Frederick Law Olmsted NHS  Press Release

July 26, 2012
For Immediate Release
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Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site Commemorates Its “Olmsted Elm” with a September Exhibit of Artworks Created from Its Wood by RISD Students

Brookline, Mass. - From Friday, August 31 through Sunday, September 30, 2012, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site is exhibiting artwork from Rhode Island School of Design’s “Witness Tree Project.”  *Echoes of the Olmsted Elm* presents student works created from the wood of the “Olmsted Elm,” a tree that for nearly 200 years graced the landscape of “Fairsted,” the home and office of renowned landscape architect and urban park designer Frederick Law Olmsted. The exhibit is free and open to the public, with drop-in hours **Thursdays from 5:00 to 8:00 pm and weekends from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.** In addition, visitors going on the site’s regularly-scheduled Wednesday through Sunday tours will visit the exhibit at the conclusion of their tour. For further information on *Echoes of the Olmsted Elm*, please visit Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site’s website at [www.nps.gov/frla](http://www.nps.gov/frla) or call the site at 617-566-1689.

Rhode Island School of Design (RISD)'s Witness Tree Project (witnessstreeproject.org) was developed in 2009 as a partnership with the National Park Service. This collaborative venture, led by RISD faculty Dale Broholm and Dan Cavicchi, works each year with one or more National Park Service sites that have removed historic “witness trees” from their landscapes. Students taking the Witness Tree Project course are given wood from the removed tree or trees for the purpose of creating art objects. At the same time that they make these wooden objects, the students study the history and significance of the historic sites where the trees once stood. In past years, the course worked with trees from Hampton National Historic Site in Maryland, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site in New York, and George Washington Birthplace National Monument in Virginia.

During the fall of 2011, the “Witness Tree Project” focused on the historic American elm from Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site (Olmsted NHS) in Brookline, Massachusetts. That tree during its
The students then produced works from the elm wood in a studio component of the course. The resulting objects present aspects of Olmsted's biography, the history of recreation in the U.S., and contemporary issues related to use of public spaces, including those associated with the 2011 Occupy movements.

Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, the host of the exhibit, was the home and office of America’s premier parkmaker and the designer of the Emerald Necklace park system. It is now administered by the National Park Service as one of its 397 sites around the United States. The site offers regular tours of the historic Olmsted design office and Olmsted-designed grounds Wednesdays through Sundays. There is no admission charge. For further information on Olmsted National Historic Site, the site tour schedule, and its other programs, please visit www.nps.gov/frla or call 617-566-1689.

The Echoes of the Olmsted Elm exhibit is co-sponsored by the Friends of Fairsted (www.friendsoffairsed.org), a private, non-profit organization that supports the mission of Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

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