

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 2, 2009

Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art presents:

**What: "PAREIDOLIA: New Ceramic Works by James Freeman"**

**When: October 17 through January 3**

**OPENING RECEPTION: October 17 – 7 to 9 pm**

**Where: Galleries, Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art, Midland Center for the Arts, 1801 W. St. Andrews Rd., Midland, MI 48640**

**Cost: General Admission: \$8 adults, \$5 children. FREE to Museum members**

**Information:** Call Ticket Office at (989) 631-8250 or (800) 523-7649 or [www.mcfta.org](http://www.mcfta.org)

MIDLAND – The Alden B. Dow Museum of Science & Art at Midland Center for the Arts, 1801 W. St. Andrews Rd., Midland, MI, invites the public to an exhibition by ceramicist James Freeman, winner of the Alden B. Dow Museum Solo Exhibition Award for excellence and innovation at the 2007 Greater Michigan Art Exhibition. Opening October 17 and running through January 3, the exhibition can be viewed during normal Museum hours: Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 10 am to 4 pm, Thursdays 10 pm to 6 pm, Sundays 1 pm to 5 pm, CLOSED Mondays, Tuesdays and major holidays. Tickets are \$8 adult and \$5 student; FREE to Museum members. Ticket price includes admission to all Museum exhibits, including Hall of Ideas. A free **opening reception** will be held in conjunction with the opening of the 49<sup>th</sup> Greater Michigan Arts Exhibition on Saturday, October 17, from 7 to 9 pm and is open to the public; light refreshments will be served.

For more information call the MCFTA Ticket Office at (989) 631-8250 or (800) 523-7649 or visit [www.mcfta.org](http://www.mcfta.org)

Mr. Freeman's work can be found in the collections of major museums and public collections such as: Jingdezhen Sanbao Ceramic Art Institute, Jingdezhen, China; and The Flint Institute of Art. Recent exhibitions include "The 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Toledo Area Artists Exhibition" at Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio; "Masters in Clay" 2008 International Contemporary Ceramic Exhibition, at Greater China Ceramic Museum, Jingdezhen, China; and "Feats of Clay XXI" at Lincoln Arts and Culture Foundation, Lincoln, California.

**Artist's Statement by James Freeman:** "I tend to approach art from a formalist perspective. I strive to create pieces that strike a bold posture, yet present an elegant line through three-dimensional space. Clay is a heavy, dense material that seems naturally predisposed to the production of ponderous and rather dumpy forms. It also has a tendency to do as it pleases in

the searing heat of the kiln: bending, twisting, and slumping in response to any technical flaw in conception or execution, and to the inexorable laws of physics. I enjoy the aesthetic and technical challenge of attempting to coax this material into forms that display a sense of lightness, lift, and elegance, but are yet able to withstand the clay's natural proclivity to pull itself apart on drying or to surrender to the relentless pull of gravity as it loses its structural integrity in the environment of the kiln. As a perfectionist with a strong if not dominant left-brain, the choice of ceramics as a means of creative expression is perhaps odd. I often find myself in a Sisyphean battle to coax precision and extreme technical complexity out of an utterly recalcitrant medium.

"While initially drawn to the craft of ceramics by my affinity to the forms and precepts of the American Arts and Crafts movement, in particular by its reference for natural materials and by its eschewing of unnecessary surface decoration and embellishment, I now see in my work the influence of a variety of other interests as well. These influences include natural and botanical forms, ancient Greek and Chinese ceramics, engineering and machinery, and ceramic processes and materials in their own right. I attempt to choose glazes and surface textures that impart a quiet repose to forms that otherwise tend to project a sense of tension or precarious balance. Many of these surfaces derive from my sympathy with the Japanese aesthetic principals of wabi and sabi.

"My current body of work consists of various series of sculptural and semi-functional ceramic vessels. The consistent reference to the vessel format lends to the work a common point of reference from which one might, if one so chooses, launch a deeper scrutiny. While I intend the works as decorative and sculptural objects, I find satisfaction and delight in seeing them pressed into service, whether to hold flowers or serve hors d'oeuvres. One cannot take oneself too seriously as an artist when one's work is filled with tuna salad."

The Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art (ABDM) celebrates discovery, creativity and individual expression through art, science and the interplay between them. Exhibitions in the Museum, classes at the Museum School, multiple outreach programs, a permanent collection and various special events are all components in the ABDM programming.

Midland Center for the Arts, Inc. is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation formed under the laws of the State of Michigan incorporating six groups: Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art, MATRIX:MIDLAND, Midland County Historical Society, Midland Symphony Orchestra, Music Society and Theatre Guild. Activities at Midland Center for the Arts are supported in part by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. For the latest Center news, visit our web site at [www.mcfta.org](http://www.mcfta.org).

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