Northern Illinois University Art Museum Presents:

Chicago artist Karen Hanmer looks back at early forms of technology to see their impact on us. Of her work she writes: “my sculptural books and installations fragment and layer content to mirror the experience of personal and cultural memory”. Her *History and Technology* series of artist books link the creative process of the artist with that of the inventor, explorer or scientist through first person accounts and archival photographs and artifacts. She combines the ancient act of book binding with the high tech use of the computer to create her work.

*Celestial Navigation* “explores what people are searching for, and what they find, by performing the ancient ritual of looking at the stars” according to Hanmer. *Celestial Navigation*, is a book in the form of triangles that can be held and read, removed from its jacket and unfolded in reference to historical astronomical charts or contemporary NASA composite photos, or folded into an infinite variety of sculptural shapes. Also included is a brief poem by the artist about what someone might be seeking, and finding, when they look to the stars.

Hanmer’s installation, *It is a Living thing*, documents interviews with software engineers regarding what they find beautiful or compelling about well-written software and the act of programming. Of the installation she writes “Three elements are combined to create the pieces in this show: quotes from the interviews which I thought best or most colorfully expressed these aesthetic values, representations of artifacts I remember fondly from my college days working in the machine room of the university’s computer center circa 1980, and my simplistic understanding of the basic inner workings of a computer.”

The Opening Reception for our Art and Technology Suite is Thursday September 10, 4:30 – 7:00 p.m. and will include Artist talks by Karen Hanmer, Jessica Gondek, & Gerald Guthrie at 6:00 p.m., in room 315, Altgeld Hall.

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