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Distinguished Scholar lecture

Dr. S. Ravi Rajan, associate professor of environmental studies at the University of California-Santa Cruz, will present the 2006-07 College of Liberal Arts Distinguished Scholar Lecture, "Sustenance, Security, and Suffrage: A Perspective on Environmental Justice," at 7 p.m. Monday, February 19, 2007, in Mitchell Auditorium in the Health Professions Center.

A humanist and social scientist, Rajan is the author of *Modernizing Nature: Forestry and Imperial Eco-Development 1800-1950* (Oxford University Press, 2006), numerous scholarly articles, and periodic essays for the popular news media; served as the president of the board of directors of Pesticide Action Network, North America (PANNA); and co-founded the Bhopal Group for Information and Action.

His research focuses on environmental issues in governance, corporate responsibility, globalization, entrepreneurship, technology choice, and risk and disaster management.

The lecture will draw upon Rajan's research for a book to be entitled, *Sustenance, Security and Suffrage: The Theme of Justice in Environmental Thought*.

"In essence, it argues that what distinguishes the environmentalism of the affluent from that of the poor is the latter's emphasis on the importance, for life, of human dignity and fairness, of access to good environments, and a concomitant removal of bad environments," Rajan wrote of his work.

"The talk goes on to undertake a political theoretical discussion of the centrality of environmental conditions for quality of life, justice, and fairness. In doing so, it also examines the challenges posed to classical theories of democracy and citizenship by new and emerging technological hybrids."

For more information, call the Sociology Department at 812/461-5264.

Townsend's book published

The Ohio River travels past quaint river towns, thriving cities, and beautiful countryside on its 302 mile journey along Indiana's southern border.

Indiana's history and early settlement began along the Ohio River and includes prehistoric Native American sites, 400 million year old Devonian fossil beds, the site where Lewis and Clark first met on the Corps of Discovery voyage, and Indiana's first state capital.

All the more reason, then, for a book of historic photographs chronicling life in those Ohio River towns, and what a better home for the author than Evansville, one of those same river communities.

Indiana's *Ohio River Scenic Byway*, a new book by **Leslie Townsend**, assistant director of Historic Southern Indiana, fits the bill on both counts. The book is the latest in Arcadia Publishing's "Images of America" series, photograph-heavy books which focus on local histories in a wide variety of locales.

Townsend is the current secretary and has served on the board of directors for the Ohio River Scenic Byway, a national scenic byway, since

1997. She provides administrative assistance for the byway through her work with USI's outreach program, Historic Southern Indiana.

Townsend works closely with local and regional history groups of southern Indiana. She coordinates workshops for teachers, helps promote historic sites and other cultural heritage programs, and works closely with the Ohio River Scenic Byway, Indiana's Historic Pathways, and Indiana Scenic Byway.

Townsend is a USI graduate with a bachelor's degree in history and sociology, and is pursuing a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies degree. She resides in Evansville with her husband Jon and two sons, Ethan and Christian.

"Researching this book allowed me to travel and visit some of the most beautiful spots in southern Indiana and to meet many special people who assisted me along the way," Townsend said. "It was fun going through old boxes or files of photographs looking for those special gems that I knew would help tell the story well."

Townsend combed through thousands of old photographs to find those that fill the pages of the book. It is divided into four chapters that include pictures detailing the river towns' historic, natural, recreational, and scenic highlights.

Evansville and Newburgh receive prominent play in Townsend's book, but she found photographs of just about every settlement on the river to display in its pages.

With help from the staff at Willard Library and the USI Archives, Townsend secured dozens of interesting shots of the 1937 flood, the Evansville shipyards, and the bitter winter of 1918 when the river froze, allowing folks to walk from one bank to the other across the ice.

"My boss, **Dr. Darrel Bigham**, has written several books for Arcadia and I was always interested in the format and research he did," Townsend said in explaining her motivation to do the book. "I work extensively with the Ohio River Scenic Byway, a national scenic byway, and thought it would make an excellent subject. Each community could have a book on its own, but together they make a compelling story of the byway."

"I spent several weeks traveling to all of the cities and towns along the Ohio River and visited libraries, museums, and historical societies." Townsend thought the subject matter would be enjoyable for everyone and not just history buffs.

"I think it is interesting to look at larger issues, such as the flood of 1937, World War II, river commerce, etc. and see how each impacted communities along the Ohio River," she said. "While each community had its own challenges or problems, there were definitely similarities between them."

"On a more lighthearted note, it is interesting to see some of the recreational aspects that are so important for the byway and how they have played a part in people's lives for years. Things like fishing and boating have always been important in the lives of the people who live there, just as they are to the people who visit the area."

Townsend had some advice for other aspiring authors.

"Pick a subject that interests you, be patient and don't be afraid to get your hands dirty," she said. "I have worked with the Ohio River Scenic Byway for many years and knew much about the towns along the byway. I was definitely interested to learn more. It is a long, involved

process and you must be patient.”

Townsend hopes her book will leave a lasting impression.

“I hope this book will interest visitors to the Ohio River Scenic Byway and give them a brief history of this special part of Indiana,” she said. “It will help them understand the communities and the landscape from how it was in the past and how it appears today. I also hope it is of interest to people who live in these communities so they can see a piece of their history and how it connects to others along the Ohio River.

Townsend will have a book-signing at Barnes and Noble Booksellers at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 3.

Indiana’s Ohio River Scenic Byway is available at area bookstores, independent retailers, and online retailers, or through Arcadia Publishing at 888/313-2665.

“No arms, no legs – no handicaps”

A joint meeting of the local affiliates of American Society for Quality, National Association of Purchasing Management, and APICS; the Educational Society for Resource Management will meet at USI at 6 p.m. Tuesday, February 13.

Students are invited to attend the dinner and a presentation by motivational speaker **Brett Eastburn**.

Eastburn was born with a congenital birth defect known as Quadmembral Limbs Deficiency. He has no arms or legs, but believes you are handicapped only if you allow yourself to be. He considers his body a gift to be used to inspire others to be the best they can be.

Throughout high school, the native Hoosier excelled at all types of sports, including basketball, baseball, swimming, and martial arts. He placed fourth in a national wrestling competition. He also is nationally recognized for his drawings and paintings.

A professional speaker since 1990, Eastburn has captivated audiences the world over with his inspirational story.

Registration for the event begins at 6 p.m. in Carter Hall D in the University Center.

Students are welcome to attend the dinner and presentation for \$10, or the presentation alone for free.

For more information, contact Charmaine McDowell at 812/464-1816.

USI is sponsor of Human Rights Film Festival

USI, the Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library, and the Committee to Promote Respect in Schools (CYPRESS) have partnered to bring a Human Rights Film Festival to the community.

Heidi Gregori-Gahan, director of USI International Programs and Services, is the University representative for CYPRESS, an organization which strives to promote respect through diversity. “The Human Rights Film Series is a new program and we hope it can be an annual event,” she said. “It has been a nice collaborative effort among CYPRESS, Central Library, and USI.”

Four films – all documentaries dealing with human rights issues - will be presented from February to May. Each title will be shown twice: at 2 p.m. on a Saturday in Central Library’s Browning Events Room, and at 7 p.m. the following Tuesday in USI’s Mitchell Auditorium in the Health Professions Center.

All the films are subtitled. The first three titles are part of the Human Rights Watch Traveling Film Festival and sponsored by CYPRESS.

Here is the schedule:

- “Rain in a Dry Land,” directed by Anne Makepeace (USA/Kenya, 2006): Two Somali Bantu families leave behind a legacy of slavery in Africa and find new homes in urban America. This film will be shown

February 3 at Central Library and February 6 at USI.

- “S-21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine,” directed by Rithy Pahn (Cambodia/France, 2003): The Cambodian genocide in which approximately 1.7 million people lost their lives (21 percent of the country’s population), was one of the worst human tragedies of the last century. The Khmer Rouge, headed by Pol Pot, combined extremist ideology, ethnic animosity, and a disregard for human life to produce murder on a massive scale. The film will be shown March 3 at Central Library and March 6 at USI.

- “KZ,” directed by Rex Bloomstein (United Kingdom, 2005): Even after 60 years, there is much to be explored and shared about the Holocaust. “KZ” is a groundbreaking, haunting film that looks at emotional repression and confrontation in relation to the Nazi atrocities. Bloomstein examines the shadow cast on visitors, tour guides, and local residents by Mauthausen, a concentration camp (“KZ” for short) on the banks of the Danube. The film will be shown April 7 at Central Library and April 10 at USI.

- “Promises,” directed by Justine Shapiro, B.Z. Goldberg, and Carlos Bolado (USA/Israel, 2001): “Promises” follows the journey of Israeli-American B.Z. Goldberg as he travels to a Palestinian refugee camp and to an Israeli settlement in the West Bank, and to the more familiar neighborhoods of Jerusalem where he meets seven Palestinian and Israeli children. Though the children live only 20 minutes apart, they exist in completely separate worlds; the physical, historical, and emotional obstacles between them run deep. The film was shot from 1995-2000. The film will be shown May 5 at Central Library and May 8 at USI.

A group discussion led by a facilitator will follow each film. The first month’s facilitators are Dr. Daniel Byrne of the University of Evansville (Central Library) and USI’s own **Dr. Joseph Uduehi**.

For more information, contact USI International Programs and Services at 812/465-1248.

Free Abraham Lincoln program offered

USI’s Extended Services will offer a free program, “Abraham Lincoln on Screen,” from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, February 10, in Kleymeyer Hall in the Liberal Arts Center.

Abraham Lincoln is so deeply ingrained in our national consciousness that his image can be found practically everywhere – in sculptures, paintings, posters, dolls, decorative items and on screen, in film and television productions. He is the most frequently portrayed American historical figure in the history of film and television.

Consequently, many people have formed their opinions of him and gained their knowledge of him based on these portrayals. Using film clips from various movies and television programs, portrayals of Lincoln will be examined both in terms of what they say about him and what they say about the times in which they were made.

The program will be presented by Mike Capps, chief of interpretation at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, and is offered as a public celebration of Lincoln’s birthday. No fee or advance registration is required.

For more information, call Extended Services at 812/464-1989.

USI in the News: Before Mel, there was Aakhus

By Carla Meekins

Mel Gibson’s movie, “Apocalypto,” portrays the decline of the Mayan civilization, but Michael Aakhus’ paintings explore its timelessness. While you may have missed the movie, you can still catch the month-long Aakhus exhibit at the Longstreth-Goldberg Art Gallery, and sneak a magical peek at the cultural heritage of Mesoamerica.

A geographical and cultural region, Mesoamerica extended from southern Mexico into Central America. It was home to some of the most

complex and advanced cultures of the Americas, such as the Aztec, the Maya and Olmec. This culture area is one of the planet's six cradles of early civilization. But, long before Mel Gibson uttered the words, "Yucatec dialect," Aakhus was wading through the streams of the Lacandon rainforest, trekking the great avenue at Teotihuacan, and discovering ancient papermaking traditions in remote villages in the Eastern Sierra Madres.

You can view the artful results of his extensive travel at Peg Goldberg Longstreth's eponymous, contemporary art gallery, located along the industrial area of Taylor Road, far from gallery-packed Fifth Avenue. She represents and sells the work of 40 contemporary painters and sculptors. Cavernous at 5,000 square feet, the gallery may be off the beaten path, but Peg's art DNA is right on target, judging from the crowd attending Aakhus' opening to meet the artist and view his work.

Aakhus was studying physics in college, when he crossed over to pursue painting and print making. Now an Associate Dean of the college of Liberal Arts at the University of Southern Indiana, in Evansville, Ind., Aakhus uses his artistic atoms to create magically realistic and surrealist paintings and prints.

Like the cinematic look of "Apocalypto," Aakhus's work is wild, exotic and dark. Juxtaposing earthly and architectural elements, Aakhus conveys a marvelous otherworldliness in his paintings. His vibrant colors explode like free radicals across unframed canvases. He defies reality through disproportionate scaling. In describing his unique perspective, Aakhus never strays too far from his roots.

"Physics is a speculative science, based on theories," he said, "attempting to establish proofs that lead to duplication of events. But life is moment to moment, and each moment changes us, never to be duplicated again."

Aakhus' artwork doesn't capture a specific moment in time and space; rather, he distorts time to make it appear absent, to reflect a shared purpose throughout the ages.

Walking through the gallery, you can't miss his art books. Scholars translated ancient Aztec texts, and Aakhus then illustrated them into intaglio prints made from etched copper plates, wiped with yellow, red and blue inks. He attains richness in sensory details that only this medium can provide.

Joyce and Peter Forsythe of Dover, N.H., are loyal clients of the Longstreth-Goldberg gallery. Joyce explained why: "This art is exciting. Who wants another picture of flowers in a vase, or another floral print? No one remembers that, but when people come into our home, they're always pleasantly surprised by our choices."

Many art pieces in and around the Forsythe's New Hampshire home came from the Longstreth gallery. "It's a real gem to be revisited, off the beaten path," Peter Forsythe said, "but once you find it, it's an unexpected discovery and you keep coming back."

The Longstreth-Goldberg Art Gallery is at 5640 Taylor Rd., off Pine Ridge Road. They can be contacted at 514-2773, or www.plgart.com.

Editor's note: This article first appeared in the *Naples (Florida) Sun-Times* on January 24, 2007.

Names in the news

Esther Barnes has accepted a position as custodial worker with the Physical Plant.

Charles Blane has accepted a position as custodial worker with the Physical Plant.

Julie D'Mellow has accepted a position as custodial worker with the Physical Plant.

Terry Evans has accepted a position as custodial worker with the Physical Plant.

Matthew Gregory has accepted a position as assistant director of judicial affairs for the Office of Residence Life. He is a 2007 doctoral can-

didate at Southern Illinois University with a Master of Education degree from Western Kentucky University. Gregory was formerly employed as a police officer at Southern Illinois University.

Elena Klueg has accepted a position as custodial worker with the Physical Plant.

Craig Pearson has accepted a position as instructor in art in the College of Liberal Arts. He holds a doctorate degree from State University of New York at Stony Brook. He is a member of College Art Association, American Studies Association, American Comparative Literature Association, and Society for Cinema and Media Studies. Pearson was awarded the Sigmund Stochlitz Research Grant from the University of Connecticut.

Adam Rust has accepted a position as custodial worker with the Physical Plant.

In sympathy

The University community extends sympathy to **Dr. Ronda Priest**, associate professor of sociology, and **Lyndsee Priest**, administrative assistant in the Office of Admission, the daughter and granddaughter of Roberta Wolfe, who died January 26, 2007, in Greeley, Colorado.

The University community also extends sympathy to **Tim Lockridge**, assistant director of Computer Services, whose father, **Wayne F. Lockridge**, died January 27, 2007, in Evansville. Memorial contributions may be made to the Multiple Myeloma Research at Indiana University.

FYI

Sweets for your sweetheart

Pick up your Valentine's Day goodies at the USI Administrative Assistants & Associates' second annual Valentine's Day bake sale, from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 14 in the Orr Center Atrium. There will be a variety of baked goods, Valentine's Day cards, and flowers available for sale. The AAA also is taking orders for gift bags of Hershey's Hugs and Kisses. Each bag includes a gift card and sells for \$2. Orders may be placed at www.usi.edu/aaa/orders. For more information, contact **Kathy Karn-Carmichael** at 812/465-1686.

Scrabble for literacy

The 4th Annual Letters for Literacy Scrabble Tournament will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, February 13, in the Ivy Tech Student Commons. The event is a fundraiser for The Literacy Center. Teams of up to three people may compete. Scrabble play is limited to under a minute so strategy is limited and great word knowledge isn't required. Registration is \$15 per person. The Literacy Center is a non-profit organization that provides free tutoring and support to adults in the area who want to learn to read or improve their reading levels. Contact The Literacy Center by phone at 812/429-1222 or Rayna@litcenter.org.

Business students offer free tax help

Through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA), USI student volunteers will provide free tax assistance on Wednesdays, February 7-April 11, 2007. In VITA programs, the Internal Revenue Service partners with national and local organizations to provide tax services to individuals with low-to-moderate income at no cost to the taxpayer. The sessions will be held by appointment only in Room 2005 in the Orr Center on the following Wednesdays: February 7, 14, 21, 28; March 14, 21, 28; and April 4 and 11. Appointments will be available at 4:45 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. For more information and to make an appointment, call the College of Business at 812/464-1718.