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### on the cover

"Seven Days," a 2012 piece by Baye Riddell, one of the Maori artists who will visit Astoria for a 10-day cultural exchange through Clatsop Community College.

Submitted photo

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# Out & about

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

## A weekend of choir concerts

After 17 weeks of rehearsal spent learning and polishing new songs, the Cannon Beach Chorus performed its spring concerts this past weekend.

I sing alto in the chorus, and it was my first spring concert with the group. Inspiration to join struck about a year ago, when I saw the lively choir perform during its 25th anniversary.

I was an avid choral singer in high school, and it's been a treat to immerse myself in that culture again: the shared choral language of Italian dynamic notations; the melody and harmonies working together; the clumsy first read-through gradually transforming into a tight and satisfying performance. It's been pretty fun.

For the concerts, we performed Friday at the Cannon Beach Community Church and Saturday at the North County Recreation District in Nehalem. The church also serves as our rehearsal venue, and a crowd filled the pews to hear the performance.

Saturday also saw a good turnout at the NCRD, which was a new venue for the chorus — and for me. The NCRD is a former school built in the

1920s that now serves as a community center. It boasts a pool, a gym, a youth center, an arts gallery and an auditorium. The arts gallery was hosting CARTM's 17th annual Trash Art Show, featuring art made of recycled and repurposed materials. I'd never seen the art show before, so it was fun to check out the wall art, sculptures and paintings during intermission.

The NCRD and the Riverbend Players theater group are starting to renovate the 300-

seat theater, and our performance was a benefit concert to replace the old wooden chairs.

Our program consisted of "choral gems," that is, compelling, beautiful choral songs that have been celebrated and enjoyed by many people for many years.

The program moved forward in a loose chronological way, starting with Bach and Handel, moving to Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, then on to Brahms, and into the 20th century with Gabriel Fauré, Randall Thompson and some Shaker hymns and a gospel tune.

I had sung two of the choral gems before when I was in high school. Bach's "Alleluia," from Motet VI, "Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden," is complicated and fast, and the trick is to keep it light and buoyant. Mendelssohn's "Lift



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Thine Eyes" from his oratorio "Elijah" is one of my favorite women's choral pieces. Sung in soprano, mezzo-soprano and alto, the song isn't overly long, but the harmonies are tight and each part is interesting and pleasantly lilting.

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Coast Weekend welcomes comments and contributions from readers. New items for publication consideration must be submitted by 10 a.m. Tuesday, one week and two days before publication.

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