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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: JANUARY 24, 2024

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**SUBJECT: BRANDON SMITH & JAN KIRSTEIN RIGOR AT THE
THYEN-CLARK CULTURAL CENTER**

EXHIBIT DATES: FEBRUARY 1 – APRIL 21, 2024

Jasper Community Arts is pleased to present the work of Carmi, Illinois sculptor, Brandon Smith and Louisville, KY mixed-media artist, Jan Kirstein Rigor for the months of February, March and April 2024 at the Thyen-Clark Cultural Center. The two-person exhibit will feature a variety of 3-D wood/metal sculptures and 2-D mixed-media paintings.

Smith is a sculptural artist with a very interesting background. Smith creates his art in Carmi, a small town in southern Illinois, where he grew up. He is currently a coal miner and has worked for over 20 years in the coal industry. Yet, Smith has been sharpening his art skills for over 2 decades. He was first drawn to the creative scene while attending Carmi white county high school. He quickly realized his passion for the arts and desired to take every art class available to him. He then went on to study art at Southeastern Illinois College where he began to fine tune his skills in sculpture. At SIC he was able to explore Medias such as metals, wood and clay. This began his love for the use of more raw materials that he utilizes today in his works.

Smith states, "My artwork is a unique combination of industrial materials and elements from nature. I tend to visualize most of my pieces in my head rather than sketching ideas on paper. Through a rather spontaneous process, I create pieces by incorporating metal, wood and other materials into forms that are both rugged and elegant. I strive to create a strong physical presence with all of my sculptures. I have an intuitive gift of relating space in and around my forms. My works serve to bridge the gap between the industrial and natural, combining them to recognize their true beauty."

Jan Kirstein Rigor's mixed-media collage journey began over 30 years ago while in an MFA program at University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Rigor states, "Graduate School had me so stressed out that, ironically, I couldn't paint. Everything I painted looked so bad that one day in complete frustration I tore up one of my failing paintings and threw it on the floor. To my complete astonishment, I looked down and saw that the pieces looked fabulous all flung together and lying on top of one another. I realized that sometimes you just have to change your perspective and orientation to perceive and create....and my process of placing random pieces together became closely related to the process of the I Ching, where one receives answers to questions by tossing yarrow stalks or coins as a means of communing with the universe."

Brandon Smith attended Southeastern Illinois College, and Jan Kirstein Rigor holds a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Louisville and Indiana University.

The two-person exhibition will be on display from February 1st through April 21st, 2024. First Thursday Receptions will take place on Thursday, February 1st, March 7th and April 4th, 2024 from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm.

The galleries at the Thyen-Clark Cultural Center, located at 100 3rd Avenue, Suite A, Jasper, IN 47546, are open to the public Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Saturday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, and Sunday from noon to 3:00 pm. School groups, clubs, and students are welcome. Admission is free. Donations appreciated.

For more information, please call 812-482-3070. Jasper Community Arts is a department of the City of Jasper. JCA is supported in part by Friends of the Arts, Inc., the Indiana Arts Commission, The Arts Council of Southwestern Indiana, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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