For Immediate Release:
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Mike Houston and Martin Mazorra run the explosive **Cannonball Press** in Brooklyn, New York while working as independent artists. Once called “world kings of scruffy pirate black and white hillbilly printmaking” they are among the leaders of a recent revival of the woodcut medium. Michael Barnes, NIU School of Art Associate Professor of printmaking notes: “Through their mammoth scale woodcuts and three-dimensional installations, often incorporating performance elements, Mike and Martin present an unabashed voice in their art. Their subject matter is steeped in down-home vernacular and popular culture, mixed with a little moonshine and rockabilly. They work with straight forward black and white imagery in woodcut and often shun the term “Fine Art” dealing with the print in its true democratic form – “For the People”. For their exhibition **ROOT HOG, OR DIE!**, Cannonball Press will explore the boom and bust in the economy, sharing an early American settler’s philosophy of “work or die”.

Cannonball’s Mission Statement is a simple recipe:

Cannonball Print: A down-home dish that is tasty hot or cold. For low-fat version, substitute another printing press, ‘cause these things will put meat on yer bones! 1 lurking artist, 1 one-eyed master-printer, 1 idea, 5 cups backwater goo, 6 spoonfuls of jumpstart and holler, 9 lb. mess with yer face, bottle Tickle-My-Fancy, 6 smatterings kick-ass juice & 1 handful Fine Art. Preheat idea in Oven of Rock. Make sure color is OFF! Allow images to gestate and contort at will. When mysterious, funny or twisted, remove and slap on table. Add all ingredients, and beat and cut until smooth and hot. Do not add Fine Art at this point. Add master-printer, work him into a steady boil, edition. Throw Fine Art in trash. Sign and serve.

Several prints created with this recipe and (maybe) a performance element will be on display beginning January 19th at the NIU Art Museum. **Mike and Martin** will present a lecture on Tuesday January 19, 5:00 p.m. VAB/JAH room 111. The **opening reception** for our Spring Pop Culture Exhibition Suite is Thursday, January 21, 4:30 – 7:00 p.m.

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.niu.edu/artmuseum](http://www.niu.edu/artmuseum) or call 815.753.1936. Photographs are available upon request.