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*** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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EXHIBIT:  
MSU Department of Art & Art History Master of Fine Arts Exhibition

DATES:  
March 21–April 5, 2009

OPENING RECEPTION:  
Friday, March 20, 7–9 p.m.
Free and open to the public

LOCATION:  
Kresge Art Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

GALLERY TALKS:  
Tuesday, March 31, 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

MSU's Kresge Art Museum to Feature Master of Fine Art Degree Candidates
Steven Baibak, Matt Boonstra, James Kimbler, Janel Schultz, Leon Sun, and Lisa Truax
Kresge Art Museum, Michigan State University

Kresge Art Museum will display the artwork of six Master of Fine Arts degree candidates at the annual Michigan State University Department of Art & Art History Master of Fine Arts Exhibition from March 21 to April 5, 2009. The featured artists are: Steven Baibak, Matt Boonstra, James Kimbler, Janel Schultz, Leon Sun, and Lisa Truax.

The opening reception will take place on Friday, March 20, from 7 to 9 p.m. The MFA candidates will introduce and discuss their work in a gallery walk on Tuesday, March 31, with James Kimbler, Janel Schultz and Leon Sun presenting at 1:00 p.m. and Steven Baibak, Matt Boonstra and Lisa Truax at 3:00 p.m. The exhibition and reception are sponsored by The Graduate School, Michigan State University.

This year artists will exhibit installations in sculpture, painting, digital media and ceramics. This exhibition marks the culmination of a three-year MFA degree program that emphasizes extensive creative exploration under the supervision of a faculty guidance committee. Focused study in an area of concentration, as well as coursework in art history and related fields, helps each artist situate their work within the larger discourse of the present practice of art. As part of the MFA curriculum, the candidates work closely with curators and staff at Kresge Art Museum to plan, promote, and mount the show.

Sculptors Steven Baibak and Matt Boonstra both explore the discards from society; Baibak uses found objects gleaned from society’s storehouse of disposed commodities and Boonstra expresses the physical and emotional toll of industrial workers’ displacement. Through the process of fabrication and construction, James Kimbler’s surfaces transform material histories into metaphoric realities.

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Fragmented human and animal forms are merged in Janel Schultz’s pieces to create hybrid structures. The diverse physical traits and common physiological needs signify an adaptation necessary for existence.

Through his personal observations and experiences in both China and the United States, graphic designer Leon Sun explores the different values, beliefs, and ideologies in these quickly emerging global cultures. As the world’s cultures develop new connections, Lisa Truax believes our inherent connection to nature and natural environments is distinct from our response to man-made environments. Through her ceramic pieces she explores the contrast between idealized natural places, cultural ideas of beauty, urban planning, and modern ways of living.

“This exhibition is an excellent example of student creative endeavors being shared with external audiences in a public environment,” said Tom Berding, Chair of the Department of Art & Art History. This particular exhibition also continues the history of successful collaborations between the Department of Art & Art History and the Kresge Art Museum, setting the stage for exciting future possibilities.

“By displaying graduate student art at Kresge Art Museum, we offer the community an opportunity to see their accomplishments and for the students to be recognized publicly for their work,” says Director Susan J. Bandes. “These annual exhibitions are eagerly anticipated by students, faculty, families and the community.”

For additional information questions, or to arrange an interview with the exhibiting artists, please contact Christine Nichols, KAM Communications & Events Coordinator, at (517) 353-9834, or via email at nicho357@msu.edu.

Admission is free to Kresge Art Museum. The museum is open Mondays through Fridays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursdays until 8 p.m., weekends noon to 5 p.m. Kresge Art Museum is located on the first floor of Kresge Art Center at the intersection of Physics and Auditorium Roads on the campus of Michigan State University in East Lansing, MI. For information, call (517) 355-7631 or visit www.artmuseum.msu.edu.

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**IMAGES**

High resolution images are available upon request via CD or email.

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