

Continued from Page 6

2019. Although she now lives in Las Vegas, Littlebird was born and raised in Northwest Oregon. She is a member of the Grand Ronde Confederated Tribes and a descendant of the Kalapuyan and Clatsop Chinook people.

Littlebird's passions encompass painting, writing and illustrating, as well as supporting and promoting the work of other artists, particularly indigenous folks who have been regularly excluded from the fine arts community. That's what she set about to accomplish when recruited to curate a show for the Anita space.

"The show is significant for the native community, particularly because they don't see themselves represented a lot," she said.

Artists featured in the show include: Carol Haskins (Clatsop Chinook, Grand Ronde); Cole Haskins (Clatsop Chinook, Grande Ronde); Bobby Mercier (Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde); Lee Hii-kalixtnikt Gavin (Confederated Tribes of Umatilla); Nick Labonte (Clatsop Chinook, Grand Ronde); Orinda Goddard (Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis); M. Earl Williams (Umpqua and Rogue River, Grand Ronde); Angey Simmons-Rideout (Rogue River, Takelma, Grand Ronde); Lyliana Rideout (Rogue River, Takelma, Iriquois, Grand Ronde); Taylor Dean (Puyallup Tribe); Rising Fire (Blackfeet and Lakota);



Items featured in the exhibit.

and Cliff Taylor (Ponca Tribe).

While the installation involves both traditional and contemporary mediums, it all highlights, celebrates and explores the culture of local tribes native to the Northwest, Littlebird said.

"Even the contemporary work is referencing our culture," she added.

Exclusion from the art scene

According to Littlebird, Indigenous artwork is often excluded from the world of fine arts. Part of the issue is that it is typ-

ically categorized as primitive, which is widely viewed as an inferior art form.

"That line of thinking continues to this day in fine art," Littlebird said. "We aren't seen as enough to be included among our peers who are non-native. ... If we're not making art that falls into the primitive category, people don't know what to do with that."

Other systemic issues are tied to the colonization and erasure of Indigenous communities, perpetrated by white supremacy.

While the show brings visibility to artists in the community, it's also an opportunity for non-native people to interact with a culture they might not "know a lot about" or typically engage, Littlebird said. At the same time, it challenges general misconceptions about Indigenous artwork.

"People have like an expectation of what kind of art they're going to see when they go to a native art show," Littlebird said. "They're expecting to see carving and baskets."

While those traditional artforms are featured, the show embodies a much wider variety of mediums to illustrate that if a piece is created by an Indigenous person, then it is native artwork. Presenting an exhibit that includes non-traditional and contemporary mediums and techniques "can unwind a lot of stereotypes that other people have about us," Littlebird said.

"The work I'm doing is to combat the idea that we only exist in the past," she said, adding the show, at its core, is about fostering empathy and demonstrating "we are these people who are still here."

"If I can lift up my community and at the same time help others in the broader community to see us and grow to love us a bit more, then that's really the biggest gift for me," she said.

Continued from Page 2

In addition, there are several new items in the museum and adjoining Butterfield Cottage, which is restored to its 1912 appearance as an early resort rooming house. The cottage, built in 1893 by Horace Seely Butterfield, a prominent Portland jeweler, was donated to the Seaside Museum & Historical Society in 1984 and opened to the public after a 7-year renovation. Its flower gardens, which feature the Yellow Rose of Texas, a European crocus and a Californian poppy, are tended by the Sou'wester Garden Club.

Other indoor museum changes include an enhanced gift shop and better lighting throughout.

"It is nice and bright. We have changed out the lights. It's a different feel," Montero said.

Future

Eager to tell Seaside's story, a group of enthusiasts formed the Seaside Museum & Historical Society in 1973. They opened the museum 10 years later on a site leased from the city of Seaside.

While Montero provides much of the



A new display of artifacts is from the House of Roberts Millinery and Hat Shop that was founded in the Butterfield Cottage in 1958 by Marion Roberts. The cottage, built in the late 1800s as a summer home, was originally at 21 N. Columbia St. and had several incarnations.

public face of the museum, she is eager for other hardworking supporters to be highlighted. The museum is a family affair for Montero, with brother Bill Montero and sister-in-law Robin Montero playing key roles.

Another sister-in-law, Tess Tappert, of Prineville, has designed a triptych quilted

collage textile artwork called "One-hundred Years on the Seaside Prom," which will be raffled Aug. 8. It contains more than 200 fabrics in three panels. Tickets depict the artwork and are suitable for framing.

Throughout the North Coast, museum supporters have partnered with local businesses to sell 1,000 limited-edition lapel pins with a redesigned logo. As part of the promotion, many businesses are displaying historic photos of Seaside.

Photos will be a focus of upcoming priorities, Montero said. Bruce Andrews, a specialist photo restorer, is a key component.

"Some are so old that the clarity is not there," she said. "They will look better online and make better copies to buy."

Volunteers have also formed an exhibits committee to dream up more ideas.

"We want to look to the future," Montero said.

She and her colleagues plan to work closely with the Clatsop-Nehalem Tribe as its members strive to preserve and showcase their history. The museum's Lewis and Clark Saltworks exhibit stresses how the 1805 Corps of Discovery was assisted greatly by coastal Indigenous residents.

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