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Sculpture in Philadelphia's Kimmel Center Marks Centennial of Modern Lithuania

Philadelphia, PA— From October 4 to November 9, a 17'x17' LED sculpture entitled "Gardens" by internationally acclaimed Lithuanian American artist Ray Bartkus will be exhibited at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the restitution of Lithuanian statehood. The artwork will be displayed in Commonwealth Plaza, the lobby of the Center located at 300 South Broad Street in Center City.

The Kimmel Center is the region's most impactful performing arts center and is known for having unique and sometimes interactive visual art displays in the lobby. "The Kimmel Center believes that art is an essential way to depict and to view life, events, and even whole countries. We are thrilled to serve as the Pennsylvania home for this glorious and important sculpture," says Anne Ewers, President & CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. "Displayed prominently in our Commonwealth Plaza, the kaleidoscopic piece will underscore the importance of the individual creative freedoms that our two countries share."

Lithuanian Ambassador, Rolandas Kriščiūnas, stated, "This sculpture was commissioned to celebrate 100 years of Lithuania's restored statehood. It is felicitous that the sculpture is being displayed here, as Lithuania has a historic relationship with Pennsylvania, as the very first Lithuanians who came to the United States, came via the Commonwealth. This year also celebrates our nation's 25 year partnership with the Pennsylvania National Guard."

"Gardens" is inspired by Lithuanian folk art ornaments called "sodai," or strands of straw woven into 3D polygons. "I have reimagined these traditional ornaments through a contemporary magnifying lens, using modern materials and technology, now shaping LED and aluminum instead of straw, into a slowly rotating, giant geometric kaleidoscope," artist Ray Bartkus explained. "By combining steel and centuries of tradition, I hope to bridge ancient and modern Lithuania. It is fitting that this sculpture will be displayed in Philadelphia, a city also steeped in so much history, and yet so innovative."

The month-long exhibit at the Kimmel Center was organized by the Embassy of Lithuania, the MO Museum in Lithuania and the Lithuanian Consulate in Philadelphia. It was previously displayed in Washington D.C.'s Union station and, later, will be featured at the United Nations in New York and D.C.'s BWI airport. At the Completion of it's USA tour, "Gardens" will be on permanent exhibition at

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the MO Museum in Vilnius (www.mmcentras.lt), a new world-class cultural destination designed by Daniel Liebeskind showcasing Lithuanian art and exploring its links with global art.

Ray Bartkus is a conceptual artist who explores our visual comprehension of space, color, light and forms. His large-scale installations, which range from ethereal to imposing, from unsettling to whimsical, open up new ways for the viewer to relate with their environment. Born in Lithuania in 1961, he emigrated to the USA in 1991. He splits his time between New York City and Philadelphia.

His illustrations have been featured on the covers and pages of many national and international publications, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Time*, *Newsweek*, *Harper's*, *Billboard*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The New Republic*, *Smart Money*, *The Fortune*, and *Businessweek*. Ray Bartkus' works are in collections in numerous museums worldwide, including The National Portrait Gallery in Washington, DC.

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High resolution JPEGs available upon request.

About The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, the Kimmel Center's mission is to operate a world-class performing arts center that engages and serves a broad audience through diverse programming, arts education, and community outreach. The Kimmel Center Campus is comprised of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (Verizon Hall, Perelman Theater, SEI Innovation Studio, and the Merck Arts Education Center), the Academy of Music (owned by the Philadelphia Orchestra Association), and the Merriam Theater. The Kimmel Center is also home to eight Resident Companies: The Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Philadelphia, The Pennsylvania Ballet, The Philly POPS, PHILADANCO, The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Curtis Institute of Music. With nearly 9,000 seats per night, The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts is the region's most impactful performing arts center, and the second largest in the country. TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank, is the season sponsor of the Kimmel Center's 2018-2019 Season. American Airlines is the official airline of Broadway Philadelphia. For additional information, visit www.kimmelcenter.org.