Artists + Firefighters = Memorable Experiences

by Peggy Kendellen, RACC Public Art Manager

In December 2003, four Portland artists — Jason Greene, Mary Josephson, Cynthia Lahti, and Henk Pander — embarked on an artist-in-residency adventure with Portland Fire & Rescue (PF&R) as part of RACC’s public art residency program, Intersections. The focus of the program is to link the “work of art” and the “art of work.”

The project was funded by percent for art funds generated from a General Obligation Bond that financed the remodeling of 23 existing stations and construction of eight new ones. Some funds were set aside for site specific works at new stations. The remaining dollars were earmarked for two-dimensional works for stations undergoing remodeling. The selection panel’s original idea was to purchase existing artwork with imagery reflective of the PF&R culture and rotate those works amongst fire stations. However, following station visits, they decided instead to set up an artist-in-residency program with several stations so that there would be more interaction between artists and firefighters. The residencies evolved in ways that no one anticipated, least of all the participants.

Each artist spent time with five to six stations. Over the course of one year, they recorded their impressions in drawings, paintings and diaries. The residencies were remarkable opportunities for the artists to witness first hand the daily responsibilities of firefighters. Each artist went on “ride alongs” to numerous fire and emergency calls, and shared meals, experiences and ideas with the firefighters. Mary Josephson wrote: “One of the most important and intriguing aspects of this residency has been the unknown nature of the calls and when they will come; the realization of how the 911 system has become the catch all for a myriad of situations from the dangerous and tragic to the ludicrous and comical.”

— continued on flap

Artwork by Cynthia Lahti for Intersections residency with Portland Fire & Rescue for Fire Station #4.
**AROUND TOWN**

*All events funded in part by the Regional Arts & Culture Council*


**Continuing** 5/14 Fiente Oeijana, Miracle Theatre Group, www.milagro.org

**Continuing** 6/5 Northwest Masters: Forgotten Prints from 1910 to 1945, Portland Art Museum, www.pam.org

**Continuing** 6/11 Leap of Faith, an interactive play, Act for Action, www.actforaction.org


5/6-22 Winnie-the-Pooh, Oregon Children’s Theatre, www.octc.org


5/12, 19, 25 Readings by Laura Foster from Portland Hill Walks, 503.621.3450

5/12-6/4 Adventures in Ill-Gore, Bump in the Road, www.bumpintheroad.org


5/19-22 A Place Called Home, Portland Taiko, www.portlandtaiko.org


5/22-7/3 Take Me Out, Artists Repertory Theatre, wwwartistsrep.org


6/3-5 Sacred Buddhist Dance of Nepal, Dance Mandal Institute, www.dancemandal.com


6/12 A Musical Finale, Metropolitan Youth Symphony, www.metroyouthsymphony.org


For more: www.racc.org/resources/events

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**AT RACC**

**Governor’s Arts Awards to be held May 4.** Governor Ted Kulongoski and The Oregon Arts Commission will present the 2004-2005 Governor’s Arts Awards to: The Art Gym (Marylhurst University); Richard Louis Brown (Portland); The Honorable Vera Katz (Portland); Tom and Chris Neilsen (Salem); Henk Pander (Portland); James and Ginevra Ralp (Eugene); Richard Rowland (Astoria); John and Joan Shipley (Portland). 6–8pm at Hudson Hall, Mary Stuart Rogers Music Center Willamette University, 900 State Street, Salem. Reception follows, RSVP to the Oregon Arts Commission at 503.986.0082 by 5/2/05.

**Artists chosen for The Visual Chronicle of Portland,** a collection of works on paper that captures artists’ perspectives on the city’s distinctive character. The selection committee chose to purchase works from Stewart Harvey, George Johanson, Edis Jurcys, Zelig Kurland, Michael McGovern and the Craig Pozzi Photo Trust. The committee purchases work annually with a modest budget of $5,000 which covers framing costs. A call for artists is typically available every December with a deadline in January. If you have any questions, contact Peggy Kendellen, RACC Public Art manager, at pkendellen@racc.org.

**Oregon Cultural Grant Opportunity:** Community Cultural Participation Grants, funded by the Oregon Cultural Trust, are offered by the Multnomah County Cultural Coalition and the Washington County Arts, Heritage & Humanities Coalition to groups in those counties. RACC is assisting in the grant process. For guidelines and applications, got to www.racc.org. **Deadline for Grants: 5/9/05, 5pm.**

**Upcoming RACC Grant Opportunities:**

- **Project Grants** to non-profit organizations and individual artists in three (3) categories: *Artistic Focus, Neighborhood Arts and Arts In Schools.* A project is a specific art presentation, exhibit or creation of work that demonstrates characteristics that have a clear benefit and is accessible to the constituency for which it is intended. Applications available 5/2/05 at www.racc.org. **Deadline for Individuals: 8/15/05, 5pm. For Organizations: 8/22/05, 5pm.**

- **Professional Development Grants** (Cycle 2) assist artists or arts administrators with opportunities that specifically improve their business management development skills and/or bring the artist or the arts organization to another level artistically. Application available 5/2/05 at www.racc.org. **Deadline: 10/10/05, 5pm.**

**Upcoming Public Art Opportunities:**

**Public Art Mural Program.** Guidelines and applications for creating murals in the City of Portland are now available at www.racc.org/murals. **Upcoming deadlines in 2005 are 5/3 and 6/3.**

For updates: www.racc.org/resources/RACCopportunities

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**SUN Arts, winter 2005.** Students enjoy an afterschool class at Clarendon Community School in Mexican Traditional Folk Dance (Flockorica) taught by Rocio Espinoza Cotero. Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) Arts programing is administered by RACC with funds from Multnomah County.
Clackamas & Washington County News

$10,000 Awarded to recognize cultural excellence for 13 Clackamas County organizations and individuals. These awards are funded through Clackamas County’s portion of Oregon Cultural Trust funds. For more information Contact: Cheryl Snow, 503.655.0525, Clackamas County Cultural Coalition.  

5/7 Artist Portfolio Review Day will be conducted by the Beaverton Arts Commission. Art professionals in photography, sculpture, print-making, drawing, painting and watercolor will offer artists their professional opinion and suggestions. Call 503.526.2288 to register by 5/4/05.  

Washington County’s Community Cultural Participation Grants from Oregon Cultural Trust are now available. (See At RACC section). Deadline: 5/9/05.  

The 2005 Youth Art Competition and Exhibition is seeking submissions from students grades 9-12 in the Hillsboro School District. Call the Glenn & Viola Walters Cultural Arts Center at 503.615.3485 or www.ci.hillsboro.or.us. Deadline: 5/9/05.  

Call for Artists for the Estacada Summer Celebration Art Festival (7/23, 30am-8pm) a three day event, with music Friday evening, music and free art activities Saturday, and a community gospel event Sunday morning. For more information go to www.estacadasummercelebration.org. Deadline: 5/31/05.  

For much more: www.racc.org/resources/countynews

Grants/Fellowships/Residencies


National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation Assistance Grants help small/mid-size institutions, such as libraries, museums, and historical societies, archival repositories, county records offices, and colleges, improve their ability to preserve and care for their humanities collections. Grants up to $5,000. Visit: www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/pag.html. For an overall listing of NEH grants go to www.neh.gov/grants/grantsbydivision.html. Deadline: 5/16/05.  

Caroline Newhouse Scholarship Fund for career transition for dancers providing limited funding for tuition, retraining or seed money central to fledgling business enterprises. Contact: 212.704.0172, www.careertransition.org. Deadlines: 5/18/05.  

NEA Grants Deadlines for Organizations: Most available for the following disciplines: Dance, Design, Folk & Traditional Arts, Literature, Media Arts: Film/Radio/Television, Multidisciplinary, Museums, Music, Musical, Theater, Opera, Presenting, Theater, and Visual Arts, Summer Schools in the Arts. statement of interest deadline: 5/23/05; Challenge America: Reaching Every Community Fast-Track Review Grants, deadline: 6/1/05.  


Film Production Seed Grants for 2005 from All Roads Film Project, sponsored by the National Geographic Society. Open to indigenous and under-represented minority culture filmmakers. Grant $1,000-$10,000. Contact: 202.857.7660 or visit www.nationalgeographic.com/allroads. Deadline: 6/15/05.  

5th Biennial Flintridge Foundation Awards. Five mature artists whose work demonstrates high artistic merit for 20 more years. Five from CA and five from OR/WA will be selected. Grants $25,000 each. See www.FlintridgeFoundation.org or contact: Flintridge Foundation, Awards for Visual Artists, 1040 Lincoln Ave., Ste. 100, Pasadena, CA 91103, 800.303.2129, Awards@FlintridgeFoundation.org. Deadline: 6/30/05.  

For much more: www.racc.org/resources/grants

Competitions

Art Moves: Kinetic Sculpture Contest and Exhibit for Alberta Art Hop (5/14). Movement of the kinetic features of the piece may be achieved by any means which is safe and sustainable in an indoor exhibition space. Wind or sun power, physical impulse and electricity are acceptable. For more detailed guidelines contact Allan Oliver, 503.493.1909. Deadline: 5/5/05.  


Portland Art Center seeking visual arts programming, either installation and site specific work or guest curators with a strong concept, idea, or opinion they want to express through visual arts. Download submission form and guidelines at www.portlandartorg/gallery/index.php?d=submission. Deadline: 5/15/05.  


For much more: www.racc.org/resources/countynews
Call to Artists for the 3rd Annual St. Johns Window Project
Juried Art Exhibitions in Store Windows (7/3-30/8/20). Open to artists residing or working in North Portland. This event celebrates relationships between business owners, artists and residents of North Portland. Contact: Mary Jaron Kelley, North Portland Neighborhood Services, 2209 N. Schofield, Portland, OR 97217, 503.823.4099. **Deadline 5/16/05, 5pm.**


Invitation to Artists for Public Art by Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) for the new Patient Care Facility. Goal is to make the designated areas welcoming and engaging for patients, families and staff. Budget: $275,000. For application www.ohsu.edu/about/comrel/InvitationArtistsPCF.pdf. Send to Marquam Hill Art Committee, c/o Office of Community Relations, L101, OHSU, 381 SW Sam Jackson Park Road, Portland, OR 97238. Questions: 503.494.7686. **Postmarked Deadline: 6/1/05.**

Call to Artists for the Textile Arts Exhibition & Sale (7/2-8/14) at the Gordon House in the Oregon Garden to honor Evelyn Gordon. Frank Lloyd Wright designed the house in 1957 for Conrad and Evelyn’s farm. The theme of the show is, Evelyn’s House by the River, honoring her legacy the Gordon House Conservancy will exhibit textile works including felt, quilt, embroidery, sculpture, and of course weaving. For application form call 503.874.6006 or email: gordonhouse@oregonarden.org. **Deadline: 6/10/05.**

Call for Artists from the Gresham Art Advisory Committee for artist in all media for their annual Juried Show (8/23-10/27). Juror is Peggy Kendellen, RACC Public Art Manager. Contact Larry Piper at 503.665.0752 or Connie Otto at 503.618.2360 for application forms. **Deadline: 7/6/04.**

For much more: www.racc.org/resources/Competition

Other Opportunities & Information

Workshops/Conferences/Lectures


6/8-10 Exploration of art & craft creation! Stimulating artistic discovery and creation awaits adults fifty years and over offered by Oregon College of Art & Craft. $125. Call 503.297.5544, ext. 117 for more information.

For much more: www.racc.org/resources/Workshops

Managing Director (P/T) for Sowelu Theater, a small, non-profit ensemble theater company. The focus of the job will be to improve operations and increase revenue. This position has potential growth to full time. Send inquiry and resume to Sowelu Theater, 4319 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Portland, OR 97215. Call 503.230.2090 with questions.

Marketing Manager sought by Oregon Children’s Theatre (Start 7/05). Experienced performing arts marketing strategist/implementer responsible for all single ticket, subscription, group & school sales marketing/strategic & implementation year-round. Email: Marta@octc.org. Oregon Children’s Theatre, 600 SW 10th, Suite 313, Portland, Oregon 97205.

Development Director sought by White Bird, a non-profit that brings the best dance companies to Portland. 3-5 years experience in development field or related arts administration; appreciation and enthusiasm for dance and other performing arts. Contact: White Bird, P.O. Box 99, Portland, Oregon 97207; info@whitebird.org: www.whitebird.org.

For much more: www.racc.org/resources/Jobs

Photography by Robert Carron, artwork, portraits, kids, pets and more. Reasonable rates. Call 503.238.8807.

For much more: www.racc.org/resources/Other

Program Coordinator (P/T) for the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center (ONLC) to play a key role in interpreting and developing programs and information about Japanese American history and culture. Knowledge and familiarity with Oregon’s Japanese American history and prior experiences in exhibit planning are desirable. Send cover letter and resume to: Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, 121 NW 2nd Ave., Portland, OR 97209 or email to: onlc@oregonnikkei.org.

For much more: www.racc.org/resources/Workshops

Callexed

Working Artists Studio in NW seek assertive, prolific, talented artists to share space. $1.95/sq. ft. studio space rental plus internet, utilities, insurance and parking. Call 503.445.1268, adrienne@urbanesque.com.

For much more: www.racc.org/resources/Classified

MAS: choreographed by Sinead Kimbrell, artistic director of SpugMotion, At Nocturnal. 18th and E. Burnside, 5/5-6. A RACC project grant helped to fund this event. These grants are now available for 2006 projects (See At RACC).
The experience forever changed preconceived notions the artists may have had of what it means to be a firefighter. As Jason Greene wrote, “Any assumptions I had were soon replaced by new understandings. I was surprised to meet such a calm and collected bunch of people who work together so well. Even in the face of random emergencies, the firefighters exude a cool steadiness, and each knows exactly what to do without hesitation.”

Cynthia Lahti succinctly summarized her experience: “It was a great honor to be allowed to observe and create artwork for the fire stations. They save lives. That is their job, everyday. A firefighter told me ‘we clean up the world’s messes.’ They do it in the fire station s. They save lives. That is their job, every day. A

Henk Pander kept an extensive diary of his experiences with five stations. An excerpt from February 6, 2004, 8:00pm:

“...The interior of the house was dark and unkempt with piles of furniture, garbage, rubble, and clothes. A haggard man sat on a couch, covering his crotch. He was motionless. I thought he was dead. Medics and firemen massaged the man, an IV bag hanging from the light fixture.... I started drawing and in quick succession made four drawings of the man.... There was a young boy, the man’s son, frantically playing a video game standing in the middle of a pile of broken furniture. A policewoman walked in and asked me if I was family. ‘I am an artist working for the Fire Bureau,’ I said....I shot more film of the man being carried out and lifted into the ambulance. Apparently there was still a pulse. In the excitement I ran out of film and rewound. I opened up the camera only to discover that the film had not completely rewound.... I think I ruined it. Stupid, since it was exactly what I was looking for for a painting.”

Works completed by the artists during the residency are on exhibit at the Portland Fire & Rescue headquarters, 55 SW Ash, through May 27. Visitors must enter the building on Ash Street, take the elevator to the 3rd floor, and request a security badge to see the art. Following the exhibition, the work will be permanently installed at each of the 22 participating stations.

New friendships, unfamiliar experiences, altered perspectives on life, and untested directions in their work were outcomes of the venture. The artists reluctantly ended the residency a year later, yet carried with them a deeply felt respect for the firefighters they met and for the work that they do. They now have a wealth of memories, drawings and photographs to draw upon for future work.

Members of the selection panel were Battalion Chief Duane Bray, artists Christine Clark and Deborah Horrell, curator Prudence Roberts, and Dick Ragland from the City’s Bureau of General Services. For more information about intersections contact Peggy Kendellen, pkendellen@racc.org.

**ART NOTES.** A free bi-monthly publication of the Regional Arts & Culture Council, which serves the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area, including Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties.

Mary Bauer, Editor
Jeff Hawthorne, Director of Community Affairs
Eloise Damrosch, Executive Director

**RACC VISION.** To enrich community life, the Regional Arts & Culture Council and partners create an environment in which the arts and culture of the region flourish and prosper.

**RACC MISSION.** Through vision, leadership and service the Regional Arts & Culture Council works to integrate arts and culture in all aspects of community life.

**RACC VALUES.** We value freedom of artistic and cultural expression as a fundamental human right. We value a diversity of artistic and cultural experiences. We value a community in which everyone can participate in arts and culture. We value a community that celebrates and supports its artists, and its arts and cultural organizations. We value arts and culture as key elements in creating desirable places to live, work and visit.

**RACC PARTNERS.** RACC works in partnership with the following organizations to ensure a quality arts and culture community in our region:

- Americans for the Arts
- Arts Action Alliance of Clackamas County
- Cultural Advocacy Coalition
- National Endowment for the Arts
- Northwest Business for Culture and the Arts
- Oregon Arts Commission
- Oregon Cultural Trust
- Westside Cultural Alliance, Washington County

**ON THE WEB.** The most current and complete information regarding the notices you see here in Art Notes is available on the RACC web site at www.racc.org.

**ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER.** To sign up for our free electronic edition of Art Notes, which is distributed each month, visit www.racc.org.

**SUBMISSIONS.** Only events funded by RACC are included in the Around Town section. Other notices about job openings, grants, etc. may be submitted, but RACC reserves the right to edit or reject material. Mail to RACC at the address listed below. Deadline for July/August: 6/15/05.
The Big Tree Comes in Upside-Down!

The Big Tree Sculpture by Fernanda D’Agostino (pictured at lower left) was installed in the New Columbia housing redevelopment, off N. Columbia Blvd. in North Portland last month. The upside-down installation of this 30-foot tall London Plane tree is part of the first public art program for an affordable housing development in Portland. Walsh Construction provided significant in-kind services to move and site the tree. The formerly living tree was felled in 2003 when construction began on New Columbia. It has been treated for decay and is being “replanted” upside down as a piece of whimsical public art in McCoy Park at New Columbia, which will open its doors May 3 with a Homecoming Celebration for the first new residents moving back. RACC has worked with the Portland Housing Authority to help fund and administer the public art at New Columbia.

Photos by Clark Worth & Eloise Damrosch