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For Immediate Release

HONORING AN EXTRAORDINARY LEGACY, THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, BARNSDALL ART PARK FOUNDATION, AND LOS ANGELES PARKS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCE THE RESTORATION OF BARNSDALL PARK'S HISTORIC OLIVE GROVE

The Collaborative Venture Supports the City of L.A.'s Mission to Plant 90,000 New Trees

May 11, 2021 – The City of Los Angeles, Barnsdall Art Park Foundation, and Los Angeles Parks Foundation are excited to announce an ambitious community initiative to restore and sustain the historic olive grove of Barnsdall Art Park in East Hollywood. The world-renowned 11.5-acre park and cultural destination includes Hollyhock House, created by Frank Lloyd Wright for Aline Barnsdall, which is Los Angeles's only UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Barnsdall Art Park Foundation has contributed \$25,000 to the Adopt-a-Park program run by the Los Angeles Parks Foundation. Those funds are being used to pay for the horticultural survey and analysis of Barnsdall Art Park's olive grove, the necessary care of the site's 463 existing olive trees for one year, and the development of a comprehensive strategy for planting additional olive trees at the park.

The Barnsdall Art Park Foundation has also begun raising money to plant and maintain new olive trees through the Los Angeles Park Forest program, created and managed by the Los Angeles Parks Foundation. The mission of the Los Angeles Park Forest initiative is to add trees to city parks to offset our carbon footprint, cool surface air temperatures, and educate the public about climate change. The Barnsdall Olive Grove Initiative will improve the air quality of the East Hollywood community and support the City of Los Angeles's goal to plant 90,000 new trees as part of L.A.'s Green New Deal.

2021 marks the 100th anniversary of the completion of Hollyhock House, the 50th anniversary of the completion of the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery and Gallery Theatre building, and the 50th anniversary of Barnsdall Art Park being added to the National Register of Historic Places. To honor these milestones, the Barnsdall Art Park Foundation has established the *Barnsdall Art Park 100 | 50 | 50 Campaign*. The contributions raised through this fundraising drive will support the City of L.A.'s comprehensive efforts to conserve, enhance, and activate the park's landscape, infrastructure, public programs, and exhibitions.

"Barnsdall Art Park is a unique and priceless gem in the City of Los Angeles, and this Olive Grove Initiative is yet another reminder as to why," said Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell. "Preserving the existing trees and propagating new, healthy olive trees into the campus's landscape is an essential step in preserving this historically significant grove that

is an essential contributor to this cultural resource we all cherish, Barnsdall Art Park, and UNESCO contributor, Hollyhock House."

"The Department of Recreation and Parks is extremely grateful for the partnership we have with the Barnsdall Art Park Foundation and the Los Angeles Parks Foundation," said Mike Shull, General Manager, Recreation and Parks. "We appreciate their commitment to ensuring that the Barnsdall Park historic olive grove continues to be a healthy landscape of olive trees that the East Hollywood community, visitors, and generations to come can enjoy."

"The Barnsdall Art Park Foundation is thrilled to celebrate the centennial of Hollyhock House and these incredible milestones throughout Barnsdall Art Park, one of the great gems in our city's crown," said the Barnsdall Art Park Foundation's President, Daniel Gerwin. "We are excited to work with the City and all our partners to honor Aline Barnsdall's extraordinary vision. Because the park is virtually the only green space serving the local community, the Barnsdall Olive Grove Initiative is of vital importance both historically and socially."

"The Los Angeles Parks Foundation is committed to restoring our city's urban forest through tree-plantings and restoration projects," said Executive Director Carolyn Ramsay. "We are honored to work with the Barnsdall Art Park Foundation and the City of Los Angeles at this significant historic site and beloved community park."

In his 2014 article entitled, ["When East Hollywood's Barnsdall Art Park Was an Olive Orchard."](#) for his *Lost LA* series for KCET, Nathan Masters writes, "Before the Hollyhock House, there were olive trees—a veritable army of them, some 1,225, each spaced 20 feet apart, marching up the hillside in an orderly grid formation." Masters explains how Joseph H. Spires established the commercial orchard in the 1890s as a means to earn revenue while he developed his unrealized plans for a grand hotel atop the site. His property became known as Olive Hill. "In 1916, the hill stood in for Jerusalem's Mount of Olives in D.W. Griffith's 'Intolerance.' Four years later, on April 4, 1920, an estimated crowd of 10,000 assembled around Olive Hill for Hollywood's first Easter sunrise service with the Los Angeles Philharmonic—a tradition that moved the following year to the Hollywood Bowl," Masters explains.

Philanthropist and oil heiress Aline Barnsdall purchased the 36-acre tract from Spires' widow. Barnsdall's goal was to use the site for her home and an ambitious theatrical arts complex designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. The existing olive grove was preserved and incorporated into Wright's landscape plans, which he created with his son, Lloyd Wright. In 1927, Barnsdall donated Hollyhock House and a portion of her land to the City of Los Angeles to establish a public park. She wrote, "I gave this park not only as a gift but as the expression of an idea, and what I care most about is [that] this idea—labeled Barnsdall Park—shall live and develop with the years."

After her death in 1946, Barnsdall's property was subdivided into several commercial and residential parcels. By 1992, only 90 olive trees remained. The 1995 Barnsdall Park Master Plan, created by Peter Walker William Johnson and Partners, Lehrer Architects, Levin & Associates Architects, and Kosmont Associates, proposed adding 1,376 new olive trees. Many dimensions of that comprehensive landscape plan were completed in 2003—including the addition of 315 olive trees.

"During our soil analysis and assessment of the condition and health of the site, we discovered that 46 olive trees are likely from the original grove established in the 1890s," explained Los Angeles Parks Foundation Project Manager and Horticulturist, Katherine Pakradouni. "Those historic fruiting trees have produced 58 seedlings that are growing near the older tree canopies. We are hopeful that those special seedlings may be nurtured into vibrant saplings at the Los Angeles Parks Foundation headquarters at the historic Commonwealth Nursery in Griffith Park and replanted at Barnsdall Art Park or other locations throughout the city."

The Barnsdall Art Park Foundation's community partnership with the City of L.A. and the Los Angeles Parks Foundation reactivates the important objectives of the 1995 Master Plan, honors Aline Barnsdall's extraordinary legacy, and preserves a vibrant landscape established 130 years ago.

For more information about how to support the Barnsdall Olive Grove Initiative, please visit <https://www.barnsdall.org/landscape>.

ORGANIZATION STATEMENTS:

About Barnsdall Art Park

Barnsdall Art Park is owned by the City of Los Angeles, operated by the Department of Cultural Affairs and maintained by the Department of Recreation and Parks and the Department of General Services.

About the Barnsdall Art Park Foundation

The Barnsdall Art Park Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Established in 2003, BAPF's mission is to ensure that Barnsdall Art Park is a vibrant, inclusive space for creativity, cultural expression, civic conversation, and social empowerment.

www.barnsdall.org

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About the Los Angeles Parks Foundation

Established in 2008 as a California not-for-profit, the Los Angeles Parks Foundation was created to support the Los Angeles City Department of Recreation and Parks. Its mission is to enhance, expand, preserve, and promote public recreation, parks, and open space for the diverse people of Los Angeles.

www.laparksfoundation.org

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