

Fashion, music and more at Stormy Weather fest

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

There was something special about the year 1987.

It was the year Cannon Beach locals Jeffrey Hull, Joyce Lincoln and Sharon Amber all decided to open their respective galleries, among a suite of others who opened around the same time. It was also the first year of the Stormy Weather Arts Festival, a citywide event that showcases a wide range of visual and performing arts.

The festival will take place Friday through Sunday, Nov. 3 to 5.

In its 30th year, the festival features musicians, the Dancing in the Rain Fashion Show with local and national designer labels, and an opportunity to meet artists to discuss their creations.

Despite the name's warning of inclement weather, the festival has evolved into one of Cannon Beach's most popular events. This celebration of local artistry helped Cannon Beach get recognized as one of "The 100 Best Art Towns in America" by author John Villani.

Hull recalls the festival's humble beginnings. "I remember asking people in town if they were here for Stormy Weather Arts Festival, and they would say 'huh?'" said Hull, who is known for his sea and landscape paintings. "It's definitely grown as an event. In the first five years, people didn't really know about it. Clearly, it has resonated."

'An adventure'

Amber doesn't remember much about the first year of the festival, other than getting a knock on the door from a Chamber of Commerce employee asking if she'd be interested in participating in a brand new art festival.

"It started as an itty-bitty thing," Amber said. "I didn't know if it was going to get off the ground. I thought it would be too late in the season. Turns out it was successful because it is late in the season."

Amber is among the professional jewelers who will be featured at Friday's Stormy Weather Arts Benefit Cocktail & Dessert Party. She's been a jeweler for 44 years, including 30 in Cannon Beach.

While the ocean often serves as a design inspiration, this year visitors can expect to see jewelry reflecting the nearby woods.

"It's easy to go about your day and to not see the beauty that surrounds you, especially here," Amber said.

The natural world is integral to why artists feel inspired to work in Cannon Beach. And, as any person who lives on the coast knows, in the winter, mother nature isn't always friendly.

But for Jane Brumfield, the festival committee chair and owner of Imprint Gallery, the blustering winds and intense rainfall is part of what



Pam Wachtler-Ferminus, from Bainbridge Island, Washington, an oil painter with the White Bird Gallery, discusses overtones and undertones with Trieste Andrews, from Oregon City, during a past Stormy Weather Arts Festival.

PHOTO BY ERICK BENDEL

The coast is in the cards during Stormy Weather

Oregon artist Aaron Trotter will release his latest deck of Illustrated Playing Cards, featuring the North Coast from Newport to Astoria, noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 4, at Voyages Toys, Comics & Games (172 N. Hemlock St.) during Cannon Beach's Stormy Weather Arts Festival.

Head 'Northwest By Northwest' during arts festival

Northwest By Northwest Gallery — 232 N. Spruce St. in Cannon Beach — celebrates its 30th year with the Stormy Weather Arts Festival.

- Schedule**
Friday, Nov. 3
- 5 to 6 p.m. Foundry process with renowned public sculptor and bronze artist Georgia Gerber. Unveiling of "Sea Hawk" sculpture.
 - 6 to 8 p.m. Live music with Bobcat Bob and Sineann Winery.
- Saturday, Nov. 4**
- 11 a.m. Hazel Schlesinger, Public Choice winner for Plein Air & More Arts Festival. Her paintings can be seen around the world, in TV series, movies and commercials.
 - 1 p.m. Master of fine art film photography Christopher Burkett gives a talk on "how we see color."
 - 2 p.m. Narrative sculpture of Ann Fleming in bronze tell the stories of our lives. "Midori" is a public sculpture by the artist.
 - 3 p.m. Gerber talks about the process of sculpting "Sea Hawk" and the creative process.
 - 4 p.m. Ivan McClean, a contemporary sculptor. Projects include Nike, Nines Hotel PDX, World Trade Center in Long Beach California and our Landmark Sculpture Garden.
 - 6 to 8 p.m. Reception with artists and live music of Bobcat Bob and Sineann Winery.

Schedule of events

Friday, Nov. 3

• 7:30 to 10 p.m. Stormy Weather Arts Benefit Cocktail & Dessert Party

Interact with professional jewelry artists who discuss their techniques while their works are being modeled. Sample a custom cocktail, created specifically for the event by Cannon Beach Distillery, and a local craft beer also made especially for the event, alongside sparkling wine and a dessert buffet that features sweets from local bakeries and chocolatiers. The celebration will also include live music and a raffle and silent auction with vacation packages. Cost: \$35. Location: Cannon

Beach Community Hall

Saturday, Nov. 4

• 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Music Around Town

Enjoy live performances by regional musicians at five different locations.

Cost: free/donations
Locations: The Landing, Sandpiper Square, Coaster Theatre Courtyard, Ecola Square, Haystack Square

• 10 a.m. (doors open at 9:40 a.m.) Dancing in the Rain Fashion Show

Pick out a new outfit at this runway show featuring apparel and accessories from local and national designers available in Cannon Beach shops. Cost: Free, or \$5 guaranteed

seating donation. Location: Coaster Theatre Playhouse

• 8 to 10 p.m. (doors open at 7:30 p.m.) Spotlight Concert: Heels to the Hardwood

The Seattle Americana band brings their foot-stomping sound to Cannon Beach. Cost: \$30. Location: Coaster Theatre Playhouse

Sunday, Nov. 5

• 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Brews, Blues & Barbecues

Sample local craft brews, including one created especially for the festival, enjoy live Delta Blues from Steve Cheseborough and savor a delicious barbecue lunch from a local chef. Cost: \$25. Location: Cannon Beach Community Hall

makes this event so special.

"During my first year at Cannon Beach Arts Association, I remember it was sideways raining, and everyone came in dripping wet. But they would just bundle up and get blown over to the next gallery," Brumfield said. "It becomes an adventure almost. It's a shared experience."

Timeless art

Jim Paino, interim director of the Chamber of Commerce and festival committee member, said the festival has evolved from a small community event into a tourism-based one.

"We want to make it bigger and better. It's always a lot of work, but we've built it, and we want to keep it going for many years to come," Paino said.

The number of galleries has grown. Recent additions, like musicians and the fashion show, continue to diversify and expand. But one aspect of the festival seems to remain constant: the people who visit.

"I have about 15 people who have been coming for years," Hull said. "They are clients, but really they are friends. I know about their kids and their dogs."

Lincoln, owner of Northwest By Northwest Gallery, has had a similar experience. Over the past 30 years, the consistent group of visitors and locals who return each year have become a kind of arts community family, she said.

There are lots of beautiful places to experience art in the Pacific Northwest. But, Lincoln said, Cannon Beach's reputation as an art town isn't determined by the number of galleries or artists, but by the type of art and the culture of the people who make it and sell it.

"(Cannon Beach) is a place to connect with artists, gallery owners, friends. It's an authentic experience," Lincoln said.

"Trends are trends," but the art that people buy in Cannon Beach is often timeless, she added. "It's not something you're going to get tired of."

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