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February 10th vs. Nanaimo Clippers • 7:00

Black Press FOCUS HOME TEAM

Rodin chaser raises fuss over exhibit

Famed sculptor's will approved castings, art gallery argues

Andrea Lavigne
 Victoria News

The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria is going on the defensive to vindicate its exhibition of Rodin: *A Magnificent Obsession: Sculpture from the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation*.

Allegations from the so-called "Rodin chaser" have called into question the authenticity of the works presented at the exhibit, which opens April 6 and runs until July 29.

Gary Arseneau, an artist, printmaker of original lithographs, gallery owner, and self-described scholar, has been tracking the Rodin exhibitions throughout North America.

Arseneau claims that several of the sculptures are not just reproductions, but fakes.

"This false market created by the Cantors and all participating museums was created to cash in on the cheap rather than the legitimate and I feel morally obligated to inform the media and the public so they can give informed consent," he said in a telephone interview from his home in Florida.

The exhibition includes more than 60 bronze sculptures, works on paper, photographs and portraits of the French sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), who is considered one of the greatest sculptors of the 19th century.

The artist bequeathed his entire studio to the French government in exchange for a museum of his work - the Musée Rodin. His will also contained a provision allowing the government to continue castings of his work after his death. The casts are made from the artists' original plasters or moulds.

Arseneau maintains the posthumous Rodin



Photo contributed

Casts were made after artist's death.

casts are fakes or reproductions at best.

"Dead people don't create art," he said.

However, the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria argues that's a very "literal" translation of the casting process.

"I'm totally confident that the exhibition is maintaining the integrity of the original works of art. Rodin had, in fact, approved this before his death and this is his desire to have his works reproduced," director Shirley Madill said, adding: "If it's OK with the Musée of Rodin, certainly the museums in the international sector will respect that."

UVic History in Art associate professor emeritus, Dr. Betsy Tumasonis, says it was a common practice for artists in the 19th century to turn the moulds over to technicians to actually do the casting.

"It's a very impersonal process," she said.

"Whether or not they were cast by technicians before Rodin's death or after Rodin's death essentially seems to be irrelevant."

But according to Arseneau, of the 60 sculptures in the collection, 54 were not made from original moulds - they were made from reproductions of the original moulds. Essentially making the sculptures twice-removed from the original.

"The Musée Rodin admits on their www.musee-rodin.fr website that they do not send Auguste Rodin's original plasters to the foundry for casting in bronze but instead they send post-humously reproduced plaster reproductions," Arseneau wrote in his news release.

Indeed, the website declares: "Whenever it is decided to release a new 'subject,' a copy is first made from the old mould which can be sent without risk to the foundry where it undergoes the necessary preparations for casting."

Arseneau likens the reproductions to posters of classic paintings in a museum gift shop. But Tumasonis says the reproductions are more like reprints of photographs from a negative.

"When you take a photograph using traditional film there is a negative and you can make prints from that negative. And any prints that are made from that negative would be considered an original. With a poster that you buy in a museum shop usually these are paintings that have been photographed and so that they are not the same. A painting is the unique original and to make a photograph and blow it up as a poster is clearly not the same (as the original oil painting)."

The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria will be open to public discussion through presentations.

Professor John O'Brian, from the University of British Columbia; Daniel Laskair, associate professor of sculpture at the University of Victoria; and Barry Till, curator of Asian art at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria will address the issue at a presentation April 12, 7:30 p.m. at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, 1040 Moss St.
 alavigne@vicnews.com

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Oak Bay Rotary Making Dreams come true



Memory Chazeza with future students near the site of Atsikana pa Ulendo (translation: Girls on the Move).



Oak Bay Rotarians helping to upgrade Rotary Water Park

Every so often you encounter someone with a dream so gripping and convincing you resolve to help them make it come true. Memory Chazeza, a young woman living in Lilongwe, the capital of Malawi—Africa's third poorest country—had such a dream. Last year, along with her friend and mentor, Christie Johnson, a teacher at Pearson College, Memory addressed the Rotary Club of Oak Bay. She spoke compellingly of the desperate need for a girls' secondary school in a rural area outside Lilongwe. Few women in Malawi receive little or no secondary education, so the fact that Memory

had already fulfilled another of her dreams—that of obtaining a degree in education—persuaded Rotarians to help in her struggle. Like so many children in Malawi, Memory was orphaned at a young age. Completing her education was a huge accomplishment. She proved her mettle when she undertook the daunting task of launching her own Famine Relief Effort during Malawi's recent deadly drought. She and her husband risked their lives to purchase, transport and distribute hundreds of bags of maize from Tanzania to thousands of Malawi's poorest in a village near Kasungu. Two

Victoria-area Rotarians recently visited Malawi to help the Atsikana pa Ulendo Girls' Secondary School project materialize. With money donated by Oak Bay Rotarians, they purchased office equipment for the project and visited the land donated by the village chiefs. They watched as hand-made bricks for the building were fired; they obtained estimates for a well to be drilled; and they encouraged Malawian Rotarians to assist with the project. These women exemplified Rotary in Action. For more information on this project visit www.malawigirlsonthemove.com.

Oak Bay Rotarians recently returned from Ethiopia where they took part in polio immunizations; they also visited school projects that the club supports at Lillydale B near Kruger Park in South Africa. In addition to other International projects, Oak Bay Rotarians are lending a hand locally. Last year they received an Olympic/Paralympic Live Sites initiative grant to upgrade Oak Bay's Rotary Water Park. Much

of the work in the park has been hands-on by Rotarians themselves. This innovative park attracts a large number of parents and children who enjoy its creative play features. Oak Bay's 62-member club is vibrant and growing rapidly. In the past few weeks three energetic women have joined, one of whom, Donna Carrigan, is in training for the Gobi March, an epic race across the Gobi

desert, to raise awareness for breast cancer prevention and research. Rotary is open to all individuals who care enough to want to give of their time and energy to make a difference. That could be you! We invite you to check our website at [HYPERLINK "http://www.oakbayrotary.com"](http://www.oakbayrotary.com) or call Call Jack Petrie (595-8010) for more information about the Rotary Club of Oak Bay.

Rotary Club of Oak Bay Profile

GOOD NEWS ABOUT US...
Good people: The Rotary Club of Oak Bay is an active, vital group of 62 individuals from many backgrounds and professions—bankers, police officers, artists, lawyers, nurses, dentists, musicians, realtors, writers, investment advisors, directors, property managers, engineers, educators, accountants, business owners, photographers—43 men and 19 women. More women are joining Rotary every day which is really Good news.
Good work internationally: Through direct participation by dedicated members as well as through the Rotary International

Foundation—polio eradication efforts, clean water initiatives, building schools—helping to bring peace to a troubled world.
Good work locally: Helping our community through hands-on efforts and fund-raising—Eldercare, Victim Services, Carnarvon Kids Water Park, and more.
Good meetings: Every Tuesday at noon at the Oak Bay Recreation Centre with Good Speakers, Good food, Good fun.
Good ideas: Stimulating ideas about our world and how to help make it better.
Good size: Our club is the perfect size—big enough to have

healthy participation and small enough to get to know each other and make new friends.
Good website: Check it out. [HYPERLINK "http://www.oakbayrotary.com"](http://www.oakbayrotary.com) or call Call Jack Petrie (595-8010) for more information about the Rotary Club of Oak Bay.

SEVEN GOOD REASONS IN 2007 TO GIVE US A CALL. Rotary is always looking for Good people to help us do more Good work. Phone 595-8010 and speak to Jack Petrie.

ROTARY CLUB MEETING TIMES

MONDAY
 ROYAL OAK CENTENNIAL, Tel 595-5974
 Howard Johnson, 4670 Elk Lake Rd. 12 Noon
 VICTORIA
 Union Club, 805 Gordon St. 12 Noon
 SAANICH
 University Club, University of Victoria. 6:15 pm

TUESDAY
 OAK BAY, Tel 595-7813
 Oak Bay Rec Centre, 1975 Bee St. 12 Noon
 BRENTWOOD BAY
 The Waddling Dog, 2476 Mt Newton X Rd 12 Noon

WEDNESDAY
 HARBOURSIDE VICTORIA
 Union Club, 805 Gordon St. 7:00 am
 SOOKE
 Village Food Markets, 6661 Sooke Rd. 12:15 pm
 SIDNEY
 Glen Meadow Golf & Country Club
 1050 McTavish Rd. 6:30 pm

THURSDAY
 COLWOOD
 Royal Colwood Golf Club, 629 Goldstream 7:00 am
 SIDNEY BY THE SEA
 Shoal Centre, 10030 Resthaven Dr 7:10 am

FRIDAY
 WEST SHORE, Tel 893-2204 or 391-0164
 Station House Pub, 2835 Bryn Maur Rd . . . 12 Noon

ROTARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ON GOING
 ROYAL OAK CENTENNIAL ROTARY CLUB'S
 HOT DOG STAND - Country Grocer, Royal Oak
 Shopping Ctr. Every month, last Fri Sat & Sun

FEBRUARY
 VICTORIA ROTARY CLUB FLASHING HEARTS SALE
 Great as safety light or Valentine's novelty! Held at
 Thrifty Foods in James Bay, Fairfield, Saanich Centre
 & Broadmead. Feb 9 & 10, noon - 6:00 pm
 FASHION FOR AIDS
 Held by Oak Bay High School Interact Club,
 Victoria Events Centre,
 1415 Broad St, Tickets \$15 Feb 20, 6:00 pm
 DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TRAINING ASSEMBLY
 Empress Hotel, Victoria. Feb 24 & 25
 HEART & STROKE DOOR-TO-DOOR CANVASSING
 by Rotary Club of Saanich All Month

MARCH
 ROTARY INTER-CLUB LUNCHEON
 Meet Rotary International President Elect, Cliff Wilkinson
 Ambrosia Catering & Event Centre, 638 Fisgard,
 Tickets \$22, Call 595-5974 . . . Mar 14, 11:30 - 2:00 pm
 LITERACY PROGRAM
 Collection & donation of books by Rotary Club of
 Saanich for Cridge's Children's Library . . All Month
 EASTER PLANT SALE
 Run by Rotary Club of Saanich Delivery April 4

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**Next month's
 feature
 Rotary Club
 will be
 Harbourside
 Victoria**