

# Native Intelligence



MAUI  
**Twigonometry**

It's striking enough to make you pull off the road—and that's the point. The Hui No'eau Visual Arts Center—on Baldwin Avenue, the verdant Maui byway that slaloms down Haleakalā from Makawao to Pā'ia—has widened its entry, cleared out the obscuring shrubbery and opened sightlines to its twenty-one park-like acres and its century-old villa. Says director Caroline Killhour, "We're trying to reach out and invite people to share this amazing place." ▶



# N a t i v e I n t e l l i g e n c e

*Twigonometry* (continued)

And now this, the reason you've pulled off the road. A fairy-tale twig house. A cocoon left by a forest god. Or the coolest fort in the world. In fact, when this twiggy installation was unveiled last September, adults were darting through its passages and

lurking in its chambers just like 4-year-olds. Says its creator, sculptor Patrick Dougherty, "My job is to make a compelling work that excites the imagination and causes passersby to come running."

Dougherty calls his creations "Stick-works," and they are literally built from

nothing but sticks. He has made about two hundred of them so far. Each one takes him three weeks and requires the pitching in of dozens of volunteers. Bill Worcester, Maui's pre-eminent glass sculptor, had already admired Dougherty installations in Tacoma, Washington and Penland, North Carolina, so he gladly offered to be one of the Hui's leading twig-tanglers. His report: "Dougherty doesn't know at first exactly what he wants. But he has strong ideas, and he can impose them without seeming like a tyrant. He kept people in a real happy mood." In other words, as Dougherty builds sculpture, he builds community. That fits the Hui's purposes perfectly.

The sticks he used on Maui all came from invasive forest plants: strawberry guava, eucalyptus, tropical ash. The Hui partnered with the Maui Invasive Species Committee to produce the installation, which has an environmental message. It will collapse in about three years. ("Sculpture, like a good flower bed, has its season," notes Dougherty.) But he'll be back in February to create a new work at the Honolulu Academy of the Arts on O'ahu. So stick around.

—Paul Wood / Photos by Elyse Butler

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