

Sooke Fine Arts Show ready to go - almost



By Sooke News Mirror

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One of the most eye-catching pieces being shown at the 2013 Sooke Fine Arts Show may well be a 500 pound gorilla made from recycled car bumpers, so said show coordinator Catherine Keogan.

"There's some very exciting stuff coming through with definite stand-out pieces on the floor," said Keogan.

The submissions edged out last year's record with an influx new artists entering their works. The gruelling task of choosing the works was a four-day process. This year the jurors selected works through an image process.

"We asked the jurors to look at the piece not the presentation, most of them have done online adjudications. It was interesting to see where they agreed and where their points of view varied," said Keogan. "It was huge job for the jurors and the online aspect allows them to spend more time with each piece."

With the selections done and the work ready to be displayed, artists who were not accepted for the 2013 show are encouraged to resubmit for 2014 as the jurors are different each year.

"There's some incredible artists in the Sooke area, I would love to see Vancouver Island recognized as Canada's artistic hub," said Keogan. "People are drawn here and there's so much inspiration here."

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THE SOOKE FINE ARTS SHOW, which runs from July 26 to August 5, is in its 27th year and brings together artists from across Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. It takes months of preparation and hundreds of hours of volunteer time to pull it off. SEAPARC Leisure Complex is transformed into a gallery and one would never know that below is an ice surface with bleachers on the sides. It is one very large feat accomplished by 300 dedicated volunteers. Some begin setting up committees and organizing as early as December/January.

"It's extraordinary," said Keogan. "We couldn't do it with them. What we do is of the highest calibre, all of our volunteers wear many hats... it's an incredible community that way, they are building many of the important parts of this community."

The show includes many of the same events and features as in years past, beginning with the Purchasers' Preview Night on July 25. The show opens on Friday to the public with the Artist Celebration taking place on Saturday.

There are live artists' demonstrations and talks as well as music every day. There are events for kids and seniors, a Taste of Sooke and youth art in the lobby.

The Sooke Rotary provided a grant for the youth art to be framed, giving it a more professional look.

Art lovers can purchase a show pass and come as often as they wish or come for one day only. Admission tickets are available at the door. Kids under 12 get in free. There are two ticketed events, the Purchaser's Preview (\$25) and the Taste of Sooke (\$12) evenings.

The Purchasers Preview Night is an opportunity for art lovers to preview and purchase artwork prior to the Sooke Fine Art Show's public opening. Be the first to stroll the gallery and find the perfect addition for your art collection.

The Taste of Sooke on August 1 is the chance to sample savoury selections of appetizers and refreshments prepared by Sooke's outstanding culinary community. Music by the Cloverpoint Drifters will add to the ambiance.

The public has the opportunity to select their favourite works of art, and show organizers are trying to make it as interactive as possible.

"Part of our mandate is to get people engaged with art and have it play a role in their lives," said Keogan.

Keogan and her partner Britton Jacob-Schram, who is the administrative coordinator, have taken on the task of the show for the past two years. They are now Sooke residents who never want to leave.

"The community doesn't show all of its secrets right away," said Keogan.

The coordinators and the volunteers are the faces of the show, but much of the support comes from the Sooke and area business community.

"We get a huge amount of support from the business community," she said, "especially in tough times it's wonderful to know you have the support when it's not so easy to give."

For more information on the 2013 Sooke Fine Arts show go to: www.sookefinearts.com or call 250-642-7256.

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