

New exhibit opens at Purdue

By **TIM BROUK**
tbrouk@jconline.com

A half-eaten doughnut. Two dingy chairs covered in years of grime. Crumbled pieces of paper. A new, shiny red Toyota Prius?

These are some of the objects that make up John Cessna's installation work, "Perverted Prius." The second year Purdue University master of fine arts student is one of five artists included in the thought-provoking "Gardens and Machines: The Suburban Life."

The show runs Monday through Friday at the Patti and Rusty Rueff East Gallery inside Purdue's Pao Hall of Visual and Performing Arts. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Prius is on poster-sized photographs taken by Cessna depicting the theme "I drive a Prius. Don't worry about it." While humorous, the photos depict the Prius driver dumping garbage from the driver's seat and another shot of the Prius outside of a seedy motel to comment on how the hybrid car does not necessarily make the driver more responsible.

"I hate the idea of 'If I drive a Prius, everything is fine,'" Cessna said.

Cessna and his crew of producers — Will Cabral, Kevin O'Shea, Bijoy Shah and Dan Skubal — obtained the Prius from "a friend of a friend." The photos are cheaply framed to resemble the kind of wall art that would hang in an auto mechanic's waiting room. The commentary in the mock waiting room is effective. Cessna blends his own creations with the found objects flawlessly.

Cessna is joined by fellow graduate students Micah Bowers, Michael



By John Terhune/Journal & Courier
Shannon McMullen, assistant professor of visual and performing arts, is shown in the Patti and Rusty Rueff Galleries at Purdue University. McMullen teaches electronic and time-based arts.



John Cessna's "Perverted Prius" is part of a new exhibit at Purdue.

Jamison, Aaron Nemecek and Juan Obando. While these students' disciplines intermingle, "Gardens and Machines" was brought forth by a new fine arts field, Electronic and Time-Based media. Shannon McMullen is in the middle of her first semester as an assistant professor at Purdue but she has been at Purdue as a visiting scholar since 2007.

McMullen said "Gardens and Machines" is a conceptual show that made her young artists think of how suburban culture has affected them.

"We started with a lot of reading and concept preparation before going in the gallery," McMullen said. "I wanted each student to get

If you go

The Patti and Rusty Rueff West Gallery will feature the photography of Purdue MFA student Andrea Dailey Monday through Friday. A reception for Dailey's work will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday. A "Brown Bag Lecture" will be offered at noon Tuesday in the gallery.

their individual perception of suburbia."

Jamison's "Shadows" combines lawn ornaments and suburban yard critters. Silhouette cut-outs of a dog, cat and three rabbits are decapitated and red paint comes out of the black necks.

In "I Never Saw a Chittimood," Bowers uses three small, black and white television screens to loop video shot of mundane suburban "everyday life" events including washing dishes, sitting on

the toilet and watching the curtains rustle from the breeze.

Born in Colombia, Obando had a broader take on American suburban life. His "Abstracting & Inserting" series is based around the American flag. Most images have Old Glory in red, white and black.

Nemecek tackles 1980s suburban culture using video games. "64K Memories" is a visual and audio piece. Nemecek recorded and remixed music from his old Commodore 64 computer game system and the music meanders through the exhibit.

McMullen sees most of the pieces in "Gardens and Machines" as projects the artists can expand upon. Even during the show's first week, Cessna's "Prius" has been added to daily. Bites have been taken out of the doughnuts and trash has been added to the work along the way.

"It adds to the humor," McMullen said.