

Still fabulous at 50

White Bird Gallery flew into Cannon Beach and never left

BY NANCY MCCARTHY

White Bird Gallery, the grandmother of Cannon Beach art galleries, turns 50 this year.

During the village's early days as an artists colony, many created their own "pop up" galleries to sell their works and closed almost as quickly. The White Bird was the first to establish itself as a gallery, a fixture in the community displaying a variety of artists' paintings as well as crafts since 1971.

As the milestone birthday grew close, gallery owner Allyn Cantor rummaged through the archives and discovered posters from past anniversaries.

A few posters include the iconic white birds, that commemorate the gallery. Original owner Evelyn Georges named the space after the 1969 song, "White Bird," by the band It's a Beautiful Day.

*"White bird
In a golden cage
Alone
White bird must fly
Or she will die."*

"(Evelyn) was a potter back then, and I think she thought this would be a good summer project," Cantor said.

But it became more than just a project. Several of the artists who first showed there went on to be known nationally; they included painter Henk Pander, illustrator Petra Mathers and multimedia artist Royal Nebeker.

"Evelyn gave a lot of emerging artists a good shot," Cantor said. "She had a group of friends wealthy enough to buy art. She would bring them out here and have parties at her house and get them to come into the gallery."

In a 2010 interview with The Daily Astorian, Georges said she had a "knack for picking artists who connect with people visiting Cannon Beach."

She tried to mix affordable pieces from emerging artists with more expensive works from known artists.

"I like the way art captures what is happening in the world," Georges said. "I like all kinds of art, from abstract to figurative,

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Ceramicists John and Robin Gumaelius created the 50th anniversary poster for the White Bird Gallery in Cannon Beach.



Opened in 1971, the White Bird Gallery was among the first galleries in Oregon to combine fine art with arts and crafts.