

Not a Cornfield

A living sculpture growing in LA this summer.

Summary of Public Programs

A 32-acre living sculpture in the form of a field of corn is being created this summer by artist Lauren Bon, a trustee of the Annenberg Foundation and president of Not a Cornfield, LLC. The “Not a Cornfield” temporary art installation is located on property just north of Chinatown and south of Lincoln Heights on the site of the future Los Angeles State Historic Park.

Community Involvement

The goal of the community involvement program is to engage local residents as well as visitors from beyond in the artwork through a series of fun, expressive and educational activities. With a special focus on serving the communities of downtown Los Angeles, Chinatown, William Mead, Lincoln Heights, Solano Canyon, and Cypress Park, Cornfield activities will tap a wide range of artists, writers, poets, musicians, and storytellers who help define these neighborhoods. An active schedule of programs serving school-age children will be available.

Not a Cornfield Operating Hours

Public access located near the southern boundary of the site (near the former “Millie’s Hamburger Stand) as well as the perimeter walking trail will be open daily from dawn to dusk. Public programs will be conducted 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. Thursday through Sunday. Evening programs will be conducted Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Please check with site staff or the Not a Cornfield website at www.notacornfield.info for specific program information and event times. Programs and times are subject to change.

Public Programming:

1. WALKING TRAIL AND PASSIVE RECREATION AREAS (Open Daily, Dusk to Dawn)

The Not a Cornfield project encompasses approximately 32 acres. Approximately 9 acres of the site has been designed as open space for passive recreation and public programs. Open space areas are located near the northern end of the site and on the pedestrian walkway that encircles the site.

2. COMMUNITY GARDEN (Open By Reservation and Sunday Afternoons)

A “Community Garden” within the Cornfield will invite everyone to participate in the transformation of the former brownfield by planting and caring for the garden. Known as the “Three Sisters” of Native American agriculture, corn, beans and squash have a special historical relationship in the corn planting process. The corn grows tall, the beans climb the corn for support and feed the soil, and the squash keeps the soil moist, inhibits weeds and deters pests. A spiral path encircles an earthen mound covered with fragrant native sage quieting the center. Access to the garden will be available on a pre-scheduled basis for schools and other facilitated groups and open for community tending every Sunday afternoon from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Dancers, drummers and other performers will also use this space for sacred/cultural ceremonies.

3. INTERPRETIVE FACILITY (Open Thursday through Sunday, 12:00 noon to 6:00 PM)

The Cornfields property includes a small, historic building near the Southern boundary of the site. The building was last used in the 1980’s as a hamburger stand called “Millies.” The structure will be re-purposed during the limited term of the Cornfield project as an interpretive center and gateway to the site. Here visitors can receive printed materials and other information about the project as well as seek the assistance of community youths serving as docents. Docents will be available to orient and facilitate visitors as they explore the Not A Cornfield site.

4. ART & LITERACY SALONS (Three Events: Several Sundays)

Three literary/spoken word events will be conducted featuring storytelling and other literary mediums to facilitate the oral history of the Cornfields site during the past 100 years and beyond. The events will take place on several Sundays. Tentative dates and programs include:

August 20: "River Stories," fictional and real life accounts of life in and around the Los Angeles River with Master of Ceremonies, Hillary Kaplan.

Date to be determined: Ansel Krut and Felicity Powell will facilitate a conversation about corn in European Paintings.

5. OPEN SCREEN/OPEN MICROPHONE (Six Events: Selected Thursdays)

In cooperation with The Echo Park Film Center and other community partners, an **Open Screen** program will be held every third Wednesday during of the months of July, August and September from 7:30-10:00 p.m. A selection of short films will be shown. Participants are welcome to suggest their favorite film(s) or present their own work for viewing. Personal entries must be limited to ten minutes or less in length and available in one of the the following formats: DVD, Mini-DVD, Super 8, or VHS. Submissions must be family appropriate and not all films submitted will be shown. Contact the Not a Cornfield, LLC staff for additional details.

Open Microphone: In concurrence with the Open Screen program the RadioSonideros Collective will host "Open Mic Nights." Participants are invited to record thoughts, reflections, poetry, music or random musings about the Cornfields, past, present and future.

Tentative dates and film programs include:

July 27: Noches de Palomitas: Short subjects from Tijuana. The event will explore the burgeoning film production trend in Tijuana and cultural relationships between the United States and Mexico. Produced in Cooperation with Consejo Fronterizo de Arte y Cultura (COFAC).

August 10: City Of Angels: Short films that feature Los Angeles as a backdrop.

August 24: Chinese films in conjunction with the Chinatown Food Festival.

September 07: To be developed.

September 21: To be developed.

October 26: Lutz Becker, filmmaker, has a life work which is the completion of Serge Eisenstien's Que Viva Mexico -- as part of a "Day of the Dead" celebration.

6. CULTURAL CEREMONIES PROGRAM (Select FRIDAYS)

Native American and Indigenous communities from Central America as well as other sacred religions and folkways will lead ritual programs that bless and celebrate the land and people.

7. Festivals (Selected Saturdays)

Community "festivals" featuring corn-related themes, artists and performers.

Tentative dates and programs:

July 23: "Germination Festival" featuring percussion performers.

September 23: "Pollination Festival" featuring movement and dance performers.

October 21-22: "Harvest Festival" celebrating the culmination of the Not a Cornfield project.

November 04: "Day of the Dead festival" celebrating

8. OPEN STUDIOS (Every Other Thursday)

Not a Cornfield artist and trustee of the Annenberg Foundation and president of Not a Cornfield, LLC, Lauren Bon, invites community residents and visitors to participate in conversations to discuss art, the humanities and related topics of interest.

9. RADIO PROGRAM (Web radio at www.notacornfield.info)

The RadioSonideros Collective will be mapping and sharing through sound, the layers of influence and confluence surrounding the Cornfields as both conceptual and physical site. Live and recorded sounds and voices from the Not a Cornfield project and documentary and archival audio about the site will be periodically posted to the website. RadioSonideros is collecting personal stories, oral histories and other archival sounds for the “Roots of the Park” audio documentary project. Anyone who has a story to tell about their personal connection or relationship to the land that lies between North Spring and North Broadway in Los Angeles is encouraged to contact radiosonideros@yahoo.com. This program will be streamed on the web at www.notacornfield.info.

10. SPECIAL HISTORY PROGRAM (Friday, September 2)

Historians and other experts will assist in identifying and telling the notable cultural and historic events of the Not a Cornfield site. Interpretive information and elements will be made available through a variety of methods, including a special symposium on Friday, September 2. The Not a Cornfield leaders welcome and look forward to the opportunity to consider additional approaches for presenting historical content.

In addition to providing community access and public programming opportunities, the Not a Cornfield leaders have initiated several employment and volunteer opportunities: Approximately 30 individuals will be temporarily employed or mentored in a variety of visitor service positions including Tour and Information Guides, Conservationists, and Landscape Tenders. Student workers will be trained and mentored as docents and tour guides and to assist in the broader community-based cultural tourism effort.