

News Release

New museum exhibition features extreme life challenges of monarch butterflies

Showcases amazing story of teamwork, wonder and hope

March 20, 2023, St. Albert, Alberta – The Musée Héritage Museum (part of the Arts and Heritage Foundation of St. Albert) is pleased to present a new exhibition that showcases the extreme challenges faced by monarch butterflies during their annual migration in a story of teamwork, wonder and hope.

Through microphotographic images and spectacular aerial photographs, viewers join Mexican filmmaker and pilot **Francisco “Vico” Gutiérrez** in ***On the Trail of the Monarch Butterfly***, as he follows the monarchs’ amazing journey from Montréal to the mountains of central Mexico.

In his ultralight aircraft, decorated with the motif of the monarch butterfly and aptly named Papalotzin (the Aztec word for “small butterfly”), he covered over 6,000 kilometres in 90 hours of flight over 72 days in 2005.

Vico’s adventure to raise awareness about butterfly habitat conservation became a true voyage of discovery as he followed the extreme challenges faced by monarch butterflies during their annual migration. With a lifespan of only about two months, no one monarch can complete the entire trip on its own. It takes up to four generations of these beautiful creatures to cover the entire distance of the migration.

“We’re so happy to share this timely and important story, since in 2022, the Monarch Butterfly was added to the endangered species list”, says Musée Héritage Museum Curator, Joanne White. “Man, and nature have an amazing ability to overcome adversity, but the work to save the monarch is not over. This amazing journey reminds us to be aware of all the spectacular creatures around us”.

Visit the museum (in St. Albert Place) to experience Vico’s awe inspiring voyage.

On the Trail of the Monarch Butterfly runs from **March 21 to June 18**.

(Produced by the Canada Aviation and Space Museum in collaboration with the Embassy of Mexico)

Free family event: April 22 from 2 – 4pm. Join butterfly expert **Camilla Leurini** to learn more about monarch butterflies, see larvae, and enjoy face painting, cookie decorating and crafts. *(Inside St. Albert Place)*

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