

SEARCH FOR HIKER CALLED OFF

No sign has been found of Pennsylvania man missing on Broken Top. Page C1



SOMETHING FISHY

Annie O'Mohondro takes art to a different level with fish paintings. Page B1



The Bulletin

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WEATHER TOMORROW

Partly sunny
High 54, Low 27
Page C2

Fishing trip out of Yaquina Bay, Newport, Or for Halibut. Holding onto a slippery #50 is no easy task. This is actually a small 'catch' compared to others of it kind. It was however, the biggest of the day, yep, it was mine! See the 'print' it made from photot to the left, along side a big chinook 'buck'.

SSWORD
INSIDE

COMMUNITY LIFE

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Artist Annie O'Mohondro puts the finishing touches on a large gyotaku painting in her home studio in Tumalo.

Foto Enchome / The Bulletin



Central Oregon Community College

Sisters Center ~ 160 S Oak ~ PO Box 845 ~ Sisters, OR 97759 ~ 541/549-7331

ADVANCED GYOTAKU

Instructor: Ann O'Mohondro

SOMETHING

Fishy

IS GOING ON HERE

By David Jasper
The Bulletin

"It's not too fishy, is it?" asks artist and angler Annie O'Mohondro as she pores over two Eastern brook trout thawing on her counter-top. O'Mohondro is not cooking — not in the usual sense. She paints fish. Literally.

Her art is a form of *gyotaku*, a Japanese technique of painting and printing fish. She's about to render these couple-pounders, along with a hefty chinook, on silk.

"You have to be dedicated to stand over the fish," she says. "You have to talk to 'em, make it fun."

Tubes of universal pigment line the studio counters like bottles of exotic condiments. Burning incense dulls any seafood odors that might otherwise kill the ambience.

LOCAL ARTS SCENE

Where It's At

• Annie O'Mohondro's fish paintings are on display at Sisters Furniture Co., 143 E. Hood Ave., Sisters, and will be on display in December at the Unity Center for Positive Living in Bend.

She applies pigment directly to fin and scale, occasionally splattering on drops of violet. The fish have been thawing since the previous weekend, when O'Mohondro taught a class at Central Oregon Community College's Sisters campus. Some fish can be thawed, painted and re-frozen for years.

"I'll freeze these one more time," she says, "and then they'll be done."

Her blended family of seven has lived in Central Oregon two years.

She doesn't have a fishing hole yet, but then she may be keeping it a secret.

She works smoothly, giving no signs of tortured artistry. After 20 minutes, she's ready to make a rubbing, or as she says, "capture the spirit." She carefully presses a 12-foot length of silk to the pair, stroking a clean brush along the back of the cloth. Paint moves from fish to silk. The trout come bleeding to life alongside other fish in the school.

"Fish represent determination," O'Mohondro says, "and I feel strong kinship with them. They keep me fairly determined."

See Fish / B6

Fish

O'Mohondro wants to try the painting technique on birds

Continued from B1

Her coming to paint them was an upstream swim. She grew up an outdoor-lover in Bellevue, Wash., deep-sea fishing off the coast and summering with relatives in Montana. She took naturally to the combines and other farm machinery, she says, and when she left her upper-crusty hometown, she became a heavy-equipment operator.

I ran a D-8 Caterpillar with a scarifying blade for Georgia Pacific," she boasts. "After a burn and before a plant, I'd clear an acre of maples an hour."

But neck and shoulder pain from a 1990 car accident forced O'Mohondro to give up such labors.

What she wanted to be, she realized, was an artist. She began by putting up a sign for a gallery on Highway 97 north of Klamath Falls — before she'd produced any work — then began doing wildlife etches on maple burls.

Her fish paintings from this period were more totemic than realistic.

More detailed work, which could take up to 20 hours, tested and failed the limits of her patience. But not her imagination.

"I thought, 'Paint the fish directly,'" she says. Her "fine art alternative to taxidermy" was soon hanging in galleries.

When she mentioned her

"There isn't any exact science on the thing. You take it as it comes."

—Annie O'Mohondro

methods to a friend, an art instructor at the Oregon Institute of Technology, he told her she'd discovered the ancient, not-so-lost art of *gyotaku*.

"It was fun, in a humbling sort of way," says the self-taught artist. Her early efforts showed promise, she says, "but I knew I had a long way to go."

Her paintings have been bought by such luminaries as Ted Turner, Jane Fonda and Kim Novak. As for new challenges, O'Mohondro once sought to paint a killer whale that had died in Canada, and wants to try her painting technique on birds next.

Back in the studio, after she's captured the chinook's spirit on silk, O'Mohondro notices a scale stuck to the work.

"I'll just leave it," she says. "There isn't any exact science on the thing. You take it as it comes."

David Jasper covers arts and entertainment for *The Bulletin*. If you have a suggestion for a Local Arts Scene story, you may reach David by e-mail at djasper@bendbulletin.com or by phone at 383-0349.



Carefully detailing around the eye, Annie O'Mohondro prepares a salmon to be printed on silk.