Cherry Center honors 1930s mural artists, painter proves you can go home

Among those who played a part in creating the distinctive murals inside San Francisco's Coit Tower in 1934 were three painters who would later move to Carmel. An art and history exhibit opening Friday, April 17, at the Carl Cherry Center for the Arts, "Coit Tower: The Carmel Connection," pays tribute to those three individuals. The Cherry Center hosts a reception at 5 p.m. The landmark tower on Telegraph Hill, which offers a birdseye view of the city and its bay, was completed in 1933.

The following year, an ambitious public works project funded by taxpayers employed 25 artists to paint the murals. Among the painters were Maxine Albro and Parker Hall, who later married and moved to Carmel. Albro's mural focused on California's agriculture, while Hall embellished the tower with scenes of outdoor recreation and sports.

Another key figure in getting the project off the ground was Col. Harold Mack, who was one of four people appointed by the federal government to oversee the project. Before becoming a Carmel resident, Mack built a large estate in Monterey, where he hired Albro to paint a mural and Parker to carve limestone sculptures of St. Christopher and two angels. The estate is now part of the Santa Catalina School, and the artwork by Albro and Parker is still on display.

Syphony showcases viola at Sunset, five bands rock youth center

Bringing attention to the viola as a solo instrument — and highlighting three compositions evoking nostalgia and nationalism — The Monterey Symphony presents its fifth concert of the season, "Majestic Realm," Saturday and Sunday, April 18-19, at Sunset Center.

Accompanying the symphony will be violist Roberto Diaz, who serves as president and director of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. When he's not busy leading the respected conservatory into the 21st century, the Chilean-born instrumentalist can often be found performing with some of the world's leading orchestras.

"Diaz is very talented," Lindsey Little, a spokeswoman for the symphony, told The Pine Cone. "He hasn't performed with the symphony before, and the viola isn't often featured as a solo instrument. It's something new and different."

With Max Bragado-Darman conducting, the symphony will perform Johann Strauss’ Overture to the Gypsy Baron, William Walton's Concerto for Viola, and Serge Prokofiev's Symphony No. 7 in C-sharp Minor. Op 131. Little said Strauss' composition is "a playful piece that will open up the show," and she called all three pieces "strong and beautiful works."

Saturday's concert begins at 8 p.m., while Sunday's matinee starts at 3 p.m. Dr. Todd Samra offers a free pre-concert talk before each performance. Tickets are $29 to $79. Group rates are also available. Sunset Center is located at San Carlos and Ninth. Call (831) 646-8511.

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On A High Note

By CHRIS COUNTS

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California State University Monterey Bay 2015 President’s Speaker Series

David Helvarg

The Golden Shore — California, the Pacific and the Future of Our Coast and Ocean

DAVID HELVRG is an author and Executive Director of Blue Frontier Campaign. In addition to his books, David is editor of the Ocean and Coastal Conservation Guide, organizer of the Peter Benchley Ocean Awards and Blue Vision Summits for ocean activists. He is the winner of Coastal Living Magazine’s 2005 Leadership Award and the 2007 Herman Melville Literary Award. Helvarg worked as a war correspondent in Northern Ireland and Central America, covered a range of issues from military science to the AIDS epidemic, and reported from every continent including Antarctica. An award-winning journalist, he has produced more than 40 documentaries for PBS, The Discovery Channel and others. His print work has appeared in publications including The New York Times, Smithsonian, Popular Science, and Sierra. David is a licensed Private Investigator, body-surfer and scuba diver.

April 27, 2015, 3:30 p.m.
Free, World Theater.
**ART**

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After a leaky roof and the passage of time took a toll on the Coit Tower’s murals, a $3.7 million project that restored them to their original grandeur was completed last year. The exhibit at Cherry Center will feature artwork by Albro and Hall, and include photographs and biographies of all 25 mural artists.

The project was one of many that kept artists busy during the Great Depression. “All throughout the country, the government put artists to work painting public buildings such as libraries, post offices and city halls,” Hall’s daughter-in-law, Frankie Laney, told The Pine Cone. The Carmel resident was instrumental in bringing the exhibit to town.

Jon Golinger, who helped lead the restoration effort, will present a slide show about it Saturday, April 18, in Cherry Hall.

The Cherry Center, is located at Fourth and Guadalupe. The exhibit continues through May 22. Call (831) 624-7491.

* ‘Loving Watercolor’ in PG.

An exhibit of watercolors opening Friday, April 17, at the Pacific Grove Library showcases the unsung creative talent of a local woman, Nancy Hauk, who is suffering from a heartbreaking illness.

“Nancy has developed a form of dementia that affects both motor and brain function, making living at home no longer feasible,” explained Julienne Burton-Carvajal, who is co-curating the show with Nancy’s husband, Steve Hauk. The couple have owned Hauk Fine Arts in Pacific Grove for more than two decades.

Now a resident of The Cottages of Carmel, where she receives the care she needs, Nancy was active as a painter from 2000 to 2010. The subjects of her paintings include pastoral French scenes, Central Coast seascapes, the gardens of Monterey’s historic adobes, and other locales.

“The extent of her achievement as a watercolorist has only become apparent since her relocation to The Cottages,” said Burton-Carvajal, who said the recent creation of gallery space at the library “provided the perfect opportunity” to present Nancy’s work.

“It has become a bright spot in Steve’s life,” Burton-Carvajal said of the exhibit. “He tells Nancy about the show when he visits her life,” Burton-Carvajal said of the exhibit. “He tells Nancy about the show when he visits her at breakfast and again at dinner time. It has become a big topic at the Cottages. Residents are carrying around the postcard invitations and anticipating their field trip to the exhibit.”


* Déjà vu for artist

If the grand opening of Scott Jacobs’ gallery Sunday, April 19, feels like a homecoming, that’s because it is. The painter occupied the same space in 2012 and 2013.

“It feels really good to be back here,” said Jacobs, the grand-nephew of Daniel Chester French, who designed the statue of Abraham Lincoln in the Lincoln Memorial. “It’s a great space.”

Unlike so many of his contemporaries, who focus on landscapes and seascapes, Jacobs is most fascinated by figurative work.

“I think the human form is the most beautiful thing on the planet,” he explained.

The gallery, which is located on Lincoln just south of Ocean, will be the site of a reception from 5 to 7 p.m. Call (831) 383-0930.

* Painting duo offers free talk

Pacific Grove watercolorist Anne Downs and Carmel Valley painter printmaker Kathryn Greenwald present an informal talk about their work Friday, April 17, from 5 to 6 p.m., at the Carmel Art Association.