

Photographer investigates what U.S. residents, refugees have in common

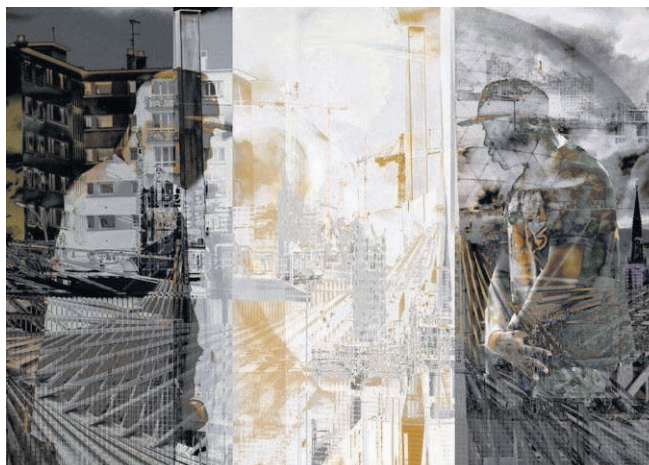
ASTORIA — LightBox Photographic Gallery opens "The Refugees' Dreams" with an artist reception from 5 to 8 p.m. Saturday, March 11. This series of photomontages by artist Friderike Heuer is dedicated to those fleeing their war-torn countries and to those helping refugees settle.

Heuer will give an artist talk about the series at 4 p.m. Saturday, immediately before the opening. Call LightBox at 503-468-0238 for reserved seating.

Heuer's current project consists of three parts: "On Transience" explored the transient psychological states of immigrants and refugees; "The Refugees'

Dreams" is focused on what residents and those seeking shelter in the United States have in common. The third part (working title "Transit") is in progress and tackles America's dual relationship with mobility — citizens cherish their own mobility, but some want to deny it to those crossing U.S. borders.

"As an immigrant myself, I am aware of the difficulties adjusting to a new culture, a new language, the loss of what was and the obstacles to integration," Heuer says. "I can only imagine how much harder it is when these changes are forced by the need to escape war zones without being



SUBMITTED PHOTO

"Looking for Jobs," a photomontage by Friderike Heuer.

welcome somewhere else.

"My work tries to address these issues by focusing on what we all have in

common: a desire for peace, for absence of harm, for a future that allows our children to grow and prosper,"

Heuer continues. "Being aware of what unites rather than separates us from those seeking asylum might diminish the distance between us. Perhaps it will help us to get involved in finding solutions to the refugee crisis. That is the hope, at least."

Trained initially as a trial attorney, Heuer shifted careers and immigrated to the U.S. from Germany in 1981. After receiving a Ph.D. from the New School for Social Research in New York in experimental psychology, she taught visual perception, cognition and social psychology at both the graduate and undergraduate levels for 15 years.

She now is working as

a full-time artist, and her work is primarily concerned with issues of justice, both historically and in contemporary settings, and the consequences of exile and emigration. Her recent work has explored the actual and emotional results of displacement ("Fugue," "On Transience," "Affirmation & Negation") and the consequences of reckless political and economic decision making ("Free Fall") and war ("The Armed Man"). For more information, visit www.friderikeheuer.com

The exhibit runs from March 11 through April 4. LightBox is located at 1045 Marine Drive.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

arts & entertainment

ON THE COVER



Women of the World, a four-part a cappella group, will perform March 11 at the Liberty Theatre in Astoria.

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See story on Page 7

4 THE ARTS

'An art student all my life'

Renee Rowe pursues the adventure of art making

7 FEATURE

Women of the World

A cappella group sings a message of peace, unity

12 DINING

Mouth of the Columbia

Community over spicy dishes at Fiery Foods Fest

FURTHER ENJOYMENT

MUSIC CALENDAR	5
CROSSWORD.....	6
SEE + DO.....	10, 11
CW MARKETPLACE.....	16
GRAB BAG.....	19



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