



Medicine Hat Clay Industries
National Historic District

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Media Release

For Immediate Release

Month long artists' residency begins in the Historic Clay District

May 31, 2010

Medicine Hat – From June 1 – 30, eighteen artists from Canada, the United States and Korea will take part in the Medalta International Artists in Residence (MIAIR) program at the Historic Clay District's Shaw Centre. The residency, which is entering its twelfth year, is lead by ceramic artist Robin DuPont. The opening of the accompanying art show – *Clay Dynamics* – is Friday, June 4 at 8:00pm at Medalta Potteries.

Robin DuPont has studied ceramics extensively throughout his career, including four institutions in three countries. He is currently an MFA graduate student at Utah State University and received his BFA from the Alberta College of Art and Design in Calgary, AB. DuPont has experience building and firing many wood kilns, which produce the subtle effects of an extreme atmosphere that only wood firing affords.

"Our invitation to Robin was extended for two reasons," explains Aaron Nelson, Artistic Director of the Shaw Centre. "We want to offer support to an artist at a stage in their career when they can most benefit from the extensive engagement a residency affords. Robin is here to act as a mentor to other artists in our program. His enthusiasm, international experience and facility with the material will be the catalyst for creative inspiration throughout the month."

Clay Dynamics is an art exhibition that accompanies the MIAIR program every year. Artists taking part in MIAIR display their work in the Historic Clay District's Squared Gallery. According to Barry Finkelman, Executive Director of the Historic Clay District, "the collection of work we're able to show as part of the artists' residency is always tremendous. From a community standpoint, being able to offer quality programming like this exposes Hatters to many wonderful new ideas. Community support is what drives our programming and we're pleased to have such a dynamic relationship with the people of Medicine Hat."

The Historic Clay District is one of eight tourism attractors in the Canadian Badlands, featured in AMA's "Alberta 100 Journeys" and is Western Canada's largest National Historic Site. The museum – in the Medalta Potteries National Historic Site – provides visitors a unique opportunity to visit a restored 1912 pottery factory, which once produced three-quarters of all stoneware in Canada. It is operated under the stewardship of the Friends of Medalta Society.

The Medalta International Artists in Residence (MIAIR) program provides artists with the opportunity to pursue their work in a unique historic setting – Medicine Hat's Historic Clay District – which tells the story of early Western Canadian industry. The residency concept gives ceramic artists the opportunity to re-enter a community atmosphere and explore new artistic directions. MIAIR has brought international attention to the city and continues its rich clay tradition through contemporary ceramics.

- 30 -

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