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Burroughs' 'Vision' transforms downtown pedestrian tunnel

Meg Barone

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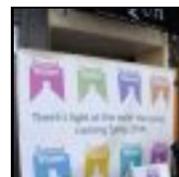
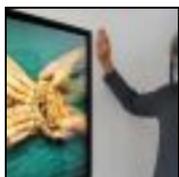
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Miggs Bourroughs poses in front of one of the 16 lenticular images he created for a public art installation -- "Tunnel Vision" -- in the downtown pedestrian tunnel between Main Street and Parker Harding Plaza. This one features the hands of Lee Papageorge, owner of Oscar's Delicatessen on Main Street, and those of his wife Maryjo. Burroughs said he wanted to pay tribute to the last non-corporate business on Main Street. Photo: Meg Barone



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Hands connect lives to lives, souls to souls. Westport artist [Miggs Burroughs](#) captured intimate stories told by 32 pairs of hands in 16 lenticular images that he created as part of a public art installation the strikingly transforms the formerly drab downtown pedestrian tunnel.

Burroughs' "Tunnel Vision" art project unveiled Thursday in the tunnel linking Main Street to Parker Harding Plaza was a prime feature of the downtown street party inaugurating the annual Art About Town event. Main Street was closed to vehicular traffic to allow shoppers and art lovers to stroll through the shopping district admiring the work of dozens of artists.

The Tunnel Vision images move with the pedestrians as they walk through the tunnel. Burroughs said the lenticular process involves combining two images digitally to create an animated affect. Then an optical plastic is layered over the

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Holocaust survivor. The image shows the tattooed number seared into her skin by Nazis when she was an 8-year-old imprisoned in the Auschwitz concentration camp. Burroughs paired her hands with those of a local 8-year-old girl.

Also seen are the hands of Westport artist [Howard Munce](#) and his wife Jerri, both in their 90s; a Norwalk veteran holding his Purple Heart medal, and same-sex couple [Suzanne Sheridan](#) and [Rozanne Gates](#) of Westport.

Burroughs' own hands are included in one of the photographs, coupled with those of [Liz Beeby](#), another local artist.

The idea for the art installation came from [Cathy Colgan](#), special events producer for the [Westport Downtown Merchants Association](#), which also sponsored Art About Town. Colgan said her plan was to breathe life into the glum tunnel that greeted downtown visitors.

"We have a beautiful downtown shopping district and it was unfortunate that when you entered our beautiful district one of the first things they came through was an unattractive, unkempt, dark tunnel," Colgan said.

"It makes this tunnel a destination instead of the grimy passage it used to be," Burroughs said.

"What a difference," said developer [David Waldman](#) as he got a sneak peek at the Tunnel Vision installation Thursday afternoon.

Tunnel Vision will give people a glimpse into the kind of creative community Westport is, Colgan said, adding that Burroughs was the perfect person for the job. A lifelong Westport resident, Burroughs is an award-winning graphic artist as well as a writer and civic activist.

"He's from Westport. He lives it, he breathes it. It's not self-promotion. It's artistic promotion. It shows how creative the town is," Waldman said.

Information about the Tunnel Vision art installation and the people behind the hands and stories is available at the website, www.tunnelvisionart.com.

printed image. The hands appear to move as a pedestrian walks by.

"The idea is to convey motion and emotion through the interacting hands," Burroughs said. Palms touch, fingers intertwine and each set of hands tells a story and takes viewers on a journey, he said. Some are whimsical while others are serious.

Burroughs photographed hands representing a wide cross-section of local residents, almost all from Westport. He included those of a Westport woman in her 80s who is a

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