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Walsh Gallery  
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400 South Orange Avenue  
South Orange, NJ 07079  
Open Mon-Fri 10:30 am to 4:30 pm  
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# THE LOUDEST ROCK: 60 Years of PIRATE RADIO



2 March—10 April 2009

Co-curated by  
**Jake Calvert**  
**Brooke Cheyney**  
and  
**Katherine Fox**

# WSOU 89.5 F.M. Pirate Radio – Seton Hall University's Premier Radio Station

## Curator's Statement

It is important to understand that 60 years of Pirate Radio is not just the celebration of a single history; it is the celebration of many. WSOU has long played a pivotal role in defining these histories and spreading them through many different communities. For WSOU, these include a university and its students, the surrounding neighborhoods, sports affiliates, the music industry and many others. Radio as a form of communication has the ability to inform, entertain and educate. We aim to show WSOU's great successes in these pursuits. What can be learned in this exhibition is particular to the station, but these many small parts suggest a greater picture of our society, its cultural concerns, and the traditions we value. For sixty years, WSOU 89.5FM, Seton Hall's Pirate Radio Station has led the airways in college broadcasting.

WSOU began as a small organization run out of the basement of the university recreation center airing its first broadcast on April 14, 1948. Since that time, the station has grown considerably into a nationally recognized non-commercial radio entity that has been a leading force in music, band promotion, broadcast technology, news, special programming and sports coverage. The growth and proliferation of WSOU has been a direct result of the devoted team of Seton Hall student employees that manage and operate the station with their faculty supervisor. This exhibition celebrates WSOU's presence in the music industry, the professionalism of its staff, advances in technology, progressive programming and delivery of cutting-edge music.

## WSOU Fast Facts

**# of Student Workers:** 110

**Employers of WSOU Alumni:** 102.7 Fresh FM, Atlantic Records, Billboard/Radio & Records, BMG Label Group, CBS, CNN, ESPN, FOX News, Newark Star Ledger, Philadelphia's B101, Sony/Epic Records and WFAN,

**Longest Running Program:** Polka Party (1949)

**Popular Programs:** *Hall Line*, *Street Patrol*, *That Other '70s Show*, and *Vintage '80s*.

**Bands WSOU has helped break:** Smashing Pumpkins, My Chemical Romance, Thursday, Pearl Jam and Five Finger Death Punch, among others

**Current # Weekly Listeners:** 90,000

**Radio Infrastructure:** ProTools Digital Editing System, Prophet Music Database, HD Digital Radio Broadcasting, and TIELine Remote Broadcasting Equipment

**Awards:** College Station of the Year, College Talent of the Year (NY A.I.R. Awards), Metal Station of the Year, NJ Associated Press Broadcast Award, Peabody Award

## Q&A with Mark Maben, General Manager:



### **How did WSOU become of interest to you?**

After building and running a radio station in Bethlehem, PA, I left radio to pursue a second interest of mine: education and helping young people succeed. While I enjoyed working in both the K-12 and higher education arenas, I always missed radio. I was working at Rutgers when I learned of the General Manager opening at WSOU. It was a terrific opportunity to combine my two passions, radio and education. I also felt that I had much to offer the station, its students and Seton Hall, and that I could sustain and enhance WSOU's national reputation for excellence.

### **Why do you think WSOU is unique?**

One of the things that sets WSOU apart from most other college radio stations is that we are much more concerned about our listeners than about ourselves. We are not trying to be a commercial station, but we model ourselves after successful commercial and noncommercial stations so that our students get the best possible experience out of their time at WSOU.

### **What have you learned during your time at WSOU?**

The radio industry is in distress right now. My experience at WSOU has shown me that commercial and noncommercial stations alike need to do much more to reach out to and work with student-run stations. If terrestrial radio is to remain relevant throughout the 21st century, it must engage today's college and high school students to help reenergize and reinvent our industry. To survive and thrive, broadcasters need to embrace the convergence of multiple media platforms to find and keep their audiences.

### **Where do you see the station going in the next five years to remain up-to-date with the latest in radio broadcasting?**

Like the rest of radio, WSOU is going to have to learn how make itself relevant to 21st century media users. We have a product that we know younger demographics listen to and an authenticity in our on-air sound that people relate to. What we need is to find the resources and talent to plug ourselves in to the world beyond over-the-air radio waves. Given WSOU's history of success, if we commit ourselves to reaching that goal, I know we will meet it.

