



St. Anthony Hospital will showcase fine art

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of the Gateway

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Organizers for St. Anthony Hospital want the 80-bed facility to be a high-quality act in every aspect, right down to its artwork.

The hospital, currently under construction on Canterwood Boulevard in Gig Harbor, will showcase the work of eight Washington talents. The committee for the Franciscan Health System commissioned the artists to create original works of art.

“Not only will St. Anthony Hospital be a state-of-the-art medical facility, it will be home to some of the most beautiful and original artwork in the Puget Sound region,” said Gail Robinette, manager of media relations for Franciscan and the hospital. “A variety of sculptures, paintings, carvings and other forms of art will figure prominently in the healing environment of the hospital and its campus.”

Bob Krotz, director of the Campaign for St. Anthony, said searching for the artists was one of the best parts of the campaign.

“It’s been a nice way of involving people in the hospital that might not have been normally involved in health care,” he said.

Krotz said the committee hired an art consultant to develop an overall theme for the hospital — Northwest maritime. They looked at about 170



different works from about 30 artists and whittled it down to eight.

“We feel we will have a lot of beautiful art that people will feel comfortable with,” Krotz said. “We think people that come to the hospital will really like it.”

The artists are sculptors Mardie Rees of Gig Harbor; Will Robinson of Bremerton; Douglas Granum of Southworth, and painters Kurt Solmssen of Vaughn and Carolyn Watts of Port Townsend.

Gerry Newcomb of Seattle is creating cast-glass windows for the hospital chapel, Steve Jensen of Seattle is carving three totems for the elevator lobby, and Joseph Rossano of Arlington is creating a mixed-media piece that will be located near the gift shop.

Rees’ life-sized cast bronze sculpture of St. Anthony of Padua, for whom the hospital is named, will grace the hospital’s main lobby. Rees has been an artist

since she was very young, but she said she took up sculpting as a college freshman.

“Once I started sculpting, I was hooked,” she said. “I sculpt in water clay, and then cast it into bronze or plaster.”

Her life-sized sculpture of St. Anthony holding a child will be cast in bronze.

“The reason I chose to sculpt the child is because I felt that it was really important to portray the child,” Rees said. “Historically, he’s (St. Anthony) shown that way, and it brings out his soft side.”

The artist’s work is being created in her home studio with the help of two live models, poet Tim McNeely and his 2-year-old son, Owen.

“They’ve been great,” Rees said. “Tim fits the part of St. Anthony. He captures the essence of St. Anthony, who was known as being very educated and knowledgeable. Tim has those qualities, and that’s the reason I chose him.”

Rees said she was chosen for the project by the Committee for the Franciscan Health System based on her previous work, which includes a 6-foot circular medallion of Andrew Skansie located in Skansie Brothers Park on Harborview Drive.

Donors who have contributed to the Campaign for St. Anthony are funding all the commissioned works of art.

Contributors include Gig Harbor Mayor Chuck Hunter and his wife, Diane; Mary Ann Walters; Dan and Pat Nelson; Allan and Sharon Hanson; the Bamford Foundation; Dr. Gar and Nina Ferrari LaSalle; Margaret Lapin; Jon and Shannon Flora; and Doug and Faye Clerget.

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