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**MORE THAN 30 LARGE SCALE MESOAMERICAN SCULPTURES
SHOWCASED IN INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC ART INITIATIVE,
“OLMEC TRAILS: CULTURE AND LEGACY,” COMING
TO DUPAGE COUNTY SUMMER 2024**

GLEN ELLYN, Ill.— Mexican Cultural Center DuPage (MCCD) in coordination with Meztli Mexico and in partnership with the College of DuPage Public Art Project (COD) and the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau (DCVB) is proud to announce an exciting new project: “Olmec Trails: Culture and Legacy.” This new outdoor exhibit featuring hand-painted large-scale renditions of iconic Mesoamerican sculptures will be displayed this summer throughout DuPage County in an expansive exhibition highlighting the culture of the ancient Olmec civilization in a fresh and accessible way.

The colossal stone heads, crafted by the Olmecs between 1400 BCE to 400 BCE, originated in the southern part of Veracruz, Mexico, the cultural heart of this early Mesoamerican civilization. Each multi-ton sculpture, chiseled from a single stone using primitive tools, reflected the Olmecs' artistic prowess and their significant influence on subsequent Mesoamerican cultures. Today, these iconic heads are celebrated globally as prime examples of pre-Columbian art and adorn various museums and public spaces. Notably, the Olmecs, Mesoamerica's earliest civilization, left enduring legacies, including the precursor to sports like basketball and soccer.

“Olmec Trails” pays tribute to the indigenous roots of Mexican heritage as well as brings attention to the importance of public art by showcasing the immense talent and creativity of more than 30 contemporary artists from across North America. The artwork will connect spectators to these one-of-a-kind works in a healthy and enjoyable outdoor setting with both physical and mental benefits. Installations will be located numerous sites throughout DuPage County including the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, campus of COD, National Museum of Mexican Art and the City of West Chicago. The project is looking to partner in additional host cities. [For more information visit OlmecTrails.com](http://OlmecTrails.com).

The creation of the works for this exciting international exhibition is already underway and will be completed in June of 2024. Artists in Mexico have begun painting some of the Olmec head sculptures and 18 international artists will arrive in May to paint on-site at two locations in DuPage County: the MCCD, 103 W. Washington St. in The City of West Chicago, Ill. and the MAC, 425 Fawell Blvd. on the campus of COD in Glen Ellyn, Ill. Installations and openings at the MCCD, COD and various forest preserves will begin June 1.



The exhibition will be celebrated throughout the summer with a variety of events including the Olmec Trails Family Fiesta Kick-Off Party at the MAC's Lakeside Pavilion June 30. More information about events, sponsorship opportunities and exhibition updates will be available at OlmecTrails.com.

Support for "Olmec Trails: Culture and Legacy" is provided in part by the Mexican Cultural Center DuPage, College of DuPage, the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau, Illinois Office of Tourism and the National Museum of Mexican Art. Artist support is provided in part by Meztli Mexico and the Mexican Cultural Arts Alliance.

Mexican Cultural Center DuPage (MCCD)

The Mexican Cultural Center DuPage (MCCD) has built a long-standing reputation and stands as a beacon of cultural expression, emphasizing expansive community public art projects deeply rooted in Mexican traditions. In 2022, MCCD joined forces with Meztli and embarked on the "Alebrijes: Creatures of a Dream World", at Cantigny Park, Wheaton, Ill. The exhibit emerged as the largest display of "Alebrijes Monumentales" outside Mexico. As champions of Mexican arts in America, MCCD caters to the population of 43 million Americans of Mexican lineage. MCCD is a founding member of the Mexican Cultural Arts Alliance (MCAA). MCAA is a bi-national alliance of Mexican-led organizations led by the National Museum of Mexican Art. For more information about MCCD, visit MCCDuPage.org.

College of DuPage Public Art Project (COD)

The COD DuPage Public Art Project proposed by MAC Director Diana Martinez, was approved by the COD Board of Trustees in October 2020 with the goal of initiating public art events and art installations throughout DuPage County. The idea of the project was inspired by the announcement by COD President Dr. Brian Caputo of the Arts, Culture and Community Engagement Pillar of the College's 2021-2026 Strategic Long-Range Plan. The COD Public Art Committee partnership with Glen Ellyn kicked off with the September 2021 installation of the Tony Fitzpatrick murals. Additional projects have included October 2021 "Chalk the Walk" community initiative featuring art by 3D award-winning chalk artist Nate Baranowski, the travelling installation "Glen Ellyn Letters" created by Juan Chawuk, and most recently, "The Grove" Glen Ellyn Taylor Avenue pedestrian underpass tunnel mural. For more information about the COD Public Art Project, visit theccma.org/codpubart.

DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau (DCVB)

DCVB is the official destination marketing organization for DuPage County, Illinois' second largest County, comprised of 38 communities. The DCVB works in partnership with community business and civic leaders to maximize travel and tourism opportunities which contribute to the economic vitality of the County and its residents. For more information, visit DiscoverDuPage.com.