

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stitching Landscapes of Vulnerability, Bravery and Humility

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL, Nova Scotia (AUGUST 30, 2024) – *In the Middle of the World* is an exhibition of new works by Penny Berens and Judith E. Martin, launched with the collaboration of curator Miranda Bouchard. The project has sparked the development of a traveling exhibition, and arrives at ARTSPACE Gallery following showings at Mississippi Valley Textile Museum (Almonte, Ontario) and the Douglas Family Art Centre at The Muse (Kenora, Ontario).

Curator Miranda Bouchard shares, “The naturally-dyed, slow-stitched textile works of Judith E. Martin and Penny Berens inspire ways of seeing, sensing, and reflection that are simultaneously outwards, at our surroundings; and inwards, at the landscapes within us.”

Martin and Berens render time visible, and touch tangible, through the hand-stitched marks that accrue, map-like, across the surfaces of layered fabrics, forming worlds within their works.

Penny Berens works representationally, stitching sights and sensations from her daily walks into works that respond to the physical landscape, the immensity of nature outside of herself, and the feelings that living closely to it stirs within her. Judith E. Martin represents the abstract inner world in her work, using symbols that evoke landscapes, and reflect on the ever-shifting forces of emotions, thoughts, dreams, and experiences within.

“Both artists work with materials, techniques, and traditions they’ve practiced for decades, to create poetic stitched drawings, an expression of great reverence for old and deep-rooted methods,” said Gallery Director Sophie Paskins.

In the Middle of the World offers poignant reminders that creation is ongoing and never static, as are the living processes of relating to our true selves, to each other and the worlds we find ourselves in as time continues to pass.

“In the Middle of the World” Penny Berens + Judith Martin, Cur. Miranda Bouchard opening reception September 7, 2024, 12-2 p.m. Light refreshments served, all welcome. Artist talk 2 pm. In the Middle of the World continues through October 26.

In the Middle of the World is supported with grants from the Ontario Arts Council and Arts Nova Scotia.

Penny Berens lives and works in the coastal woodlands of Granville Beach, Nova Scotia. Her work is hand stitched and embroidered over several months and sometimes years. Berens holds a City & Guilds diploma in Embroidery & Design, but her education in stitch started under the loving guidance of her mother and grandmothers. Her work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions across Canada and internationally.

Judith E. Martin grew up on a large rural property in Northwestern Ontario, and believes that the solitude of long summers is how she discovered the inner dreamworld that is her subject. She lives and works on Manitoulin Island in the Great Lake Huron. Martin combines traditional hand stitch, local natural dyes and used domestic textiles and her large-format textiles are included public art collections, as well as the International Quilt Museum (USA) and the Canada Council Art Bank.

ARTSPACE is a public Art Gallery that is operated by the Annapolis Region Community Arts Council, a registered charitable, community organization dedicated to encouraging and promoting the arts. Supported through the Province of Nova Scotia and the Canada Council for the Arts.

ARTSPACE Gallery is located at 396 St. George Street in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia

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