

CHARLES DESMARAIS *Art*

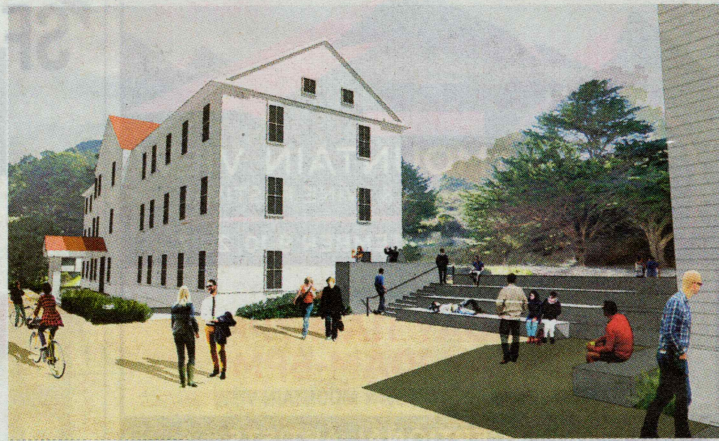
Headlands to unveil new outdoor space

The Headlands Center for the Arts in Marin County is a fiercely contemporary institution that traces its bloodline to the Ohlone, who harvested the bounty of the nearby marshes. It is a collection of historic structures made by humans yet deeply connected to nature; a temporary shelter for artists that assumes a per-

manent place in their careers; a place to work that is itself a work of art.

On Sept. 17, Headlands will unveil the Commons, a substantial new space that is part site-specific art, part venue for outdoor events. A free daytime celebration with plenty of family-oriented fare

Headlands continues on E6



Rendering by CMG Landscape Architecture

A small plaza/amphitheater, part of the Commons at the Headlands Center for the Arts, will seat about 100.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Rendering by CMG Landscape Architecture

A "Welcome Terrace" by Ball-Nogues Studio incorporates fragments of the former walkway. In the background: "Wall Space" by Dutch artist Chris Kabel.

The Commons — new art space

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is scheduled from noon to 5 p.m.

The love many people have for the center goes beyond respect, to something nearing reverence. Yet because its primary mission is to serve artists, Headlands is not widely known among the public. This, despite seasonal (three per year) open house events when people can freely roam the grounds, visit the studios of some 45 artists from around the world who are supported with experience-rich residencies of four to 10 weeks, and explore a romantic old military facility that has been ingeniously reconceived by prominent artists such as Ann Hamilton, David Ireland and others. There's also a Project Space where innovative exhibitions, free and open to the public, are on view much of the year on a rotating basis.

And here's a tip for hikers and cyclists traversing the often-chilly Headlands hills: There's usually warm shelter and a pot of free hot coffee in the Mess Hall.

The Commons, designed by CMG Landscape Architecture of San Francisco, comprises a concrete apron and a small plaza/amphitheater that will seat about 100, linking the Headlands' two main buildings. It serves several functions: event venue, handicap access, hangout spot, emergency roadway. Huge hunks of reclaimed eucalyptus, minimally carved by Michael Cran into casual seating, are strewn



Peter Prato

Sharon Maidenberry is the executive director of the Headlands Center for the Arts in Sausalito.

about.

Set into the concrete is a pair of striped terrazzo decks or "Welcome Terraces," one in front of each building, into which are incorporated fragments of the former walkway. Designed by Ball-Nogues Studio, a Los Angeles duo with

work in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the decks embrace the ethic of frugal stylishness apparent throughout the campus.

A mushroomy-looking "Doubledrink" water fountain



Andria Lo / Headlands Center for the Arts

An ethic of frugal stylishness is found throughout the campus.

The Commons, Headlands Center for the Arts — Inaugural Celebration: Noon to 5 p.m. Sept. 17. Free. Headlands Center for the Arts, 944 Simmonds Road, Sausalito. (415) 331-2787. www.headlands.org

by San Francisco artist Nathan Lynch, not yet installed when I previewed the project in late August, will encourage people to look one another in the eye as they drink, aware of their shared consumption of a precious resource. It will also be a convenient bottle-filling station for those hikers and bikers.

A third big art project, "Wall Space" by Dutch artist Chris Kabel, was viewable in prototype on my visit. A system for outdoor mounting of short texts, it will be curated in its first season by Claudia La Rocco, editor in chief of the online publication Open Space. In an interview, Headlands

Executive Director Sharon Maidenberry made the project sound, if not easy, at least straightforward. The \$1.8 million cost was covered by just 26 donors. "We haven't done a project of this scale since 1999," she said, but a plan "to rehabilitate parts of the campus" has been in the works "for over a year."

The Commons, a new entry for the Headlands Center for the Arts, would seem also to be the portal to much more.

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