

UC San Diego to Recognize Historic Inauguration

Stuart Collection's 'Trees' Will Air First-Ever Live Broadcast of Ceremony and Speech

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The Stuart Collection's "Trees" at the University of California, San Diego will broadcast the inauguration of Barack Obama as 44th President of the United States, on Jan. 20, beginning at 8 a.m. Hundreds of additional UC San Diego students will watch the inauguration at parties in the Loft, Price Center East and the International House from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The "Trees," created by multidisciplinary artist Terry Allen, stand in the eucalyptus grove between the Geisel Library and the Faculty Club and have been playing songs and a series of original poems and stories since their installation in 1986. Allen felt that it would be appropriate to mark this new beginning for our country by letting the "Trees" share it with anyone who cares to stop by, said Mary Beebe, Stuart Collection director.

On Jan. 20, both the "Music Tree" and the "Poems and Stories Tree" will play a live radio broadcast for the first time to mark the historical significance of President Obama's inauguration. The radio broadcast will feature the inaugural program - including the swearing-in ceremony and inaugural address - at a higher than usual volume.

Allen salvaged three eucalyptus trees from a grove razed to make way for new campus buildings. His "Trees" are preserved and encased in skins of lead to evoke, perhaps, the world's continual loss of natural environment. They were "replanted" into the grove where a tree had died or fallen and bear layers of scratchings of many students' initials. Signs will be placed on the hills and paths alerting students to listen to the historic inauguration at one of the university's most renowned landmarks. The highly trafficked area is expected to attract hundreds of students.

Large crowds of students also will gather together to watch the historic inauguration at parties in the Loft, International House, and Price Center East beginning at 8 a.m. Students were highly involved with the 2008 presidential election at UC San Diego, where the highest number of voters turned out for the Nov. 4 election in San Diego County.

The Stuart Collection commissions outdoor, site-specific artworks for UC San Diego's 1,200-acre campus. The innovative collection is unusual in that the entire campus may be considered as sites for the artworks. The Stuart Collection is further distinguished from a traditional sculpture garden by integration of some of the projects with university buildings.

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