

# SHARON ART STUDIO

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### THE PLAYGROUND RE-OPENS AT LONG LAST



On Saturday, July 14, the newly refurbished children's playground, now known as the Koret Children's Quarter was officially opened by Yomi Agunbiade, SFRP General Manager, and Gavin Newsom, mayor. The fog caught characteristically up in the trees marked the location as San Francisco, but the weather did not hinder the enjoyment of those in attendance. Because of the generous support from the Koret Foundation, the occasion marked the completion of a \$3.8 million renovation project at this popular and historic site. As touted on the SFR&P website, "Formerly known as Children's Playground, this area was originally built in 1887 and is commonly thought to

be the nation's first public playground. In that era, the idea of providing a dedicated space solely for youth recreation was unique and groundbreaking."

There are so many surfaces for feet to explore: the warm, hard paved asphalt, the bouncy resurfaced play areas, the soft, shifting sandy patches, the ticklish grass lawns, and the cool, wet water streams...not to mention all of the things to climb. Adults as well as kids were swaying on oversized metal cattails. Scott Peterson and his crew created two wave walls designed to appeal to the rock climber. The sea creatures by Vicki Saull were a hit with the toddlers. All of her sculptures are made from pre-cast concrete, which has been polished and sanded to have a relatively smooth, but not slippery surface. The jewel of the new artwork is tucked at the bottom of the hillside just west of the concrete slide and behind a jungle gym structure. It is half buried by sand, but the joy of discovery is a large part of the installation. It is the contribution of the Sharon Art Studio crew. (For more information, please read the article by Christine Heath in this newsletter.)

To make the opening day even more special, the Department of Recreation and Parks sponsored some extra creative activities. Pat Wiley (SFR&P supervisor) and a healthy staff of volunteers manned tables at which the public was invited to make their own kazoo, design a visor to wear, or fashion a carousel wand.

Of course, Sharon Art Studio volunteers engaged the public as well. Len and Katina Price both gave

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**FALL SESSION  
OPEN REGISTRATION**

**SENIOR  
PRE-REGISTRATION:**

**Friday  
August 24  
2-4pm**

**YOUTH REGISTRATION:**

**Friday  
August 24  
4:30-6pm**

**ADULT & YOUTH  
REGISTRATION:**

**Saturday  
August 25  
12-2pm**

This is an  
**OPEN REGISTRATION,**  
so for those classes  
you know fill quickly,  
come early with a  
snack and be prepared  
to wait in line!

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demonstrations on the electric wheel, answering the questions of the young spectators. Barbara Libasci assisted Cynthia Major with the sale of donated artworks all the while answering questions about the studio and signing up students for classes. Dina Competente and Velva Perieff drew in spectators curious about the fine art of china painting. Susan Strolis became the Pied Piper of Bubbles as squealing children jumped to pop the oversized globes of rainbow soap.



It is good to once again have activity and hear the laughter of children. Everyone seemed to have a good day in our corner of the park.

- By Susan Strolis, FOSAS Board Vice-President



**PARTNERSHIP!**  
**Cole Hardware is giving**  
**the Friends of Sharon**  
**Art Studio 10% OF**  
**YOUR PURCHASES!**

FOSAS is a member of Cole Hardware's School and Community Partnership program (\*1033). Cole Hardware gives us 10% of purchases made by you, every day of the year! Earn money for the friends of Sharon Art Studio while shopping for your hardware needs at any Cole Hardware location. The more you spend, the more they donate to us! Ask the cashier to post your purchase to the Friends of Sharon Art Studio. It's that simple! You can donate to our wishlist account, from which we can purchase from Cole Hardware at a substantial discount. That will really help!

## A note from MICHIKO THOMPSON:

As many of you have already heard, on June 2nd, five members of my family died in a tragic collision with a semi-truck. In the car were my aunties Patsy (67) and Nellie (60) and cousins, Cindy Lou (36), Alec (12) and Aaron (3). Ironically, they were on their way to a memorial for a cousin who died a year earlier. The two young boys loved their Kat'sa (Grandma), and two T'sit'sa's (Aunties) so much that they wanted to be in the same car as them, and thus, moved into the car with them before the crash. The only condolence is that in going to the other world, they were all together, as they were part of a very tight knit family. The three adults were very respected women in the community on our Nimipu (Nez Perce) Reservation in Lapwai, Idaho, as well as throughout "Indian Country." The children were much loved by all who had a chance to know them in their short lives.



Although it was a very sad event, the ceremonies, which took place outside and lasted all day and all night for five days, were beautiful to behold. The family and the tribe united to accommodate the nearly 700 people who came to pay their respects and allow their spirits pass through unhindered. To do this, my family believed that we had to do everything very traditional, with strict adherence to our religion, Seven Drum. It could be considered beneficial in some ways because it showed the younger generations many of the traditional ways that only the elders remember now. If anyone is interested, I would be willing be to speak more in depth about the actual proceedings.

I would like to thank everyone at the studio for their kind support through this hard time. My heart aches for my family on the reservation as well as for my mother, whose phone call that sad day still haunts me. I know that some people mentioned they would like to help my family. I would suggest donating art or money to our memorial effort in a year, which will probably be another big event. In many of our ceremonies, we do something called a "giveaway" in which things are given as gifts to the family and community. Any donated cash would go to the transport of people and things (checks can be made to Cassandra Kipp).

Any donations would be greatly appreciated, and if you are unable to help in that way, please keep us in your hearts and minds. I know that if any family can handle such a tragedy, it is this one, as strength and unity are what binds us.

Tah-sah-ha-po

- Michiko Thompson is the FOSAS Administrative Assistant, former Studio Tech, and a long time student of the studio. She is also a wonderful friend.

# AN ART ARCHEOLOGICAL DIG, OH BOY!

At last, at last, our wall has come at last! That is right friends, the Archeological Dig Site created by staff and students of SAS & FOSAS is at this moment a permanent fixture in the new Children's Playground. The wall is 4 ft. wide by 20 ft. long adorned with precious objects created at the Sharon Art Studio Yeah us!!

This project was started in the summer of 2004 with the redevelopment of the Children's Playground. Staff and students held a workshop to create the red clay California grizzly bear skeleton, the summer session of the teen program, Art in the Park, created fused glass tiles. Staff and students from every discipline created amazing gifts to be embedded in this work of art. In fact, there were more pieces donated than could be used in the space. Christine Heath, former SAS glass and youth instructor, worked with the project architects vision and assistance to edit the pieces down to what is currently in the wall. After the final approval on the layout each piece was mapped for size and depth to create a mold in the concrete. A relief of the map was made in foam and set into the drying wall. When the cement was dry, an exact footprint was left for each piece. Using a copy of the original map, in the spring of 2007 Christine helped place each object in its new location. Several apoxys were tested until one proved strong enough to hold the heavy pieces of clay, glass and metal. Wooden shunts were placed around each object to secure it while the epoxy cured. Every piece was then cemented, finishing the installation. This process took over a week to complete.

Three years in the making, this idea has become a complete and permanent work of art in our city and fair park for all to enjoy. Thank you staff and students for all your hard work and determination to see this project through to the end. Since the work is a dig site, 2 ft. of it is under a little sand... but fear not, photo's were taken before this event occurred, and all are encouraged to dig a little to find some buried treasures in our own backyard.

- Christine Heath, former SAS Instructor & Archeological Dig Coordinator

## FRIENDS OF SHARON ART STUDIO BOARD REPORT

FOSAS has a new vice president, Susan Strolis, who recently joined the board and is a Wednesday ceramics student, as well as a buyer for the Museum of Craft & Folk Art, and an active member of the Haight Ashbury Improvement Association. Mei Lie Wong, a long time glass student, is now our new FOSAS treasurer. New to our board is Alice Potter who is also a ceramics student and who works for the California Academy of Sciences. If you have expertise in the areas of fund raising, accounting, or law, and would be interested in joining the board, don't be shy. Talk to Lani in the office. We need people who are willing to donate their time and skills.

A reminder that early renewals for FOSAS membership will soon begin! Look out for your reminder in the mail and make sure to renew. If you are not currently a member, sign up at the Fall registration on August 25 for an extended membership good for 2007 and 2008! Your memberships help keep us active!

FOSAS just purchased a new glass kiln in the glass studio.

FOSAS board members volunteered at the grand opening of the playground on July 14 and sold \$185 worth of studio pots! We welcome back the kids and the playground, both were absent from the park for too long!!

We have tote bags, t-shirts and aprons with FOSAS logo for sale in the kitchen.

## LETTER from the DIRECTOR

*Dear Friends of Sharon Art Studio members,*

*Summer has been an exciting and busy time at the Sharon Art Studio. Our popular Art in the Park program has been a sell-out hit once again with 11-15 year olds and we've had dozens of plaster masks, stained glass windows, and PMC jewelry to admire and inspire us made by these young artists.*

*Many of our adult students are gearing up for the annual Summer Student Sale which will take place on Sunday August 12 from 11am-5pm. Please join us to pick up a great piece of art and help support your fellow students and the studio.*

*Unfortunately, there is still no word on when the city will be posting the new 20/hr teaching position due to a back-up of open city job listings. We hope it will progress soon.*

*Sincerely,  
Lani Rovzar, FOSAS Director*

# A Sharon Blossom, MARY HARDEN

Now you see her, now you don't. Mary Harden, watercolor instructor at the Sharon Art Studio, is one active teacher between her many classes and exhibitions of her and her students work. In Fall of 06, the S.F. Botanical Garden's Helen Crocker Russell Library had *Between Science and Art: Works in Botanical Illustrations*. The Esteban Sabar Gallery highlighted *Black Tie Botanicals* in January '07 and, of all places, Alcatraz Island had an exhibit of *Botanical Illustrations* from their historical gardens, running from May to July 31, 2007 in the Band Room Exhibit Hall. All received rave reviews.

"The students participating in this exhibit come from all walks of life, and are bound together in the miraculous process of creating 'something from nothing'. Beginners and experienced artists alike discover anew their innate human ability to draw with accuracy and create beauty from nature's abundance through the synergy of a weekly class and critique" said the Leaflet, Newsletter of the Botanical Garden Society about the Fall '06 show.

Isabelle Ringer and her sidekick "Tick" said of *Black Tie Botanicals* at the Esteban Sabar Gallery, "Now, this is my idea of nature: nothing in this room is perfect. Like most botanical watercolor paintings, this work appeared as life-like...However, unlike most botanical paintings, this work featured half of an imperfect specimen..."

As to the current exhibit on Alcatraz Island, Mary Harden commented on her artist students' reinterpretation of the natural world. "The juxtaposition of stone and petal, of structure and form is the inspiration for these inquiring artists. We hope that through their creative process, you too will be able to see another dimension of this very special place."

Mary Harden is obviously a big promoter of student exhibitions and took the opportunity to have her students paint the flowers, vines and trees of the newly restored gardens and be part of the educational project at Alcatraz. By exhibiting their works, Mary hopes her students will receive new confidence in their abilities. Supporting students has been a life long passion of Mary who has taught for 30 years in the S.F. Unified School District. She first came to the Sharon Studio in 1988 with her daughter, Rose, to study glass. Always pleased by the family atmosphere at Sharon, Mary became a FOSAS supporter and, after retiring from SFUSD, an instructor of Watercolor and Journaling at the studio in 2004.

Mary is known for her highly creative handouts full of interesting images, art history, techniques, tips, tools and materials as well as a bit of cheerleading to keep the new student artist on the creative and often scary artistic journey. Look for her popular classes in the Sharon Studio's Fall Brochure. We feel fortunate to have such an energetic, talented and inspiring teacher as part of our FOSAS family.

*-Constance Flannery, SAS Staff*

## FRIENDS OF SHARON ART STUDIO BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

**Jean Marcy** (president); **Susan Strolis** (vice-president); **Mei Lie Wong** (treasurer); **Julia Kemp** (secretary);  
**Lani Rovzar** (executive director); **Constance Flannery** (SFRP representative);  
**Jessica Barbieri**; **Byron Beach**; **Cynthia Major**; **Mary McCrohan**; **Alice Potter**; **Jess Taylor**.

## FOSAS Newsletter Committee:

**Constance Flannery, Jessica Barbieri, and Lani Rovzar with contributing authors**



FRIENDS OF

Sharon Art Studio

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