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Art Embraces Words: Costumed literary and artistic characters present lively program

Submitted by Elana O'Loskey



Lafayette artist Ellen Reintjes (appearing as a Border Collie) presents her 13.5" x 49" acrylic painting with a baseball theme, "All Stars in the Family." Photo Elana O'Loskey

reintjes/.

While the skies were overcast and the air a bit chilly, the mood was warm on Oct. 30, and the costumed characters stole the show at Art Embraces Words. The free program, sponsored by the Lamorinda Arts Council, was held outdoors in the Amphitheater at the Lafayette Library & Learning Center. Because the LLLC Foundation shared their roomy double marquee complete with lights, comfy chairs, podium, easels, portable mic and speakers, guests were sheltered and comfortable.

This ongoing program features emerging writers who read from their work surrounded by original artwork from local artists placed on both sides of the podium. Both writers and artists were introduced by Emcee and LAC outgoing president Denise Nomura. They spoke about their work for 10 minutes each plus time for an audience Q&A. Program Co-Chair Natalie Samuels Wheeler explained it this way: "Writers paint images with words; artists tell stories with color. Together they enrich our community."

Artist Ellen Reintjes of Lafayette was difficult to recognize in her Border Collie costume, but when she displayed her 13.5" x 49" work entitled "All Stars in the Family," all became clear. There are six portraits in the work and three of them are border collies. See more of her work at www.bayareastudioartists.com/ellen-

Writer Dita Basu of Walnut Creek explained that the silk fabric of her traditional Bengali ceremonial dress is literally imprinted with stories from Bengali history and folklore. She read from her work-in-progress fictional novel, "Dreamcatcher," about a young Bengali girl's outing on a train trip.

Characters appearing at the event included artist Gustave Courbet (1819-1877); artist Yayoi Kusama (1929-); Queen Noor of Jordan; Hillary Clinton, promoting her new mystery book; Dorothy Parker (1893-1967) who gave out cards with her most famous quotes such as, "The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity."; Doctor Strange, visiting from the Marvel Cinematic Universe; Daisy Buchanan from "The Great Gatsby" and two Steampunk era women from London.

Orinda Starlight Village Players (www.orsvp.org/) costume judges Jill Gelster, Beth Hooper and Laura Matin-Chapen announced the costume contest winners as they distributed 12 prizes from local businesses, including Tutu's Food & Drink; CA Writer's Club, Mt. Diablo Branch; Diablo Writers' Workshop, LAC Mixology Saloon Box Team and Amphora Nueva Lafayette. Orchard Nursery Lafayette provided brightly colored Chrysanthemums which were given to attendees to take home. LAC volunteers on hand included board member Sue Farmer, Josephine Sabolboro, Isabella Pier, interns Ava Tran and Ricky Gjertsen, Jr. and curator Bill Carmel.

Art Embraces Words is made possible by a generous grant from the Lafayette Community Foundation. Visit www.lamorindaarts.org/art-embraces-words/ to learn more, including access to videos of recent webinars.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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