



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cheekwood Harvest Returns with New Marigold River and Six Weeks of Fall Fun

Seasonal Festival Features 100,000 Pumpkins, Harvest NIGHTS, Scarecrow Trail and Family-Friendly Traditions

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Fall comes alive at Cheekwood Estate & Gardens as **Cheekwood Harvest** returns September 19 through November 1, transforming the historic 55-acre estate into one of Middle Tennessee's premier autumn destinations. Featuring the debut of the vibrant Marigold River, more than 100,000 pumpkins, Harvest NIGHTS, Pumpkin Village, Scarecrow Trail, and seasonal programming for all ages, the six-week festival offers unforgettable ways to celebrate the beauty of fall.

New this year, guests will experience **Marigold River**, a stunning display of more than 2500 vibrant marigolds in shades of red, orange and yellow creating a river of color along the walkway between the Bradford Robertson Color Garden and Arboretum Lawn.

"There's something special about fall in Tennessee, and Cheekwood Harvest has become a tradition for so many families," said Dana Stein, Vice President of Gardens at Cheekwood. "This year, we're excited to introduce the Marigold River featuring a flowing ribbon of bold and vibrant marigolds. We hope it inspires our visitors to slow down, explore and breathe in autumn from a new perspective."

The celebration continues after sunset as **Harvest NIGHTS** return on Thursday evenings throughout the festival. Guests can stroll the illuminated gardens while enjoying live music, food trucks, seasonal cocktails and themed activities. A towering **Jack-o'-Lantern Topiary**, constructed from around 200 hand-carved faux jack-o'-lanterns, will once again serve as the centerpiece of the Bradford Robertson Color Garden.

Returning favorite **Pumpkin Village** welcomes visitors to the Arboretum Lawn, where more than 100,000 pumpkins sourced from local farms are displayed throughout the gardens alongside 5,000 chrysanthemums in vibrant shades of yellow, orange, red and white. Guests can pose for photos with three charming pumpkin houses featuring thatched and cedar roofs accented with cascading chartreuse and deep purple Ipomoea vines. A variety of pumpkins in orange, white, green and pink will also be available for purchase to take home for fall decorating and carving.

Visitors can also explore the popular **Scarecrow Trail**, where local artists, schools and community organizations transform simple scarecrow frames into imaginative works of art inspired by this year's theme, "Once Upon a Harvest." Fifteen scarecrows selected by a panel of jurors will be featured.

In addition to seasonal displays, Cheekwood Harvest features live music on weekends, classes through the Cheekwood Gardening School, seasonal food and beverages, and countless opportunities to experience the beauty of autumn. Whether creating new family traditions, gathering with friends, or simply soaking in the spectacular autumn scenery, Cheekwood Harvest offers one of Nashville's most beloved seasonal experiences.

Cheekwood Harvest is presented by Tractor Supply.

Harvest NIGHTS

September 24 – October 29 | Thursdays | 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.

The fall festival continues after dusk at Harvest NIGHTS on Thursdays, where you can see the scarecrows and the Jack-o'-Lantern Topiary illuminated after dark. Get into the spirit with cornhole and other garden games on Arboretum Lawn, pumpkin-carving demonstrations by Master Carver Lundy Cupp, live music, food trucks, specialty cocktails, and all the makings of a memorable outing for the whole family. On October 29, wrap up the Harvest NIGHTS season in style and get in the mood for Halloween at the **Botanical Bash** costume contest and dance party.

Harvest NIGHTS is presented by Genesco.

Harvest Weekends Music

Saturdays and Sundays | 12 p.m. – 2 p.m.

On weekends, a diverse lineup of bands provides the soundtrack for a perfect fall afternoon. Bring a blanket or chair, settle in for a picnic, and play garden games surrounded by gorgeous scenery.

September 19: Hay Fever (Western Swing)

September 20: Mindy Miller (Country)

September 26: Brandon Birkedahl (Americana)

September 27: Quincy Lancto (Classic Country)

October 3: Jessie Gray (Singer/Songwriter)

October 4: King Corduroy and Dayna Bee (Soul)

October 10 - Mark Thornton (Classic Country)

October 11 - Ky Brandes (Singer/Songwriter)

October 17 - MERJ (Jazz)

October 18 - Tim Gartland (Blues)

October 24 - Tony Hannah (Americana)

October 25 - Jerry Tachoir (Jazz)

Japanese Moon Viewing

September 27 | 4 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Experience the 12th annual Japanese Moon Viewing, *Otsukimi*, an afternoon and moonlit evening filled with immersive experiences celebrating Japanese culture. Enjoy tea ceremony demonstrations, mochi pounding, taiko drumming, art activities, and bilingual tours of the Blevins Japanese Garden. New this year, a musician will play the shakuhachi, a traditional Japanese flute, during the tea ceremonies on the main stage. Explore bonsai displays and a vendor marketplace featuring food, art, and handcrafted goods. This celebration is produced in partnership with the Consulate General of Japan and the Japan-America Society of Tennessee.

Japanese Moon Viewing is supported by Mitsui and HCA.

Halloween Pooch Party

October 24 - 25 | 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Bring your pup out for costume contests and snap a pic of your four-legged companion at the Pumpkin Village. Costume contests will be held at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. each day. This year's special costume category is "Founding Paw-thers," so bring your pooches dressed as an American Icon to celebrate America's 250th. Also, browse the dog-friendly vendors and delight your furry friends with special treats. Members can reserve tickets starting on August 25. Tickets go on sale to not-yet members on September 1.

El Día de los Muertos

October 31 - November 1 | 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For the 27th year, Cheekwood presents the largest Day of the Dead festival in Middle Tennessee where you can experience murals created by area middle and high school students, beautiful ofrendas or memorial altars honoring the deceased, Latin and Aztec dance performers, traditional musical performances, authentic cuisine and handmade goods, and hands-on activities for kids of all ages. The popular weekend sells out

quickly, so visitors are encouraged to reserve tickets early. Tickets go on sale September 15.

El Día de los Muertos is supported by HCA.

The Cheekwood Gardening School September 13 – October 25

Autumn is the perfect season to harvest, plan and plant for the seasons ahead. Learn from experienced instructors from regional plant societies, local Master Gardeners, and Cheekwood's own staff.

Also, bring your gardening questions to Harvest NIGHTS. For the first time, drop-in **Ask a Gardener** sessions will be held on Thursdays throughout the Harvest celebration from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Fall Gardening Classes

Cool Season Vegetables | September 26 | 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Plant Propagation Workshop | September 26 | 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Designing with Woody Plants: Trees & Shrubs | October 10 | 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Plant ID for Home Gardeners | October 10 | 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

For more information on classes visit <https://cheekwood.org/learn/adult-education-programs/cheekwood-gardening-school/>

Adult Art Workshops

Hands-on workshops at Cheekwood celebrate creative exploration inspired by our gardens and seasonal exhibitions.

Relief Printing | September 19 | 10 a.m.

Miniature Zen Garden | September 26 | 2 p.m.

Cheekwood Leather Visors | October 3 | 10 a.m.

Fall Floral Weaving | October 10 | 10 a.m.

Explore the full schedule and register at <https://cheekwood.org/learn/adult-education-programs/seasonal-workshops/>

Martin Shallenberger Artist-in-Residence: Maura Wright August 1 – October 4

Cheekwood is pleased to present Maura Wright as the 2026 Martin Shallenberger Artist-in-Residence. Based in Kansas City, Missouri, Wright is a ceramic artist whose practice centers on intricately crafted clay vessels and sculptural forms. Working primarily in

earthenware, she draws inspiration from decorative arts history, domestic objects, and folk traditions. Her installations combine richly ornamented ceramics with painted environments that evoke frescoed interiors and decorative wall treatments, exploring the relationship between objects and the spaces they inhabit.

During her residency, Wright will draw inspiration from Cheekwood's decorative arts collections, Historic Mansion, and expansive gardens. Her research will inform a site-specific installation that responds to the estate's rich artistic and architectural heritage.

The Artist-in-Residence program is made possible through the generous support of the Shallenberger family. Martin Shallenberger's connection with Cheekwood started in 1971 when he exhibited 40 paintings, providing visitors with a glimpse into his life and travels around the globe.

Ticket Information

Tickets for Cheekwood Harvest, Harvest NIGHTS, and Japanese Moon Viewing go on sale August 11 at cheekwood.org.

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/6078af8e35b79d001153e846>

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