



For immediate release
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Media Advisory

What:

A magnificent living outdoor art project, “The Blue Trees”, will be installed in Sacramento this week and will last approximately six months. The Blue Trees project is a part of artist Konstantin Dimopoulos’ effort to call attention to global deforestation, and is supported* by several local organizations and businesses because of its ability to call attention to Sacramento’s valuable urban forest and the unique benefits of visiting our city.

*No public funds are spent on this project.

Twenty mature trees and forty container trees will be colored bright blue by the artist and Sacramento Tree Foundation volunteers. The blue pigment used on the trees is a non-toxic, environmentally-friendly substance that will stay on the trees for up to six months.

Dimopoulos has installed The Blue Trees in Melbourne (2006), Vancouver (2011), Auckland (2011) and Seattle (2012). Sacramento will be the fifth Blue Trees city before the Dimopoulos takes his project to Gainesville, Florida in late October and Houston in 2013. He is currently in discussions to expand the project to New York, Boston, Liverpool and Vienna.

When:

The project work will begin on **Tuesday, October 9, 2012** and is expected to be complete by Saturday, October 13, 2012. Work will likely start each day at 8:00 a.m. and end by 6:00 p.m.

Where:

Twelve of the trees are located on 13th Street on the same side as the Convention Center. The other eight trees are located on the west side of the street. Forty #15 container trees will also be colored to be showcased around town, before being planted in a site to be determined.

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Blue Trees Sacramento c/o Sacramento Tree Foundation 916.924-8733
www.sactree.org



Why:

In addition to supporting the artist's effort to call attention to global deforestation, local sponsors support the Blue Trees project for additional reasons.

Lead sponsors

- The **Sacramento Tree Foundation** is pleased that The Blue Trees will generate interest in, and conversation about, trees! The Tree Foundation would like to also call attention to plight of the city's iconic elm trees; and to encourage the public to plant and care for trees.
- The **Sacramento Convention & Visitors Bureau** is committed to optimizing the Sacramento experience for visitors, and to generating positive news stories for the region. While many upcoming conferences will experience The Blue Trees, three in particular will have immediate exposure to the installation: American Institute of Architects; California Downtown Association and the National Urban Forest conference.
- The **Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission** is committed to expanding public experiences of visual art by installing artworks in public spaces.
- **Sactown Magazine**, June/July 2012: "Here in Sacramento, we take great pride in our trees, but we don't always notice them. That's something that Egyptian-born Australian artist Konstantin Dimopoulos is trying to change in cities around the world." The article issued the challenge, "Why not commission him to bring his 'Blue Trees' project to the City of Trees?"

Just a few of the "friends of The Blue Trees":

- **The City of Sacramento, Urban Forestry Division** supports the project with this message: "If you want to do something about Sacramento losing its signature canopy, then plant a tree! Even better, if you have the space, plant a big tree, like a hybrid DED resistant elm! Join the pledge to add 30,000 trees this year."
- The **Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce** and the **Downtown Sacramento Partnership** help promote the project because it is a demonstration of the region's creativity, enthusiasm and willingness to do something interesting for a good cause. These are important factors in attracting and keeping new businesses and youthful workforces.

Additional sponsors are listed on the Sacramento Tree Foundation's website: www.sactree.org

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Statement from the artist:

“What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another.” Mahatma Gandhi

As artists we change our environment continually through our particular practice. Whether painting on canvas, creating sculptures or a digital artwork we take reality and alter it. You, the viewer, then see this altered world through our eyes.

The Blue Trees takes an urban landscape with which you are familiar and changes it for a brief period of time so that it becomes something unfamiliar, a strange environment.

We are creatures who like certainty and we become disconcerted when our environment changes. Yet we have altered and destroyed much of the global environment. With this destruction we have caused the extinction of countless species.

The Blue Trees is part of a wider question that I ask – *“Can Art Save the World?”* Maybe not on its own, but it can generate thinking and discussion throughout the global community.

- **Konstantin Dimopoulos**

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The Blue Trees / Sacramento

When *Sactown Magazine* published an article in its June/July 2012 issue that floated the idea of “The Blue Trees” in Sacramento, community leaders took notice... and action.

The magazine’s “Why Not Here” column spotlighted a project by Australian artist Konstantin Dimopoulos, who has “painted” trees in a handful of cities ranging from Melbourne, Australia to Seattle with an eco-friendly pigment that temporarily renders the trees a bright ultramarine blue. The end result is a bold public art installation and an important environmental message about global deforestation. The article issued the challenge, “Why not commission him to bring his ‘Blue Trees’ project to the City of Trees?”

And now, after an extraordinary effort led by the Sacramento Tree Foundation, The Blue Trees project is coming to Sacramento!

In partnership with the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission, the Sacramento Convention & Visitors Bureau, and *Sactown Magazine*, the Sacramento Tree Foundation is bringing Konstantin Dimopoulos to Sacramento on October 9th 2012 to make this project a reality here before it continues on to other cities.

The Blue Trees stimulate conversation, interest and enthusiasm in each their host cities. Residents from throughout their regions made it a point to visit the trees to check them out in person. (“Are they really as blue as the pictures make them appear?”) Local vacationers and out-of-town tourists plan trips to be photographed with The Blue Trees – and promptly post or Tweet them for all their friends to see. Even business travelers are curious enough to visit the part of town where The Blue Trees beckon – and many groups of conventioners have been spotted posing in groups for photos with The Blue Trees.

In addition to the important message about global deforestation, The Blue Trees are a fun, interesting outdoor art project. They bring excitement and interest to their host cities, and they attract visitors and residents alike to the neighborhoods where they are installed. Civic leaders from The Blue Trees cities say that they are proud that their city is viewed as interesting, innovative, and even curious – it is all a part of their brand as a desirable destination.

Enthused by all of this information, the lead host partners (*Sactown Magazine*, Sacramento Tree Foundation, Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission and the Sacramento Convention & Visitors Bureau) recruited donors and in-kind sponsors to help bring The Blue Trees project to Sacramento. The team raised more than \$25,000 in cash and in-kind services in one week from a broad group of local businesses and organizations. With these funds* covering the cost of the coloration substance and the artist’s travel, the Sacramento Tree Foundation pledged volunteer support, and many others offered in-kind services, to help plan and promote the project.

**No public funds are spent on this project.*

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