



Sarah Haas and her dog, Sugar, sit on the stage of her EcoMobile in Urbana earlier this month.

Robin Scholz/The News-Gazette

MOVEMENT ARTIST

SHOW ON THE ROAD

UI grad makes April pit stop in C-U following several months of touring

By MELISSA MERLI
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URBANA — For the past seven months or so, movement artist Sarah Haas has been on the road, traveling, performing and living with her dog, Sugar, in her Eco-Mobile, a tiny home on wheels.

This month, though, she's parked next to the south side of the Urbana Tire Co. building at 202 S. Vine St., U.

There, from her galvanized-steel-covered moveable structure, she greets friends she made while working on a master of fine arts degree in dance at Illinois.

Perhaps more importantly, she rehearses and performs on the small stage of her Eco-Mobile and offers discussions about it and her "Raw Art Tour."

The 34-year-old Haas, who's often told she resembles actress Tilda Swinton, has scheduled a variety of events through April at her Eco-Mobile. Everyone is invited to participate in the last one April 29. After she left Urbana-Champaign in early September, Haas traveled to a residency at Austin Peay University in Clarksville, Tenn. There she collaborated with students.

Then she spent three days in Ida, Tenn., at a Radical Faeries intentional community.

"I wish I could tell you more about the people who live at Ida, but it's quiet here," Haas wrote Oct. 3 on her Raw Art Tour blog. "Most of the inhabitants are off the land for a birthday party and weekend festival, and the few folks lingering behind seem to be more preoccupied with living than with hosting, which is refreshing. It makes sense to me; yet, I'll be leaving this morning with very little understanding/knowledge of the folks who live

Time in town

Following is movement artist Sarah Haas' Raw Art Tour schedule for the rest of April in Urbana. Her living-performance space is her Eco-Mobile parked on the south side of Urbana Tire Company, 202 S. Vine St., U. All the events are free and open to the public.

■ 6 to 7 p.m. Thursday, open rehearsal.

■ 6 to 6:30 p.m. Friday, works in process showing.

■ 6 to 7 p.m. April 26, performance.

■ 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. April 29, performance party.

Viewers are advised to bring fold-out chairs or other seats. Haas said the open rehearsal may take the form of movement studies, photography, set design, glass mosaic work and/or costume design.

"These will be quiet contemplations," she said.

She defines performance as a culmination of her works in process showings. The performance party will showcase community members of various disciplines and interests who use the stage as a platform to perform, workshop and/or discuss. The scene is as varied as the participants.

Haas' website is www.sarahhaas-rawart.com.

MELISSA MERLI

here." After that, Haas used her Eco-Mobile to camp out in the Shawnee National Forest in southern Illinois and then in Waynesville, Mo. From October through late March, she parked in Huntsville, Texas, where she worked a full-time carpentry job, continued to work on her portable home and gave a performance before she left.

Her Eco-Mobile, which she began building late last summer while still

on the UI campus, remains a work in progress.

She did find time to insulate it while in Texas but has not yet installed solar panels, stored for now under the plywood floor.

She hopes to eventually cover the floor with papier mache; she already added another artistic touch by covering her tiny countertop with a glass mosaic.

The mobile home does not have a kitchen; Haas basically uses a large cooler as a mini-refrigerator. The Eco-Mobile has a compost toilet; Haas plans to add a portable shower. When she needs to, she uses a solar shower.

While on the road she slept on the Murphy's bed in her Eco-Mobile. While in Urbana, Haas is staying with her partner.

To build her Eco-Mobile, Haas used a lot of donated material including redwood for interior walls and cabinets. However, she bought the galvanized steel that covers the exterior.

"That was expensive," she said. Haas and another Illinois MFA dance graduate, Hallie Aldrich, a choreographer, each built an Eco-Mobile last summer as a way to construct their own post-MFA careers. Their plan was to do residences at universities and community centers nationwide.

A Seattle native, Aldrich has parked her Eco-Mobile, which she built from modular parts, in Washington State.

"We actually want to meet up together and do performances and talk to the public about building these structures," Haas said.

Last year, Haas and Aldrich tried to raise money for their Eco-Mobile

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CHAMPAIGN NATIVE'S LULLABY PROJECT

Broadway fixtures create relaxing tunes

1992 Central grad, friend will donate proceeds to breast cancer charities

By PAUL WOOD
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New mom Kate Dawson, a Champaign native, has come up with lullabies for anyone who will listen.

The actress and singer convinced some of the best composers and performers on Broadway to come up with lullabies in every style to contribute to her CDs.

The 1992 Champaign Central graduate has worked in musicals and movies in her New York years, which started when she graduated from Millikin University in 1996.

But the production she's proudest of is her son, Ezekiel Cohen, all of 7 months old. She's married to Jed Cohen, a former actor (a smaller part in "Home Alone") who's now a Harvard-educated Web guru.

She did a read-through of a Broadway play ("Parade") with Matthew Broderick, wrote a one-woman show and has worked in several films doing voice-overs.

But early in her pregnancy, she decided to embark on a major baby-oriented project with friend Jodi Glucksman.

"Over the Moon: The Broadway Lullaby Project" features two CDs with 26 songs, a hardcover book of 17 songs from the albums, an e-book encompassing the entire collection and a documentary film.

The project's revenues will support breast cancer charities like the Evelyn Lauder Breast Cancer Research Foundation and Young Survival Coalition, Dawson said.

Composers successfully approached by Dawson and Glucksman include the world-famous Stephen Sondheim; Rupert Holmes, playwright of the Tony

Award-winning "The Mystery of Edwin Drood"; Tom Kitt, a Pulitzer winner for the rock musical "Next to Normal"; Steven Schwartz, known for "Godspell" and "Wicked"; as well as such other notables as Henry Krieger with Bill Russell, Bobby Lopez with Kristen Anderson Lopez, Jill Santoriello with John Patrick Shanley, David Shire and Nona Hendryx with Marva Hicks and Charles Randolph-Wright.

Performers include Dawson herself, Audra McDonald, Michael Cerveris, Victoria Clark, Raul Esparza, Sutton Foster, Brian D'Arcy James, Rebecca Luker, Kelli O'Hara, Donna Murphy, Anika Noni Rose and Vanessa Williams.

The foreword to the book has the best Broadway seal of approval of all: It's by Julie Andrews.

Though the project package, which can be preordered at amazon.com, has commercial potential, Dawson said its reason for being is personal.

"I got pregnant and wanted to do a community project involving music and babies and motherhood," she said. "I also thought of my cousin Jill Nicolette Izzi, who died of breast cancer (and had) two small children. I wanted to do something to honor her."

"I've always found music to be the most healing."

Besides the CD project, Dawson recently completed a one-woman show about woman who argues with her own critical and pessimistic inner voice.

She treasures the work she has done with greats such as Frank Oz, the director and voice of Yoda and Miss Piggy, and her own voice-over work,

Please see MUSIC, G-2



Champaign native Kate Dawson, joined by her son, Ezekiel Cohen, and husband, Jed Cohen, helped spearhead the lullaby project.

Cohen family

studio VISIT

Melissa Mitchell, 54, Champaign

Q: How do you feel when you see on a billboard your photo as the signature image for the Boneyard Arts Festival?

A: It felt like a quiet exclamation point. Quiet, because I was alone in my car when I first saw it.

Q: Are you going to show your work during the Boneyard?

A: I'll be at five venues, which is why my to-do list took me all morning to compile.

Q: What venues?

A: I will have a solo exhibition at the 40 North 88 West offices (106 S. Neil St., C). As the Boneyard signature artist, I was invited to show my work there. It will be mostly digital prints on metal panels and assemblage pieces. Also, our studio suite (518) in the Lincoln Building (44 E. Main St., C) will be open. And Claire Billing, Sherri Stinson and I will show mixed-media shrines on a window ledge inside Ratio Architects (10 E. Chester St., C). Then I organized for the I.D.E.A. Store (28 E. Springfield Ave., C) a two-day event called Persephone's Treasures.

Q: What's that?

A: It's a spring bazaar hosted by the I.D.E.A. Store at the I.D.E.A. Store, featuring a dozen artists who create using recycled, reused and repurposed materials. It'll have a festive atmosphere with refreshments.

Q: Where's your fifth Boneyard venue?

A: I'll have at least one piece in "The Something You Love" show at the Art Coop Gallery at



Melissa Mitchell displays some of her creations in her downtown Champaign studio.

Darrell Hoemann/The News-Gazette

Lincoln Square in Urbana.

Q: Aren't you the communications director for the I.D.E.A. Store?

A: Yes, since the summer of 2010. I've volunteered at the store practically since it opened.

Q: Don't you have a background in arts writing?

A: Yes, for 30 years I worked at the University of Illinois News Bureau, promoting the arts. I retired in 2009.

Q: Did you ever take art courses?

A: I did take art and design courses at the UI for a year, circa late 1970s, when I temporarily switched majors from English literature to interior design. And through the years, I've completed courses and workshops in photography, ceramics, printmaking and, most recently, mixed media, combining painting and photography. Most of my life, whenever I was "supposed to" be writing, I'd find myself making art and

vice versa. That's the great thing about being retired: There are no more supposed to's. And there are no rules or schedules to keep. I love being the master of my own destiny.

Q: What kind of art do you make mostly?

A: For quite some time, I've made assemblage art. I also have had an interest in photography, off and on, for more than 30 years. Some of my photographs were published recently in special nonprofit journal for the arts published annually by Rollins College in Winter Park, Fla.

When I first rented the studio space downtown, I was interested in doing more painting because the light is so fantastic in that space. I wasn't even going to bring all my collections and odd bits I used in assemblage art from my home basement studio. But an artist friend said, "Take everything there." As I began to unload things I didn't even know I had anymore, all sorts of ideas and assemblages resulted.

Q: Do you call your art-making business anything?

A: I call it ACME Elfworks. The name comes from a couple of places. ACME means a place that makes everything, so I thought it was appropriate. And it's also a nod to the Lincoln Building, which has a very noir feeling.

Also, some of my assemblages tend to have a slightly creepy feeling, so I like to say it's not me or my work. Rather, it's the elves, working into the night.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Boneyard Arts Festival will be Thursday at the UI, Friday in Champaign, Saturday in Urbana and next Sunday in surrounding communities. The Persephone's Treasures event is set for 4 to 7 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at the I.D.E.A. Store. For more about the Boneyard, see the schedule in Monday's paper and another preview in our e3 entertainment magazine on Thursday.

MELISSA MERLI

ENTERTAINMENT

MARY WYCZOLKOWSKI: THEATER REVIEW

'Murder' an enjoyable date night experience

At one point during the play "Murder by Natural Causes," adapted for the stage by Tim Kelly from the film of the same name by Richard Levinson and William Link, a character is driven to attempted murder after finding himself on the sour end of a poor theater review.

Let's hope my words do not sting as harshly. That's not to say that my review of the Parkland College Department of Fine and Applied Arts production of "Murder by Natural Causes," directed by Abigail Manekin and running through April 22, was ever intended to come across harshly, but it may be perceived that way.

Though there were some obvious opening-night jitters among the

If you go

What: Parkland College Theatre presents "Murder by Natural Causes" When: 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday; 3 p.m. April 22 Where: Parkland Theatre, 2400 W. Bradley Ave., C Tickets: \$14 for adults; \$12 for students and seniors (55+); all tickets are half-price Thursday More information/reservations: theatre.parkland.edu/

players both on stage and behind the scenes, the show as a whole provided a nice, lighthearted evening for any in attendance. The set was beautifully constructed and provided an interesting, realistic and detailed backdrop for a

world that is otherwise over the top. Monty Joyce, in his Parkland Theatre debut, capitalizes on his ability to play arrogant and maligned with the best of them, and he was at points the only element holding the ensemble together.

Zach Benner and AJ Curry both display obvious talent in their performances as the other two centralized characters, but there was something intangibly off about the performances, be it Benner's affable undertone that belies his character's cunning nature or Curry's attempt at ice-queen coolness that came across, on more than one occasion, as flat.

The minor characters (stretched less thinly?) fared far better. Of special delight was Susan Sheahan's return to the stage after nearly 20

years away to focus on raising a family. As a dimwitted but genuine housekeeper, Sheahan struck just the right balance between loopy and lovable, delivering her lines with a sugar-sweetness that is far harder to pull off than one might think.

Also back from a nearly double-decade hiatus is Scott Walker, who has been in several area productions since "coming out of retirement" last year.

Walker, who will soon move to Chicago, is a talented actor and worthy of an audience's attention when on stage. I sincerely hope that Walker continues his theater work in the big city as he has the talent capable of standing up to a more demanding and intense caliber. Stefanie Senior, Randy Offner

and Mary Rose Cottingham (whose regal sounding moniker is somehow trumped by her character's, Cornelia Carrington) all gave solid performances and were able to provide a sense of a deeper character existing despite limited time on stage.

Overall, a pleasant evening out at the theater for my guest and myself, with enough humor to keep us happy, plot twists to keep us entertained and talking points to discuss in the car on the ride home.

The run time of about 90 minutes was also suited to fitting comfortably into our evening without dominating it, and we both left the theater with energy (and time!) to spare for the remainder of date night.

Mary Wyczolkowski is a freelance writer from Champaign.

KRANNERT APPEARANCE

Famed violinist conducting London-based orchestra

By MELISSA MERLI

URBANA — Famed American violinist Joshua Bell won't only be playing the violin on Thursday evening at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. He'll also be conducting the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, a London-based chamber orchestra.

He was named its music director last year — the first person to have the title since Sir Neville Marriner, who founded the orchestra in 1958.

"I have felt a particular affection for the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields ever since I made my very first recording with them under the baton of Sir Neville Marriner when I was just 18 years old," Bell said in a statement released last year by the ensemble. "Since then, the orchestra has come to feel like family to me, as we have shared so many cherished moments together both musical and over the past several years. I have begun to explore the great symphonic repertoire with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields and I am thrilled that I will have the opportunity to continue this collaboration under the official title of music director."

At 7:30 p.m. Thursday at Krannert, Bell and the orchestra will perform works by Beethoven: "The Coriolan Overture," Op. 62; the Violin Concerto in

D Major, Op. 61, with original cadenzas by Bell; and Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92. The program, of course, is subject to change.

The concert is sold out. People wanting to attend may get their names on a waiting list. Call 353-6280.

Bell and orchestra began a 15-city tour on Wednesday at Avery Fisher Hall in New York. While leading the ensemble from his violin, he also will serve as soloist in concertos.

"It combines everything I love to do," Bell told Wall Street Journal reporter David Mermelstein for a story published Tuesday, "but I don't have to deal with a middleman, the conductor. I control everything this way. Plus, I'm distinct and see how it goes just leading the academy," he said.

However, Bell, who grew up in Bloomington, Ind., and studied at Indiana University, told Mermelstein he won't give



The Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, led by famed American violinist Joshua Bell, above, began a 15-city tour last week. They will perform at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts on Thursday evening.

up his violin. "What drew me to the violin was mastering the instrument technically, which I'm continuing to do. You want to push boundaries, to not always be in your comfort zone. If you don't, you get stale. So you have to find areas of growth. For some, it's commissioning new pieces — and I want to do more of that, too — but this is a way I can challenge myself and do something new."

SPRING CONCERT 2012

Arcadia Chamber Players will perform

By The News-Gazette

The Arcadia Chamber Players will present their spring concert 2012 at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday at the studio of Debra Sutter, 306 E. Sherwin Circle.

The program will feature two trios by Bohuslav Martinu and Alfred Uhl and a Brahms piano quartet. Guest violinists Aaron Jacobs and Laura Hourt will join flutist Mary Chapman, clarinetist Marina Antoline, violist Jieyeon Kim-Schleicher, cellist

Amy Flores and Sutter, a pianist.

Tickets (including coffee and dessert) are \$15 for adults, \$10 for students and senior citizens, and \$7 for children younger than 12. Reservations are required as seating is limited; call 384-0568.

The concert will be Antoline's last with Arcadia before she takes an overseas teaching position at the American School of Yaounde in Cameroon.

HAAS

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projects. They received a little plus some volunteer help in building their structures.

Haas said last week, though, that it's been hard to find funding for her Eco-Mobile because she remains busy finishing it and working day jobs when she can.

"It's something that will continue but takes a lot of time and energy to organize."

She also hasn't used her pull-out stage much; she supports it

with sawhorses. Because it's so small, she is unable to do large leaps and movements on it.

"That's OK, though. For me, I do site-specific work so it's fine to dance on a small spot," she said. "It's really good for a meeting place. I use mine as a platform for a lot of different things."

After she leaves Urbana, Haas will perform May 4 in Chicago as part of the Columbia College's Manifest Urban Arts Festival. Then she will head for the 555 Gallery in Detroit. Her life remains open after that, at least for now.

PETALS & PAINTINGS

Opening reception to start for Friday

By The News-Gazette

CHAMPAIGN — Krannert Art Museum's 20th annual Petals & Paintings gala-opening reception will take place from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Friday at the museum.

Champaign florist Rick Orr curates Petals & Paintings; it features floral arrangements created by award-winning regional floral designers in response to works of art selected by Orr from the museum's permanent collection.

The floral designs remain on view through the weekend, with docent-led tours beginning at 10 a.m. Saturday.

The museum will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. Petals & Paintings,

which falls on the University of Illinois Moms' Weekend, is one of the museum's biggest events in terms of attendance.

The Krannert Art Museum Council hosts the gala-opening reception, during which guests view the floral displays as they enjoy art and live music. This year, the music will be by the piano-based Kevin Hart Trio and the cocktails and light hors d'oeuvres by Michaels' Catering.

There also will be a silent auction of garden-themed items and a raffle of "Tall Hat" (2005), a pigment print by New York-based photographer William Wegman, who received a master's of fine arts degree from the UI in 1967. He became famous

after he began photographing his first weimaraner, named Man Ray.

Raffle tickets for the Wegman print are \$25 each or five for \$100. The tickets are available for purchase in the museum's office on the second floor of the museum and will be sold at the gala. The winning ticket will be drawn at the gala. The winner need not be present to win.

Tickets for the opening reception are \$75. To make a reservation, call 244-0516 or email kam@illinois.edu.

Proceeds from the event support the museum's exhibitions and educational programming, which is free and open to the public in part thanks to this annual fundraiser.



'Tall Hat,' a pigment print by University of Illinois graduate William Wegman, will be raffled at the Krannert Art Museum's 20th annual Petals & Paintings gala-opening reception.

THE DUKE OF UKE AND HIS NOVELTY ORCHESTRA

CD release party will be held at Highdive

By The News-Gazette

CHAMPAIGN — The Duke of Uke and His Novelty Orchestra will have a CD release party at 7 p.m. Saturday at the Highdive, 51 Main St.

The new CD, "April's Empire," was co-produced and mixed by Grammy Award-winning engineer Gerry "The Gov" Brown at Noa Noa Studio and Jvern Studio Los Angeles.

The album was mastered by Alan Douches at West West Side Music in New Windsor, N.Y. The album artwork was done by Urbana-based Glen Davies.

The Duke of Uke and His Novelty Orchestra began recording "April's Empire" with Mark Rubel at Pogo Studios in Champaign in May 2010, three months after the release of their first studio album "This Way Up."

The new album will be available on iTunes and other digital outlets, and the ensemble is scheduling tours for the spring and summer to promote the album.

part vocal harmonies, ukulele, violin, tuba, saxophones, electric bass, rock drums and Latin percussion.

The band focuses on collaborative songwriting and weaves together King's lyricism with vocal harmonies, buoyant instrumentation and swinging rhythms.

The ensemble has been featured on stages throughout the country, including Musikfest in Bethlehem, Pa., Milwaukee's Pride Fest main stage, New York City's Cake-shed, Little Rock's Sticksy Rock n' Roll Chicken Shack, New Orleans' Allways Lounge and Chicago's Quenchers

Saloon. Locally, the group has played in the lobby of Krannert Center for the Performing Arts and at the Pygmalion and the C-U Folk and Roots festivals. The band also has opened for the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra and local house shows.

MUSIC

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which includes an intense moaning scene in "The Stepford Wives."

"I'm an executive assistant by day, and with the baby, I don't add much anymore," she said.

Frustrating auditions were an inspiration for her one-woman show, she said.

"I have an inner voice in my head, a voice that always puts me down. The play disarms it," she said. "We have that voice that keeps us stuck. I was so tired of almost getting the roles, tired of leaving town for roles and I was tired of doing shows I didn't like."

RANTOUL

Theater group seeks input for 2013 season

By The News-Gazette

RANTOUL — The Rantoul Theater Group is accepting submissions for potential plays and directors for its 2013 season. Anyone interested is asked to contact Rod Sickler at rodimagest@aol.com by June 15.

For more information, contact Sickler at 403-1790 or 898-1972.

Advertisement for The Claret, a theater group, listing showtimes and contact information.

Advertisement for SAVOY 16 Quality Theaters, offering a \$6.00 bargain twilight price.

Advertisement for FREE Spring Movies at Metropolitan Opera.

Large advertisement for the play 'Murder by Natural Causes' featuring the title in large letters and listing showtimes and contact information.

Advertisement for Arrow Glass, offering services like screen repair and replacement, with a 'Mention Ad For Free Gift' offer.

Advertisement for Metropolitan Opera listing various plays and showtimes.