

GIANT OCTOPUS SPOTTED IN WHEATON, ILLINOIS!

Cantigny Park introduces Alebrije Art Walks, delivering a unique blend of nature, imagination and the Mexican art exhibition's latest and final sculpture

July 5, 2022 — Rising 15 feet from its grassy nest and, with eight long tentacles ablaze in color, a spectacular octopus sculpture is the final creation and crowning achievement of “Alebríes: Creatures of a Dream World” — the blockbuster Mexican folk-art exhibit running through October at Cantigny Park. At least 50,000 visitors have viewed the exhibit since its June opening.

Starting July 9, visitors to the park can enjoy a guided **Alebrije Art Walk** featuring the giant octopus and 48 other whimsical creatures displayed throughout the gardens and grounds. The one-hour Saturday-only tours are a chance for patrons of the arts, culture-seekers, and outdoor enthusiasts to learn about the colorful alebrije sculptures and the six artists from Mexico City who created them.

Walks begin from the Cantigny Visitors Center at 11 a.m. or 2 p.m., depending on the week (schedule posted on Cantigny.org). Registration is not required. The final tour will be on Sept. 24.

The artists were in residence at Cantigny from early May until their return to Mexico this week. For two months they perfected their creations, interacted with guests, and were warmly welcomed by the local arts and culture community. Throughout June they worked as a team to bring the octopus to life, with park visitors witnessing its construction and painting. Arts-minded volunteers were invited to participate in the process, and many did!

Artists Alejandro Camacho Barrera and Miriam Salgado designed the colorful beast, which spans 100 feet wide on the south end of Cantigny's McCormick Allée.

The word alebrijes (pronounced ah-leh-bree-hehs) refers to imaginary creatures that possess elements from different animals. The art form originated in the 1930s from the vivid dreams of Mexico City artist Pedro Linares. Alebrijes gained popular exposure in the United States through “Coco,” the 2017 Disney/Pixar film.

In addition to the art walks, Cantigny will host a free outdoor concert by **Mariachi Herencia de México** on Sunday, July 31, at 7 p.m. More alebrije-related events will be announced soon, including some in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month and Mexican Independence Day.

Cantigny Park is located in DuPage County, known as an outdoor oasis with robust arts and culture. “Alebríes: Creatures of a Dream World” is an example of the one-of-a-kind experiences found only in DuPage. For ideas on pairing a trip to Cantigny with other DuPage destinations, visit “DuPage Road Trip - Where Nature Meets Art” at www.DiscoverDuPage.com.

- more -

“Alebrijes: Creatures of a Dream World” is a partnership of **Cantigny Park**, the **DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau**, **Mexican Cultural Center DuPage**, and the **City of West Chicago**.

The Chicago-based **Robert R. McCormick Foundation**, Cantigny’s parent organization, awarded a grant to the Mexican Cultural Center DuPage to help make “Alebrijes: Creatures of a Dream World” possible. Additional support was provided by the **DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau**, **Illinois Office of Tourism**, **National Museum of Mexican Art**, **Ciudad de México**, and **College of DuPage**. **Telemundo Chicago** is the exclusive Media Sponsor.

Admission

“**Alebrijes: Creatures of a Dream World**” is at Cantigny Park, 1S151 Winfield Rd., Wheaton, Ill., through Oct. 30, 2022. Admission is included with Cantigny’s regular parking fee (\$5 per car on weekdays; \$10 weekends). Parking is free on the first Wednesday of the month. The park is open daily from 7 a.m. to sunset. For more information, visit Cantigny.org/Alebrijes.

Host Partner Media Contacts:

Cantigny Park

Jeff Reiter, 630.260.8218, jreiter@cantigny.org

DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau

Beth Marchetti, 630.575.8070, beth@DiscoverDuPage.com

Mexican Cultural Center DuPage

Sara Phalen, 815.751.0551, mccdupage@gmail.com

City of West Chicago

Daniel Peck, 630.293.2200, ext. 139, dpeck@westchicago.org

#

General Media Contact:

Carol Fox & Associates

Ann Fink, 773.969.5042 annf@carolfoxassociates.com

For Downloadable Images and Additional Information: <https://tinyurl.com/Crea2022>