

Open Invitation

ExposeKenosha.com Issue 4, October 22, 2007



The Role of the Arts in Building Communities: In Kenosha, Racine, Wisconsin and Beyond

Monday, October 22, 3:30 -5:00 PM

Tallent Hall Room 201, University of Wisconsin-Parkside

FREE and Open to the Public

Call (262)595-2312 or e-mail felicia.stallworth@uwp.edu to register

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An Open Invitation

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Featuring a Presentation by:

Maryo Ewell, Community Arts Consultant and Community Development Coordinator for the Colorado Council on the Arts

And a Question and Answer Session with:

Anne Katz, Executive Director for Arts Wisconsin

Karen Goeschko, Assistant Director for Programs and Services, Wisconsin Arts Board

Miranda McClennahan, Director for the School of the Arts at Rhinelander & Theatre Education

From youth development to tourism, community arts organizations and artists have enhanced our quality of life, our economy and our connections to each other. Look around Kenosha and Racine and see examples of this abound. Come join a conversation to strategize ways that we can use these assets to make our two communities stronger and more economically competitive on the national level.

Sponsored by UW-Parkside's Arts Management Program and Nonprofit Development Program

My interview with me

by Colleen Kappeler



Since the beginning of this e-zine, I have been referring writers to Francisco to do the interviews on these fascinating local artists. Since the beginning, he's been asking me to do an interview on myself. On myself? That seemed so shameless. And then he asked again, and then again. Finally I agreed. My friend and colleague Tammy Peacy was nearby when I said ok. She thought this was a great idea and said, "You'll probably learn a lot about yourself!"

"Are you kidding?" I said, "I am so sick of learning about myself that if I have to spend one more minute alone with me I might throw up!"

But alas, a promise is a promise, so here goes my interview with me!

So, let's start simply, what is your favorite color?

Blue. But I love red. But I do think it's blue. Oh no, this is going to be so hard!

Ok, deep breath, it's not so bad. Let's talk about your work. What do you do?

Well, I moved to Kenosha almost exactly four years ago. I hold a BA in Writing from UMass Dartmouth and I taught English at four local colleges and universities in Ohio before moving here. So when I got to Kenosha I thought I'd start up my own business of running writing workshops that I developed. I started by coaching writers in the area, then editing for them, and finally by teaching workshops on all aspects of writing. I taught at UWP, the Kenosha Public Museum and the Racine Art Museum for almost four years. In that time I started the, if I may say so myself, GREAT Kenosha writing group! I set them up for about a year and half before I had to take a break for family reasons. Then, this past May, I began running Women's Writers' Circles at the Nook in downtown Kenosha. I am sort of running them like a workshop with free-writing in group and then assignments from month to month. And I set up an online yahoo group for them. Oh, and I write.

What do you like to write and where have you been published?

I like to write about me - isn't that obvious! Just kidding. I write personal essays. I've had several published in local and national publications including

Adoption Today, the Kenosha News and *Chicken Soup for the Dieter's Soul*. My passion in writing is sharing life experiences with others.



And what is your passion in teaching and leading the groups?

Seeing others recognize their talents and write their stories. Some people will never write for anyone but themselves; some people are on their way to publication. Either way, it is such a joy to see them put that story on paper and then be able to share it with others. Somehow there's nothing like it in the world. Especially when I work with women. I definitely have a passion for getting women to tell their stories.

Are you planning to start teaching again?

Right now I am editing two books and working with one very serious writing coach client and a couple other casual ones. I am running the two writers' circles each month. I am probably not going to start teaching again any time too soon, but then again you never know. I am headed to a women's writing retreat in October to learn about Creative Writing Therapy and I may begin a women's group based on this as well.

You seem totally at ease talking about your work, and you said you write personal essays, so why would you be nervous about this interview?

I don't know...I guess, in a strange way, I'm a very private person. I don't like to show vulnerability, nor do I even know how to ask for help. (See, that's something I just learned about myself!) You know, you can ask any of my students and they will tell you that I am pretty open with my life in the writing groups. My articles are also very open and honest.

Let's go slow and see if we can find out anything a little more personal about you - after all Francisco wants something unique in this piece.

Wow - well there's some pressure! Ok, well, let's see...a little about me...I have a wonderful husband who is sometimes a pain in the butt, but mostly my best friend. We met on the beach in Cape Cod when we were 19. I pretended to swim into him in the ocean one afternoon and we've been together now for 13 years! We have a seven year old son and a three year old daughter. Our son is biological and our daughter is adopted from China. We always planned on having two kids then adopting our third - that was until we realized how much work they are and we decided we only wanted two.

Ok, that's a good start. Now, tell us something even a little more personal or unique - tell us what you love, what you're passionate about, something like that.

Hmmm...well, I love to travel. I always thought I would travel the world long before I had a husband and children, but that wasn't the way it was meant to be. And I'm glad. There are good and bad things in my past, like everyone, and yet I wouldn't change a thing - they've made me who I am today. And my travels have come in other, unexpected ways. Like the trip to China to get our daughter. I never thought I'd go to Asia - I loved Europe, but Asia seemed so foreign. And yet, I loved it - it was amazing and I miss it. The people are so uninhibited there. Anyway, I am also passionate about adoption and humanitarian work. I am so unbelievably grateful we could add to our family through adoption - my dream - but my work there is not over. Right now I have my hand in several humanitarian efforts nationally and internationally including fundraising efforts for a four month old child in China who needs surgery for a spine problem. I am also incredibly passionate about women and empowering them. It's hard to say that since people immediately think I'm some kind of radical feminist which could not be further from the truth. It's just about helping women feel strong and recognize what they have to give the world and themselves. And finally, I'm passionate about spiritual and metaphysical studies and self-growth - but religion and politics are two things I don't talk about.

What are your pet peeves?

Oh, my two biggest are:

1. People assuming your political affiliation and preaching to you from either side.
2. People assuming you don't know about things just because you're young.

And what you are still working on for yourself in your life?

Probably the biggest is releasing control. I am not good at that, but I'm getting better. That can be little things like being ok if the toys are spread out across the living room for a little while, or bigger things like not having conversations in my head with people who aren't there so that I can hold the upper hand in the next argument! (Come on - some of you talk to imaginary people too!)

You are doing well! Are you still breathing?

Yes.

Last question and I'll let you off the hook. What are you involved with around town?

Oh good, that's easy. Let's see...I love my new neighborhood, it's like a slice of the 1950's where people bring you bread and watch each other's kids and all that. I'm slowly becoming involved in a lot of that. I belong to the RecPlex and go as often as life allows. I am a member of AHA! Kenosha and help Francisco with Expose Kenosha. I am taking an amazing art class with Kenosha Art Association on Chakra Painting with Brigitta Richter. I help when I can at my son's charter school and pretty soon I'll be starting an adoption resource group for area families. Oh, and of course I lead my writing circles and edit and coach. And try to have time for my family and friends.

Colleen Kappeler, you have “Exposed” yourself!

To contact Colleen:

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Visit www.colleenkappeler.com

Coming Clean...

by Franco Tarsitano



When you first meet Laura Zielinski you see a vivacious, petite, curvy, young looking woman of forty. During the interview, her beautiful blue eyes just captured me in very intelligent and flirtatious conversation. Particularly when you get her talking about her civil war re-enactments, complete with Southern drawl and her soap product line Dragonfly Soap Works. A graduate of Minnesota State University at Mankato she earned degrees in Plant Science and Environmental Services. Hired by a regional company as a Senior Development Chemist, that designs and develops touch free hygiene products, she is currently the Quality Systems Manager. She keeps a work schedule that would make any Southern belle droop, but we managed to get this interview especially for ExposeKenosha.

When did you start doing civil war re-enactments?

I was introduced to Civil War re-enactments six years ago through my friend Perry Brusenbach who portrays a Civil War doctor.

Did it begin as a promotion for the soap, or were you doing re-enactments prior to that?

I started selling soap at Civil War re-enactments 4 years ago. My soap-making hobby had gone awry which meant that I had more soap than friends and family could possibly use before my burning desire to create caused me to formulate more fragrances and I recognized that there were very few 19th century products available that 21st century participants could use and enjoy. Therefore, the logical next step was to become a sutler, (a civilian provisioner

to an army post often with a shop on the post). I have done more than 20 events as a sutler and numerous more assisting my friend Doc Perry and just for the fun of it. Now I will forever be known as “the soap lady” ...lol... (Southern drawl) You are the silliest man...

Has anyone ever asked you to give them a bath? (Teasingly) Are you asking?

I have put soap in their mouths...you dirty, dirty, man. LOL...it has been done...LOL...

You teach soap making as well, right.

I taught when I was in college and loved it so I decided to seek out opportunities to teach again after I move back to Kenosha from Minnesota. I began teaching the art of making soaps and spa products about four years ago at Lemon Street Gallery: the art of making soaps and spa products as well as drop spinning and fiber processing.

What does your solo exhibit provide?

My solo exhibit introduces the art that I create, and is meant to broaden people’s minds as to what constitutes “art”. To me, art is simply personal expression.

Why do you consider soap making an art?

In today’s society, so many people have forgotten about the old world arts. Personally, I have always been fascinated by what many folks tend to look as a mundane and old world. I have always had a great admiration for the peoples of times past who took what was a necessity and turned it into art. Things like weaving, and spinning, leather making and metal smithing, soap making and perfuming just to name a few.

Soap making is a wonderful blend of science and art. The behind the soap making process is rather straightforward. The art of soap making is in the personal expressing that you achieve through it. The oils and the proportions add to make the soap impart different qualities to the soap. The effects that you can achieve are endless. On top of the personal expression that is possible through the basic formulation, adding color and especially fragrance, opens up a completely new realm of possibilities to express ones own personality.

One of the things that I love most about working in this medium is that I am able to delight a much-neglected sense, the senses of smell. Because of the added dimension my art has, smell, I am able to open peoples thoughts and memories in a way that visual and tactile art cannot. After all, a sense of smell triggers the human memory more readily than any other sense.

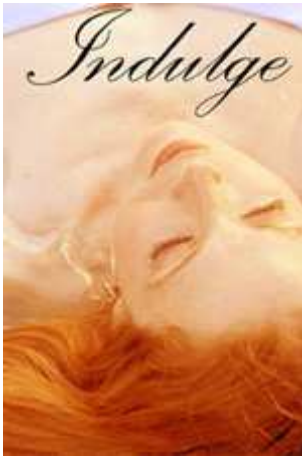
What do you consider “good living,” and how it affects our physical condition, particularly our skin?

To me, “good living” is living a life that is true to ones self. We all make mistakes, we all stumble, and fall but it is how we handle these negative times in life that is a measure of who we are.

How does one keep a secret formula a secret?

My lips are sealed. Keeping my formulas a secret is easy since I am both the formulator and maker of all of my products. The difficulty of keeping the secrets will come when my little cottage business grows to the point that I need to hire employees.

Can you really attribute your product to keeping your skin looking younger?



Yes. Although, I am blessed with wonderful genetics, just look at my parents and my 95-year-old grandma. I do depend on my products to help leverage the youthful genetics that I have been blessed with. I decided to make my own soap because I have suffered from desperately dry skin since I was a teenager. When I moved to Minnesota, the dryness was even worse due to the environment. After trying products that are more commercial and not finding relief from the dryness, I decided that with research and experimentation I would be able to make a better product than I could purchase.

I was correct!

What makes your product so different?

Someone who suffers from difficult skin formulates my products to be kind to difficult skin. All of my soaps and home spa products are formulated to be gentle and nurturing to the skin.

How easy is it for people to make their own soap?

Making soap is not terrible difficult to learn. I always urge people to take a class on soap making if they do not have a chemistry background. The reason for this is the lye. If not handled correctly, lye can be a dangerous chemical and since it is chemically impossible to make soap without lye I feel that it is of the utmost importance that people learn how to respect it.

Can they do this in one of your classes?

After taking my beginning soap making class at Lemon Street Gallery, my students can formulate and make their own soap. I am often amazed at how many amazing types of soaps my students make after just one two-hour class.

In your exhibit, you showed courage by having a shot of your face blown up to show the wrinkles and aging of life...what were you trying to relate to the viewer?

I titled that photo is "A life well lived". The main point that I was trying to get across is that there is nothing wrong with the lines and wrinkles that we all develop over time. They are the roadmaps of who we are and the lives that we have lived. Good or bad, the effects stay with us. No matter how hard we try, we cannot be or look twenty forever. Personally, I do not know why people want to. I have earned every wrinkle I have and I am rather proud of them.

Laura Zielinski you have been "Exposed".

Laura's Solo Show "*INDULGE*" will be running up to October 28 at the Lemon Street Gallery

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Where you'll discover how to "feel good in your skin again. . ."©

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Franco Tarsitano is the General Manager of Lemon Street Gallery & Artspace, Inc.

Meet Jessica Meyers

by Tammy Peacy



She says she isn't chatty, but Jessica Meyers had plenty to say about art a few weeks ago at Mo's Lounge.

Jessica is a mixed media artist who incorporates newspaper and hand written words into her paintings.

"Before I started painting I didn't realize you could stick all kinds of stuff onto the canvas. I thought it had to be just paint."

Jessica grew up in Waukegan but moved to Kenosha when she started high school. Why did she decide to stay after high school ended and she was a full fledged adult?

"Part of it was that I like the area. I like being by the water. Most people don't care, but I'm a Cancer and Cancer is a water sign," she smiles. "I just always liked being by the water."

She went to Beloit College for creative writing until she realized that she didn't need to go to college for creative writing. She left school after a year and a half and eventually decided to pursue a degree in graphic design. "It's kind of like art, but you get paid for it."

She started going to Milwaukee Institute of Art, but left after one month.

"I hated it. I still liked graphic design, even though I didn't want to go to MIAD, so I started going to Gateway."



Tammy: When was the first time you said, "I'm an artist"?

Jessica: Honestly, I don't really call myself an artist for the most part. That's partially because of the connotation of being at MIAD, because a lot of them were really snobby. They had the "I'm an artist, I'm better than you" sort of mentality, a lot of them. So I don't really like that word so much now. I usually call myself a painter.

I was taking an abstract painting class at Lemon Street. I have a daughter and she had gotten to be six months old or so. Where I could actually get out of the house a bit more. I was like, "I need to get out and do something." I saw the painting class and I really enjoyed it, so I took it the second time they offered it. I thought, "I kind of like this. And people don't think I suck."

T: Who taught the class?

J: Keith Wood. Keith's from Canada. He did the whole putting on Jazz and paint to the music sort of thing. It was interesting. I thought I could do this for a while. I wasn't writing too much, so I was like, "I'll give it a go."

T: You're selling your work on a website? We'll go ahead and plug that for you.

J: Yeah, it's www.mixeduppainter.etsy.com

T: So, you're also a writer?

J: I'm working on a novel right now. Middles are really hard. I used to write short stories, but I guess my practical side thinks it's less fun writing short stories, because there is less chance of them getting published. The kind of stuff that I write, there's not a lot of places that take short stories.

T: What do you write?

J: Right now I'm working on a paranormal romance, but they tend to be more towards, not necessarily horror, I guess they call it Urban Fantasy now. With vampires and that kind of thing. It's fun because you can make up everything.

T: What are you working on now?

J: I was working on a collaboration with Matt Specht. Right now he has the painting in his apartment. It only took two days. We painted it on the back of one of his paintings. That was kind of interesting.

Ten Words with Jessica Meyers.

I gave her thirty seconds for each word. She said, "That's not very much, I'm not the most concise person."

- **Color-** I usually use a lot of red and a lot of blue, I like to do kind of a weathered, I like to give it an aged sort of look. Like this one [artist trading card], it has an aged side I like dark colors. I don't actually use black though. I've never used black aside from ink. I don't actually own black paint. I guess a lot of people are surprised by that.
- **Texture-** I kind of like them to feel nice. And like for the cards and sometimes the paintings I put down a coat of Gesso or a coat of white and I just make sure it has a nice texture so it's kind of crackled, 'cause then you get all this nice- where the paint kind of soaks into some parts and then the other parts it totally wipes away. So you get all these different shades from putting one color on.
- **Canvas-** Let's see. I prefer canvas to panels and things like that for most of my work, but I do like the cards. But with canvas you get built in texture And it kind of grabs the paint and makes it look more like you know what you're doing. It gets all of these nice little dots of color all over the place. I like them to be a little more rough, I don't like them to be sanded because it will catch the paint and you get all these little bits all over the place.
- **Green-** I like green, I just don't paint with it much. I always liked the color green. I like malachite. I have I think two shades of green and like four or five for red and blue. I usually mix it myself if I use it.
- **Brush-** I like hog's bristle brushes cause they're a bit stiffer. They don't get all mushy very easily, if you're using thick paint. The best brush I have was ninety-nine cents. I got it from Michael's. I scrub paint onto canvases with it backwards and everything.
- **Art-** I actually haven't been an artist for all that long. I used to draw and I did pastels and things when I was little. I also wanted to write and illustrate my own book when I was like seven. I actually went to art school for about a month, but then I left and went to college for a year and a half for creative writing.
- **Pop Culture-** I use a lot of pop culture reference when I talk that I don't think a lot of people get a lot of times. I make references to comedians I

- like and movies that I've seen and a lot of people haven't seen those movies, so I don't think they really get what I'm talking about.
- **Recycling-** I'm actually Earth friendly, but it doesn't always work out so well. But basically part of the reason I started using newspaper is because we had all of these newspapers and I had to do something with them. I still have a bunch of newspapers laying around that I haven't finished using.
 - **Paper-** I use a lot of paper, usually with canvas, but even the paper (artist trading) cards have a lot of newspaper. I like a lot of the hand made papers, but those are hard to find.
 - **Words-** I'm a big fan of words, obviously since I'm half painter, half writer. That's part of the reason too that the words are all over the paintings. It's like if I'm not writing I might as well write on something. It's kind of like a diary, and people can't read it, because then you cover over it. You can put down anything that you want and they can't read what you said. It's private, but it's there. I know what it says. Nobody else does. Hopefully.
-

Jessica Meyers you have been **"Exposed"**.

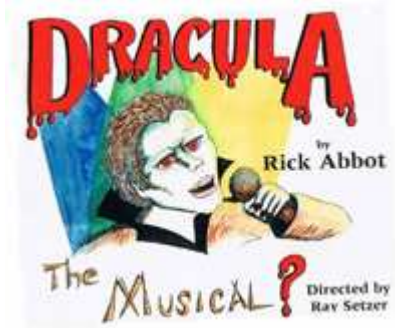
You can contact Jessica through her myspace page.

You can Buy her art at www.mixeduppainter.etsy.com

Tammy Peacy finds time to write between loads of laundry in the basement of the home she shares with her husband, Steve, and their three children. Her writing has been published in AntiMuse, Chick Flicks Ezine, The Write Side Up, and Wanderings Magazine, and ExposeKenosha.com

Dracula The Musical?

Review by Matt Smith



What do you get when you combine some of the best theatrical talent in Kenosha with a comedic horror musical? That's a question I never thought I would ask (or get an answer to for that matter), but at Rhode Opera House, this hilarious interpretation of the horror classic is something worth seeing.

Described by director Ray Setzer as “a cross between Mel Brooks and Gilbert and Sullivan,” this play puts us in the middle of a family headed by Dr. Sam Seward (Philip Jaeger), a psychiatrist in charge of a mental facility. His wife Sophie (Brandi Schuld) is the typical doctor's wife with high fashion sense and (at first) low impression of others. The daughter, Mina Seward (Meg Walsh), the somewhat typical “victim” who's fiance goes to Transylvania in search of Count Dracula's castle, only to not return. The Count (Joseph Cardamone III) takes an interest in her from the start, but is thwarted several times before stealing his prize.

The play begins with the Count coming to the Swards' for a formal dinner. Joining them will be Bubu Padoop (Amy-Louise Seyller), Mina's best friend, and one of the Institution's inmates, Boris Renfield (Vince Cook). When the maid Nelly Norton (Melissa Kelly Caramone) is surprised by the seemingly insane Dr. Van Helsing (Jay Rattle), trying to warn the family of the impending doom, hilarity and foolishness soon follow.

This mini-musical, featuring so much talent both vocal and theatrical, feels just like a show on Broadway . The comedy styling and musical arrangements remind me very much of other comedic musical masterpieces like Wicked and Nunsense.

Lakeside Players, Inc. Presents:
Dracula The Musical?
by Rick Abbot

October 19th-November 3rd, 2007

7:30 pm Fridays & Saturdays

2:00 pm Sundays

(tickets are available at the door, the box office is open one hour prior to performance)

Where:

The Rhode Center for the Arts

514 56th street

Downtown Kenosha, WI 53141

To reserve tickets call: (262) 657-PLAY (7529)

www.rhodeopera.org

Matt Smith lives right in the middle of Historic Downtown. Since moving to Kenosha in July, he has instantly fallen in love with this city.