

Work by three professors selected for bi-national art exhibition

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Three members of the Alfred University School of Art & Design, NYS College of Ceramics faculty will display works in "Extraordinary Forms: Bi-national Clay," an exhibit in the Kenan Center, Lockport, NY, which opens Sunday, Feb. 11, 2007, with a public reception at 2 p.m. Walter McConnell, associate professor of ceramic art; Chris Miller, visiting assistant professor of ceramics; and Linda Sikora, assistant professor of ceramic art, had works selected for the show featuring 17 faculty members from nine colleges and universities in Western New York and Canada. Guest curator for the show is Gerald Mead, artist and past curator at Buffalo's Burchfield-Penney Art Center. "Ceramics have a rich heritage in Western New York and Southern Ontario and the fine educational institutions in these regions have been vital to that heritage," said Mead. "This inaugural ceramics exhibition - a survey of extraordinary expressions in clay - also honors the makers, ceramics educators, who through their devotion to their craft and commitment to pedagogy, have enabled this media to flourish in our midst." McConnell has a bachelor of fine arts degree from the University of Connecticut-Storrs, and a master of fine arts degree from the NYS College of Ceramics at Alfred University. He describes his work as "a mediation on my relationship to nature with a culture decisively alienated from it." Miller earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from the Art Institute of Chicago and a master of fine arts degree from Pennsylvania State University. "Jars and teapots are at the front edge of my recent inquiry," said Sikora. She has a bachelor of fine arts degree from Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, and a master of fine arts degree from the University of Minnesota. Elaine Harrigan, Kenan Center marketing director, said several unique features have been added to enhance the "Extraordinary Forms" exhibit, including a "touch room" where a hands-on policy for the typical potter's work room will not only be allowed, but encouraged. New York State boasts 44 schools of higher learning with ceramics departments, eight of them in Western New York, including the NYS College of Ceramics at Alfred University. Having such a rich pool of artist-educators who are rarely given the opportunity to exhibit together was the impetus for the Kenan Center to undertake the gallery show devoted entirely to the medium of clay showcasing the work of full-time faculty members from Western New York and Ontario, Canada colleges and universities. The Kenan House Gallery is at 433 Locust St., Lockport. Hours are Monday-Friday, noon-5 p.m. and Sunday, 2-5 p.m. For more information call 716.433.2617, or go to www.kenancenter.org. "Extraordinary Forms" runs through March 11, 2007.