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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 9, 2016

Pianos About Town Returns to Old Town Square to Celebrate Sixth Season

Fort Collins, Colo., May 9, 2016 – On May 10 after months of indoor hibernation, painted pianos will emerge in outdoor locations across Fort Collins as part of the Pianos About Town project, a collaborative effort among [Bohemian Foundation](#), the [City of Fort Collins Art in Public Places](#) program and the [Fort Collins Downtown Development Authority](#).

Over the course of the year, local artists will paint 13 pianos donated by community members. The Art in Action tent and summer painting will return to the south side of Fort Collins' newly-renovated Old Town Square. The public is invited to stop by to watch the work in progress. On May 11, local artist Gail Whitman will be the first to start work on 2016 pianos.

"We're excited to usher in another season of Pianos About Town," said Tom Scharf, Bohemian Foundation's Music Programs director. "The program aims to bring together visual art and music on a public platform. We have wonderful things happening with music and art in Fort Collins. Pianos About Town is just one of many programs that showcase Fort Collins' active creative communities."

Since the program's start in 2010, 40 local artists have been employed to paint 67 pianos.

"Over the past several years of the program we've employed a wide range of artists: a high school student, Colorado State University students, as well as professional artists," said Ellen Martin, Visual Arts Administrator for Art in Public Places. "This season, six of the 13 artists are new to the Pianos About Town program."

Pianos About Town at a Glance

Pianos About Town is intended to be a fun, interactive art installation that creates an additional element of whimsy and surprise in Fort Collins. The project is a public art initiative that provides paid work to local visual artists, that gives the public the opportunity to observe these artists work in real time, that showcases the work of these artists throughout town, and that brings opportunities for spontaneous musical expression to the streets of Fort Collins.

The original inspiration for Pianos About Town comes from British artist Luke Jerram, who created a 60-piano installation that toured the world, stopping in New York City in June 2010. Pianos About Town was also inspired by a similar project on Denver's 16th Street Mall. The first pianos were placed in Downtown Fort Collins during the 2010 holiday season and were an instant hit. This is the sixth season for Pianos About Town.

Pianos are acquired through donations made by community members looking for a new home for their used instruments. Pianos are picked up, free of charge, from their previous homes and brought to a storage area where they are cleaned, tuned, prepped for painting and readied for the outside elements. After that, the painting begins. Selected local artists spend approximately two weeks painting their piano in downtown Fort Collins, outdoors in a public location when weather permits. Once painted, each finished piano enters into rotation at Pianos About Town locations throughout Fort Collins. Area businesses play a key role in the success of the project by "adopting" the painted pianos and covering them during inclement weather.

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Artist Profile: Carla Gamboa

Carla Gamboa originally hails from Mexico, but now lives in Fort Collins.

“I am a proud mom, a nature lover, rock climber, blogger, eager reader and curious creature,” said Gamboa. “I’ve never considered myself an artist, even though I had been born in a family of artists. I draw, write and paint everywhere but I guess I always considered it more as a [way] to express myself.”

Gamboa holds a bachelor’s degree in graphic design and two master’s degrees in business administration—one carries a specialization in green marketing. Her work as a green marketing consultant for Colorado State University’s School of Global Environmental Sustainability reflects her deep interest in culture and sustainability.

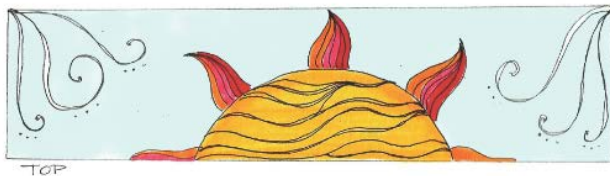
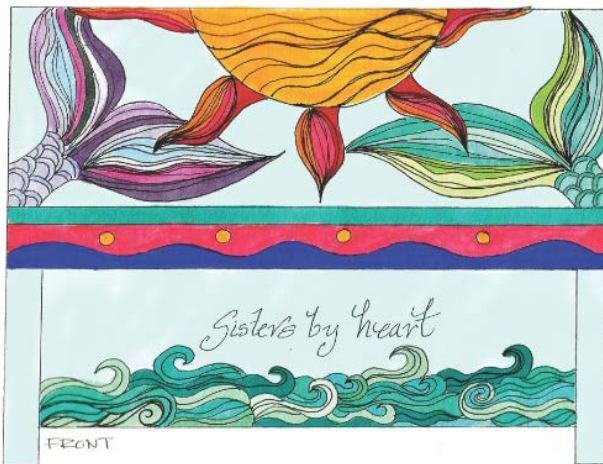
“I moved to Fort Collins almost two years ago,” said Gamboa. “The first thing I noticed when we visited Old Town was the colorful pianos. I saw people playing them and kids dancing around them. I felt happy to be here—even when I was away from home, I felt hope in my heart, and I knew everything was going to be ok. This project is the perfect way to celebrate life and express its importance. I feel fortunate and grateful to be a part of this program.”

Gamboa will be painting her piano in mid-June, at the Art in Action tent on the south side of Fort Collins’ newly-renovated Old Town Square.

Piano Title: “Sisters by Heart”

Artist Description: This piece tells the story of two mermaids who remain friends despite the seas that separate them after one mermaid has to move far away. “Sisters by Heart’ is a piece of art that honors that friendship, that strong bond that grows, no matter the distance. This is a piece that honors little girls’ hearts, and the hearts of little girls inside each woman. I made this piece for my little girl Marina and her best friend Tahid, for the admiration I feel every time I see them together, and for their old souls in their little bodies.” -- Carla Gamboa

CITY OF FORT COLLINS ART IN PUBLIC PLACES PROGRAM
PIANOS ABOUT TOWN CONCEPT IMAGE



Group Profile: Colorado State University, Art 235: Intermediate Drawing

This group of artists came together in an intermediate drawing course taught by Amy Misurelli Sorensen at Colorado State University. The course explores themes of delving deeper into the concepts of art and connecting to an audience through artwork. The group's goals are to work together to create community, dialogue and interaction through public art. Members of the team are: Natalie Blakely, junior; Robert Di Grappa, junior; Sarah Goodwin, sophomore; Kelly Hyatt, sophomore; Sydney Mann, sophomore; and Christy Schuster, sophomore.

"Working with Pianos About Town is an excellent opportunity to experience Fort Collins," the group said in a statement. "By taking part, we are able to contribute our own mark: a reminder of how this community is always alive and welcoming!"

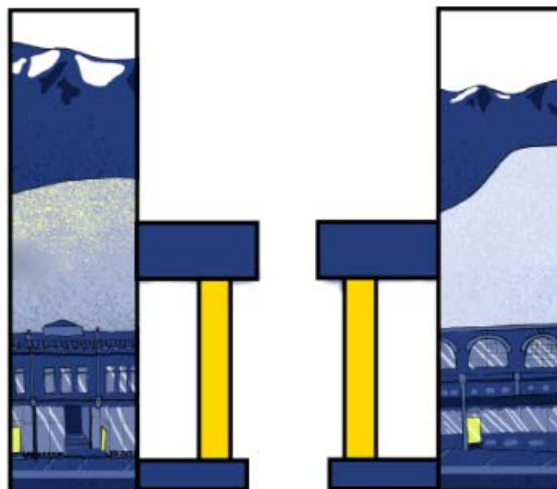
CSU Intermediate Drawing students will be painting their piano from late June to early July, at the Art in Action tent on the on the south side of Fort Collins' newly-renovated Old Town Square.

Piano Title: "FoCo Delights"

Artist's Description: "In 2016, the arts community celebrated the 500-year anniversary of the death of Hieronymus Bosch. Bosch was an artist from the Netherlands known for his detailed imagery. For our mural design, we chose to acknowledge this groundbreaking artist's anniversary and exhibitions by incorporating elements of Bosch's 'The Garden of Earthly Delights.' As a nod to Bosch, and to Fort Collins, we titled our mural 'FoCo Delights.' Additionally, we took design cues from vintage National Parks postcards and the Colorado state flag. Within our mural, we chose to represent the iconic surroundings of Fort Collins: the mountains, Horsetooth Reservoir, the 'A,' and the storefronts of Old Town. These places unite our community." –CSU Intermediate Drawing



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Artist Profile: Drake Arnold

Drake Arnold is an artist working primarily in digital media, acrylic and aerosol paint. He makes work that falls loosely between the genres of psychedelic, fantasy and visionary art. He resides in Fort Collins, and spends his time glassblowing by day and painting by night. He enjoys traveling the country live-painting at music festivals and visiting the national parks. He is also a musician who enjoys playing the piano.

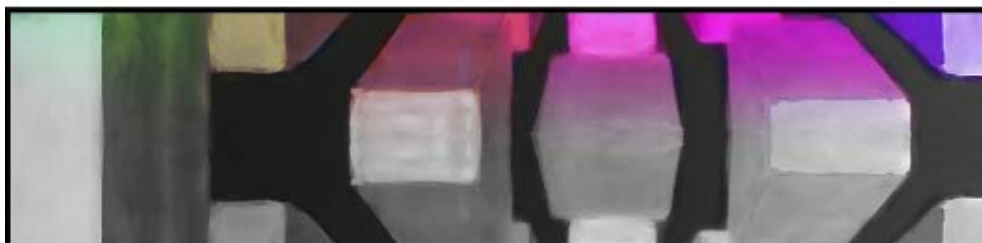
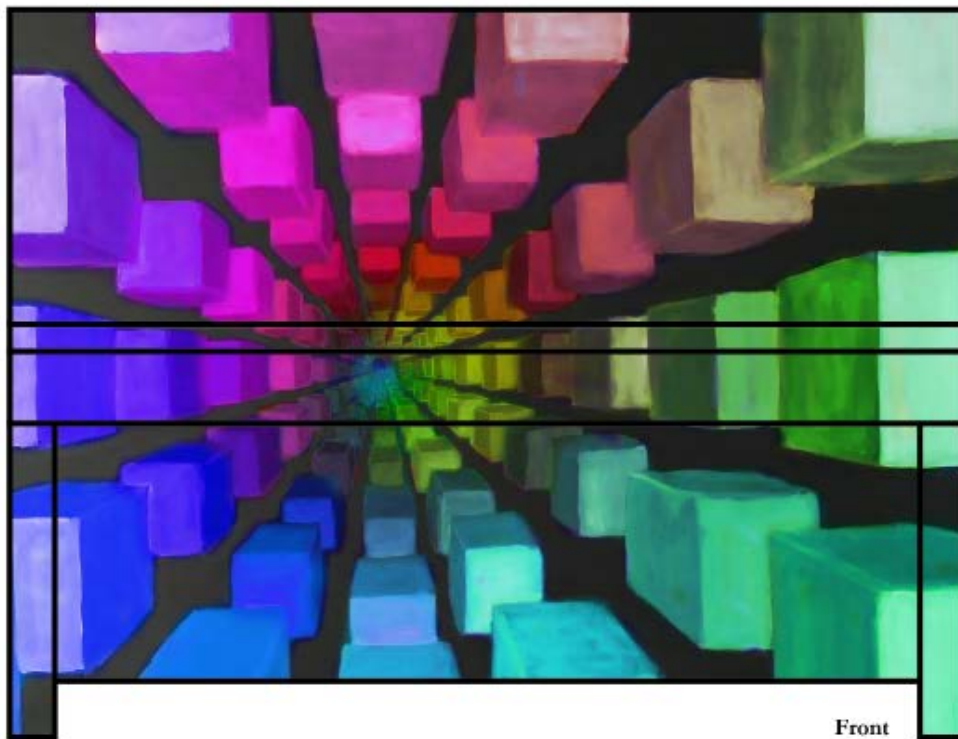
“Getting the opportunity to sit down and play on these public pianos that are also hand-painted, one-of-a-kind, custom works of art is truly a delight and pleasure,” said Arnold. “These public art programs are a treasure to this community, making Fort Collins really stand out as a unique and attractive place to live.”

Arnold will be painting his piano in early September, at the Art in Action tent on the south side of Fort Collins’ newly-renovated Old Town Square.

Piano Title: “Music as a Portal”

Artist’s description: “These perspective designs give the illusion of deep space and are symbolic of how music can be a portal into deeper space as well. Music can be a portal from a muted world of gray scales to a vibrant world alive with the rich diversity of the full spectrum of colors.” – Drake Arnold

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