



A passion for cycling: Luigia Zilli, a Burnaby artist, created the design for the banners that will decorate the race course for the July 19 Giro di Burnaby. Zilli also created the official poster for the event (see page 4) and the bronze trophy that will be given out to winners.

Artist inspired by passion for cycling

Luigia Zilli created poster, banners and trophy for the Giro di Burnaby cycling race

Ailie Lau
staff reporter

Known by organizers as the "Giro artist," Luigia Zilli has made her mark once again on the Giro di Burnaby. At a ceremony held on July 4, Zilli's newest creation, a banner with a cyclist deep in competition, was unveiled at the Heights Merchants Association office. By the time the race hits Hastings Street on July 19, there will be 160 of the banners all along the scenic but challenging race

route. "It's quite an honour to have your work out there for everybody to see," said the artist, who moved to Burnaby in 1999. "I hope my passion for cycling comes through in my work." Zilli said that she has always loved cycling, not only as a competitor in her earlier years but because her brother raced competitively alongside some of the current giants of the sport. "My brother used to race with Gilberto Simoni, who won two Giro D'Italias," said Zilli. "Bicycle racing is something that's in my blood and in the blood of many Italians, where it is the second most popular sport after football (soccer)." When Coun. Pietro Calendino helped

lead the City of Burnaby's drive to bring a one-day race to her new hometown, Zilli wanted to be involved in any way possible. In addition to creating the street banners, Zilli has also created the official poster for the event - which shows a victorious rider, hands in the air, just ahead of the peloton (pack) of riders he has bested - and the bronze trophy given out to the winners, male and female, of the Giro di Burnaby. "It's quite an honour to be able to show my passion for cycling, to depict people's lives on a bicycle," said Zilli. Race director Rainy Kent couldn't say enough positive things about Zilli. "The posters are fabulous, the banners

are fabulous," said Kent. "To have a talent like Luigia capture our luck, we've certainly set the bar very high." Defending women's champion Gina Grain echoed those sentiments. "The art is phenomenal," said Grain. "To have arts and sports come together like this, I think it really sets this event apart from other races. I've travelled to races all over the world and I've heard nothing but positive things about this event ... and that includes the art." Calendino said he was proud to have another Italian-Canadian doing her part to make the event a success. "I think there are many of us who are

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Photo contributed/BURNABY NOW

Winning ride: Luigia Zilli's portrait of a victorious rider is the poster for the Giro di Burnaby. Zilli also created the banners and trophy for the race.

Giro: Artist brings colour to race

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very proud to be from Burnaby North and the Heights area," said Calendino. "It's very nice to see the legacy of Italy, such as cycling, fine art, espresso, spaghetti, wine and sunshine be shown here in the Heights."

Zilli, born in Treviso, near Venice, is a self-taught artist whose work has included frescoes and trompe l'oeil. In addition, she is a gifted sculptor whose work is held in both private and corporate collections in Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, Japan, South Korea and Canada. On Luigia's website, she talks about what has driven her as an artist. "My personal inspiration comes mostly from nature and from simple things, but

also from music. It gives me a great energy in creating what I feel inside; it brings out my memories and passion. It can change a rainy day into a beautiful sunny one. I like to paint the things that I like or that mean something to me: I have to feel them," Zilli writes. She continues: "The aim is to share with the viewers the emotions I feel creating my works. When they look at my paintings, I'd like them to feel joyful, I'd like them to feel the warmth of the light and scents of the nature. I'd like them to travel on those paths I paint and go wherever their eyes are taken in the painting or wherever their memory or imagination leads them." For more information, go to www.luigiadzilli.com. alau@royalcityrecord.com