



Eastern Connecticut State University

# NEWS

October 17, 2008

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Akus Gallery to Present “It’s Getting Hot in Here”**

**Willimantic, Conn.** — The Julian Akus Gallery at Eastern Connecticut State University will present the exhibition, “It’s Getting Hot in Here,” from Oct. 23 – Dec. 11. The exhibit, which reflects greener lifestyle trends and sustainability, explores how this progressive philosophy effects art making.

A reception that includes two performance pieces will be held on Oct. 23 from 4 - 7 p.m. at the gallery. The public is invited. Admission is free. The Akus Gallery is located in the lower level of Shafer Hall at the corner of Windham and Valley Streets in Willimantic. Parking is available on both cross streets. The gallery is fully accessible.

The show was organized by Montserrat College of Art by co-curators Leonie Bradbury and Shana Dumont. Bradbury and Dumont brought together eight regional and national artists exhibiting work in a range of media, including sculpture, performance and installation. Although created within the context of global warming, much of the artwork is not about the environment or sustainability. Rather, the ‘green’ part of the work lies in the artistic process and the primarily recyclable, eco-friendly and/or locally found materials used. Artists include Vaughn Bell, Ellen Driscoll, Niizeki Hiromi, Katie Osediacz, People Powered, Pat Shannon, Yuken Teruya and Rachel Perry Welty.

Far from the 1960s ‘granola’ aesthetic, this exhibit embraces art whose elegant appearance belies the humble origins of much of the material. Bradbury and Dumont

collaborated to make selections of work that possess a primarily minimalist aesthetic and that innovatively address the exhibit theme.

“Rather than showing art made with organic, natural materials like ‘stick-and-twigs art,’” says Montserrat Gallery Director Leonie Bradbury, “we are including works that incorporate man-made materials the artists have harvested from materials usually destined for our trash, such as plastic bottles, bread tags and toilet paper rolls.”

Montserrat Gallery collaborated with the New York-based installation artist Hiromi Niizeki to create two new pieces originally on view in spring 2008 in the Montserrat venue. Niizeki incorporated hundreds of envelope windows collected from Montserrat employees and students into large, softly undulating screens. For the Eastern venue, Niizeki created yet another panel of windows which introduce a maze of color and pattern at the Akus Gallery entrance.

The Akus Gallery installation of this exhibition was made possible in part by generous donations and assistance from the Eastern’s School of Arts & Science; the Department of Environmental Earth Science at Eastern; Dave Dupuis of O.L. Willard Company; the Institute for Sustainable Energy; Eastern students of People Helping People; Prides Corner Farms of Lebanon, CT.; Eastern staff members President Nuñez; Michael Pernal; Carmen Cid; Ken DeLisa; Professors Fred Loxsom, Norma Vivar-Orum, Bill Leahy, and Laurel Kohl.

Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 1 to 7 p.m. on Thursday; and 2 to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. The gallery is closed Mondays and Fridays. For more information regarding this and other exhibitions at Akus Gallery, please call the Akus Gallery at (860) 465-4659 or visit the web site at <http://www.easternct.edu/depts/akus>

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

05 Hiromi Niizeki, *Untitled*, 2001/2008, torn envelope windows, adhesive, courtesy of George Billis Gallery, photo by David Hyland

14 Yuken Teruya, *Corner Forest*, 2006, toilet paper roll, courtesy of Shoshana Wayne Gallery

19 Installation view, *It's Getting Hot in Here*, artwork clockwise from top by Ellen Driscoll, Niizeki Hiromi, and Vaughn Bell, photo by David Hyland.

10 Pat Shannon, *NY Times 9/18/05*, 2007, newspaper, acrylic medium, photo by David Hyland

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Eastern Connecticut State University is part of the Connecticut State University (CSUS) system and is the state's public liberal arts university. ECSU serves more than 5,000 students each year on its Willimantic campus.

It is the policy of Eastern Connecticut State University to ensure equal access to its events. If you are an individual with a disability and will need accommodations for this event, please contact the Office of University Relations at (860) 465-5735.

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