

For immediate release

Contact:

Sofia Blom

sofia.blom@restonarts.org

703.471.9242

A closing celebration of *A Bird in the Hand* by Patrick Dougherty in Reston Town Square Park

(Reston, VA): Join us as we celebrate the conclusion of the public art landmark *A Bird in the Hand*, on Saturday, October 7, 2017, from 11am-1pm. This monumental, site-specific, temporary sculpture at Reston Town Square Park was created by internationally acclaimed artist Patrick Dougherty in 2015 and has been providing the community an immersive and magical experience since its installation. The work's popularity with adults and children has been manifested in thousands of games of tag and hide and seek played within its woody realm. This project was a communal, participatory experience both through its funding and installation. Sculptor Dougherty spent weeks on-site constructing the sculpture in tandem with a team of community volunteers who contributed enormously to the creation process.

In addition to the community joy it generated, this project provided an opportunity for its co-producers, Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE) and Public Art Reston, to engage a larger, more diverse cross-section of the community in a highly public and accessible setting outside of gallery walls, fulfilling GRACE's mission of promoting excellence and involvement in contemporary visual arts and Public Art Reston's mission to inspire an ongoing commitment to public art and create a new generation of artworks in Reston. The project was made possible by a team of generous sponsors.

The Lead Sponsor of the project was Willowsford, a naturally planned community in Loudoun County, who also provided a portion of the installation's saplings from its property. Major grant awards were provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Arts Council of Fairfax County, Reston Community Center, Reston Town Center Association, and MEDA, Inc. Essential in-kind contributions were made by Reston Association, Storycatcher Productions, Red Thinking, and Hyatt Regency Reston.

A Bird in the Hand has been a destination for individuals as well as school groups and has inspired creative conversations while providing art-focused educational outreach. The work will live on in photographs and film, continuing to promote artistic curiosity and insight into environmental art. Additionally, GRACE Art, the beloved Greater Reston Arts Center's art enrichment program, now offers a learning module on Dougherty featuring the sculpture.

Free and open for all to join us in this celebration of the arts with a GRACE Family Day, complete with stick- and nest-inspired art projects, dance performances sponsored by Reston Community Center, and a brief speaking program. Artists from Gin Dance Company and GroundShare Arts Alliance developed exceptional choreography connected to the sculpture and

GreaterRestonArtsCenter

will present encore performances. Director Rebekah Wingert-Jabi's fantastic and insightful short documentary film about *A Bird in the Hand* will be showing all day in the GRACE gallery.

The sculptural installation will be dismantled and removed in the week following the celebration with the help of the Reston Association's staff who have been a tremendous partner in this project from the beginning. Their team offered horticultural advice, provided labor for the harvesting and transportation of the saplings, periodically assisted with refurbishing of the piece, and now will execute its removal.

After the event, make sure to visit Flavors of Fall (formerly Oktoberfest Reston) hosted by the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce. Flavors of Fall will take place in Reston Town Center from noon to 11pm, Saturday, October 7. More information can be found at www.oktoberfestreston.com.

The Greater Reston Arts Center is dedicated to enriching community life by promoting involvement and excellence in the contemporary visual arts. Its gallery showcases exceptional emerging and established artists from the mid-Atlantic region and beyond; its GRACE Art program delivers art enrichment experiences in over 40 schools regionally, impacting over 20,000 students; and its annual Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival is among the top such events in the country. The Greater Reston Arts Center is always free and open to the public.

The Greater Reston Arts Center gratefully acknowledges the leadership of its Board of Directors and the support of its sponsors, members, and patrons. GRACE programs are supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the Arts Council of Fairfax County, and Reston Community Center.

