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Greater Reston Arts Center and Initiative for Public Art-Reston present unique Patrick Dougherty installation and experience

March 13, 2015 (Reston, VA): Internationally acclaimed artist Patrick Dougherty will take up temporary residence in Reston for three exciting and productive weeks in April. During that short but industriously creative time, with the help of community volunteers and using local materials, he will create one of his famed monumental, site-specific sculptures. This unique public art installation, fashioned from tree saplings, is the result of collaboration between the Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE) and the Initiative for Public Art-Reston (IPAR).

"As a communal public art experience, the Dougherty project is profoundly tied to the missions of GRACE and its partner IPAR," said Holly Koons McCullough, GRACE's executive director.

"We are delighted by the collaboration with GRACE," added Anne Delaney, IPAR's executive director. "This project, by a major international artist, illustrates perfectly the spirit of collaboration and community engagement that public art aims to achieve."

Open to the public officially on April 25, the installation, which is expected to become a public art landmark, will remain at its Reston Town Center site—in Town Square Park immediately across from the GRACE gallery—for approximately two years. Because Dougherty works with natural materials, his sculptures have limited life spans.

More than 30 years ago, Dougherty (www.stickwork.net) began exploring primitive building techniques and experimenting with tree saplings as construction material. His sculptural installation in Reston will be assembled so that it can be explored by viewers, inside and out. In addition, volunteers are being recruited to help harvest the saplings and help build the artwork. The public will be able to observe Dougherty's creative process firsthand.

In celebration of the Dougherty installation's April 25 opening, GRACE and IPAR are co-hosting a Family Day from 2 to 5 p.m. in Town Square Park, followed by a reception beginning at 5:00 pm at GRACE. The installation will also be complemented by an exhibition at GRACE that documents some of Dougherty's more than 230 sculptural installations from around the world.

Other related events include a lecture by Dougherty on April 16 at the Jo Ann Rose Gallery, Reston Community Center (RCC) Lake Anne at 7:30 p.m., and a March 24 screening of the feature-length documentary "Bending Sticks: The Sculpture of Patrick Dougherty" presented by IPAR at CenterStage, RCC Hunters Woods, at 7:30 p.m. Also to be announced will be dance performances inspired by the Dougherty installation, commissioned and sponsored by the Reston Community Center, during the annual GRACE-produced Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival, May 16 and 17.

Willowsford, a naturally planned community in Loudoun County, is the lead sponsor of the project, and will also be providing a portion of the installation's saplings from its property. A nature-oriented residential community, 2,000 of Willowsford's 4,000 acres are cared for by the Willowsford Conservancy and set aside for environmental preservation, recreation, and agricultural use.

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In addition to Willowsford, this project is supported in part by major awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Arts Council of Fairfax County. Reflecting the excitement and broad community support that the project is generating, other committed sponsors include the Reston Community Center, Reston Town Center Association, Reston Association, Red Thinking, and the Hyatt Regency Reston (which, in celebration of its 25th year, will be hosting the artist at no charge during his three-week installation visit in April).

About GRACE: The Greater Reston Arts Center enriches community life by promoting involvement and excellence in contemporary visual arts. In pursuit of this mission, GRACE provides a year-round program of contemporary visual art exhibitions, education programs for all ages, and special events. www.restonarts.org

About IPAR: The Initiative for Public Art-Reston seeks to inspire an ongoing commitment to public art and create a new generation of artworks in Reston. www.publicartreston.org

Patrick Dougherty's installation is sponsored by



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 Virginia Commission for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Arts Council of Fairfax County, and the Reston Community Center.

