

Source: Linda Duke, 785-532-7718, lduke@k-state.edu

Website: <http://beach.k-state.edu/explore/exhibitions/bello.html>

News tip: Manhattan

Photo available: <http://www.k-state.edu/media/images/aug14/bello.jpg>

Photo outline: Charles Bello and his redwood sculptures are featured in a new exhibition at Kansas State University's Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art.

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Sculptor Bello's redwood creations showcased in new Beach Museum exhibition

MANHATTAN — Charles Bello has dedicated his life to preserving 400-acres of redwood forest in Northern California. Now visitors to the newest exhibition at Kansas State University's Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art can get a sense of the beauty of this precious species..

"Tree of Life: The Art of Charles Bello," which opens Sept. 12 and runs through Dec. 14, offers a window into Bello's special forest through the sculptures he has crafted from the majestic redwood, which is among the tallest and strongest trees in North America.

"For those of us here on the Kansas prairie, these sculptures offer a way to know the redwoods by their colors, forms, surfaces and aesthetic presence," said Linda Duke, director at the Beach Museum of Art. "In a larger sense, however, this exhibition is intended to inspire the viewer to think about the beauty and fragility of every ecosystem, including the one closest to his or her own heart."

Bello originally trained as an architect, graduating from California Polytechnic State University. He went on to serve an internship with noted architect Richard Neutra in the 1950s, giving him opportunities to know and work with some of the most respected modernist architects, designers and artists of the mid-century. In the late 1960s, Bello bought his redwood forest, which inspired his passion for stewarding as he applied his talent and intellect to whatever need arose. On his land, he serves as an ecologist, engineer, subsistence farmer, inventor, artist and architect—even building the bridges and buildings on his property from his own designs.

Bello's forest now comprises his Redwood Forest Institute, which has the mission of purchasing, protecting and restoring redwood forest lands for future generations; educating the public about their importance; and providing a place to commune with nature. More information on the institute is available at <http://www.savetrees.org>.

The "Tree of Life: The Art of Charles Bello" exhibition also offered opportunities for Kansas State University students to be involved in exhibition design under the guidance of university faculty. William Wingus, senior in fine arts, worked with Shreepad Joglekar on photographic and video elements of the installation. Troy Britt, senior in fine arts, and Richard D. Prudenti, master's student in landscape architecture, worked with Steve Davidson, assistant professor of interior architecture & product design, and Lindsey Smith, Beach Museum exhibition designer, on the overall design and construction of the installation

The Beach Museum of Art is on the southeast corner of the Kansas State University campus at 14th Street and Anderson Avenue. Admission is free and the museum is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

and Saturday; 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday; and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. The museum is closed Mondays and holidays. Free parking is available adjacent to the building. For more information, call 785-532-7718 or visit <http://beach.k-state.edu>.

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