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Red Letter Day for "International Orange"

By Sue Adolphson May 20, 2012.

Late one winter afternoon, Cheryl Haines, executive director of the For-Site Foundation, invited Chronicle staff writer Sam Whiting to tour Fort Point with a group of arts patrons.

The occasion was to explain to potential donors "International Orange," the group show she had organized in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Golden Gate Bridge.

It was a clear, cold afternoon, colder inside the drafty old Army post than outside, but Haines planned for this by issuing each person on the tour an "International Orange" blanket.

"Some people ripped their blankets straight from the package and used them as shawls as we worked our way up through the warren of rooms on the second and third tiers," Whiting says.

By the time the group reached the roof, directly beneath the pounding ramps of the bridge, the sun was setting.

"A few of the artists were in the crowd, and it became as clear as the day that if Cheryl could pull this off it would be the most fantastic site-specific art installation this city has ever seen," Whiting says.

She did pull it off, and "International Orange" opens Friday, featuring 15 artists.