

Liza Hyatt

Storyteller and Mosaic Artist

Liza Hyatt has been a professional storyteller since 1989. She has performed throughout Central Indiana at schools, museums, libraries and festivals. She performs world folktales, historical stories and personal stories with heroes who become wise by daring to explore community, nature, and creativity. She received a Frank Basile Emerging Stories Fellowship from Storytelling Arts of Indiana in 2003. Her storytelling performances include audience participation and encourage all to delight in the magic of imagination. Her love of storytelling originated in childhood. Raised by parents who considered themselves book loving weirdo's in a rural Indiana town, stories were always part of daily life. With bookshelves in every room of the house, Liza grew up reading and hearing read to her myths and legends and folktales from around the world and began writing her own stories as soon as she learned to read. Imagination and creativity were celebrated in her childhood home, and the stories that Liza tells today pass this celebration on to children, adults, and communities wherever she goes.

Liza's poetry and personal essays have been published in literary journals and anthologies in the United States and England. Drawing upon her ability to engage audiences in playful participation, her poetry readings invite audience members to bring poems to life in group performances in natural settings and city parks. She has been known to write poems in sidewalk chalk in busy public settings and ask passers-by to read the poem aloud with her in order to bring attention to community issues and/or natural beauty specific to actual spaces in our environment.

Liza began making mosaics in 1997. Having worked a number of years as resident artist, storyteller and art therapist at a women's domestic violence shelter and counseling center, she found the art form of mosaics to be a powerful medium through which to respond to the brokenness that was so painfully a part of the lives of the women and children with whom she worked. She developed the Domestic Violence Awareness Mosaic Project, involving community businesses, schools, churches and civic groups in workshops through which they learned about domestic violence issues and created mosaics symbolizing lives being put back together after experience violence. Over 70 mosaic panels were created for this project and were displayed throughout Central Indiana to raise public awareness of domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Awareness Mosaic project received an honorable mention award from the Blair Sadler Art's in Healthcare competition and a Turn off the Violence award from Indianapolis community groups supporting peaceful communities.

Liza has provided Community Mosaic residencies in elementary, middle and high school settings since 2002. As roster artist for Young Audiences of Indiana, she engages entire schools in creating mosaic panels to hang as permanent art

within their schools. Each school she works with explores with her the history and symbols unique to their own school community and learns how mosaics can serve as powerful teaching metaphors to understand such community systems such as democracies and natural biodiversity.

Liza is currently working with Indiana University Hospital's Cancer Pavilion to create a Cancer Mosaic project in which people whose lives are affected by cancer can create mosaics and tell the story of the cancer experience.

Credentials:

- Recipient of 2007 Indiana Arts Commission Individual Artist Program Grant
- Recipient of 2005 Sharing Hoosier History Through Stories Commission in collaboration with the Indiana History Center and Storytelling Arts of Indiana to create "Booth Tarkington and Penrod"
- Recipient of 2004 Rose Voci Fellowship for Women Writer's through Indianapolis Writer's Center
- Recipient of 2003 Frank Basile Emerging Stories Fellowship to create "Through John's Eyes: John Muir's Year in Indianapolis"
- Summer storyteller at Indianapolis area city parks through program offered by Indy Parks and Storytelling Arts of Indiana
- Performances at the 2004 and 2005 Indiana Storytelling Festival
- Recipient of Blair Sadler Award for Arts in Healthcare for the Julian Center Domestic Violence Awareness Mosaic Project
- Recipient of 2001 Partners for Peace/Turn Off the Violence Award for Julian Center Domestic Violence Awareness Mosaic Project
- Adjunct Faculty for St. Mary of the Woods College Masters of Arts Programs in Art Therapy and Earth Literacy
- Community Mosaic projects facilitated at schools (preschool - high school) throughout Indiana
- Facilitator of The Cancer Mosaic Collaborative project for IU Cancer Center's Complete Life Program
- Roster artist for Young Audiences of Indiana
- National Board Certified Art Therapist
- Licensed Mental Health Counselor in Indiana