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For Immediate Release

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dig in, float up

Invitational exhibit: Krista Connerly & Tracy Featherstone

Opening Reception: Fri., March 6, 6-9 p.m.



Still from **RootPack**, 2009. Stop-motion animated video

CHICAGO – Woman Made Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of its new exhibition, ***Dig In, Float Up***. This exhibition features wearable sculpture, photography and video created during Connerly and Featherstone's ongoing investigation into how to create a more meaningful connection with the world around us. Included in the show are examples ***Envirotouchers***, a series of prototypes designed to create a more connected world. These include a wearable cloud-suit which allows the wearer to transcend their everyday experience and to experience cloud-like thoughts as well as a root-growing backpack that enables its wearer to grow into and transmit and/or absorb molecules from his or her environment.

Running from March 6 - April 19th 2009, this playful exhibition helps us to re-imagine our connections to our environment by replacing rationality with sensuality and isolation with relationship.

Woman Made Gallery

685 N. Milwaukee Ave, Chicago, IL 60642

Gallery Hours: Wed-Fri noon-7 p.m. / Sat-Sun noon-4 p.m. / Admission: Free

www.womanmade.org

Also at the gallery:

Group Show: 12th International Open juried by Yolanda M. López

Solo Show: Rack and Ruin by Marjorie Woodruff

Artisan Gallery: Whimsicality

Artists' Statement:

Why do I move through my environment in isolation when it is so obviously alive, breathing and reaching out to touch me? When there seem to be such intense opportunities for exchange and interpenetration? I walk down the sidewalk and find the branch of a tree gingerly grazing my cheek. A lamppost runs its light over my skin. What happens if I return the caress?

The **Envirotouchers** featured in **Dig in, Float up** is our response to these questions. We notice that often, we get stuck in a relationship-rut with our environment, wearing down the same path to work and back or ignoring the (arguably) tender call of a car-alarm. **Envirotouchers** are a series of actions and wearable sculptures that offer a simple and playful solution to this. Through them we can create new, experimental relationships with our environment; we can dig in, collect, absorb, float, lick, snuggle and ultimately instigate our own actions to build a personalized and meaningful connection to the world around us. Through these new connections we are doing nothing less than re-imagining our environments, and with them, our selves. te professor in Art at Miami University, Ohio.



Snowball Carrier, 2006. photograph

Tracy Featherstone:

In the toil to find the meaning of life, people can often take themselves too seriously. They skip over an exchange or a moment which may hold the answer. Featherstone finds these sometimes irrational, inconsequential events to be of utmost importance. Her work shows that the quest for meaning can often be found in the smallest exchanges or realizations. Much of her work deals with the theme of personal environment and she received a research grant to travel to Ghana, West Africa to initiate a body of work that explores this theme.

Featherstone's work has been featured nationally and internationally. She has shown at the Wexner Center in Ohio, at the Contemporary Art Center in Cincinnati, at the Corcoran Museum of Art in Washington as well as at the Fringe Festival in Scotland among many others. Featherstone lives and has a working studio in Hamilton, OH. She earned a BFA from the University of Cincinnati and a MFA from the University of Arizona. She is currently an associate professor in Art at Miami University, Ohio.



Cloud-Becoming (Mt. Saint Helens), 2009. photograph

Krista Connerly:

Artist/designer and poetic sociographer Krista Connerly works in a variety of media including the internet, photography, writing, performance, and video to explore issues of relationship and connection. Whatever the media, she is interested in turning art viewer into collaborator, provoking forms of interaction that through humor and poetry temporarily override the efficiency and rationality of everyday life.

Connerly's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in places such as Los Angeles, Portland, Chicago, Memphis, Basel, Cairo, Dublin, and Melbourne. Some of these venues include: The Urban Institute for Contemporary Art in Michigan, The Next Wave Festival in Melbourne, Australia, WOW, Women's International Film Festival in Sydney Australia, The Los Angeles Center for Digital Art, Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada, and at the Egyptian Ministry of Culture in Cairo. Connerly lives and works in Portland, Oregon. She earned her MFA from Carnegie Mellon University. Currently she teaches design at Oregon State University.