

## media release

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For immediate release

### **Julie McIntyre: Sewn Stories**

**Exhibition about motherhood and discovery has developed over time... with growing pains and all.**

COQUITLAM – The Art Gallery at the Evergreen Cultural Centre is pleased to present the exhibition **Sewn Stories** by Vancouver artist/printmaker **Julie McIntyre** from May 9 to July 5, 2008.

Fairy tales, myths, legends, fables, childhood songs and her grandmother's box of travel photographs has fed McIntyre's imagination and the result is nearly 50 meticulous works created entirely of paper, ink and thread. The exhibition, divided into two large series of work: *Bedtime Stories* and *Travel Stories*, includes quilts, wearable art pieces and an artist book on nursery rhymes.

What began after the birth of her daughter, *Bedtime Stories* has been a work in progress, experiencing growth not unlike what a mother experiences as she nurtures a child. McIntyre summarizes the series as "a celebration of the elegance and strength of fine papers, grand stories, relief prints, art quilts and motherhood."

*Bedtime Stories* is a series of crib-sized printed paper quilts, scrolls and mats. At the time, the idea and medium answered symbolic and economic issues for the artist as a mother raising her child full time. Given a small pocket of time, she would sew a patch or layout a pattern, just as women for generations have done before her. The series is rooted in her home life; the inspiration coming from the evening ritual of the bedtime story – a world of giants, fairies, mythical beasts and dangerous quests.

As McIntyre created such quilts as *To Grandmother's House*, *Hansel & Gretel* and *Camelot*, she made parallels to raising her own daughter. "How can I spread a world of warmth and beauty, yet prepare her for the wolves she's bound to meet? What delicate lines do I sew to give her courage..."

Quilt making heightened McIntyre's awareness of pattern and composition, line and structure. Last year, a show entitled *Ending Bedtime* in Vancouver officially completed the series with an artist book of nursery rhymes. As this chapter closed, another one opened.

In early 2008, McIntyre felt an urgency to return to grandmother's house.... McIntyre's grandmother left her a box filled with travel slides from her journeys around the world. In honour of her grandmother and perhaps to continue her spiritual journey and reconciliation, McIntyre created a new series of work entitled *Travel Stories*.

Using the global village as its setting and a tourist's viewpoint, *Travel Stories* recreates the visual storybook quality of first *sensations* experiences by travelers to a foreign land. The work uses the form of an apron, the full-bibbed "Grandma Apron" as its template. Again to reinforce the notion of home, motherhood and housewifery as well as the social ambivalence women experience today (*apron strings tie unwilling women to the home*)

McIntyre restored 300 of her grandmother's images, hand printed 150 images using lithography and painstakingly sewed them into the apron's front and back. Her choice of paper as the medium continues on the theme of *Bedtime Stories*. A print and book maker for 20 year, McIntyre hadn't touched a sewing machine since Grade 8. On *The Shopkeeper's Apron*, she literally stitched in real paper money!

It is no coincidence that *Sewn Stories* opens on Mother's Day. These two stories explore perspective of child and motherhood – the two are intertwined in these works, while embracing the struggle women artists experience when making art a priority.

**On Mother's Day, May 11<sup>th</sup>, join Julie McIntyre as she gives an artist Tea & Talk at 3pm followed by the opening reception of *Sewn Stories*, 4 – 5:30pm in the Art Gallery. The Blue Mountain Quilter's Guild will have a display in the lower lobby.** For more information or hi-res images contact 604.927.6555 or visit [www.evergreenculturalcentre.ca](http://www.evergreenculturalcentre.ca).