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2757 Friendly St 302-1365

performance

BY ARIA SELIGMANN

Film and video artists Vanessa Renwick and Bill Daniel will share their work at the My House celebration Sunday in Washington-Jefferson Park.

Activist Art

Do it yourself venue goes out with a bang.

My House, the basement venue opened a year and a half ago in a house on West 5th Avenue to give performance space to underrepresented art, is closing down. But not without a bang. This Sunday, under the Washington Jefferson Bridge, "ASUPERHAPPYFUNDAYINTHEPARK" is planned from 3 to 11 pm to showcase the art, artists, poetry, music and film — especially film — that has sprung up outside the Northwest's mainstream arts culture.

"Our space is about community," says My House co-founder Marc Moscato, who's just wrapped up his masters degree in arts administration, and, like other My House founders, is moving on.

Although people in the collective have come and gone, a few artists and events connected with the group are well known. Sean Mediaclast, curator for the Museum of Unfine Art, has performed music for some of the avant-garde film shown at the basement space, and My House organized the No War Art Show, which drew more than 600 attendees in March.

"We live in a unique community, and we wanted to celebrate the creativity of it," says Moscato.

When he moved here a few years ago, Moscato was dismayed at the lack of venues for self-expressive art. So he turned his basement into one.

My House held self-published zine readings, film screenings, music, scratch animation workshops, punk rock shows and many other types of activities. Never once did neighbors complain of noise or did organizers have any trouble with police, says Moscato. The space was about creating art. Period.

"The unifying characteristic of all the artists we have worked with is that they are

interested in doing things outside the realm of capital," says Moscato. For example, some musicians would rather perform in the park for free than support the commercial enterprise of a venue. In addition, many clubs are for ages 21 and over, which imposes limits on the performers' audience.

"There aren't many places people can congregate free of crass commercialism," says Moscato, "not a lot of places where people can come together and talk or share. We do a lot of folk art and sharing stories; it's a new form of uncensored self-expression."

But now that My House is closing, Moscato hopes that others will pick up the baton and run with it. He hopes the mission has encouraged other young people to "take control over their lives and their art" and to realize they have the power to achieve whatever they want. "It doesn't have to happen in an institution," he insists. "We did this with no budget, no government grants, and no memberships, but we supported this vibrant community of well-recognized artists who have had shows in big centers."

Some of those artists include musicians and poets. Seattle's the Urban Hermit will perform on Sunday, along with folk singer Dennis Driscoll, art rockers Old Relijun and many others. Others in attendance will be some of the many filmmakers who've held screenings at My House and the Sunday show will conclude with a mini-film fest of sorts.

Beginning at 9:30 pm, hand-cranked film by Lee Krist with live music by Mediaclast will be shown, followed by a slideshow and film shorts from Olympia Film Ranch and the evening will conclude with a My House film retrospective beginning at 10:30 pm with works by Sandra Lea Gibson, Paolo Davanzo, Jim Finn and others.

A full schedule of events can be found at www.notmyhouse.com

We're not all crusty old mechanics.

Katlin is one of our three apprentices; we love em all, because they remind us just how much fun bicycling is!

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