



VOLUNTEERS DAIN KALDAHL, VALENTINA GONZALEZ AND JOSH SANDS REMOVE THE 'FREE WALLS' ON SHELTON MCMURPHEY BOULEVARD

PHOTOS: TRASK BEDORTHA

The Maude Kerns Art Center opens **Photography at Oregon Commitment to Vision: 50th Anniversary Retrospective Exhibit** 6 to 8 pm Friday, May 20. The late Bernard Freemesser, a longtime photography professor at the University of Oregon, started Photography at Oregon, a fine arts photography exhibit at the UO in 1966. The 50th anniversary show features the work of more than 80 artists including Ansel Adams, Brian Lanker, Barbara Morgan, Mary Ellen and Brett Weston. Also on MKAC's docket: Deadline for 17th annual **Mayor's Teen Art Show**, for ages 13 to 19, is Friday, May 27. The show will run Sept. 9-30.

But Springfield arts keep chugging: The city has announced its latest call to artists for the **Upstream Art** project, which "seeks local artists to paint up to five storm drains in the downtown area to help raise awareness about the importance of protecting our rivers, stream habitat and aquatic wildlife." Springfield's Community Relations Manager Niel Laudati writes that 2016's theme is "Drains to Stream." Deadline for entry is 5 pm Monday, June 13. Find more info at springfieldstreams.org.

Itty bitty art: The Oregon Supported Living Program's own Arts and Culture Mentorship Program is hosting the 4th annual **So Small: Miniature Art Show**, a silent auction and benefit, 6 to 8 pm Thursday, May 26, at The Lincoln Gallery (309 W. 4th Ave.). Miniature donated artwork must be submitted by May 23. Contact artsandculture@oslp.org for more info.

Mark your calendar: The deadline for artwork submissions (\$10 per piece, up to two) to the **Eugene Biennial** (a sort of

replacement for the Mayor's Art Show) is May 31. Submissions can be turned in digitally or to the **Karin Clarke Gallery**, the biennial's host. For more info, email eugenebiennial@gmail.com.

For years, a series of "free walls" used for graffiti art stood in the grassy lot next to Hummingbird Wholesale on Shelton McMURPHEY Boulevard. "Hummingbird purchased the lot where they stood and they posted an ad on Craigslist for [the walls] to be removed," says Valentina Gonzalez, who along with Josh Sands and Dain Kaldahl responded to the ad. Gonzalez, a member of **Whiteaker Community Art Team** (WCAT), says they expected the removal to take one to two hours and hoped to reinstall them in the Whiteaker.

"It was insane," she says, laughing, adding that it took about eight hours. "They were quarter-inch plywood sheets, but it was covered in about 1 to 2 inches of layers of paint. In some parts it looked like pages in a book or rings in a tree — so it made them very heavy."

Gonzalez says that due to rotting and wear, the group has chosen to preserve and then display them in a venue to attempt to raise awareness and funds to create new free walls in a more visible location. To follow the project, look for the tag **#EugeneFreeWallsProject**.

A collection of artists, arts orgs and community partners have a plan in the works: redeveloping the old, vacant **Lane Community College downtown center** into an arts "innovation hub."

Liora Sponko, executive director of Lane Arts Council, says

they've joined the conversation to advocate for more arts spaces that are collaborative and innovative downtown.

"Every time we have these meetings, there are more art groups at the table," Sponko says. "I think there's synergy."

Joshua Purvis, events coordinator for Technology Association of Oregon and a community member working on the project, says that last week the LCC Board of Education voted 6-0 in support of the redevelopment of the building into an arts innovation hub and to fund it through an extension of urban renewal (if passed by the Eugene City Council).

At 7:30 pm Monday, May 23, at the Public Services Building (125 E. 8th Ave.), the City Council is hosting a public hearing on a proposed amendment to urban renewal (UR), a longtime program that redirects some city taxes to a specified urban renewal district.

UR is a flashpoint in Eugene — some say it is needed to keep development momentum downtown, while others say UR has run its course and taxes should no longer be redirected downtown; in fact, the City Council promised in 2010 that UR would terminate in 2018.

"We're wanting to get artists to show up and talk and give testimony about the needs of the community," Purvis says of the public hearing. Purvis adds that UR is one of the only tools available to create affordable art working spaces downtown.

Regardless of what the City Council decides with UR, Purvis says, "Ultimately, it's LCC's determination what to do with it."

THE LAYERS OF PAINT ON THE 'FREE WALLS'



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The Takeaway

Critical conversations, live reports from the field, a platform for commentary and analysis, and listener participation. *Weekdays 11am*

BUCKETHEAD

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