

“HerStory”: The 15th Women’s Work Exhibition at The Link Gallery, University of Winchester, West Downs Campus, Romsey Road, Winchester SO22 4NL

8 June – 9 July 2011

PRESS RELEASE

The Link Gallery for the second time in recent years is hosting a fascinating exhibition of work by women artists from all over the country. The ‘Women’s Work’ annual exhibitions were established to explore the everyday issues of women’s lives; this is the fifteenth, and it has attracted contributions from nearly one hundred artists, of whom only about half can be represented here. The theme of this year’s exhibition is ‘HerStory’, so the focus is on narrative. It is a theme that invites reflections on women’s lives from many angles, and in a great variety of media, from painting and printmaking through to collage, sewn and sculptured works, and an atmospheric backlit installation.

Work hung on the walls includes figurative images of family scenes, powerful or wryly observed; exquisitely woven tapestries on both the joy and sorrow attendant on childbirth; a ‘dress for mother’ from an imaginatively folded apron. Narratives of daily living are expressed in a collograph series on ‘moving house’, a quilt of places lived in, or a pattern of cow-tags celebrating life on a dairy farm. Views of ‘Her Story’ are sometimes naturalistic, sometimes almost surrealistic, and sometimes semi-abstract as with a series of etchings inspired by body-scans or book-forms. Other artists interpret the idea of narrative in terms of artistic process, as in graphic ‘daily doodles’ or a group of smoke-fired pebbles.

There is social comment on the cultural forces that can control a woman’s vision, such as the view from inside and outside a burkha, or historical reflections through photo-montage on a 60’s childhood; and the concept of making choices is crafted in finely folded paper that revisits a popular children’s game.

There is an especially rich collection of small three-dimensional works displayed in cabinets: including a ‘memories pin’, a portfolio wooden box, tiny clay figures and handmade books.

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