

Sound and breath unite in art

Kayla Calloway

The Clackamas Print

The most recent exhibit in the Alexander Gallery has caused a stir. The sonic sculptor has some people scratching their heads in confusion, but artist Dan Senn says it takes some time to fully understand.

"Take a look," said Senn, during his lecture in the art center on Thursday, Feb. 12.

According to Senn, most people fail to spend enough time observing the artwork. Observing, in this case, does not mean only staring at the piece, but listening to the canned sound of Senn's breathing played on a constant loop.

The piece itself is of several black pipes with white garbage bags on the end. The recordings inflate the bags, giving the effect that the pieces are breathing. This was an innovation of an earlier installation of Senn's in Prague, which was just one part of a multi-piece exhibit, titled "Den Horniků," which took place in an old mining building.

Senn's contributions to the exhibit were old rubber boots that hung from the ceiling. White garbage bags were placed at the boots' openings and "breathed" like the current piece at the Niemeyer.

The piece on display was built in November of this past year.

"It took several weeks," said Senn. "But, it was built from previous works, so it's probably a couple years of work in the making."

Students buzzed about the exhibit after the lecture, saying it is unique.

Katie Spittle, a student who attended the lecture, found

it interesting, although she couldn't hear the recorded noises.

"I could feel the vibrations," said Spittle.

Spittle also commented on how, visually, the piece was stimulating, and how it didn't rely on either the sound or the sight by itself.

During the lecture, Senn also talked about some of his past pieces. One such piece was called "Uncovered States." The piece includes one sub-woofer speaker, wire, and sticks. The speaker generates low frequencies that bounce the wire and the sticks, which hit small metal disks, causing

sound.

All of Senn's works in sounds.

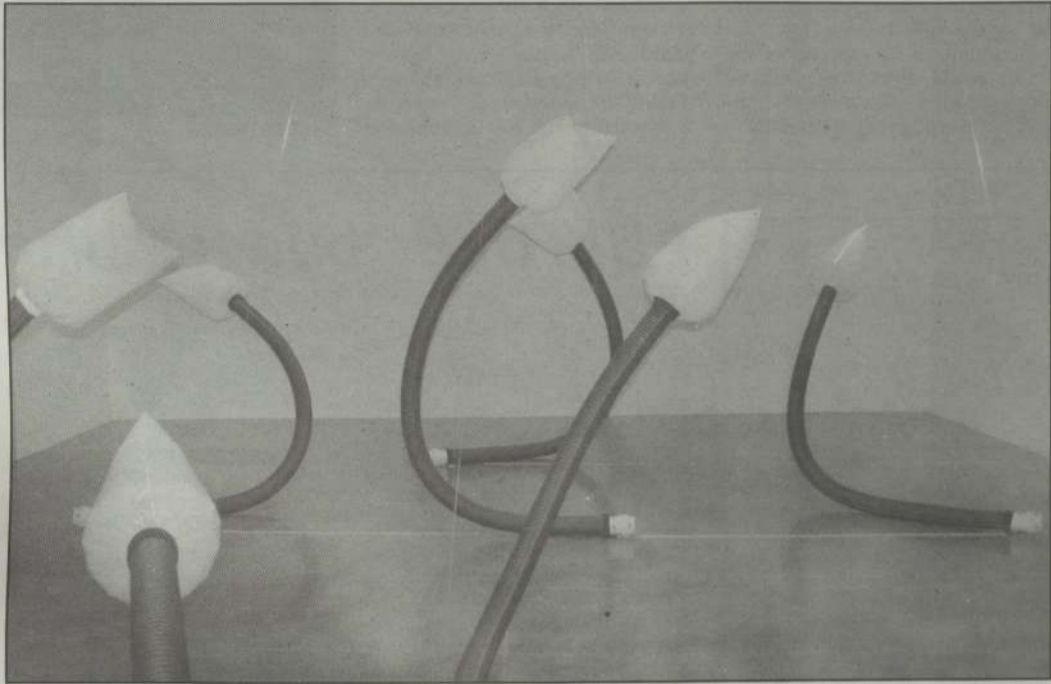
"I am first a composer," said Senn. In addition to art, he composes and records music. Recently, he finished a piece that debuted in New York City.

Senn travels across the nation giving lectures on art and work. He offers a lecture to students, including mentioning in his lecture that the art center is a better environment for an artist.

"I believe strongly in producing lots of bad art," said Senn, another piece of his work for up and coming artists.

The exhibit is in the Alexander Gallery at the Niemeyer Center. It will be running through the rest of February and March.

Because of the sound produced by the piece, the gallery is closed. If you wish to see the exhibit, please contact the Art Department. The extension is 2386.



Robert Crawford Clackamas Print

In the Alexander Gallery, the room is filled with the sound of artist Dan Senn's breathing, recorded and played in a continuous loop. White garbage bags and sound are recurring pieces of Senn's artworks, this one is titled "Twisted Pairs Expanding."

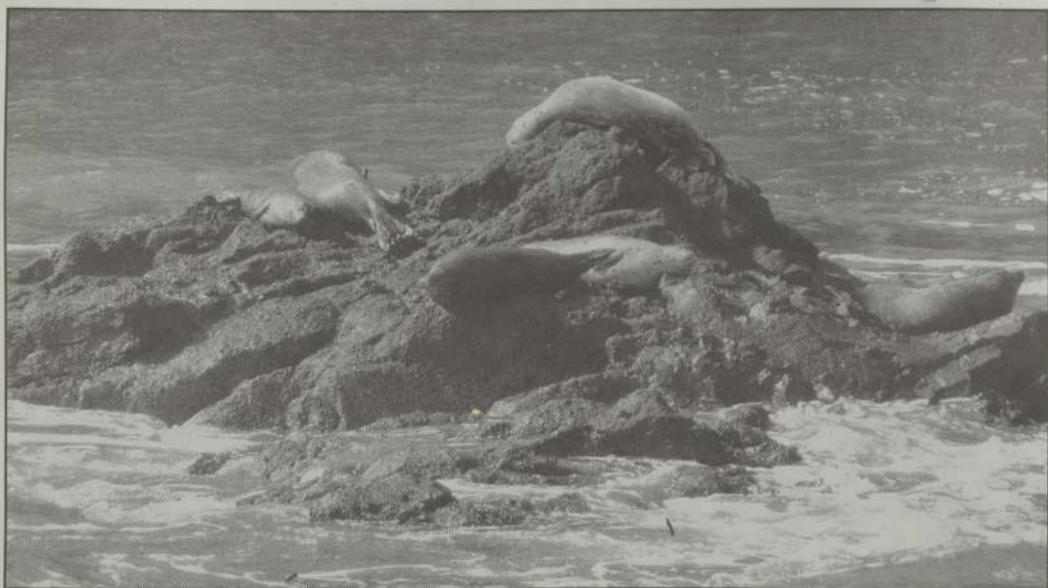
See this exhibit at the Alexander Gallery in the Niemeyer Center until March 20.



Contributed Photo

Last spring the coast class spent part of their Newport trip at Boiler Bay watching the water for whales and the skies for bald eagles.

Below: On the Spring 2008 trip to Newport, Bown's coast class had the opportunity to see this group of harbor seals resting at Yaquina Head. Without this class and others like it, students will lose the chance to see the native Oregon wildlife they are learning about up close and in their natural habitats.



Contributed Photo

Budget cuts threaten coastal history class

Jess Sheppard

Arts & Culture Editor

With the onset of the budget crisis, it seems an invisible axe is looming over many classes, and its shadow has not gone unnoticed by students.

One class that is under the threat of the proverbial chopping block is science instructor Jennifer Bown's History of the Oregon Coast. It's one of Clackamas' diversity classes. Other weekend is a trip to a part of the Oregon Coast, and once per week lecture on the places visited.

"You have to have fun classes, or people lose interest," said student Lane Locke.

But, more than just being a fun and engaging class, several other students agree on its academic value.

"This is biology, ecology, oceanography and geology class and you get everything," said Kyla Bandasith, a student in the coast class.

"I've lived most of my life here, and this is the most I've ever learned about the Coast," added Melissa Major, yet another student of the class.

According to Karen K. Kruse, still another student of Bown's coast class, "Courses like this are foundations."

But unfortunately, the current crisis in the budget, poses a threat to the History of the Oregon Coast class and other classes like it. The shadow of that intangible axe has some students speaking out in their course's defense.

"This class is one of only a few diversity classes we can take. The others (regular biology classes) are boring," said Bandasith.

"Someone who lives here should know this stuff," said Major. "It could save your life. Now we know not to go to the algae."

"Keeping this class will give an opportunity to find out about Oregon," said Locke.

Bown shares her students' eagerness to keep the History of the Oregon Coast, but other courses like it, offer an experience outside the normal science class.

"These diversity classes are what make us unique at other community colleges," said Bown.

"We're actually going to the places we're learning about instead of a regular biology class," said Locke.

Bandasith, in particular, is hopeful that the course will not be cut.

"If they get rid of this class, they won't get any more tuition money," said Bandasith vehemently.