

## DRAWN TOGETHER



Noel Thomas sketched the North Coast Chorale.

### Artist sketches a performance of the North Coast Chorale

By NOEL THOMAS  
*Special to The Daily Astorian*

**O**n Saturday night it was my great pleasure to attend the North Coast Chorale's compelling performance of "The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace."

My balcony seat allowed me to take in the whole stage. The setting below was stark, evoking an arena, or battlefield, with the singers split — flanking either side of the stage — musicians seated on either side toward the front of the stage, and a bank of musicians across the back.

I think I began sketching even before the first note, and was propelled along by the emotional depth of the music. It wasn't always

easy to listen to, but my hand kept going until, at some point, I was completely drawn into the performance and stopped sketching.

It was the next day before I finished the piece.

I feel grateful to live in Astoria, a piece of the world where so many talented and committed artists can present their work. A special "Thank you" to the Chorale's director, Denise Reed, for the imagination and determination to bring this powerful production to fruition. And "Thank you" to the dedicated musicians, singers and dancers, to Friderike Heuer for her resonant photo montages, and to all the background people who helped pull this together for the rest of us.

*Noel Thomas is an Astoria artist.*