

Festival celebrates genius of da Vinci

The celebration, which takes place in Corvallis, showcases art, science and technology in a unique atmosphere

By Jenni Schultz
Oregon Daily Emerald

Leonardo da Vinci was a genius inventor as well as an unprecedented artist. He envisioned planes flying through 15th century skies 350 years before the Wright brothers were even born.

Now he is being used as a source of inspiration to those behind the festival that is da Vinci Days.

The festival was started by a

group of Corvallis residents 14 years ago to "put Corvallis on the map," festival director Tony Perez said.

Someone was looking at an Oregon guide book and noticed that Corvallis wasn't even mentioned. The group wanted an activity that was unique to Corvallis, he said.

Every year, Corvallis' Central Park and the lower portion of OSU campus fill with an estimated 18,000 people who come to celebrate art, science and technology. This year, the event will feature everything from the Portland dance group Taiko to a kinetic sculpture race reminiscent of The

Learning Channel's "Junkyard Wars." The race begins with a sand dune portion on Saturday, continues with a mud bog competition on Sunday and ends with a race to the finish down the Willamette River. Participants must use the same vehicle for all three races, and the winners are determined by a point system.

In addition to a children's village and film and video festival, seven teams from Comedy Central's "Battlebots" will be participating in "robotics activities," Perez said. "They have given us an offer to destroy anything we can give them," he said. Slated for destruction are Perez' old washing machine and dryer.

Yet another event is a competition that will attract both homo sapien and canine. The Skyhoundz Hyperflite Corvallis Oregon Local Championships will be at the event. The contest is free for spectators and promises to be quite entertaining.

Perez hopes for 20,000 people at this year's celebration. The event will also have art exhibited throughout the area.

The celebration runs July 19 to 21. Advance three-day passes can be purchased for \$10, or \$5 for children ages 3-13. Children younger than 2 are admitted for free. Day passes are also available for purchase. For more information, visit the da Vinci Days Web site at www.davinci-days.org or call (541) 757-6363.

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Art show celebrates Crater Lake history

Artists nationwide gather to paint, photograph and sculpt artwork inspired by the lake for its centennial anniversary

By Pat Payne
for the Emerald

Crater Lake, on the site of the former Mount Mazama, has been a national park for 100 years. This year, in honor of its centennial anniversary, Southern Oregon University, in cooperation with the National Park Service, is holding an exhibition of artists' impressions of the natural surroundings.

49 artists from across the country, as well as a Chinese and an Israeli artist, were invited to reside at Crater Lake National Park for as long as a month at the park service's expense to create art documenting their views of the natural scenery. Their works include photography, painting and abstract sculptures.

"(The park service) gave artists an opportunity to come up to the lake, and they, in turn, created art based on their experiences there," said Mary Gardiner, interim director of the Schneider Museum of Art, which is hosting the exhibition. "It turned out to be a great pairing between the park service and the museum."

One of the reasons that SOU was approached by the park

service for the exhibition was its relative closeness to the park.

"We were chosen due to our location and our ability to handle the amount of art required," Gardiner said. "We're about two hours from Crater Lake."

Among the pieces of art in the exhibition is a video piece from Marlene Alt, a professor of art at SOU. Alt traveled into the crater itself, where she videotaped the surface of the lake for a half an hour, taking care to record reflections of clouds across it. This video is being played at the exhibition, projected on a wall.

"Are you looking at the sky, or are you looking at the water?" Gardiner said.

The lake was created nearly 8,000 years ago by the explosion of Mount Mazama. The lake is the deepest lake in the United States, and the seventh deepest in the world. On May 22, 1902, Crater Lake was declared a national park by President Teddy Roosevelt.

The Schneider Museum of Art is a facility of SOU, and is open Tuesday-Saturday from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. The museum closes at 7 p.m. the first Friday of every month. It is located at 1250 Siskiyou Blvd., in Ashland. For more information, call (541) 552-6245.

Pat Payne is a freelance columnist for the Emerald

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