

For Immediate Release

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The Northern Illinois University Art Museum presents:

Imperfect Models: Jessica Gondek, Paintings and Prints

August 25 – October 10, 2009

Since the dawn of the machine age artists have struggled with the dynamics of hand versus machine, artificial versus natural, and the dichotomy of traditional medium with the variety of expression that technology allows. Our fall ***Art and Technology Suite*** highlights artists who embrace technology as a partner in their creative process. Jessica Gondek, Curator of the group exhibition ***Dimensional Figures and Environments: Artists Engaging Technology*** and Associate Professor, Loyola University, is featured in a solo exhibition: ***Imperfect Models, Jessica Gondek, Paintings and Prints***.

This exhibition includes abstract work by Gondek who begins with compositions created via 3-D modeling programs that are then collaged and overprinted to reinterpret and humanize the computer-generated forms. The intermingling of hand and mechanical approaches in the work prompts a collision between intuition and computation.

Of her recent work, Jessica writes that for the past ten years she has been concentrating on the areas of painting and both digital and traditional printmaking and that she has been influenced by several art historical figures including “DaVinci’s inventions and war machines, Piranesi’s whimsical architectural spaces, the Futurist’s works celebrating technology, and the Pre-Dada works of Duchamp and Picabia that take a more uncertain view on technology.”

She adds “the work in traditional media retains an imperfect and handmade feel even though the forms referenced are computer generated and machinelike...The ink jet elements within my works are direct representations of modeled forms and compositions I have created on the computer that deny the hand of the artist. They represent the most perfected embodiment of the original computer files, generated through entirely mechanical, created on the computer...I merge traditional art forms and technological media in printed works. One body of work on paper combines ink jet prints with traditional reduction woodcut to reveal process and create a dialogue between hand and machine. The combination of woodcut and digital print contrast the earliest known printmaking form with the most current.”

The Opening Reception for “Imperfect Models, Jessica Gondek, Paintings and Prints is Thursday September 10 from 4:30 – 7:00 p.m. Jessica Gondek will present an artist talk at 6:00 p.m. in room 315, Altgeld Hall, along with Gerald Guthrie and Karen Hanmer, additional artists from our Art and Technology Suite.

The NIU Art Museum is located on the first floor, west end of Altgeld Hall, the “castle,” at the northwest corner of College and Castle Drives on the NIU campus in DeKalb. The galleries are open to the public Tuesday – Friday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Saturday 12 noon – 4 p.m., and by appointment for group tours. Exhibitions are free; donations are appreciated. Pay parking is available in the Visitor’s Lot on Carroll Avenue and at metered spots in front of Altgeld Hall. Free parking is available on Saturdays and during receptions and visiting artist lectures in the lot northeast of Gilbert and College Drives. The exhibitions of the NIU Art Museum are funded in part by the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, the Friends of the NIU Art Museum, and the Arts Fund 21. For more information, please visit our website: www.vpa.niu.edu/museum or call 815.753.1936. Photographs are available upon request.

