

Artists Upstairs with
**The Three Rivers Arts Festival, Rivers of Steel, and The
Pittsburgh Project**



Present:
MAGARAC ATTACK!
Opening **June 14th, 2008** in Market Square

MAGARAC ATTACK event organizer:

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MAGARAC ATTACK!

A grassroots community project for the **THREE RIVERS ARTS FESTIVAL** in **MARKET SQUARE**

Exhibition: The Installation/Exhibition will be installed at Market Square for the Three Rivers Arts Festival, opening on **June 14th** for a **huge MAGARAC ATTACK** event. Working with the Rivers of Steel Heritage group, ArtUp will bring in “the Joes”, live music, Steel worker installations and paraphernalia, live interviews and archive building, local strong man contests, a tug of war, Margarac-look-a-like, and a photo opportunity with bent steel (foam) beams. The **exhibit will stay up for a week** and the Magaracs will then be available to be installed in schools, libraries, community centers etc.

PROJECT STATEMENT: We believe by going into different Pittsburgh neighborhoods and reinventing the Joe Magarac character, we will bring “pride and progress” back to the community by reinventing the controversial character.

ArtUp artists will work with the neighborhoods of **Braddock, The Hill District, Lawrenceville, and Homestead** to re-interpret the Joe Magarac image. The Magarac image is well known all over Pittsburgh but his history is scandalous and some believe racist. “Magarak”: which means Jackass or donkey in Polish is also believed to have been invented by the Steel Company as propaganda to persuade the workers to work long hours and compete against one another. But Joe also became a mascot; Joe Magarac was like the Paul Bunion of Steel. There are many different theories as to where the image came from.

Connections: Through oral history and “man-on the street” interviews we will be investigating what people already know about Joe Magarac. Ask for their thoughts on what character might be the “superhero” for Pittsburgh’s future. These interviews, along with background information, will be the mortar for our program and inspiration for the performance/puppet.

Steel Worker Traveling Trunk: The Steel Worker Traveling Trunk helps deepen the understanding of the steel workers daily work experience and dangers they faced in the production of molten steel. The public is invited to explore this exciting subject matter through, hands-on contact with the natural resources use in making steel, steel worker clothing and protective gear.

The mission of the Rivers of Steel National and State Heritage Area is to conserve, interpret, promote and manage the historic, cultural, natural and recreational sources of steel and related industries in Southwestern Pennsylvania, and to develop the use of these resources so that they may contribute to the revitalization of the region.