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**MAYOR EMANUEL, PARK DISTRICT AND CHICAGO SCULPTURE INTERNATIONAL ANNOUNCE
CHICAGO TREE PROJECT TO TURN DEAD TREES INTO PUBLIC ART**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the Chicago Park District and Chicago Sculpture International today announce the Chicago Tree Project, which will commission local artists to turn dead or dying trees that are infested with Emerald Ash Borer or other bugs and diseases into living public art.

“Chicago is one of the world’s greatest arts and culture capitals, and every Chicagoan should have the opportunity to experience art and culture, no matter their zip code,” said Mayor Emanuel. “The Chicago Tree Project joins programs like Sculpture on the Boulevards, Night Out in the Parks and installations of public art along the lakefront to bring art directly to Chicago residents.”

The Chicago Tree Project uses art as vehicle for community engagement throughout Chicago parks and creates unique opportunities for citizens to celebrate the beauty of nature. Each Chicago Tree Project artist aims to create an impact on the neighborhood and park visitors.

The project is part of Mayor Emanuel’s efforts to bring public art to neighborhoods across Chicago and fits into his citywide vision for art and culture, as outlined under the Chicago Cultural Plan. Artist J. Taylor Wallace began to carve a Honey Locust tree in McGuane Park on May 15th. His whimsical, ascending spiral concept is intended to compliment the tree’s natural form and growth pattern. The carving-intensive project is expected to take a few weeks to complete.

Currently on display in Jackson Park is “Flock” by Margot McMahon. This elm tree, which is more than 125 years old, consists of hanging a cast/sculpted owl with other song birds from the elm tree limbs.

Last fall, through a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process, 10 qualified local artists were selected to transform deceased or dying tree shafts throughout Chicago. The concepts proposed by the artists selected to create public art from these trees range from carved tree shafts to additive concepts that will use a variety of materials.

Patrons can expect to see carved or artistically modified trees over the next several months at parks including Washington, Marquette, McGuane, Armour Square, Humboldt, Olympia and Riis.

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