles southwest of downtown Nashville at 1200 Forrest Park Drive. It is open Tuesday through Sunday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., with extended days and hours of operation depending on the season. Visit cheekwood.org for current hours and to purchase advance tickets required for admission.

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Images for Media

<https://show.pics.io/press-images/collection/69cfd08a1280bf0a5aa2e5b>

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