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## Merwin and Wakeley to Feature Three Exhibitions During May Term

May 3, 2005

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - During Illinois Wesleyan University's May Term the Merwin and Wakeley Galleries will present three exhibitions, which will be displayed May 4-25.

The Merwin Gallery will display *From Four Directions* by "The Firm," which consists of artists Shane Christensen, Brian Jensen, Stephen Heywood, and Michael Schmidt; it will also show Catina Briscoe's *Spontaneity in Transition*. Rhea Edge's painting and print collection, titled *Fly Zone*, will be on display in the Wakeley Gallery.

The galleries, located in the Joyce Eichhorn Ames School of Art building (6 Ames Plaza West, Bloomington), are open Monday-Friday 12-4 p.m., Tuesday 7-9 p.m., and Saturday-Sunday 1-4 p.m.

There will be an artist's lecture given by Edge on Wednesday, May 18, at 6:30 p.m. in room 218 of the Ames Art Building, followed by an opening reception at 7:30 p.m.

All events are free and open to the public.

*From Four Directions* will include ceramic works dealing with vessels, ranging from pitchers to watertowers, which blur the boundary between sculpture and function. Critics have described "The Firm's" work as "delicate, quirky forms" and "explosions of crystalline shapes."

The four members of the group live in different parts of the country, yet exhibit their works as a group. Christensen and Jensen teach high school in Southern Utah, Heywood is a professor at Florida Community College, and Schmidt is a professor at Valdosta State University in Georgia.

Bloomington/Normal artist Briscoe's exhibition *Spontaneity in Transition* will include ceramic works inspired by forms and textures found in the natural world. Critics have said "her hand-built vessels are meticulously carved, and reminiscent of rock façades, or the bark on a tree. Spontaneity is present in the glazing process, where Briscoe employs a palette of blues, greens, purples and browns, that wash over the forms like cascading waterfalls."

Briscoe, who has resided in Bloomington/Normal for 14 years, is a 1997 graduate of Illinois State University. She has been a ceramics instructor at schools and organizations around the area, and has served as a senior partner at *Earth, Spin and Fire*, a commercial ceramics studio and gallery in downtown Normal, which is now closing its doors.

Edge, also from Bloomington/Normal, will exhibit *Fly Zone*, which will feature paintings and prints varying from Great Skuas (large Antarctic predatory gulls) to stealth bombers. Her work often focuses on the misguided human interpretation of predatory behavior in the natural world.

Edge is president of the John Wesley Powell Audubon Society in Bloomington/Normal, chair of fine and performing arts at Eureka College, and a professor in the Eureka College art department. She also runs the *Beluga Press Studio* in downtown Bloomington.

For additional information, contact Director of Merwin and Wakeley Galleries Jennifer Lapham at (309) 556-3391.

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