

**ONE MAN'S WAR, from page 8**

exercising his astoundingly creative imagination.

Little by little, Hogancamp builds a 1/6 scale, WWII-era Belgian town just outside his back stoop. Populated with Barbies as well as military dolls and models, Hogancamp's artistry can be seen in his obsessive attention to detail, and the effort and precision that go into creating the town of Marwencol are staggering. The name of the town comes from a combination of Hogancamp's name with two friends: Mark, Wendy and Colleen.

In Hogancamp's alternative universe, he is an army pilot who crash-lands outside the town of Marwencol. The town is solely populated by beautiful women as all the men have been killed in the war. Hogancamp's alter-ego opens a bar in the town and they establish a neutral zone where the soldiers of every nation can interact and drink and leave the war behind for a time. Hogancamp's real-life friends are given doll-counterparts in Marwencol and the constant threat of the German SS soldiers provides Hogancamp with an opportunity to re-live his attack over and over. The artist captures the history of the town in his ongoing series of gorgeous, narrative snapshots.

"It sounds like a couple of things happened for Mark," offers Edith Costanza, an art therapist at Room In The Inn with a focus on addictions. "I would say the first would be the release of his fear and his anger and the reclaiming of his power. He is perhaps re-framing the incident so he can come to a place of understanding and forgiveness in order to move forward."

In two major incidents in the film, Hogancamp replays his attack through his alter ego being captured and tortured by the SS in Marwencol. Both scenarios are brutal, graphic depictions of what happened to Hogancamp in real life, and both end with his being saved by the beautiful ladies of Marwencol. One of the rescue scenes would constitute one of the most violent displays in American film if it weren't portrayed by dolls in still photographs, and the sheer bloodiness of Hogancamp's revenge-fantasies speaks volumes about the therapeutic importance of his creative exercises.

"Art is a safe way to express oneself," says Hester. "Art builds self-esteem. There is not a wrong way to create. I have a small doll

cradle I have had most of my life. When I need to think, I pull out that cradle and paint. The spindles have layers upon layer of paint on them. Some have stripes. Some have dots. All have my soul. No one looks at that cradle and hears my thoughts but I know they are there."

Art therapy has proven to be particularly effective at treating people who have experienced violent incidents and even the Army is prescribing art therapy in its treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. A new PTSD program at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany includes art-therapy among a battery of approaches that the Army has deemed beneficial for these types of patients. According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, nearly one-quarter of the nation's homeless men and women are veterans, and the lingering effects of substance abuse, married to PTSD are common among this population.

The calming, patience-training effects of art-making can be crucial to dealing with long-term therapy and counseling. As psychiatric treatment becomes more difficult, a patient's ability to remain calm and centered is a key to further progress. Its ability to calm the anxious and reassure the panicked may be the most important benefit of art therapy.

"Across the board, people experience the peace and calmness that comes through creativity," explains Costanza. "When you are creating, you lose yourself and take a break from your troubles and self-centeredness."

Hogancamp's photos of Marwencol have gone on to garner attention and the Marwencol film has sparked new discussions about mental illness, addiction and art therapy at websites like Huffington Post and the Geek Pride blog at Psychology Today.

Near the end of the film, Hogancamp's best friend, Bert, relates a story about being annoyed with a patron at Hogancamp's New York gallery debut. A man leaving the opening commented to his date "C'mon, let's go look at pictures of real war." Bert comes to his friend's aid, insisting that "This is Mark's real war!" It's one of the most tender moments in a film whose moving message has fostered growing awareness of the compounded difficulties that make life on society's margins a day-to-day battle.

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**Catacombs**

by Dee Allen


Those ancient, dusty tunnels and cellars  
Hold the history of a city near Puget Sound.

Large constructs of rusted metal, dead technology  
Victorian-era mechanical detritus, long-  
Broken machines, giant gear shifts, steam engine parts  
Line up along half-dark passageways  
Passageways beneath Pioneer Square. Streets beneath streets  
That were created after 1889, when a glue vet overturned and  
Twenty-five city blocks became  
Avenues of cinder and flame.  
Wooden buildings were gone with the smoke.  
The Emerald City re-emerged in cement and brick.  
Hotels, ginjoints, casinos, house of prostitution  
Found themselves underground.  
The houseless escaped persecution above and  
Found sanctuary and sleep in the tunnels.  
Fiends scrambling through the cold, consistently  
Rainy night satisfied their hunger  
For opium in cellars few knew about.  
The Emerald City's life re-emerged in the catacombs.  
All good things come to an end in 1905.  
Everyone avoided the catacombs  
Like the plague.  
Bubonic plague.  
Scurrying rats' only gift to humankind.  
For decades, the catacombs were abandoned. Empty.  
Condemned to dry, academic historybook pages.  
Architectural feast for the curious tourist eyes.  
The cement is barely holding the faded red bricks  
Together. The wood and steel foundations still hold,  
But show their age, even in blurry skylight's  
Scant light.

Those ancient, dusty tunnels and cellars  
Hold the history of a city near Puget Sound.

THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY'S ROLE IN EXTENDING

**A Helping Hand**



TO END HOMELESSNESS IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

Washington County, the economic hub of the metro area, is recovering from the Great Recession but many of our neighbors in need are contending with the impact of the recession including facing homelessness. Washington County is a microcosm of the USA where some are doing very well, some are doing better and others are slipping into poverty and homelessness.

Washington County has many private/public partnerships in response to neighbors in need. But with cuts from state and federal government the ranks of the poor will grow just as the economy is improving. How can we respond to a crisis framed by the reality that for some it is the "best of times," for others it's the "worst of times?"

**Saturday, June 4, 2011 - 8:30 to Noon**

Cedar Hills United Church of Christ, 11695 SW Park Way, Beaverton


**Keynote Speaker: Greg Van Pelt, CEO, Providence Health & Services, Oregon**

**Program Sponsor:** Interfaith Committee on Homelessness of Washington County.  
**Contact Person:** Eric Canon, Chair of IFCH, 503-357-3282

**What We Believe:**

- ❖ Hardworking people should be able to afford decent and safe housing.
- ❖ Children succeed in school when they have a safe and secure home.
- ❖ Renting or owning a "home of their own" helps families succeed.

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Office Cat Rooty sends a big thank you to the folks at PAW Team for looking out for him with health cat food. Thank you, PAW Team!