

PILLAR OF PRIDE



Artwork by Rachel Maxi

Rachel Maxi, one of the Astoria Column restoration crew members, depicts the white netting blowing off the Column during the summer windstorm in this miniature painting.

Astoria Column's restoration crew featured as fine artists in exhibition

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

It took more than a dozen artists and craftspeople to restore the Astoria Column this year — from the workers who repaired the cupola to the painters who sharpened and salvaged the mural illustrating the city's origin story.

Now, with the white netting removed and the scaffolding torn down, the 125-foot landmark stands bare and beautified on Coxcomb Hill, inviting the world to check out the extreme makeover.

But the restoration team isn't done with Astoria just yet.

A special exhibition titled "Inspired By The Column," featuring the personal artwork of more than a dozen Column crew members and hosted by Imogen Gallery, will open Saturday night at the Carruthers Building.

"It's a gift to the community to see how these people have been working diligently through the heat, the windstorm, the vandalism that took place," Teri Sund, the owner of Imogen Gallery, said.

Organized by Aretta Christie, the restoration project's documentation manager, the exhibition is a way for the restorers to introduce themselves as fine artists.

"It's just an interesting opportunity to see who they are and what they do in their real lives," Sund said. "They're all really talented artists in their own right besides doing the restoration work."

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Photo by Chris Bryant

This photo, taken by Chris Bryant at Vancouver Iron in Vancouver, Washington, shows the company producing the new stair treads for the Column in 2009.

INSPIRED BY THE COLUMN

An art exhibition inspired by the renovation of the Astoria Column will open Saturday evening at the Carruthers Building at 1198 Commercial St. The exhibit, which runs through Nov. 14, is hosted by Imogen Gallery. A reception runs from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday and will be catered by Jim DeFeo, owner of Astoria Coffeehouse & Bistro and the Carruthers Building.

Featured artists include:

- Rick Araluce
- Joshua Bessex
- Chris Bryant
- David Coyne
- Steven Craft
- Jeff Daly
- Jeanne Franz
- Lucero Garcia
- Kitty Kavanaugh
- Steven LaRose
- Michael Mathers
- Rachel Maxi
- Roger McKay
- Sharon McNeil
- Jeff Mihalyo
- Robert Paulmenn
- Jim Schmidt
- Anna Webber
- Astoria High School art students

