

## ART SPOTLIGHT

# Costume design is an inspiration for the fiber of her work

By BILL VAN SICLEN  
Journal-Bulletin Arts Writer

**The artist:** Cristin Searles, 28.

**What she does:** Sculpture, fiber art.

**Where she's been:** Born in Cambridge, Mass. Attended Hamilton College and New York's School of Visual Arts. Lives in Providence.

**Sewing and sculpting:** Some artists are inspired by nature. Others take their cues from the great art of the past. But for Searles, the creative spark came from a much more mundane source: her day job.

"Basically, my interest in fabrics grew out of my work experiences in costume studios," she says. "In Providence, I worked as a costume designer at Rhode Island College.

In New York, I worked for the Metropolitan Opera. After a while, the idea of using costumes and fabrics in an artistic sense just sort of infiltrated my work."

Searles also helped make the shiny, space-age outfits for Intel Corp.'s famous "Bunnymen" commercials. "That was me," she says.

**Working in Tiverton:** Searles is also the director of Tiverton's Four Corners Art Center. Located at East and Main Roads (across from the Provender), the center sponsors a regular series of concerts and poetry readings, as well as a one-acre sculpture park. The center is also participating in this year's Convergence arts festival, beginning June 13. "It's something new for us, but

it's very exciting," she says.

**Where she hangs:** Searles's fabric pieces are currently on display, along with work by artists Amy Campagna and Susannah Strong, at the Island Arts gallery, corner of Thames and Pelham Streets in Newport.

"It's all done in silk organza using couture techniques," she says. "It's very time-consuming, but it's also very relaxing. You sort of get into it."

*Art Spotlight runs in Lifebeat each Tuesday. Artists who would like to be featured may send resumes to Bill Van Siclen, c/o Features Department, Providence Journal-Bulletin, 75 Fountain St., Providence, R.I. 02902.*



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