

AU alumni artists' work featured in Penn Yan gallery show

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Work by five artists, all graduates of the School of Art & Design, Alfred University, will be on display Sept. 8 through the end of October at the Earthworks Galley, 230 B Lake Street Plaza in Penn Yan. An opening reception for "Alfred U Thru the Years" will be held from 5-7 pm Saturday, Sept. 8, at Earthworks. Featured will be the work of Peter Knickerbocker, a 1971 graduate of AU with a BFA; Sam Castner, who earned his BFA in 1997; Shawn Murrey, who received his BFA in 2004; Dan Mirer, a 2002 graduate with a BFA degree; and Laura McGraw, who received her BFA degree in May 2007. Knickerbocker, who has operated Spider's Nest Pottery in Penn Yan for more than 30 years, received his MFA from Rochester Institute of Technology in 1974. A ceramic artist, Knickerbocker fires his work with reduction glazes of his own creation. He combines colors to create a painterly effect on his pieces. Castner was raised on a vineyard 10 miles from Penn Yan, overlooking Keuka Lake. While at AU, he took a course in metal sculpture, and became enthralled. His work features a mix of materials, including stone, steel, bronze, glass and recycled materials. He says he draws his inspiration from the Finger Lake area's natural beauty. Currently, he works with master metal sculptor Albert Paley. Now living in Avoca, Murrey is now a student in Alfred University's Master of Fine Arts degree program in ceramic art, the nation's top-ranked program. Mirer is a glass artist, who has his own studio in Corning, NY. After earning an associate's degree from RIT and a bachelor's from Alfred University, he studied glass design at the Pukesberg School of Design in Sweden. He has taught at The Studio in the Corning Museum of Glass. Born and raised in upstate New York, McGraw is in the process of establishing her own studio in Alfred while working part-time at the Schein-Joseph International Museum of Ceramic Art at Alfred as a museum assistant.