

## Professor to exhibit monumental wet clay installation in Washington, D.C. art center

9/07/15



Walter McConnell, professor of ceramics at Alfred University (AU) will exhibit a monumental wet clay installation in the Katzen Arts Center at American University, Washington, D.C. beginning Saturday, Sept. 12 and running through Sunday, Oct. 18, 2015. There will be an opening reception for “Itinerant Edens: Of Fable and Facsimile” opening day from 6-9 p.m.

In addition, McConnell&s gallery Cross MacKensie, also in Washington - will be showing related works of photography and ceramic sculpture. There will be an opening reception there from 5-7 p.m., also Sept. 12. McConnell will give an artist&s talk at the Katzen Monday, Sept. 28 from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

A series of male figures derived from familial models are central to McConnell&s “Of Fable and Facsimile.” Rendered in moist, unfired clay and sealed in terrarium-like plastic enclosures, McConnell&s earthen bodies appear fragile, apparitional - sustained momentarily in their fictional landscapes - positing impermanence as the inevitable condition of natural systems.

The figures in the installations are digitally scanned and prototyped from live models including the artist, his 83-year-old father, and his nephew, representing three generations of male family members. A full body scanner housed in the School of Human Ecology at Cornell University, produced the files; prototyped models were CNC-milled or 3D printed, then plaster molds were made. The figures appearing in the installation are terracotta clays, cast and pulled from these molds.

McConnell is best known for his moist clay installations housed in plastic enclosures that address the relationship between nature and culture. His work has been widely exhibited internationally and in venues across the U.S. including The Denver Art Museum, MassMoca, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

The artist is the recipient of a 2015 New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) Fellowship in the crafts/sculpture category.

McConnell earned a master of fine arts degree in ceramics from AU.

The Katzen Arts Center, at 4400 Massachusetts Ave., NW, is open Mondays-Fridays from 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; the Center is closed during university holidays. Call 202.885.ARTS(2787), or visit [AUarts@american.edu](mailto:AUarts@american.edu), for more details. Tickets are available online at [american.tix.com](http://american.tix.com).

Cross MacKensie Gallery, at 1675 Wisconsin Ave. NW, is open Wednesdays-Sundays from noon-5 p.m. and anytime

by appointment. For additional information call 202.337.7970.