



Patrick Dougherty stickwork installation



"O Say Can You See"

Patrick Dougherty, October 2019

Siberian elm, Norway maple, non-native cherry hybrids, willow

To celebrate the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Botanic Garden's (USBG) original 1820 creation, the Garden has collaborated with renowned stickwork artist Patrick Dougherty to create a custom sculpture to stand throughout the 2020 celebratory year.

Dougherty, who hails from North Carolina, is known around the world for his installations woven from plant materials, which celebrate nature through both flowing lines and intricate forms. Over 30 years, he has built more than 250 stickwork sculptures, from Scotland to Japan to all over the United States. D.C.-area residents may have seen his eye-catching installation in the popular "Wonder" exhibit at the reopening of Renwick Gallery.

"We are excited to work with Patrick and his team to create a unique piece of art here at the Garden," said Saharah Moon Chapotin, U.S. Botanic Garden Director. "We hope visitors will explore the installation, think about the many ways we interact with plants throughout each day, and be inspired by both the beauty and the complexity of nature."

For this creation the USBG began by harvesting saplings of invasive plants from area locations - Norway maple from the American Horticultural Society's Invasive Plant Removal Program, Siberian elm and hybrids of non-native cherry from the U.S. National Arboretum. Willow sustainably harvested from a farm completes the plants used to create the sculpture.

Volunteers and USBG employees worked more than 800 hours with Dougherty and his team over three weeks to create the unique installation, which was completed October 25, 2019. Visitors are invited to touch and explore this nature-inspired plant artwork installation. The finished sculpture is 15 feet tall and 15 feet wide.

"I'm really excited to be here, participating in the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Botanic Garden," said Dougherty. "We've tried to make a sculpture that resonates with our imagination. Visitors might think of fond memories in nature like playing with sticks as a child, a first kiss under a lilac bush or a nice walk in the woods, or they've seen in nature like a bird nest they've just seen somewhere in the Garden."

Through the 2020 bicentennial year, the USBG will present a special exhibit celebrating plant exploration and the Garden's history dating back to founding fathers George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison, as well as unique programs, workshops, lectures, festivals, tours, and more.

Please touch and walk through the sculpture, but do not climb or pull on sticks.

Join the conversation with #USBGstickwork .

Watch a timelapse of the creation of the sculpture!

Source URL: <https://www.usbg.gov/Dougherty>