

Eureka!

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: DONA DEPAOLI, ACTING DIRECTOR

"ROMANO GABRIEL WOODEN SCULPTURE GARDEN DEDICATION APRIL 3RD"

EUREKA, CALIFORNIA - THE ROMANO GABRIEL WOODEN SCULPTURE GARDEN, AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED FOLK ART WORK NEARLY LOST TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE ART WORLD, HAS BEEN RESCUED.

RANKED IN IMPORTANCE BY ART CRITICS WITH SIMON RODIA'S WATTS TOWERS IN LOS ANGELES, THE GARDEN WILL BE DEDICATED AT NOON ON APRIL 3RD AT ITS NEW LOCATION AT 315 2ND STREET IN THE "OLD TOWN" SECTION OF THIS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTAL CITY.

DEDICATION MARKS THE CULMINATION OF A FIVE YEAR COMMUNITY EFFORT TO PRESERVE THE GARDEN, WHICH ORIGINALLY "GREW" IN THE FRONT YARD OF ROMANO GABRIEL, AN ITALIAN IMMIGRANT.

GABRIEL, AN APPRENTICE FURNITURE MAKER, CARPENTER AND GARDENER, COMBINED HIS TALENTS OVER 30 YEARS TO CREATE A FANTASY FOREST FROM OLD CRATES AND SCRAP LUMBER. CARICATURES OF THE POPE AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD GROCER STOOD IN AN IMPROBABLE ARRAY OF FLOWERS, ANIMALS, TREES AND TOWERS.

FOLLOWING GABRIEL'S DEATH, THE GARDEN WAS SUBJECTED TO VANDALISM AND NEGLECT UNTIL PURCHASED FROM THE GABRIEL ESTATE BY EUREKA RESIDENTS, RAY AND DOLORES VELUTINI, AND THEN RESTORED BY THEIR SON, VINCENT.

RESPONDING TO THE NEED FOR A NEW SITE AND PROTECTIVE STRUCTURE, THE EUREKA HERITAGE SOCIETY LAUNCHED A COMMUNITY-WIDE CAMPAIGN RAISING \$80,000 FROM INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS, GROUP ACTIVITIES, AND GRANTS FROM THE JAMES IRVINE FOUNDATION OF SAN FRANCISCO AND THE HUMBOLDT AREA FOUNDATION, A LOCAL PHILANTHROPIC ORGANIZATION. THE NEW EXHIBIT STRUCTURE, DESIGNED BY THE EUREKA ARCHITECTURAL FIRM OF TRUMP AND SAUBLE, HAS NOW BEEN COMPLETED ON A SITE PROVIDED BY THE EUREKA REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY.

DURING THE FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN, THE GARDEN WON INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION WITH SELECTED PIECES ON TOUR OF EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AS PART OF A FOLK ART EXHIBITION SPONSORED BY THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT. NATIONALLY, THE GARDEN HAS BEEN REPRESENTED AT THE LOS ANGELES MUNICIPAL ART GALLERY, THE SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF MODERN ART AND IN PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITIONS AT HARVARD AND THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.

IRONICALLY, THE GARDEN RECEIVED ITS FIRST OFFICIAL RECOGNITION AS AN IMPORTANT PIECE OF FOLK ART FROM THE CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL ON MARCH 19, 1977...THE DAY OF ROMANO GABRIEL'S DEATH. TODAY, ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARTIST'S PASSING, THE EUREKA/HUMBOLDT COUNTY CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE DEDICATION OF THE PERMANENT PUBLIC DISPLAY OF THE ROMANO GABRIEL SCULPTURE GARDEN.

come find it...

**EUREKA
HUMBOLDT COUNTY
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123 F STREET • EUREKA, CA 95501 • (707) 443-5097