

Space art; lost and found; Picasso at NMWA

What do Coffeemate, Tobasco and Propel have in common? They make Sam Dowd's spaceships move.

Dowd will introduce 14 new ceramic spaceships made from molds of post-consumer containers.

Using a method called slip casting, Dowd makes a plaster mold of an object - in this case a bottle or post-consumer container - and pours liquefied porcelain clay into the mold. What emerges is a hollow ceramic replica of the original bottle, and the malleable positive can be cut, altered and attached to other pieces to make, in this case, a spaceship.

Dowd said he has watched the Star Wars trilogy about 100 times, but he didn't want to make warships, because that would be "too easy." His vessels are more like personal jets or luxury autos. They are meant to be about 100 years old, but in the future, so they function like a transit museum of the future.

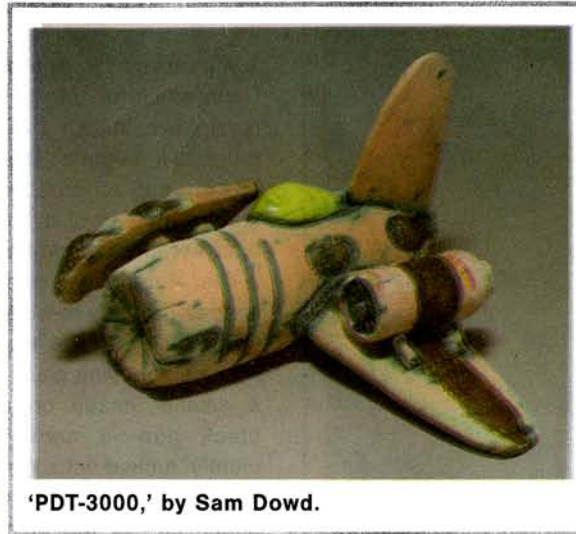
Some of these ships might not look aerodynamically correct, but anything goes in Dowd's space.

"I wanted to make stuff like this so I could live in my own world, even when making my art," Dowd said.

Dowd likes to think that their imaginary power and function give a second life to the original design of the product containers. The form of the bottle that was intended to make it stand out as an individual helps Dowd deduce its function and placement in one of his imaginary spaceships.

Bring your imaginations to Dowd's "Plane Engineering," which will open from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, June 6, at Teton Artlab, 135 N Cache, number 5.

For the past 15 years, Matt Flint has been a fine artist and only recently has he let a distinct subject - a deer, a bird or maybe a human hand - into his work. His paintings use a lot of black, white and earth tones that are relentlessly worked and reworked into bold, simple geometric divisions of tone. Flint says these tonal relationships are his own take on the "spotlight effect" used by "old master painters," to manipulate natural light and the viewers eye. Flint calls his dreamlike arrangement of nat-



'PDT-3000,' by Sam Dowd.

ural light "organic geometry," and says it allows the viewer to soak into the painting to the point they are interchangeable with the painting's subject.

"You can relate to the paintings on kind of an anthropomorphic level. The paintings are about this quiet, meditative place, but if you take time to look at them they are very active in their surface complexity, the buildup of paint and the action of painting," Flint said. "It's quiet, but there are so many things going in beneath the surface, that I'm describing it as an active quiet."

His paintings have vestiges of old subjects, like the outline of an explorer or the legs of a horse, barely visible under layers of paint. Most of his smaller paintings began with an old map underneath them that have traveled hundreds, perhaps thousands of miles through the backcountry, but all that visually remains from their presence is a blocked texture from the map folds.

Flint's process is guided by an ongoing meditative relationship with the piece and is layered by his changing mind. The painting tells him, in a way, when it is finished.

"I won't let a painting walk out the door until it's talking back to me," he said.



'Remains,' by Matt Flint.

Lyndsay McCandless Contemporary's opening for Matt Flint's show "Lost and Found," will be from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Lyndsay McCandless Contemporary gallery, 130 S. Jackson Street.

The National Museum of Wildlife Art is bringing one of the most famous artists of all time to Highway 89. A set of 31 original prints of Pablo Picasso's etchings will hang in an exhibit on Buffon's Natural History, a well-known 18th century French text that was re-released with art by Picasso in 1942. Only 226 printings were done with Picasso's plates, and many sets have since been broken up, so to see all 31 prints in one place is an opportunity that local art appreciators should not miss.

The collection provides a glimpse into a perhaps more playful side of an immortalized artist. It shows a unique side of Picasso's skill, and a glimpse into the personality of a man whose work will inspire generations of artists.

The prints will hang Saturday, June 7, until October 19 at the National Museum of Wildlife Art, 2820 Rungius Rd. off Hwy 89 north of town.