

Naperville Art League
Daily Herald Insert Story
Riverwalk Fine Art Fair

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Potraits of Patzcuaro
Michoacan Artists' Display Celebrates Naperville's Newest Sister City

When artist Rene Hugo Arceo set out to depict similarities between his native Mexican state of Michoacan and the United States, he chose two striking symbols: the monarch butterfly and the Chicago Skyline.

“Near the Day of the Dead, monarch butterflies emigrate to Patzcuaro, Mexico, and people believe the butterflies carry the souls of deceased relatives,” said Arceo, 50, a native of Cojumatlan, Michoacan who is known for his printmaking expertise and has exhibited around the world.

“I wanted to put on the wings the faces of people to represent those souls, and I combined it with the Chicago skyline to represent that we are all under the same sky.”

Art fair attendees can examine the many faces drawn within the wings of a neon monarch in Arceo's well-known print, “Monarca sobre Chicago” (Monarch Over Chicago, 2009). The Linocut and watercolor artwork will be among many on display at the Naperville Sister Cities Commission booths at the Naperville Art League's 25th Annual Riverwalk Art Fair September 18 and 19 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Arceo, of Chicago, and colleagues Eufemio Pulido, Hector Duarte and Roberto Ferreyra are exhibiting at the invitation of the Sister Cities Commission to celebrate its new relationship with Patzcuaro, Michoacan, Mexico.

Patzcuaro officially became Naperville's second sister city in June, following a tradition begun in 1993 when Naperville formalized a Sister City relationship with Nitra, Slovakia. The program provides cultural exchange and business opportunities for city officials and citizens through long-term community partnerships.

The commission booths will feature both the art and artists who have ties to Michoacan, one of the largest states in Mexico, said Arceo. The works are culled from a previous exhibition celebrating bonds between the two cultures, he said.

Among other featured Arceo prints: “Dos Experiencias, Una Identidad” (Two Experiences, One Identity, 2003) and “Pescado Blanco en Rio Chicago” (White Fish in Chicago River, 2003) which shows a white fish found in Lake Patzcuaro known for its mild flavor and used in many regional dishes.

Patzcuaro was chosen by the Sister City Commission because of its many similarities with Naperville, according to **Co-Chairman** Roberto Ramirez. The 500-year-old Mexican city, located between Mexico City and the western coast, is situated near a lake and features historical architecture and a thriving downtown area. The partnership also reflects the increasing population of Mexican Americans in the Naperville area, many of whom like Arceo have immigrated from Central Mexico, said Ramirez.

Arceo came to the United States in 1979 and was educated at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. A married father of three, he also teaches art at Monroe Elementary School in Chicago. His body of work, held in private and public collections, is known for its intricate, painstaking attention to printmaking detail and strong political and emotional messages.

Arceo and fellow artists Pulido, Duarte and Ferreyra will be on hand at the Art Fair to discuss their work, background and exhibitions. Naperville Sister Cities commissioners will also be attending to help answer questions about the program and the new partnership with Patzcuaro.

The commission booths will also feature performances by Tarima Son, a troupe formed in the Pilsen neighborhood in 2002 to celebrate music from Michoacan and other states. **The troupe will perform September 18 at 2:30 and 4 p.m.**

The commission has raised more than \$30,000 in pledges to support travel and exchange opportunities between Naperville and Patzcuaro over the next three to five years, said Ramirez. **The next event announcing Patzcuaro will be a Signing Ceremony and Celebration November 13 at 10 a.m. in City Hall.** For more information, view the commission website at www.Naperville.il.us/sistercities.aspx or 630-420-6018.