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Eble, artist and professor, studies the Louisiana coast from the air and from his studio

Summary: One of thirteen Morris professors to receive an Imagine Fund Award, Eble will use his new source of funding to continue studying the effects of coastal erosion and hurricane damage to the coast of Louisiana, his home state.

(September 1, 2009)-When one thinks of aerial photography, it is usually in the context of grand panoramic shots of purple mountain majesties, helicopters flying over great herds of bison, or dolphins gracefully jumping from the ocean through the air. Michael Eble, associate professor of studio art at the University of Minnesota, Morris, takes a different approach. During flights in a small plane over southern Louisiana, Eble digitally captures the effects of coastal erosion and hurricane damage. Back on land in his campus studio, the artist transforms the images into paintings that tell a story far more powerful than even a photograph can convey.

While Hurricanes Katrina and Rita motivated this particular artistic exploration, Eble notes that coastal erosion is of grave concern to his home state of Louisiana. In his artist's statement for Endangered Landscapes, his first series of paintings on this topic, Eble shares that Louisiana's coastline is disappearing at a rate of 10.3 square miles per year. Designed to educate people on coastal erosion, Endangered Lands was exhibited in Lafayette, Louisiana, and New Orleans, Louisiana, during the summer and fall of 2008.

Last July, Eble returned to Louisiana to conduct aerial flight surveys to create a catalyst of physical stimulus as well as to gather visual resources. Currently, Eble is finishing a body of work, titled An Aerial Perspective, that will be exhibited at the Ridgewater College Art Gallery in Willmar from January 25 through February 26, 2010, and at the Ridgewater College Art Gallery in Hutchinson from March 1 through April 9, 2010. The work is also tentatively scheduled for an exhibit at Gallery 13 in downtown Minneapolis.

Eble states that being immersed in liberal learning at Morris has influenced the way in which he thinks of his artwork as a tool to communicate with people on many levels and to educate others. Morris's green initiatives have impacted his work. He states: "Morris's green emphasis has made me aware of many of the green issues that we face as global citizens. There are faculty members here who have strong interests in green issues that create a sort of community."

One of thirteen Morris professors to receive an Imagine Fund Award, Eble will use his new source of funding to continue studying the coast of Louisiana, from the air and from the studio. Imagine Funds Awards, unique to the University of Minnesota system, are sponsored in part by the McKnight Foundation and are designed to support the arts, music, and humanities.

To learn more about his artistic response to Louisiana research and view his work, [visit Eble's Web site](#).

Photo above: Delta Anatomy by Michael Eble

Photos below: Eble's view of the Louisiana coast from a small plane and Eble, associate professor of studio art, in the studio with a student

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.