

Meet the artists

Lundell and Maine to be featured at Art in the Park ... Naturally

BY SUSAN CODY

Neal Maine

The Seaside Mill Ponds Natural History Park is close to Neal Maine's heart. He donated photographs for Art in the Park ... Naturally and Virtually's Saturday auction.

The park is not a typical park with playground equipment, sport fields and picnic tables. It is a place to walk and explore wild-life and its environs.

"I'm excited about this because I think this is a good entry point to focus on the art instead of the science," Maine said.

Maine has gained a lot of science experience at Mill Ponds — looking at plankton, banding birds and taking photographs. He and others have banded more than 147 species there. He believes the park could be an educational resource for the whole community.

A science teacher for 30 years at Seaside High School and a founding member of the

North Coast Land Conservancy, Maine is perhaps now better known for his stunning wild-life photographs.

Maine said he laments not including more art in his science classes. "In its true form, if you just have scientific description, it's not very friendly," he said.

Looking at objects scientifically often leaves one stuck without seeing the larger context.

"In the world I live in now, it's really about developing the art of seeing," Maine said. What we end up seeing is only what is reflected. If you look at a leaf, the only reason you see green is because those are the light rays that are reflected. That doesn't mean it's a leaf.

"A leaf is a lot more than reflected green light. It's got a complete life. It's interacting with all the chemicals in the air, it's breaking up molecules. It's dynamic, almost an indescribable phenomenon.

"Being a biology person, I am usually looking for live things," Maine said. "I got going photographing water skippers. All the things they do. You don't know that water skippers have these pads that don't break the meniscus of the water because they're transparent, but they still block the sunlight, so you get this deep contrast. And this is what you see, a water strider with six little legs — and its shadow is a whole new creature. Then if you get the right angle between those legs that come out, they trap a little drop of water.

"This is the art of seeing."

Artists have the most advantage for exploring how they see, Maine said. "When artists paint or draw, they communicate what they see in those light rays that bounced off the leaf."

Maine began using photography in his classes because his young students had trouble focusing. Suddenly, they started seeing things differently, he said. While they were using photography, they were learning biology. By narrowing the frame of observation, they could interact with what they were seeing.

"It seemed to serve as that intermediary method of connecting with nature," he said.

Maine would like to see mini workshops at the Mill Ponds, where people could learn about plants, birds and other wildlife. Photography, visual art, photography and birding classes could help others appreciate what is right there in Seaside.

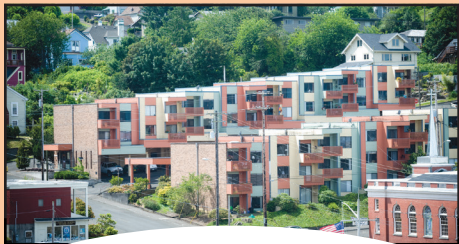


Neal
Maine



Marcus
Lundell

The Illahee Apartments



*As good as it gets
in Downtown
Astoria!*

1046 Grand Avenue
Astoria, OR 97103

503-325-2280



Marcus Lundell

Artist Marcus Lundell has an unusual style — he paints backwards. That is, he paints on glass windows from behind the glass while looking from the front.

Lundell likes to walk the Mill Ponds Natural History Park when he spends summers in Seaside. It reminds him of his childhood in Coos Bay, where he stomped around marshlands, built forts and caught tadpoles.

Now he's at home hiking daily up and down hills with his two dogs in a nature reserve in Santa Barbara, California.

"There are abandoned olive groves, sage, canyons — beautiful stuff," he said.

Lundell is a retired airline pilot. For 30 years, he found looking out the plane window at countryside to be mesmerizing.

"When you're a little boy and you're playing, all those cliffs leading into the water are right there and tangible. The degradation of the land is always changing because of the tides," he said. "And it's very similar to what you see flying over deserts and mountains and canyons. I see these miniature worlds out there."

One might think Lundell would choose

to paint landscapes but he has flown to the whimsical side of art. The images he paints come from his imagination.

He started playing with fun characters while drawing single-caption cartoons for Willamette Week when he lived in Portland. He said he had a great time painting people of all different sizes and shapes.

"It's like a landscape of the world," he said.

The painting he donated to the Art in the Park ... Naturally and Virtually features a portly gentleman from a bygone era with bright pink cheeks, a beauty mark and a powdered wig. He is posing holding a full crab on a plate. All this is surrounded by a gaudy golden frame.

Lundell began painting on glass in college, when he had no money but wanted to give his mother a nice painting as a Mother's Day gift. He found an old window and decided he wanted the image behind the glass to give it a more finished look. To accomplish this, he had to paint in reverse with the foreground first and the background last.

Lundell's light-hearted paintings show joy he perhaps dreams up as he is walking the beach or the Mill Ponds in Seaside.