

Show supports alternate art

Chronic Town to host third alternative arts and crafts show

By Anita Modi

COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

It might sound like just another craft show, but this isn't your grandmother's crochet.

The Underground Artisans Marketplace, an alternative crafts show, will share the stage with the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts this Sunday, offering visitors another opportunity to appreciate local talent.

Chronic Town, 224 W. College Ave., a downtown hookah lounge and store, will host the day-long event.

"When you say 'craft show,' it sounds like old ladies," said Jesse Ruegg, co-owner of Chronic Town.

"Our artists use art forms to create something a little different, a little edgy, something not as common."

Ruegg said examples of such artwork could include anything from skull-and-crossbones embroidery to re-purposed vintage clothing, combining traditional media with non-traditional ideas.

The idea for an "alternative crafts show" in State College was inspired by the popularity of similar shows in bigger cities across the nation, show organizer Kristen Smeal said.

Many of these shows carry a reputation for having environmentally friendly pieces, Smeal said — something the alternative show boasts by showing local artists uti-

lizing recyclable materials in their craft.

Centre Hall resident Leighann Sammis said her customers refer to her as the "Master of Recycling," intrigued by her printmaking and jewelry designs.

Sammis said she will sell bracelets and necklaces made of watch parts, bottle caps and Scrabble tiles, among other materials, at the event.

As a new artist who just graduated from art school last year, Sammis said the Underground Artisans Marketplace was easier to get into than Arts Fest, which usually features more experienced artists.

Smeal said the event is a great



Courtesy of Kristen Smeal

A pair of earrings displayed at a previous alternative arts show at Chronic Town.

opportunity for local artists — experienced or not — to advertise their work.

"It's a showcase for local arti-

sans," Smeal said. "A lot of vendors have their own web pages, but this is a great way for them to get their work seen in person."

This is Chronic Town's third year providing a venue for 12 independent artists, many of whom have returned each year to share the diversity of their artwork with their visitors.

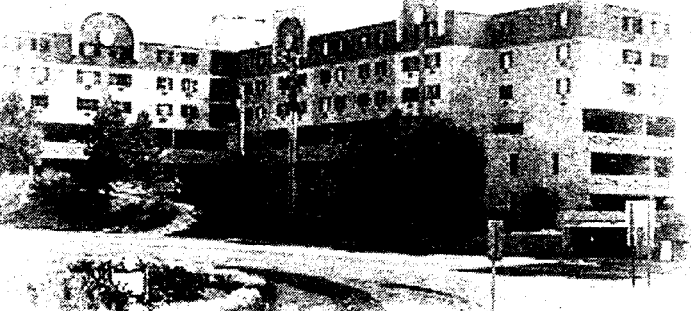
"We're not separating the artisans from their spectators," Ruegg said.

"The whole experience becomes the art."

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Reporter Chris Zook contributed to this article.

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