

An eye for jewelry

Local artist's unique work earned her a spot in this year's Broad Ripple Art Fair.

By **Shelby Roby-Terry**
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 May 18, 2004

Andréa Jackson is a jeweler, but she doesn't wear a suit to work or earn a living in a building where the business' name is advertised in script.

Nor does she regularly dabble in diamonds, rubies or sapphires (though she will on commission).

The 31-year-old Indianapolis native is more comfortable sporting a spiked hairstyle and wearing jeans, shirt and plastic sneakers when crafting her silver necklaces, rings, bracelets and earrings.

Jackson's hip style works for her.

It also will help her stand out among more than 260 other artists at the 34th annual Broad Ripple Art Fair Saturday and Sunday on the grounds of the Indianapolis Art Center, 820 E. 67th St.

But it was Jackson's work, not her look, that landed the jewelry-maker a coveted spot in the juried art fair, said Amy Lamb, public relations manager at the Indianapolis Art Center.

From the long lines of her necklaces to the tapered shapes of her pendants, and earrings that look like eyes, Jackson said everything she creates is based on the human forms of the body, with much of her inspiration taken from the pinched-corset look of a woman.

Jackson admits that a lot of her work "is happy accidents."

"A lot of things just come about," she said. "A lot of times, just walking down the hallway will give me inspiration. Evolution also plays a big part in my jewelry making."

The Broad Ripple Art Fair -- the largest fund-raiser for the Indianapolis Art Center -- is the perfect place for Jackson to display her creations. The outdoor event features works of hundreds of artisans from across the globe who create everything from the unique to the whimsical and practical, including furniture, leather goods, paintings and textiles.

"This will be my first time selling and displaying my work at the Broad Ripple Art Fair," said Jackson. "It's a really big thing for me and a good opportunity, because lots of people will get to see my work."



Andréa Jackson will be displaying her jewelry at the Broad Ripple Art Fair for the first time. -- Frank Espich / The Star

ANDRÉA JACKSON

Age: 31

Occupation: Jeweler, instructor and owner of F.C. Dre'a Design Studio, 212 W. 10th St., Suite B-320.

Education: 1999 Ball State University graduate, with a degree in metalsmithing and jewelry design. 2002 Texas Tech University graduate, with a master's degree in metalsmithing.

Hometown: Indianapolis.

Jackson's jewelry can be found in several shops in Indianapolis. Individual pieces can also be found on Jackson.

"I do a lot of test pieces to see how they wear, and to get people's reaction," she said. "I've gotten work from standing in line at Wal-Mart. But a lot of my work is word of mouth."

On average, Jackson makes 10 to 20 pieces each week at her wooden jeweler's bench with a few tools of the trade (a mallet, saw frame, clippers, three pairs of pliers, a torch) and a couple of non-traditional items, including nail polish -- used to etch designs into the metal and to polish her fingernails -- and a nail, used to add texture to her rings.

It may be tedious work, but Jackson loves it.

"If you don't like that tedious nature, you'll hate it," said Jackson, who teaches jewelry-making at the Indianapolis Art Center and inside her Downtown studio.

"But for me, making jewelry is a form of relaxation."

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