

# **Marry A Plant Wedding vows and script**

All readings by Ed Cooper, Officiate, unless otherwise indicated

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## **SET-UP, PREPARATION**

9:00 – Sculpture Garden opens. Set up columns, decorations, podium, sound system, chairs

10-10:30 – performers (Ed Cooper and Two Star Symphony) arrive

10:15 – volunteers begin distributing the program to audience

10:30 – mic check for Ed Cooper, Meredith Goldsmith and Toby Kamps at podium

10:45 - Introduction music by Two Star Symphony begins

11-11:10 - Ed Cooper, officiate, takes his position behind the podium. When he is ready and comfortable, he will indicate this to Two Star Symphony who will begin playing the processional music and the ceremony begins.

## **CEREMONY**

### ***Processional/entry music by Two Star Symphony***

The Art Guys enter with the tree and take their positions in front of the podium.

Music concludes and Ed Cooper begins speaking.

### **Welcome**

Welcome family and friends on this beautiful day. We are here this morning to celebrate the wedding of The Art Guys to a plant. They would like to thank each of you for making the journey to be with them today as they celebrate this event. They are honored to have you present with them.

We have gathered in the Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston to be joyful in celebration for The Art Guys and this live oak tree in the new life they now begin together. For The Art Guys this ceremony represents the start of a new chapter in their lives. Today, they proclaim their commitment to this tree.

Art Guys and tree, I welcome you to this moment in your lives. Ladies and gentlemen, I join with you on this day, in the uniting of The Art Guys to this plant.

The Art Guys wanted to be married at this special place near the museums because they felt that it was important to represent the coming together of their past, present and their future together with this tree, especially in the context of art.

### **Readings**

Now I'd like to introduce to you Toby Kamps who will offer the first reading.

## **First Reading**

[Read by Toby Kamps]

A reading from the first book of Moses (Genesis), Chapter 2

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

## **Second Reading**

Now I'd like to introduce to you Meredith Goldsmith who will offer the second reading.

[Read by Meredith Goldsmith]

A reading from William Clifford, English philosopher and mathematician

“... we cannot suppose that so enormous a jump from one creature to another should have occurred at any point in the process of evolution as the introduction of a fact entirely different and absolutely separate from the physical fact. It is impossible for anybody to point out the particular place in the line of descent where that event can be supposed to have taken place. The only thing that we can come to, if we accept the doctrine of evolution at all, is that even in the very lowest organism, even in the Amoeba which swims about in our own blood, there is something or other, inconceivably simple to us, which is of the same nature with our own consciousness

## ***musical interlude by Two Star Symphony***

[At the conclusion of the musical interlude, Ed Cooper returns to the podium and continues with the ceremony]

## **Wedding Vows**

Today, Art Guys, you make a commitment to care for this tree for the rest of your lives. When two people pledge to care for a plant in marriage, they create a unique bond which binds them closer than any spoken or written words. The strength of that bond will provide you courage in the face of adversity, joy and laughter to sustain you through times of sorrow and doubt, and new ideas that will inspire you in all that you do.

Into this union, The Art Guys and this plant now come to be joined. If any of you can show just cause why they may not be married, speak now; or else forever hold your peace.

[short pause – *(If anyone speaks up in any way to offer an objection or comment, simply acknowledge that person and reply, “The Art Guys have noted your comment and have agreed to continue with the ceremony.”)*]

I require and charge you both, Art Guys, here in the presence of these people, that if either of you know any reason why you may not be united in marriage to this plant, you do now confess it.

[short pause]

Art Guys, if at this time you wish to affirm your free choice to unite in marriage to this live oak tree, please indicate that now by turning to face the tree and hold one of its branches as you take your wedding vows before your family and friends.

We, The Art Guys, *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*  
take this live oak tree, *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*  
to be our wedded tree, *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*  
to water and nurture *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*  
to have and to hold, *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*  
for better or for worse, *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*  
for richer, for poorer, *[pause and repeat]*;  
from this day forward *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*  
until death do us part. *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*

Will all of you witnessing these promises do all in your power to uphold these two persons in their marriage?  
If so, please answer “we will.”

*People: “We will.”*

### **Family and Community Support**

To all of you, who are gathered here, today will be especially important to The Art Guys: your loved ones, friends and members of the art community who fill their lives. You are the framework that supports their world. You represent, symbolically, all the people who will be touched in any way by the marriage of The Art Guys and this plant. You represent their families, friends, artists, art professionals and supporters, past, present and future. Marriage is an intensely personal act, and for The Art Guys today, a highly conceptual and philosophical art event. But, in order for this marriage to gain strength to last throughout the years, their marriage must be supported by their greater circle of family, friends and institutions. Today, The Art Guys proclaim their commitment to this live oak tree, and we gather here to rejoice, with and for them, in the new life they now begin together with this plant.

### **Ring Placement**

Art Guys, I will ask you now to seal the vows you have just made by placing a ring on this tree. ~ May I have the ring please?

[one of The Art Guys presents the ring]

The wedding ring has been a traditional symbol of enduring commitment that, like a circle, has no end. This ring is an outward and visible sign of this event for future generations to acknowledge and share. With this ring you seal the vows you have just made, reminding everyone of your decision to remain faithful to your promises of commitment to this tree. Let it be a symbol of a never ending devotion. As often as either of you see this ring on this tree, I hope that you will be reminded of your commitment to this plant, which you formalized today.

Art Guys, please repeat after me while placing this ring on the tree.

[The Art Guys will place the ring on one of the branches of the tree.]

With this ring, *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*  
a symbol of our commitment, *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*  
we thee wed. *[pause and Art Guys repeat]*

### **Ring symbol**

This rings is a powerful symbol. The circle symbolizes the wholeness of your commitment, unbroken and everlasting. The metal represents the sincerity of your commitment. It is strong, enduring, and does not break. As this ring surrounds this live oak, may you be reminded of your eternal devotion to this tree.

These two human lives are now joined with the life of this tree in one unbroken circle. Wherever The Art Guys go, may they always return to this tree to be reminded of this day. May these two humans and this plant find in each other the understanding for which all living beings long. May they grow in understanding and compassion. May the future permanent location of this tree be established as a place of happiness for all who approach it, a place of growing and learning, of understanding and questioning, of good friends and laughter. May the ring around the tree symbolize the spirit of the exploration and the commitment of the Art Guys to this plant and to their art.

### **Closing**

Art Guys, may the challenges of your life together with this tree be met with courage and optimism. May you learn from your challenges and grow in your achievements. May life bless you with friends and family in a wide network of mutual support and enjoyment. May you face adversity with courage and a light heart.

May this marriage last through all of your conscious moments, so that in the triumphs and the trials that lie ahead, you will feel just as happy and committed to this tree and to this concept as you do now. Go then in peace, and live more and more in the present, which is beautiful and bountiful and stretches beyond the limits of the past toward the horizons of the future.

### **Pronouncement**

Art Guys, you have openly declared your wishes to be united in marriage to this tree and in the presence of these witnesses, have pledged your commitment to it. You have confirmed the same by saying so.

By the power vested in me and invoking the power of the spirit, which performs every true marriage, it is my honor and delight to pronounce that you are now married to this plant.

Please face the audience and take a bow.

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you The Art Guys and a plant.

### ***Recessional/exit music by Two Star Symphony***

[The Art Guys exit with the tree followed by Ed Cooper and all proceed to the CAMH for the reception.]