

Artist's panels capture 'Vortex'

Part of Concourse's centennial

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

A local artist has turned his passion for the Bronx's busiest intersection into a five-paneled painting on display at the Bronx Museum.

Daniel Hauben is known for painting Bronx street-scenes, and has said he was always excited by the borough's frenetic street life. He is now touching up the panoramic piece of the corner of Fordham Road and the Grand Concourse. The painting is titled *Bronx Vortex*.

"I have been painting Bronx street-scenes for over 20 years and am drawn to the busy mix of environments and people, displays of cultures, the busyness, and what makes the Bronx a unique setting," Hauben said.

Now Hauben's masterpiece, which is still being touched up, will be included when the Bronx Museum, located at E.165 Street and the Grand Concourse, launches its newest exhibit: "Intersections: The Grand Concourse at 100."

"Daniel's work has been shown at the museum before, and he has work in our collection," said museum curator Sergio Bessa.

Daniel said that when he first set up his easel in front of the military recruiting station at the Concourse and Fordham Road, he painted just two panels. Gradually, the painting became more involved and grew to three and then five panels.

"I set up my easel directly next to the military recruiting station," Hauben said. "When I first got there, the recruiting center was closed. After it opened, they were very obliging and came out periodically to watch the progress. I did the two right panels at that location. I got more involved as it grew to five panels."

Hauben said that the painting was created as part of his love of Bronx street scenes, and the fact that this year was the 100th anniversary of the Grand Concourse was just a con-

science.

"I only found out about the centennial when I created the fifth panel - it was serendipity," he said.

"Intersections: The Grand Concourse at 100" is a year long celebration that will trace the past, present, and future of the Bronx' most storied boulevard. The celebration will begin with an opening at the Bronx Museum including remarks by Bronx County historian Loyd Ultan on March 6 at 6:30 p.m. and continue until January 4, 2010.

Modeled after the Champs-Elysees in Paris, and designed by engineer Louis Risse, the Grand Concourse officially opened in November 1909 after nearly two decades of planning, construction, and engineering.

For more information about the exhibit visit www.grandconcourse100.org.



Photo courtesy of Daniel Hauben

Artist Daniel Hauben painting "Bronx Vortex."