

Captured beauty Jewelry artist Sheila Webster returns to markt

BY CASEY UEBELHOR

"I had looked my whole life for something I felt like I did well artistically," explains Sheila Webster of Sheila's Sculpted Jewelry. "I had tried everything — I'd painted and gardened and flower arranged and tried my hand at decorating — but it just never felt like anything ever clicked."

Then in 2004, while vacationing with her husband in Gatlin-



Two examples of Sheila Webster's fine art jewelry. The artist sculpts precious metals, entirely by hand, capturing gemstones and other decorative valuables for wear. Find Sheila's Sculpted Jewelry right next to the performance stage in the Forest Park High School Practice Gym.

burg, Webster saw an ad for a local artist. She remembers turning to her husband, Doug, and suddenly proclaiming, "I've got to go see this woman!" The next day found Sheila and Doug in the woman's shop discussing the incredible art of capturing gemstones with twisted precious metals.

The concept definitely *clicked*. Webster, confident in her abilities from the start, ordered a training video and began practicing her craft back home in Owensboro. "It's hard to do this style of jewelry well, unless you practice a lot," she explains.

Webster's pieces are so skillfully formed, many people assume they've been soldered. In reality, artists like Webster spend hours deciding not only *what* they're going to produce, but *how* they're going to complete it. The process is somewhat like a puzzle, and the final product is intricate and beautiful — so beautiful, in fact, that a customer once bought a piece off Webster's own neck!

"I enjoyed [the art] so much," she explains, "that I started having so many pieces, and people started asking to buy." At first, Webster sold to friends and co-workers. Then, in 2006, she and Doug started doing shows.

Around that time, Webster produced a blue sapphire necklace. "I liked it so much

that I just kept it. I didn't want to part with it," she tells.

The necklace drew attention, and a single customer approached Sheila to inquire about the piece. After two years of wearing it, Sheila gave in and allowed the woman to purchase it. "She bought it right off my neck," nods Sheila. "She loved it...even after I'd worn it for two years."

"I've had people come to me and say that they can feel the love in my jewelry," Webster says. "The first time a woman came up to me and said that, it was one of the nicest things that anybody had ever said to me. It caught me off guard. It meant a lot to me."

One project remains especially precious to Webster. A woman from Newburgh approached the artist with two Italian cameos. The woman's husband had brought the cameos home upon his return from World War II.

"She had saved them in her jewelry box all those years," tells Sheila.

Webster couldn't have been more pleased with the pieces. "They looked absolutely beautiful. I mean, they looked *gorgeous*. Cameos wrap up really beautiful with this technique. They just look like they *belong* in this kind of setting."

Sheila's client called her after receiving

the final pieces, "extremely pleased" with the results of the Owensboro artist's work. "It makes me feel like I'm doing something that I *should* be doing," says Webster, "because people can tell I guess just by looking that I just love what I do."

Sheila has plenty of finished pieces, mostly pendants and necklaces, though the artist has recently ventured into designing rings.

Customers may also bring gems they'd like to have set. She's more than happy to take a look and make arrangements for a later pick-up at the show. For in-depth projects, Sheila takes them to her studio for finishing. She then ships finished pieces back to the owner, who pays upon receipt.

Because gemstone wrapping is considered more of an art than a craft, Webster mostly displays her work at art shows. The artist limits herself to six shows a year in order to "keep it fun." She says she wouldn't miss Christkindlmarkt, however!

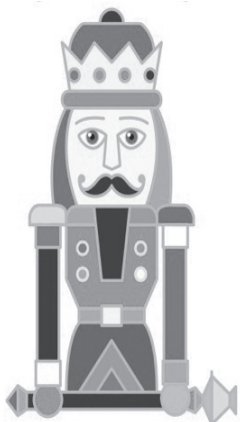
"There's several people we know, and Doug loves to visit them and walk around. Plus, there's so many good things to eat! It's a good time!"

Stop to chat with Doug and Sheila at the FP Practice Gym. It's hard to miss their booth — it's right by the stage!

Winzerwald Winery Holiday Wine Sale

WINZERWALD

WINERY



Like Us On
facebook

Join us at the
YMCA for free
tastings of our
Malbec, Blueberry,
Riesling, Cranberry,
Pumpkin Spice, warm
Gluhwein and more!

Saturday & Sunday
Save up to
\$2.00 per Bottle!


www.winzerwaldwinery.com



OASIS Bar & Grill

Main Street - Ferdinand - 812-367-1250

FULL MENU Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Evenings
OPEN SUNDAYS



ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT
FISH on
FRIDAY NIGHTS

TACO
THURSDAYS

Community Pride At Its Best

RAHMAN LAW OFFICE

GLORIA J. RAHMAN

GREGORY S. SCHNARR • BERNADETTE A. KOVACS

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

735 Main Street, P.O. Box 228, Ferdinand, Indiana 47532

812-367-1120