

## BRONX NEWS

## BLOOMIN' AWESOME

## The colorful Orchid Show adds a French floral flair

BY TANYANIKA SAMUELS  
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

THE COLORFUL CASCADE of orchids and tropical foliage greeting visitors to the New York Botanical Garden's 10th annual Orchid Show drew gasps of awe.

"This is amazing," whispered one woman at a special preview. "Absolutely breathtaking," said another.

The 26-foot tall "Green Wall" and the other artful installations in the show are the work of renowned French botanist and artist Patrick Blanc.

This year, the popular themed Orchid Show centers on Blanc's "vertical walls" of lush foliage and sweeping displays of orchids.

"This is the first time that the orchids have almost had to take a backseat in the overall exhibit," the garden's Todd Forrest said.

At the viewing last week, Blanc glided through the exhibit

with a glass of white wine in hand, excitedly talking about his towering, flowering creations.

"I never use plants that grow horizontally, always plants that go vertically, on a tree trunk or branch or on a slope," he said in a mellifluous French accent.

"All of the projects are totally different according to the climate," said Blanc, who sported green hair and shoes to match.

"It is always something different and that is what is exciting."

His work can be found all over the world, from Madrid, Spain to Taipei, Taiwan.

"It's a wonderful fantasy of impossibly beautiful flowers," gushed Frankie Shahar, 64 of New Rochelle. "The flowers look artificial because they are so outstanding. But they are real. It's amazing."

The show really is a dual celebration of the orchids and the foliage, Forrest said.

"Throughout the exhibit," he said, "people will see that the foliage is equally as beautiful,



equally as complex and equally as inspiring to look at as the orchids."

"The Orchid Show: Patrick Blanc's Vertical Gardens" runs through April 22 in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory.

The garden is also hosting several programs to complement the show. Visit [nybg.org](http://nybg.org) to learn more.

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PATRICK BLANC



Lush foliage and sweeping displays captivate attention of (top, clockwise) Cadence Moy, 4, while Tara Cebbag, 3, gets close up with assist from dad at Botanical Garden's 10th annual Orchid Show that runs until April 22. Photos by Enid Alvarez/Daily News

