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Art Space Fills Void for Community

Open Door Galley opens at McCoy Academy

BY CARI HACHMANN
 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Holding the belief that art should have a permanent place in education, brother and sister art educators Bobby Fouter and Liz Fouter-Branch recently opened a space called Open Door Gallery to offer the local community affordable access to art.

Their dream was to provide the community with some of the same tools and guidance that was influential to them as young artists growing up in an art-oriented family in northeast Portland.

By offering free and reduced-price art programs, "We're here for the community," said Bobby Fouter.

Run by a collaborative of artists, social activists, community elders, and small business owners, Open Door Galley is located within McCoy Academy at 3802 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

As a community art space with

more than one function, it provides a bridge to art programs that have been stripped from local schools because of budget cuts.

McCoy Academy is an alternative school for Oregon Outreach, a non-profit agency that helps provide students at-risk of dropping out of high school. It offers a variety of classes to students within the Portland area that will prepare them for post-secondary education or training.

During the week, Fouter and his sister teach credited art classes to students at McCoy.

Liz Fouter-Branch, a former special education teacher, calls art instruction a multi-sensory approach to learning and a motivator for students.

"It's a vehicle for developing the whole person," she said.

The students don't just learn to draw and paint, they are taught

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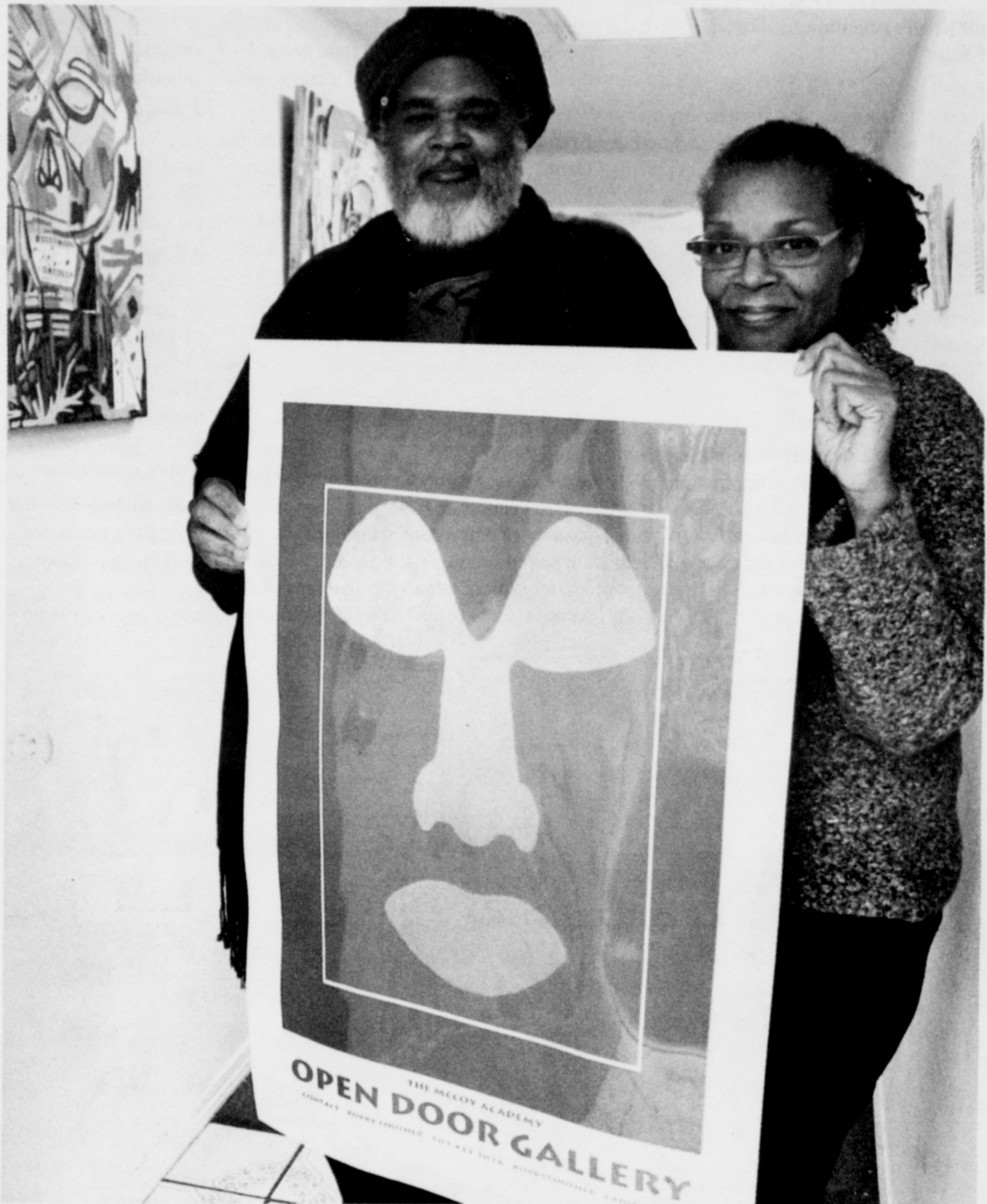


PHOTO BY CARI HACHMANN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Portland artist Bobby Fouter and his sister Liz Fouter-Branch introduce Open Door Gallery, a new community art space located at McCoy Academy on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

Equestrian Ballet Performer Builds Confidence

It takes hours of training for magical encounter

BY CARI HACHMANN
 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Like any other relationship in life, gaining understanding and respect with horses can only be won by spending lots of time with them.

Fairland Ferguson, 28, one of the star performers in the travelling equestrian ballet show 'Cavalia,' says the breathtaking stunts in the show are only achieved after a great deal of physical and mental synchronization between horse and rider.

"The relationship and communication we build with our horse is

so important," said Ferguson.

A day after the excitement of a night show ends late, Ferguson sleeps in until 11 a.m., when she wakes up to another workout for her very physically-demanding job.

"Time spent on stage is not enough to maintain good physical condition," she said.

Horses also need the extra exercise.

When Ferguson arrives to work, she runs her horses for up to 45 minutes each day, though each

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Fairland Ferguson performs breathtaking stunts as a rider in the equestrian ballet 'Cavalia,' now showing through Jan. 2 in the Pearl District of northwest Portland.

