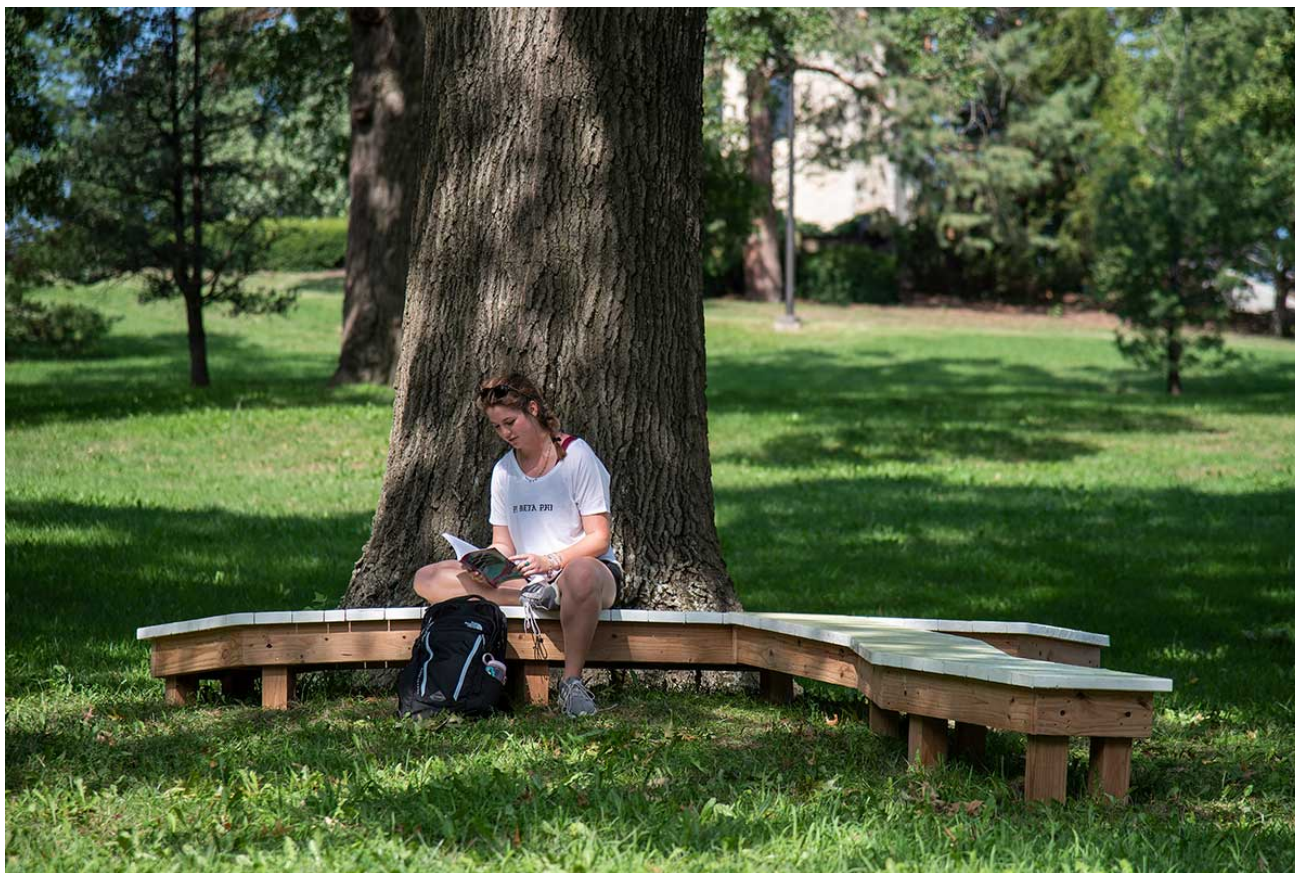


TWO ART COMMISSIONS ENLIVEN MARVIN GROVE ON KU'S LAWRENCE CAMPUS¹

Wed, 08/29/2018



LAWRENCE — The new exhibition ["Art in the Grove"](#)² enlivens the historic green space at the heart of the University of Kansas' Lawrence campus through two site-specific works commissioned by the Spencer Museum of Art.

The first commissioned work is a series of benches installed within Marvin Grove and in front of the Spencer Museum created by local artist team Judith G. Levy, Jason Zeh and David Ross. Each bench wraps around or "hugs" a tree. Titled "CHIPKO," the Hindi word for hugging, the installation was inspired by women who — in 1973 — hugged trees to prevent them from being cut down by loggers in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, India.

The benches feature glow-in-the-dark paint to artificially mimic the relationship the trees have with sunlight. Two of the benches also include audio, which was created using natural sounds collected from the Grove.

"We seek to honor the legacies of both the women of the Chipko Movement and Chancellor James Marvin," Levy said. "It is our hope that 'CHIPKO' will provide insight, experience and pleasure as artworks that touch upon various aspects of human and natural interactions, while underscoring global environmental struggles."

The second commissioned work is a dance performance choreographed by Maya Tillman-Rayton, an instructor in the Department of Theatre & Dance. Rayton's performance, titled "Groove in the Grove," uses the grounded movement from hip-hop and modern dance to celebrate the wooded landscape. "Groove in the Grove" will be performed by dancers from KU and the Lawrence community at the Spencer Museum's annual Backyard Bash in Marvin Grove on Sept. 30, with an open rehearsal Sept. 27.

Tillman-Rayton said she was excited to participate in the exhibition because dance is often presented separately from visual art.

"'Groove in the Grove' will create a moving sculpture using hip-hop dance with the sounds of funk music. This piece should be fun, festive and encourage the crowd to move," Tillman-Rayton said.

["Art in the Grove"](#)² is also a site for [Open Spaces: The Expanded Field](#)³. [Open Spaces](#)⁴ is a 10-week, city-wide celebration of art and artists throughout the Kansas City area.

["Art in the Grove"](#)² is supported by Mike and Dee Michaelis, Emprise Bank and the Linda Inman Bailey Exhibitions Fund.

Related Programming

Sept. 27

Open Rehearsal: Groove in the Grove

6:30-7:30 p.m./ Marvin Grove behind the Spencer Museum of Art

Get a glimpse into the artistic process with choreographer Maya Tillman-Rayton and dancers from KU and the Lawrence community as they rehearse for the premiere of "Groove in the Grove," a hip-hop performance commissioned for "Art in the Grove."

Sept. 30

Community Event: Backyard Bash

1-4 p.m. / Marvin Grove behind the Spencer Museum of Art

Kick back with your friends and neighbors in the biggest backyard on campus — historic Marvin Grove behind the Spencer Museum of Art — for an artful celebration of our surroundings. Free and fun for all ages.

Oct. 7

Gallery Talk: Art in the Grove

2-3 p.m. / Marvin Grove behind the Spencer Museum of Art

Gain insights into "Art in the Grove" with Museum Director Saralyn Reece Hardy and the artists behind a series of new works nestled within historic Marvin Grove.

Photo: A student enjoys one of the benches installed within Marvin Grove as part of "Art in the Grove."

Credit: Ryan Waggoner, Spencer Museum of Art.

The University of Kansas is a major comprehensive research and teaching university. The university's mission is to lift students and society by educating leaders, building healthy communities and making discoveries that change the world. The KU News Service is the central public relations office for the Lawrence campus.

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1. <https://today.ku.edu/2018/08/29/two-art-commissions-enliven-marvin-grove-kus-lawrence-campus>
 2. <https://spencerart.ku.edu/exhibition/art-grove>
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