

Press Releases

December 2008

Jason Middlebrook: Live with Less opens at the University Art Museum, University at Albany

February 3 through April 5, 2009

Opening reception on Tuesday, February 3, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Gallery walk-through with the artist at 4:30 p.m.

Free and open to the public.

ALBANY, NY--- The University Art Museum is pleased to present *Jason Middlebrook: Live with Less* featuring recent sculptures, works on paper, and a large-scale sculptural installation by Middlebrook whose work explores the relationship between nature and human consumption.

Middlebrook is a long-time practitioner of using recyclable materials such as old wood, cardboard boxes, rubber tires, and plastic bottles to draw attention to larger social issues. *Live with Less* is an expression of Middlebrook's artistic and environmental goal to see beyond the discarded nature of these materials and to re-imagine them as something beautiful and useful.

Considered one of today's most socially responsible artists, Middlebrook draws inspiration from a range of disparate sources including ecology, art history, geography, and politics. In *Live with Less*, he metaphorically brings the unbridled wastefulness of contemporary living to new heights in a massive 35-foot tower made from several tons of recycled cardboard. The cardboard, collected on campus over a two-month period, will be stacked and layered from floor to ceiling creating visual stratifications analogous to the layers of a landfill. Often coupled with watchful birds and sporadic weeds, these stratifications make their appearance in many of Middlebrook's sculptures and two-dimensional works including his most recent paintings done on collapsed cardboard boxes. *Live with Less* will feature dozens of these new paintings as well as a series of wood plank sculptures in which vivid painted patterns echo the natural striations of the wood's grain. Middlebrook's signature benches made from found wood will be placed throughout the museum functioning in a dual role as both sculpture and functional object. Throughout the run of the exhibition, Middlebrook will be collecting plastic water bottles consumed on campus and recasting them into multicolored concrete sculptures that will exponentially form a sculptural mound on the museum's second floor.

In all his efforts Middlebrook speaks to our need to live with less. At the same time he shows us that all is not lost. There are plenty of regenerative possibilities in, as he states, "creating something from nothing."

The UAlbany Offices of Environmental Sustainability and Grounds Management have offered instrumental support in the planning and implementation of Live with Less. During the run of the exhibition, Middlebrook and the University Art Museum will continue to work closely with both offices to promote the need for environmental accountability on campus and the community around us.

About the Artist:

Jason Middlebrook lives and works in Hudson, New York. His work has been exhibited at institutions worldwide including Museo de Arte de El Salvador, San Salvador, El Salvador; Centro Arte Contemporanea, Siena, Italy; Wellcome Trust, London, England; Kunstverein Wolfsburg, Germany and was included in the Second Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, Moscow, Russia. Nationally he has exhibited at California Museum of Photography, Riverside, CA; Aldrich Contemporary Museum of Art, Ridgefield, CT; Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO; Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica, CA; Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, MA; Contempo Arts Center, New Orleans, LA; Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE; and in New York at New Museum of Contemporary Art; Public Art Fund at Metro Tech; Wave Hill; Whitney Museum of American Art; Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson and The Fields Sculpture Park at Omi International Arts Center, Ghent, NY. He had his sixth solo exhibition at Sara Meltzer Gallery in New York City in October 2008.

Publication

Live with Less will be documented in a fully-illustrated catalogue featuring a critical essay by Dan Cameron and an interview with the artist by Mary-Kay Lombino.

For further information or visual materials on Jason Middlebrook, please call (518) 442-4035 or visit our website at [www. albany.edu/museum](http://www.albany.edu/museum).

MUSEUM HOURS:

**Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 5 pm
Saturday and Sunday noon to 4 pm**