

Art takes to the streets

Outdoor creation the focus of Plein Air & More

By Katherine Lacaze
For EO Media Group

Strictly translated, the term “en plein air” refers to the tradition of artists painting outdoors, where they can observe and incorporate how the air, shadows and light affect their subject.

The Cannon Beach Gallery Group takes a less stringent approach to the term during its annual Plein Air & More arts festival, which applies the concept of publicly crafting artwork outdoors to a number of mediums, creating a more robust, varied experience.

The ninth annual festival will take place Friday through Sunday, June 23 through 25, in Cannon Beach. During that time, more than 30 artists — mostly from the Pacific North-



R.J. MARX

Artist Pamela Claffin paints at Plein Air Friday, in front of Bronze Coast Gallery.

west — will create art on location throughout town.

“The gallery group invented this (festival) as a chance to engage people with a type

of artwork much of the public would not be familiar with,” said Jim Kingwell, of Cannon Beach’s Icefire Glassworks. “Generally, getting this many galleries to cooperate is an unusual event in towns. It’s so much a character of this town. Each gallery has a distinct difference, and you see a joint cooperative effort instead of a competitive effort.”

The ‘& More’

The Cannon Beach festival is special because it’s “the only plein air festival in the entire country that has the ‘& More’ part to it,” according to marketing director Bonnie Gilchrist.

“By adding the ‘and more’ component, we were able to invite more artists to participate and make the festival

more interesting,” she said.

Not only can visitors see artists working in various paint mediums characteristic of traditional “en plein air,” such as oil, pastels and watercolors, but also different art forms altogether, including metalworking, printmaking, wood-working, stone carving, bronze sculpture, jewelry making, and fused or blown glass.

Dave and Boni Deal, artists who live outside Camas, Wash., and show their work at the White Bird Gallery, will mimic the plein air style during their raku firing on the beach.

The Deals, who have collaborated in clay for more than 30 years, bring to their pottery a focus on the natural environment through the plants, geology and wildlife reflected in

the themes and materials they use. In that way, they create art that’s influenced by the surrounding environment, Boni Deal said.

Her husband, Dave, started learning raku, a type of Japanese ceramic-making, during a summer class in Cannon Beach in the early 1970s. On their two-person team, he’s the potter, while Boni Deal uses her illustrating and painting skills to do surface work.

On Saturday, Dave Deal will set up his kiln on the beach near Whale Park, where spectators can watch the drawn-out, low-fire process that evening. The raku style involves pulling artwork out of a kiln while it’s still red-hot and then transferring it to a container filled with combustible materials for post-firing reduc-

tion — a step of the process that is “fiery and exciting and dramatic,” Boni Deal said. The smoke that surrounds the art while it cools in the reduction barrel gives the clay a unique appearance: crackly and sooty with metallic accents, almost “ancient-looking,” Boni Deal said.

“It’s really slow, so you have to be patient,” she added.

The raku firing, which has been part of the festival for three years, will include s’mores and live music by the Rogue Blue Grass Band.

The Deals will work on wet clay Sunday, and Boni Deal will demonstrate how they do surfaces while incorporating coastal vegetation and themes.

“We’re trying to be like we’re ‘plein air’ artists,” she said.

Sandcastles: All you need is ‘a shovel and two buckets’

Sand from Page 1A

becomes a place where visitors of all ages can build sand sculptures, cheer on teams of children and teens, and participate in a parade, live music and a 5-kilometer fun run.

Standing watch

Kyler Vetter served as the guard to fend off those inclined to turn sandcastles into a sand mound. He will be helped by his father, City Councilor George Vetter.

“I’ve been advocating for this for years,” George Vetter said. “Why let others destroy what took so long to build?”

This year, the two presided over 30 plots — a 20 plot decrease from last year. Nelson said she contributes the decline to Pacific Northwest schools getting out later due to an unusual number of snow days taken this winter, making the Sandcastle Contest compete with graduation



COLIN MURPHEY/EO MEDIA GROUP

Sandcastle sculptor David Lond was just one of the dozens of participants.

ceremonies.

While this year’s contest was a little calmer than some previous years, team building enthusiasm was anything but diminished.

For Master Class competitor David Lond, nothing was going to keep him from building — even the accident

which gave him a concussion and stitches a week prior.

“I got sideswiped while on my bike,” Lond said. “I was going to do this unless my doctors said I couldn’t.”

His enthusiasm for sandcastle building started when he was young.

“I found a photo of me

digging up sand when I was 1½ years old,” Lond said. “Since, I think I’ve gotten better. How much better I suppose is questionable.”

Family affair

Decades later, sandcastle building has become a family affair. The team he is on, Moonstone, is named after the beach he and his sister frequent in California. The team spans from members as old as 82 to as young as 11.

Years of playing on the beach helped Lond hone his skills that enable him to make a giant sand octopus.

“What’s most important in sandcastle building: a shovel and two buckets. One for water, one for sand,” he said. “Everything else is just toys.”

While the team still treats sandcastle building as more casual, family fun, the techniques and skills they collectively contribute are sophis-

ticated. Throughout the day children and adults crowded around his corner of the plot, where he would simultaneously build his sculpture and explain his techniques as he did it.

Sometimes he would take a break from building to show how builders make designs in the sand with thick kneads and drinking straws.

“We’ll always try to teach someone,” Lond said. “(Sandcastle building) is clean, innocent fun. It’s a cheap thrill.”

Moonstone Sandcastle Club has competed in Cannon Beach for many years, Lond’s mother Kate Zublim said, and so far has won every place at some point except for first. This year, the team’s design “Sea Circus” did not place in the top four. The team Form Finders took first for their creation “Reverse Safari.”

“We’re just happy to be here,” Zublim said.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Julie Amici

Manzanita Music Festival coming up

The Manzanita Music Festival celebrates the power of music and to welcome visitors to the Oregon Coast. Last year, the festival showcased incredibly talented local, regional, and nationally acclaimed artists performing Americana, blues, country, reggae, jazz, and more. Events take place Friday, July 21 through Sunday, July 23, at the Rex Champ Field in Nehalem and downtown Manzanita.

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