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Singer, Songwriter to Reflect on Tour Through War-Torn Israel

November 3, 2006

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - Sonia Rutstein, better known as SONiA, front woman for the band disappearfear, is a veteran performer at Illinois Wesleyan University's Blue Moon Coffeehouse. However, when Rutstein returns to IWU's campus on Thursday, Nov. 9, she will speak about an entirely new kind of stage fright: her concert tour through Israel during last summer's Hizbollah bombings.

The event, which will take place in the Main Lounge of Memorial Center at 7 p.m., is free and open to the public.

When bombing broke out in Israel this past August just a few days before Rutstein was scheduled to leave for two weeks of concerts there, she decided to go ahead with the tour as planned. "Most of the people who live there don't have the choice to be there or not, so I thought it was important to follow through with the tour," Rutstein said.

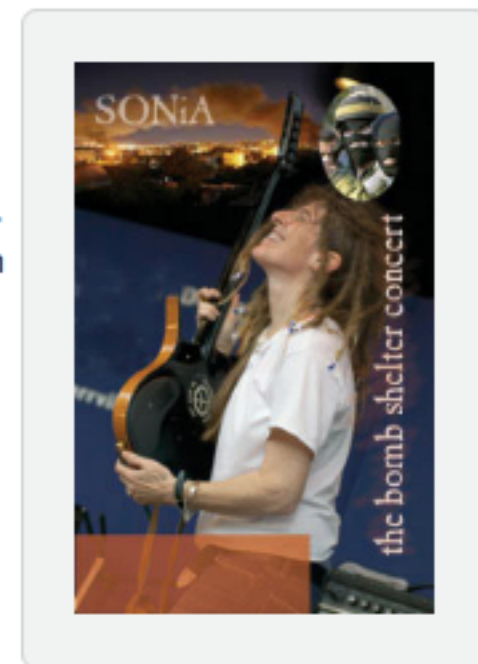
She traveled by night, when bombing was lighter, and performed for 16 days throughout Israel in venues such as a Palestinian village and bomb shelters in northern Israel, where it was illegal for groups to congregate outside of shelters.

"There were 150 to 200 rockets falling each day in northern Israel. When I talk about it, I re-live it a little bit," Rutstein said, describing the tension she feels in her stomach when she remembers the extent of the rockets' random destruction.

But re-living her experience is exactly what Rutstein will do on IWU's campus next week. Her tour in Israel and her efforts to share the experience through songs and stories, fit with Rutstein's mission to "disappear fear" in the world and replace it with compassion and love.

"When I do my songs, it's a very human-to-human experience," Rutstein said. "It's the kind of medicine that's needed in a war-torn place."

The event is co-sponsored by IWU Hillel and the Pride Alliance. For additional information, contact Darcy Greder, associate dean of students, at (309) 556-3541.



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