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WKU series branches out with community art project this fall

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Western Kentucky University is branching out with a community art project this fall involving artist Patrick Dougherty, who is known for his large-scale sculptures woven with tree saplings.

WKU's Cultural Enhancement Series and the Kentucky Museum have invited Dougherty to campus between Oct. 1-19. During his stay, Dougherty will complete a sculpture in front of the museum. The public is invited to help with harvesting branches and building the piece.

"I think it's going to be wonderful for our community," said Lynne Ferguson, the Kentucky Museum's artist-in-residence.

The sculpture's design is still a work in progress, but Ferguson said Dougherty has already visited the museum and scouted surrounding counties for materials.

Volunteers are also needed for the project to help with two phases.

The first phase involves collecting branches from on and off campus. The following construction phase involves weaving with branches under Dougherty's direction. More information about volunteering is available online at www.wku.edu/kentuckymuseum/stickwork.php. Volunteers can sign up at the Kentucky Museum or by calling Lynne Ferguson at 270-745-2594.

An advertisement featuring a smartphone icon with a blue speech bubble containing an envelope and the number '1' above the word 'NEWS'. To the right, text reads 'Get today's Headlines & Events from the Daily News via email everyday!'. Below this, the text 'Signup Now for FREE!' is written in a stylized font.

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FORD'S FURNITURE



Dougherty's work grew out of his love for nature and carpentry, according to his website. His first work, Maple Body Wrap, was featured in the North Carolina Biennial Artists' Exhibition in 1982. The following year, he debuted a one-man show called Waitin' It Out in Maple at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem, N.C.

His work has blossomed from single pieces on pedestals into monument-sized environmental works that require truckloads of saplings. He's built more than 250 pieces over the 30 years and attracted international attention, according to Dougherty's website.

Once finished, Dougherty's sculpture will remain on campus for several years, Ferguson said.

"It'll be a destination for people," she said.

– Follow education reporter Aaron Mudd on Twitter @BGDN_edbeat or visit bgdailynews.com.

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