

DUMBARTON OAKS
GARDEN & LANDSCAPE STUDIES

ARTIST'S TALK:
PATRICK DOUGHERTY
“PRIMITIVE WAYS IN AN ACCELERATED WORLD”

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2010 AT 5:30 P.M.



Summer Palace (2009) Morris Arboretum, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. Photo © Rob Cardillo

In conjunction with his installation in the gardens at Dumbarton Oaks, sculptor Patrick Dougherty will give a talk about his work on Tuesday, September 21, 2010 at 5:30 pm. Since September 1, the artist has been working on an improvised installation of woven saplings in the Ellipse; the lecture will mark the completion of the project and opening of the sculpture to public view.

Dougherty's project for Dumbarton Oaks is taking shape in the Ellipse, one of the most familiar features of the Dumbarton Oaks Gardens. Originally designed by landscape architect Beatrix Farrand during the 1930s and surrounded by a sprawling boxwood hedge, the Ellipse was transformed by architect Alden Hopkins in 1956 by the addition of a double row of pleached hornbeams. Responding to what he perceived as the monumentality and the static quality of this clipped aerial hedge, Dougherty is adding a series of "running figures," or twisted architectural elements, that rise into the hedge and pursue each other actively and gracefully around the Ellipse.

Combining his carpentry skills with his love of nature, Patrick Dougherty began to learn about primitive techniques of building and to experiment with tree saplings as construction material. Beginning about 1980 with small works, fashioned in his backyard, he quickly moved from single pieces on conventional pedestals to monumental site-specific installations that require sticks by the truckload. To date he has built over two hundred such massive sculptures all over the world. His work is the subject of a new monograph entitled "Stick-work," published by Princeton Architectural Press (August 2010). More information on his work can be found at <http://stickwork.net/>

Dougherty's talk will provide an overview of his work, including a discussion of materials and techniques, sources and variations in his imagery, the role of institutions and volunteers in his projects, and public reception.

The talk will take place in the Music Room at Dumbarton Oaks and will be followed by a reception in the Orangery, during which guests will have a chance to see the sculpture. Admission is free but advance registration is required by emailing landscape@doaks.org or by calling (202) 339-6460.

1703 32nd Street, NW, Washington DC. Parking not provided.