

May 11, 2009

### RCC FireHouse Gallery plans “Perception of the Past” opening reception

The Rogue Community College FireHouse Gallery will host an exhibit that features a statewide collaboration of Oregon artists and writers, celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Oregon’s statehood.

“Perceptions of the Past” will be on display May 20 through June 27 at the FireHouse Gallery, corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and H streets, Grants Pass. An opening reception is scheduled from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. May 20. The reception will feature a reading by Oregon Poet Laureate Lawson Inada at 7 p.m. and by Carlos Reyes at 7:30 p.m. Many of the show’s participating artists and writers also will be in attendance.

Thirteen historic photographs from the Josephine County Historical Society were given to writers from around the state to interpret in poetry or prose. The written pieces were then given to artists for their visual interpretations. The artist created works based solely on the written pieces; they did not see the original photographs. The exhibit will consist of the 13 sets of photographs, written pieces and artworks displayed together for a unique, contemporary glimpse at Oregon’s past. Participating writers are Marc Acito, Alison Clement, Walt Curtis, Monica Drake, Lawson Inada, Lauren Kessler, Robert McDowell, F. A. Nettelbeck, Carols Reyes, Vern Rutsala, Floyd Skloot, D. L. Snell and Kim Stafford.

Participating artists are Ruth Armitage, Bruce Bayard, J.S. Bird, Ellen Dittebrandt, Annette Gurdjian, Judy Hoiness, Frederick James, Kirk Lybecker, Laura Nakell, Royal Nebeker, Melinda Thorsnes, Sherrie Wolf and Phyllis Yes.



*So That's It* by Robert McDowell

We are all reflections of original catastrophe.  
So the poor in spirit are dumbstruck  
As a rabbit of inconceivable size  
Is pulled by an even bigger hand  
From a hat of limitless darkness.  
So the unemployed go on and on,  
Survivors of eons of random collisions;  
So the loveless, wandering in their grief,  
Imagine the sweet madness of tendrils  
Shooting heavenward in an ecstasy of photosynthesis.  
Who lives and who dies?  
The cosmos breathes and stars are born, stars go out.  
It takes forever as it happens in a heartbeat.  
The miracle, I guess, is that the vast soul and puny soul  
Are somehow like the centered rider on the trail  
Amid solar wind, rubble, and debris,  
Their course through chaos the only way home.



"The Struggle," watercolor acrylic and watercolor crayon by Judy Hoiness

Other events being planned as part of the exhibit include a workshop by Carlos Reyes at 1 p.m. May 20, a talk by artist J.S. Bird at 11:30 a.m. May 21, a talk by writer/artist pair F.A. Nettelbeck and Bruce Bayard at 1 p.m. June 1, and a First Friday Art Night Reception from 6 to 9 p.m. June 5. Workshops by Lawson Inada and Walt Curtis also are planned.

Funding for the project has been made possible by Home Valley Bank, the Oregon Arts Commission, the Autzen Foundation, the Josephine County Cultural Coalition, the Grants Pass Visitors and Convention Beaureu, Nighthawk Graphics, and Fiberoptic Lighting Inc. For more information about the exhibit or events, call the RCC Galleries at (541) 956-7339.

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