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Sara Kay Rhoades: Accidental Artist

"Things happen in life that you don't plan," said **Sara Kay Rhoades**, administrative associate in Graduate Studies. Rhoades didn't plan a future as a working artist with her own company, S.K. Rhoades Design. She sells her handmade jewelry at the New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art, The Bower-Suhrheinrich Foundation Gallery, and The Evansville Museum, and travels to art and fine craft fairs to sell her wares.

Rhoades was a student at Ball State University, planning a future in journalism, when she learned that she'd have to cut her academic career there short. "I'm one of four kids, and that summer my family as a whole decided that me being away at college was too expensive, and I couldn't go back."

Initially, she signed up for art classes as a sort of rebellion. At Ball State, she had experimented with art as a hobby. "I'm not a partier. I would make things with stuff I found around my dorm for free. I'd stay in my dorm room and paint bottles with fingernail polish. Everybody in my dorm had one of those bottles."

When she returned to Evansville that summer, she took a drawing class at USI with **Michael Aakhus** (now associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts). "I was lucky, because he doesn't teach that class anymore," Rhoades said. "He said my stuff was interesting. Then I took a sculpture class with **David Huebner**, and I was really good at it." Her first jewelry class was with the late **Jim Goodridge**.

"My husband's grandparents, Albert and Virginia Rhoades, did lapidary and silversmithing, and they wanted someone to pass on the family tradition. I joined the lapidary society and started making my own jewelry."

Now, Rhoades considers herself a silversmith and does some of her own lapidary work. "I consider every individual piece a piece of art," she said. I am really particular about materials. I like to use fine gems and sterling silver." She likes to borrow designs from nature, using the curl of a vine or the shape of a flower.

Jewelry-making is appealing for its practicality as well as its beauty. "Art is wonderful, but when it comes down to selling your art, it's a lot easier with something that's useful that people can use it on a daily basis. Jewelry is great because you can have your own artwork that you're wearing every day, and I really like that."

Rhoades graduated from USI with a bachelor's degree in art in 2006. **Erika Myers-Bromwell**, director of the New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art, admired Rhoades' work in the Senior Seminar Exhibition at the gallery that year and invited Rhoades to show and sell her jewelry in the gallery's gift shop. "Now I have three galleries that show my work: New Harmony Gallery, the Bower-Suhrheinrich Foundation Gallery, and The Evansville Museum.

Myers-Bromwell also asked Rhoades to participate in her first art festival during Christmas in New Harmony. "I probably go to 10 shows a year now," Rhoades said. "Since I work full-time, I can't go very far very often, but I have gone as far as Louisville."

She never imagined that her degree would lead in these directions. "I got my degree for me, because I just really enjoy doing it," she said.

She said she owes a lot to teachers at USI such as Aakhus, Huebner, Goodridge, and Myers-Bromwell. "If it weren't for her phone call, I would-

n't be doing this. I might be working in my office and painting on the weekends, but I wouldn't be doing it on the scale I am now. I feel really lucky."

Rhoades is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies degree at USI. She and her husband Nicholas have a baby daughter, Lyra.

Plain White T's engage the campus

UBlog written by **Kathy Jones**

An anonymous quote states that music is what feelings sound like. If that is the case, music is proud and amazing! It encompasses the culmination of campus-wide efforts focusing on bringing entertainment to USI in a unique sense.

On Tuesday, April 21, Plain White T's sang their hearts out to a crowd of 1,000-plus. Following performances by Single File and Danger Radio, they engaged the crowd with hit songs like "Hey There Delilah" and "1234." The Physical Activities Center was home to this magical night. It was a proud moment for me as the advisor of the Activities Programming Board and the concert was amazing, to say the least!

This event is the largest that the Activities Programming Board has planned in my less than two years at USI. We jumped in head first and took a risk with nothing but excitement and high expectations. A group of 25 APB members worked tirelessly throughout the planning process, and on the big day they really shined. APB members began their shifts at 8 a.m. on Tuesday and didn't go home until 2 a.m. on Wednesday morning. We were determined to provide nothing but the best for our students!

The concert began at 8 p.m. with an introduction from Atom and Shawnda of Hot 96 kicking off the show. The crowd gathered against the barricades to see what the buzz was all about. The first band, Single File, took the stage nervously. Their management mentioned that USI was a large venue for the group. Fortunately, nerves did not get in the way. They engaged the audience and groups of all ages clapped, jumped around, and managed to sing along to songs that seemed so new.

Danger Radio soon followed and numerous USI students were shocked at the quality of their performance. Several have asked about their return to our campus. It's a great feeling when positive feedback is the result of going outside of the box with entertainment.

Our icing on the cake was the Plain White T's. They entertained us with their "Three Part Harmony" show, singing different variations of popular songs. The lead singer, Tom Higgenson, jumped from the stage, interacting with students as they sang in the microphone together. The screams and cheers were almost deafening as several of the event staff stood in PAC 200 watching the show.

The night came to a close with one final song from Plain White T's. Weeks of hard work ended on a chord from lead guitarist, Tim Lopez. That moment was bittersweet. We ended the show successfully, but the show came to an end. The night seemed to fly by, but what matters most is that the audience was pleased.

I know that this event is the result of collaborative campus efforts; from the USI Bookstore volunteering to sell tickets to Administrative Staff taking time to review contracts. Without the support of campus officials and genuine student interest it would have never been the success that it was. So, from the bottom of the Activities Programming Board's heart, we thank you, USI!

We hope to see you at more events soon, but what matters most is that the beat goes on.

Online evaluations due morning of May 4

With a goal of improving teaching effectiveness, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment at the University of Southern Indiana is distributing course evaluations for the spring 2009 semester. Course evaluations allow students the opportunity to rate course and teaching effectiveness. The evaluation has 14 questions with a section for open comments. These surveys provide faculty important feedback on their teaching content and style.

Once again, faculty members were able to choose between paper and online evaluations for each of their courses. Distribution of both online and paper versions begins April 20.

Online course evaluations are sent directly to the students at their USleagues.org account on Monday, April 20. Faculty members opting for online evaluations are asked to remind their students to check their email accounts and encourage them to complete the evaluations promptly. Reminder emails will be sent on April 23 and April 29 to those students who have not completed their evaluations by that date. Online evaluations will remain open until 8 a.m. on Monday, May 4.

Instructors who chose traditional paper evaluations can expect to find their course evaluation packets in their USI mailboxes on Monday, April 20. These evaluations are to be completed during class sometime between April 20 and May 1. Faculty members are expected to read the instructions on how to properly fill out the course evaluations to their students and are then expected to leave the room while allowing a student proctor distribute and collect the evaluations.

Students' evaluations are kept confidential. Faculty members will receive a statistical summary report for each of their classes. Instructors opting for online evaluations will receive their reports the day after grades have been released to students. Results from courses evaluated using traditional paper evaluations will be released as soon as all paper evaluations have been processed, approximately one month after the end of the evaluation period.

More information about course evaluations can be found at www.usi.edu/ir/course_evaluations.asp.

Mahoney receives faculty excellence award at USI

An economics instructor is the 2009 recipient of the Dr. Jane Davis-Brezette Faculty Excellence Award by the Athletic Department at the University of Southern Indiana. **Tim Mahoney**, a mentor to USI student athletes, inspires the athletes to achieve in the classroom. Mahoney has been on the USI faculty in the College of Business since 1987. He was honored at the Student Athlete Scholar luncheon in April.

The first award was presented last year to **Dr. Jane Davis-Brezette**, chair of the Physical Education Department. The award, named in her honor, will recognize annually a faculty member who best exemplifies the work of **Dr. Davis-Brezette**, who demonstrates a competitive desire for excellence in the classroom and on the field.

The scholar luncheon recognized the 61 USI student athletes who are maintaining a 3.5 grade point average-or-better. The USI student athletes have maintained a cumulative 3.0 grade point average-or-better since 2005.

Enjoy art, music at Arts in Harmony festival

Celebrate springtime at Arts in Harmony, a festival of art, fine crafts, and music, on Saturday, May 2, and Sunday, May 3. The open-air festival will be held rain or shine from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday at Church and Main streets in New Harmony, Indiana. Admission is free.

Dozens of regional and national artists will show and sell their work, including a wealth of art and crafts from paintings, glass, sculpture, and

jewelry to pottery, basketry, woodcarvings, and furniture. Opening day festivities on Saturday will include a reception from 4 to 6 p.m. at the New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art and demonstrations by artists Cynthia Watson and Julie Byczynski at the Women's Institute and Gallery.

The festival will include music by nationally known recording artists as well as homegrown talent. Dubois County troubadour Paul Ash will get things rolling at 11 a.m. Saturday, followed by Small Potatoes, whose music is an eclectic mix of everything from Celtic to cowboy. At 2 p.m., local favorites Circle of Friends will take the stage, followed at 4 p.m. by Jason Wilber, an outstanding singer/songwriter who has played lead guitar for John Prine, Greg Brown, Hal Ketchum, and Carrie Newcomer, among others.

On Sunday, Griffin Indiana's Hilltop Project will lead off at noon, followed by New Harmony's Randy Pease and Jan Morris at 1 p.m. Taking the stage at 2 p.m. will be Wild Carrot, a Cincinnati duo whose repertoire stretches from the traditional to the non-traditional and whose instrumental array includes guitars, penny whistles, dulcimers, mandolin, concertina, and the occasional bowed psaltery. Closing the festival at 4 p.m. will be the traditional bluegrass sounds of The Wabash Valley String Band.

Food will be available at the festival, so spend the day or come for the weekend. For hotel or bed-and-breakfast accommodations, go to www.newharmonybiz.com.

On Friday, May 1, recording artists Stacey Earle and Mark Stuart will perform at the Owen Community House, 421 North Street. Their clever acoustic guitar interplay, lovely harmonies, and humorous storytelling have kept audiences spellbound throughout North America and Europe. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the concert starts around 8 p.m. Donations of \$10 to \$15 will be collected at the door. Seating is limited, so call 812/589-5031 or 812/682-3523 to reserve a seat.

Arts in Harmony is sponsored by the New Harmony Business Association with support from the Arts Council of Southwestern Indiana, the Indiana Arts Commission, and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more information, call 812/682-3156.

New Harmony Gallery exhibition examines the big questions

The New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art presents "In Finite Definition" featuring the works of artists Joe Meiser and Adrian Hatfield Saturday, May 2 through Sunday, May 31. A reception for the artists will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. Saturday, May 2 and is free and open to the public. This exhibition is made possible through the support of the University of Southern Indiana.

Meiser and Hatfield explore humanity's methods of dealing with the unknown. They examine the approaches science and religion take to answer life's most profound questions, such as: Where did we come from? Where are we going? And what is the nature of our world, our souls, and our universe? They question the notion of truth and whether science and religion have the ability to find it. This exploration is done with a variety of media including performance, sculpture, and painting.

Meiser received a Bachelor of Fine Art degree in sculpture from Northern Kentucky University and Master of Fine Art degree in sculpture from Ohio University. He is an instructor of art at Bowling Green State University, in Bowling Green, Ohio, and has exhibited widely.

Hatfield received his BFA from the Ohio State University and MFA in painting/drawing from Ohio University. He has been featured in exhibitions across the country.

New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art is located at 506 Main Street in New Harmony, Indiana, and is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. For more information call 812/682-3156 or visit www.nhgallery.com.

Conaway to discuss "Shakespeare's Shrewish Voice"

Dr. Charles Conaway, assistant professor of English, will present the