

Beyond Words

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Acknowledgements



All partners in this collaboration wish to express appreciation to Pip Murphy for her patience, creativity and keen editorial skills in creating this catalogue.



Toby Graser, Sue Hooper and John Murphy would like to acknowledge the contribution which Brent Rourke has made to the completion of their work for this exhibit.

This project would not have been possible without the generous donation of time made by all members in the planning, curation and hanging of the exhibit.

Beyond Words Beyond Words Beyond Words Beyond Words

Introduction

I love words. They are juicy, ticklish, provocative. And because I love words, I love the books that contain them. For me, a book is a sensual object: I look at it, hold it, get the feel of it in my hands and, while I'm still in the bookstore, I surreptitiously smell the fresh pages. Until I can read it, I hoard it like treasure. And my warmest sensual memories are of sitting on the edge of the bed, reading to my daughters cuddled up against me, taking the book-induced journey into sleep.

I suppose the journey concept is similar to George Fry's belief that a book is a theatrical vehicle which unfolds like a play; we travel through the pages with the various characters and, dramatically, the text stimulates our emotions and challenges our thoughts. Also, like good theatre, we don't leave the experience behind. In many ways books pave the way to the adults we become; we have read novels, biographies, autobiographies, reviews, prayer books, magazines, newspapers and, of course, school texts on every subject imaginable. It would be impossible to understand the influence of any one book when the cumulative influences are so profound. And while reading is generally a solitary pastime, the reader is inevitably linked to thousands of other people who have shared

these same words and thoughts, and then put them into their own personal contexts. As cultural icons, books are durable, linking us to past and present generations. In his eighteenth sonnet, Shakespeare declares: "So long as men can breathe or eyes can see, / So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."

Earlier this year my husband, John, talked about a book project he was involved with. While I listened vaguely in that spousal zone of divided attention, I noticed he spoke of 'making' a book and 'doing' a book; odd words to use instead of writing or reading. Then I registered which other artists were 'making' books. I knew Jim Boyd was a stonecarver and Darren Byers worked in wood, so what was up? The first thing that was 'up' was that I had to abandon my conventional image of a book, although as these nineteen artists have explored the concept, their visions are deeply familiar. Sue Judah's mezuzoth links her family's past with the future and encapsulates both the very public, yet private nature of books: what is written and what is hidden by the author; what is read but only partially understood by the reader. George Fry's book is playfully historical; Andrea Meeson tells story through fabric; Darren Byers invites us to touch and experience the physicality of his book; Brigitte Clavette captures

that fascinating sense of treasure contained within the binding; Kathy Hooper's stream-of-consciousness reflects the inherent pleasure of writing and reading. The links between the nineteen works and the conventional understanding of 'book' are endless.

Yet in this exhibit there is also a challenge to conventionality, which is reflected in the title, *Beyond Words*. Verbal language has powerful links to our conscious and subconscious selves, and as such may function as a means of manipulation and constraint, imposed on us by others, or springing from ourselves as a means of self-justification. Too often words inhibit the primal response, the genuine impulses we experience before we crush our feelings into constructed language. Thom Gunn refers to "the dark before of truth". Love, instinctive kindness, deep fears are not created because we articulate them, but rather arise in a current of emotional honesty. All the works in this exhibit explore the concept of 'book' from that deep current which exists within us and which defies the constraints of 'word'. Our deepest and truest response is not linguistic, it is sentient, direct; it is, ultimately, wordless.

Pip Murphy B.A. B.Ed. M.A.

Welcome

In 1904, Andrew Carnegie gifted Saint John with funds to erect a new public library dedicated to the edification of the human spirit through education. How fitting it is that Saint John Arts Centre welcomes *Beyond Words* to the Frazee Gallery which once served the community as the main reading room. This summer we may once again come to explore the pleasure of books in this space.

I am delighted to welcome all the artists of *Beyond Words* to Saint John Arts Centre. Throughout 2008, it has been a great privilege to share in the creative process at the core

of this exhibition of individually written and crafted books. Sparked by George Fry's passion for creating one of a kind books, nineteen artists joined in the challenge to produce a book. "What" and "how" and "why" were the essential questions faced by each of the artists in finding a subject and crafting a book. As you savour their answers, you are invited to see the world through the eyes of nineteen dynamic creators of our region.

I would like to thank all the artists for their collaborative efforts to bring this important work to Saint John. I would like to commend Pip Murphy for the amazing editorial skills and

energy she has brought to the creation of the catalogue. I am most grateful to Print Three for their corporate support of this catalogue.

With the support of Saint John Community Arts Funding, Saint John Arts Centre is delighted to sponsor a series of "Meet the Artist" talks. Please come and join in special readings with the authors/artists throughout the summer of *Beyond Words*.

Kathryn McCarroll, Executive Director,
Saint John Arts Centre

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Jim Boyd

In his Artist Statement, Jim refers to his fascination with older houses, and it is worth noting that he and his family live in one of the oldest houses in Hampton, the original rectory for Saint Paul's Anglican Church, which was built in 1825. It is a home full of stories itself.

A graduate of NSCAD University, Jim currently combines a busy teaching career with his environmental and humanitarian ethos. At Hampton High School he is teacher advisor for the student Amnesty International Group; with his students he fundraises for AIDS Saint John; and through a recycling programme, he and fellow artist and Art teacher Glenn Hall raise enough money to make sizeable donations to charity. He still manages to create his own art, and his drawings, prints and sculptures are in many private collections across Canada. Prior to teaching, Jim worked as a stone carver and stone cutter at a granite manufacturing company. The skills he acquired there are not only evident in *Open House*, but also in the granite *Fiddlehead* which stands in front of the Saint John Arts Centre.



I make objects and sculpture in order to give life to some of my thoughts and ideas. Art is a language in itself and, as an artist, my goal is to create something that provides the possibility of a dialogue with the individual experiencing it.

At our first meeting for *Beyond Words* I knew that I would make my art work in stone. Carving stone has been a passion of mine for almost twenty years. I find the process of carving stone challenging and, although at times it may seem monotonous, the experience becomes restorative, as the nature of the work creates a space for reflective thought.

I decided on creating my sculpture *Open House* for this exhibit with the idea of a house as a metaphor for a book. There are so many houses that intrigue me and I often wonder what the interiors are like and who lives in them. Houses are full of stories, memories and even secrets. A house or home has meaning and connotations for all. Personally, I find that many houses, especially older houses, have personality and a sense of mystery. It was these thoughts that compelled me to sculpt a house with the back side sawn open to reveal a moment at its core.

Open House is a hybrid of elements of houses that appeal to me. The height of the sculpture is exaggerated to give it a whimsical quality and also to present the house on a more human scale. The house presented to the viewer cannot be entered, it can only be experienced.

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Open House
Sandstone, 15" x 10" x 45"

Linda Brine

Many visitors to this exhibition will recognise Linda's name from the short list for the 2008 Strathbutler Award. Her contribution to the New Brunswick arts scene has been enormous and, in 2001, Linda was recognized as a Volunteer of the Year in the Cultural sector. Prior to moving to the Maritimes, Linda graduated with Honours from the University of Windsor. Travels in Europe, with its architecture, museums, culture and cuisine inspired her lifelong commitment to the arts.

As a member and coordinator of Gallery 96 Artists Cooperative, she exhibited works on paper (chalk pastel/charcoal) regularly. Seasonal employment at the Stratford Shakespearean Festival led to work as a scenic painter for the National Ballet, CBC-TV, and the Banff Centre Festival of the Arts.

After she moved east, Linda began her personal exploration of hand bookbinding; as Kalinda Hand Bound Books she participated in Craft

Festivals and exhibitions between 1990-96, but then became drawn to textiles and weaving with Susan Judah at the New Brunswick College of Craft and Design. In 1999, Linda joined the College faculty, teaching weaving, bookbinding and art history. Shortly afterwards she became Textiles Studio Head.

Her study of 'Saganishiki', a traditional Japanese method of weaving with metallic paper warp and silk weft, under the guidance of master weaver Mihoko Karaki, inspired her approach to woven paper. She also credits the influences of Louise Berubé and Vita Plume for transforming her thinking about the use of imagery and metaphor in her work; her woven paper cloth works are simultaneously deeply personal and universal.

2007, Canada's Year of Craft saw Linda's work exhibited in several major exhibitions and a solo show *Materia* at Ingrid Mueller Art + Concepts. *Darkness and Light* will open at the UNB Art Centre in January of 2009.



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9/11. A day that has changed all of our days since, knowingly or not. I remember September 11, 2001 so clearly. It was a beautiful, sunny, early fall day in Fredericton, and as I walked through the front door of the Craft College I chanced to hear something about planes and buildings. Not being a TV watcher at the time, I gleaned what I could from mainstream print media.

The horror of it was so overwhelming, shocking and awful, that I declared a personal media boycott, which was to last for several years. (Still can't watch TV news). Yet I couldn't escape it. Even in those early days, there were voices questioning the truth of the official version of 9/11, the veracity of reporting in the mainstream media, the psychological terror being waged through fear mongering orange alerts, red alerts, the scam of Bin Laden and weapons of mass destruction in Iraq as a rationale to justify a war for oil. Massive incompetence at best; at worst, collusion/authorization from within the White House that has led more and more voices to

call for impeachment and an independent, international investigation into the events of 9/11.

Ground Zero is comprised of a pair of books that echo the architecture of the Twin Towers destroyed on 9/11.

WTC 1: 100 Questions presents a compilation of research from a number of organizations questioning the official story, including Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth; The Journal for Scholarly Studies and 9/11 Truth & Justice.org. These reputable scholars and critical thinkers refute the improbable cascade of 'coincidences' before and since 9/11, the numerous violations of the immutable laws of physics peddled by the Keane Commission, NIST, and FEMA Reports, challenge the outright lies that have been told to the world to fuel the 'War on Terror' and expose the 'cover up' of the crimes of 9/11.

WTC 2: in Memoriam remembers all those who lost their lives on 9/11. Current count: 2996. Their voices are silenced forever; it is for we the living to demand justice on their behalf.

Darren Byers

Born in Dalhousie NB, in 1964, Darren moved to Sussex when he was sixteen. He first started to carve in high school Art classes; interestingly he began with a face mug and a clay figure. He was also fortunate to have access to his father's wood working shop, and he says that although he was self-taught, it never occurred to him that he would not be able to carve. His *Stations of the Cross* can be seen in the Chapel at Saint Joseph's Hospital; and *Faith*, a six-foot figure of Christ is installed in St. Francis Xavier Church, Sussex.

In 2002, Darren collaborated with John and Kathy Hooper on the sculpture *America's Future* and he credits John and Kathy with having been a major influence on him, both as an individual and as a sculptor. He adds, "I never realized how much John was teaching me until I gained further experience sculpting. Then I began to understand and apply the thoughts and wisdom he so freely gave. For this, I am forever grateful."

More recently, he worked with the Hoopers on *Credo*, a sculptural tribute to John Peters Humphrey in Hampton. Begun prior to John's death in 2006, it was an emotional unveiling when he and Kathy saw the project through to its completion.



View Through the Broken Pain
Butternut and ash, 31" x 27" x 6"

Words have never quite worked for me as a means of expression, instead it has been wood carving. The carving becomes a communication between me and the wood as I am seduced by the feeling that, maybe this time, I will be able to express the conversation clearly. These are the words not spoken; truly "Beyond Words". So it is difficult to write about my 'book' which reflects my emotional journey through life; a journey which, like everyone else's personal journey, changes direction with each choice I make.

The wood chosen for this piece is a combination of ash and butternut. The ash used for the outside cover is strong, pliable, rich in grain and emotion, and reflects our traditional past. The butternut I chose for the interior of the book shows both warmth and beauty, while evoking feelings of love. I found myself engaged in the grain and shape of the wood, expressing with every cut the emotions I felt. Please read the emotions from the wood, feel the words through touch, and listen to what it says as you explore the story for yourself. My journey is primarily a search, to discover a life of love.

I travel with many guides and teachers, some of whom are my closest friends. To them, I would like to say thanks for their guidance, patience, direction and love. To God, who is teaching me about unconditional love, thank you for the courage to share my journey with others.

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Brigitte Clavette

Brigitte holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from NSCAD University and became a member of the Royal Academy of Arts in 2000. Her hollowware and silver work is in private and public collections across Canada and Europe and has been shown internationally. She has been recognized as one of New Brunswick's foremost artists in her field, winning the Excellence Award for Craft in 2002 and the province's Strathbutler Award in 2006.

Brigitte is the Studio Head of Jewellery/Metal Arts and has taught at the New Brunswick College of Craft and Design since 1985. She has also taught at NSCAD University, the Nunavut Arctic College, Haliburton School of the Arts and NBCC Dieppe.



Red Book

A big red book
Color of passion
Color of life

A repository for thoughts yet unformed
The fear of the virgin page
A secret passage holding the vessel

Mementoes of secret times
Traces of places
Smell of fleeting moments

Red Book

Leather and paper bound book, myrrh, sterling silver, pearls, bronze crystal turquoise, rubber, 31"x 27"x 6"

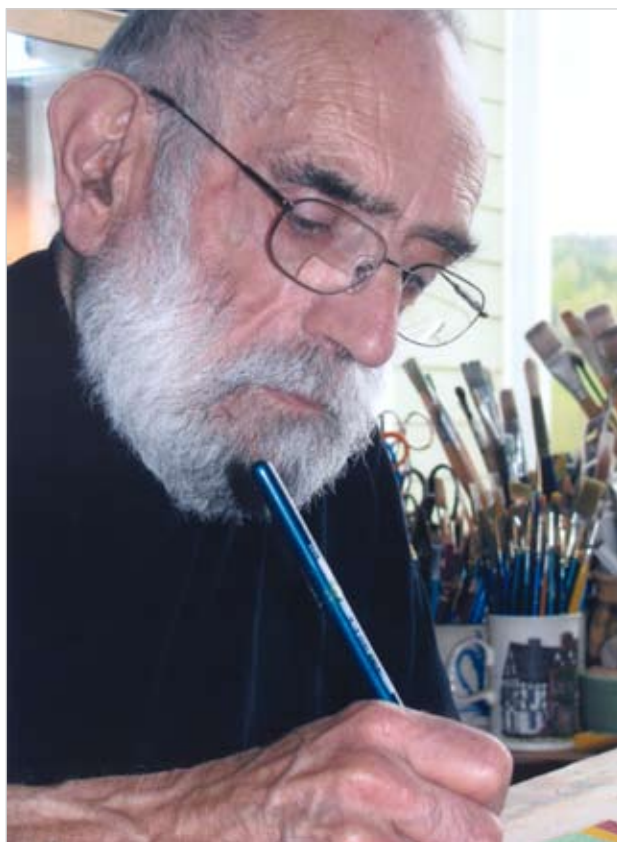
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George Fry

As the catalyst for this exhibition, George Fry has a lot to answer for! Yet the response he has engendered is typical of his ability to stimulate dialogue and response amongst artists.

Despite official retirement from the field of education, George remains a driving force and mentor in the NB arts community; his enthusiasm is truly contagious. In fact, he's rather like the book image himself. Great books operate in the present, and George's *Dancing* reflects the joy of the moment, while his influence stretches beyond today. His past roles as Director of Art Education for the Saint John School Board (1966-1976); Director of Craft Development, Province of New Brunswick; and Director of the New Brunswick College of Craft and Design (1976-1993) have put George in a position where he could effectively influence young artists and nurture their development into the future.

George emigrated to Canada in 1963, and since then has contributed to many art exhibits, locally, nationally and internationally; and his talent has stretched across the dividing lines of art to include theatrical sets and costumes; masks; publications; and television performances. George Fry moves freely across the boundaries which are traditionally used to classify the 'disciplines' of Art, and this freedom is exemplified in his current work *Dancing*.



Dancing
Mixed media, 6" x 4.5" x 4"

Growing up as an only child during the War, books were my major companions. I learned to love the intimacy and sharing with both authors and illustrators which expanded my lonely world as a non-evacuated child. Therefore when I became an art student I chose to graduate as an illustrator, with a minor in theatre design.

I have always been fascinated by the concept of creating my own books and as an adolescent I used to make elaborate "Films" which consisted of hundreds of illustrations which you turned over in sequence rather like a strip narrative.

But it was really many years later, at a workshop in the College of Craft and Design, my enthusiasm was fired for one-off books, where I had control of every element from text and paper to binding and cover. I began with a simple accordion book and became fascinated by the possibility of exploring the way the pages opened becoming part of the story. This led to two more books to be followed by a peepshow. The enthusiasm caught fire with some good friends and transpired into this current exhibition.

I wanted to explore pop-ups, and as I have always enjoyed dancing I decided to create a celebration of my feelings about Dance. However, pop-ups are the very devil to do, especially if you are "engineering challenged" as I am. It was not helped by reading an expert who said that it takes about a year to create a pop-up. Inspired by masters such as Robert Sabuda and Mark Hiner, I persisted. But I think my book *Dancing* should be regarded as being still in the learning phase.

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Toby Graser

Toby Graser, a native of Montreal, currently lives in Saint John, New Brunswick. Over the past thirty years she has held more than fifty solo exhibitions. A major retrospective of her work toured Canada from 1992 to 1995. She has contributed to countless group exhibitions in the Maritimes as well as other Canadian provinces, New York and Mexico.

Her works can be found in many public collections, including those of the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa, The New Brunswick Museum, The Beaverbrook Gallery in Fredericton and the Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Ontario. In addition, her art is featured in more than seventy corporate collections in North America.



Slices of my Life
Acrylic collage, mixed media, 30" x 18"

Increasingly, as we age, we look back on our past. I started to think about my husband, who is my best friend and partner; my career as an artist; my children, grandchildren and all my other relatives; and my many friends. I thought a nice way to document some of my thoughts and memories would be to do a small project which put a lot of my ideas in one place; hence this 'book' which, for obvious reasons, I have titled *Slices of my Life*.

The 'book' is a two-sided affair. One side deals with my thoughts on art, and the other side deals with family and friends. Because I am a painter, and not a writer, this was a new experience for me and required a totally different approach from what I have ever done. The idea to use a format of 'slices' was purely accidental as I had originally decided to do a circle. That didn't work out too well, which was great, because I like this idea much better. Selecting the photos was probably the most difficult part because I have more good friends and close relatives than I was able to include. I'm sure any of them who see this exhibit will forgive me for that. Those closest to you will always understand such things.

So here it is; my 'book', which is really a creative work that depicts a series of cameos of my life."

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Fred Harrison

Fred says of himself, "I love to paint big". If you haven't already done so, you should visit Sussex to see his four historical murals (the logging industry; the Dairytown heritage; the arrival of the railway; and 19th century life at Sussex Corner). Fred is an example of how environment can awaken an artistic talent. He remembers the magnificent woodwork from an old public school, mural landscapes painted as backdrops for school theatre and, most profoundly, the landscape surrounding Sault Ste Marie. Every art book in the Carnegie Library in the Sault was examined with such relish that the paintings and readings from these books form the basis of Fred's artistic knowledge and technique.

For his murals Fred uses an historic technique, substituting blue for the more traditional umber monochrome tonal layer. Other colours are glazed on top to achieve vibrant glowing colours reminiscent of stained glass. With his obvious love of history and traditional techniques, and with his appreciation of the natural landscape, it is no wonder that Fred feels at home in New Brunswick.

We are fortunate to have him in our province because now his expertise is on call as 'mural doctor'. Our recent harsh winter has necessitated some restoration work on six of the Sussex murals, which has created a new challenge for Fred as the method and techniques of each artist must be matched so the work appears unblemished. *Beyond Words* has also been a fresh undertaking for him and is a tribute to his creative flexibility.



A Punctured Garden of Verse
Acrylic on plywood, plastic, enamel, 84" x 48" x 48"

"Walking through the trees in the woods is like reading the pages of a book, and when you step over a log it's a new chapter" (Narissa Byers, age 9).

My book project, *A Punctured Garden of Verse* was inspired by my childhood copy of Robert Louis Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses*, and is bigger than life, with the original intention, childlike, of being able to walk into the book.

I love to paint big, and I get to do that in my murals but, with exhibit space limited, I must be content to walk around the outside of it instead of through it. As a result, it represents one tree in four pages, depicting different seasons and emotions. The "talking leaves" (a reference to printed pages made by native Americans) are covered in the calligraphy of different languages that have been created to communicate. These languages, glorious in concept, end up controlling the paths of logic of entire civilizations. They are part of the stream of human activity that has resulted in the accomplishments and failures of humans in our world.

The theme of my project, inspired by Narissa's comment, started with a sense of wonder and delight that, translated through my own experiences, has acquired cynical and bittersweet aspects as well. Too often we mindlessly follow the logic of our cultures and rob ourselves of our destinies. Being a stubborn man, and trusting the language of my pre-literate visual markings, I hope to remind myself and others that those delights of pure communication with all things, are the reality that underlies our existence.

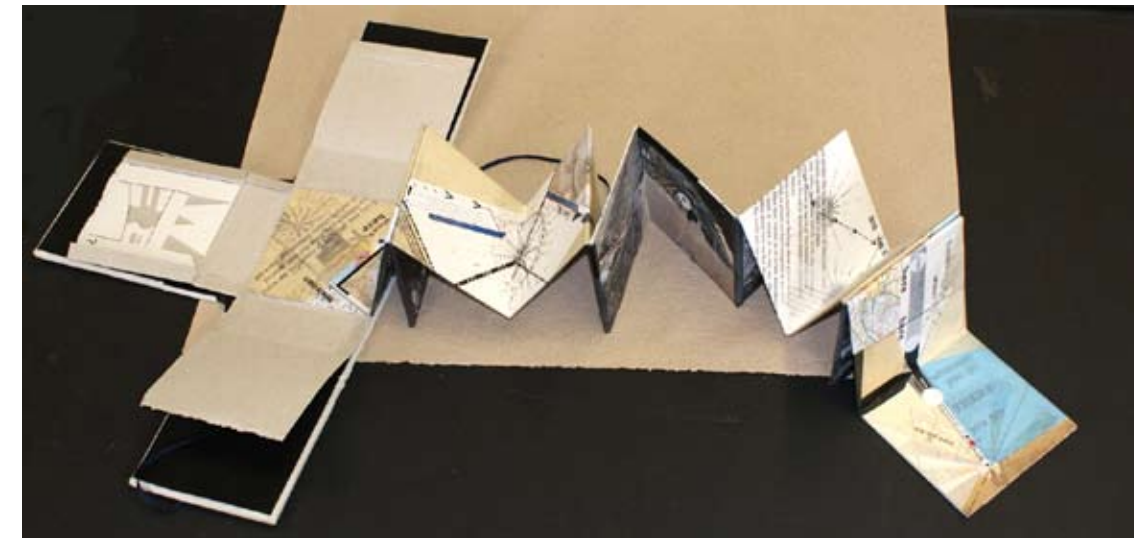
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Suzanne Hill

Suzanne Hill, an active professional artist and art education consultant, lives in Rothesay, New Brunswick. A graduate of Mount Allison and McGill Universities, her works are included in many private and public collections, including the New Brunswick and Canada Council Art Banks, University of New Brunswick, the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, the NB Museum, and that of the Governor General of Canada.

Hill has juried for the Strathbutler Award, the NB Art Bank, Creation and Excellence Grants. She served on the NB Arts Board executive, and is on the Board of Directors of both the New Brunswick Museum and the Third Space Gallery (alternate). In 2003 she worked with three other individuals to create the NB Visual Art Education Association.

Currently she is working to complete a major ongoing project, *High Water Mark*, for which she was awarded a Creations Grant.



Here to There
Mixed media, 6" x 72" x 3"

This book took a while to get going – what would it look like? What would it be about? The idea of “pages” between “covers” appeared practical... but what sort of pages and covers? A book about books saved my bacon. Folded paper leaves seemed interesting and do-able, as did setting them inside a cover of sorts to enclose them. But most books are about something. The intricate folds suggested a map... and I had spent some time working with maps. A map orders some aspect of reality, sorting, saving and discarding. What was I mapping this time? What would be selected and shaped into a conscious path, what left to float as superfluous to this particular journey? The quotation “wherever you go, there you are”, has always seemed useful – why not narrate a movement from HERE to THERE? That has become the story – the mapped path and, underlying it, the paths discarded, not taken.

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Kathy Hooper

In 1994 Kathy Hooper received the prestigious Strathbutler Award which recognizes excellence in crafts and/or visual arts in New Brunswick. This award alone reflects the quality of Kathy's work and the high esteem in which it is held.

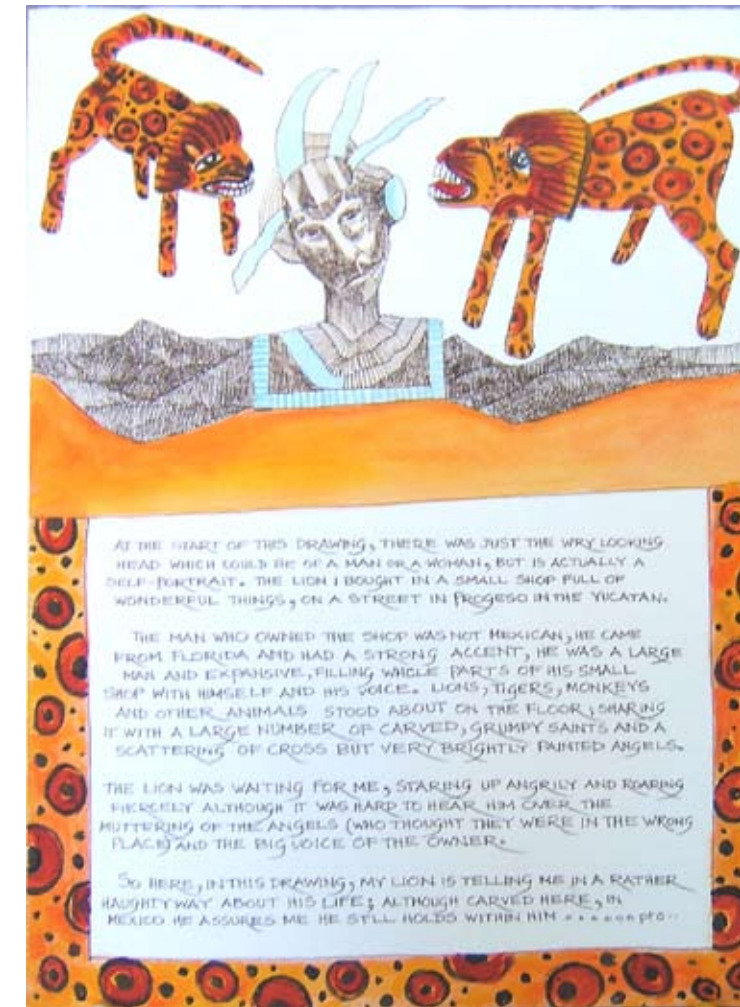
Her free spirit has allowed her to "use whatever medium I find best to express what I feel and think", so while best known for her paintings, Kathy Hooper has produced sculptures, clay pieces, ceramics, etchings, illustrations and animations. She is also known for the work she has accomplished with her late husband, John Hooper, on many of his wood carving projects.

Kathy studied at Rhodes University, South Africa; and the Central School of Art in London, England. She has traveled extensively, but South Africa, where she grew up; Hampton, where she has lived since 1962; and the Yucatan, Mexico, where she frequently stays, have all been major influences on her work. And while Kathy has traveled, so has her reputation and

work, which is now represented in provincial, national and international collections.

Not content to pursue her own work in isolation, Kathy has been a tireless worker on behalf of other artists by serving on the New Brunswick Arts Board and the Advisory Board of the Canada Council Art Bank. She has also been a member of many provincial and national arts juries. In 2007, she received the Lieutenant-Governor's Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts, in recognition of both her own contribution to Art, and the substantial contribution she has made to visual arts in New Brunswick.

If you want to see more of Kathy's work outside a gallery setting, visit the Hampton Court House where the impressive *Credo* sculpture may be viewed on the grounds. Kathy worked on this piece with John Hooper, Darren Byers and Ludwig Hartmann. Unveiled in June 2008, it typifies both Kathy's desire for social justice and her collaborative approach to art.



Out of Mexico
Mixed media with chair and table, 15.5" x 11.5"

I draw for the same reason as I paint: to try to understand why things happen. In some ways they are like dreams, images connected by lines and colours. I have no idea what might happen when I sit down to draw: at times its almost as if I am in a trance. I may begin a body by drawing its feet or a hand, sometimes just an eye. However, as I begin, one line joins another and I am immersed in a growing story.

This book of drawings and their stories were all done in Mexico and although some of them are about being there, many are not; they are about people I have known, ideas I have about the way things are for us all. They are fairly light and I hope quite funny at times.

I have loved doing them and the whole process of creating this book. How lucky I am!

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Sue Hooper

As you approach Hampton on the main highway you will see a sign announcing the upcoming exit. A heron flies across the rectangle, and words announce "Hampton: It's our nature!" Sue Hooper designed this sign for the town and it is an appropriate message for Sue as well.

Not only does she work as a painter and designer, but she also co-ordinates and manages Art at Hooper Studios, where classes are geared towards freeing the creativity in everyone. Meanwhile, students are also influenced by the setting of the Studios with their lovely gardens and woodlands overlooking the Kennebecasis River Valley which is so precious in Sue's emotional landscape.

But Sue hasn't always been settled in the valley. She has worked in visual communications in London, England; Toronto; and Saint John. In 1977 she received an Award of Excellence, graduating with a full scholarship from Georgian College, Barrie, Ontario. She went on to establish her own business, Sue Hooper Graphic Design, serving clients from some of New Brunswick's most successful businesses. Ten years later, she started a second successful business SUMO, painting original designs on cotton clothing, and selling them at selected craft shows and galleries in the Maritimes. Like so many of the other artists participating in this exhibit, Sue is a social activist, and in 1999, she was a member of a specialized team, working to establish Patchwork Planet, a women's co-operative in Safi, Jordan, which continues to flourish. You can see Sue's paintings at Hooper Studios Gallery, and if you want to see her excellent graphic work, then visit the interpretive panels on Hampton's courthouse lawn.



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Contemplative Space
Mixed Media, 78" x 78"

I strive for a deep peace and trust in life. Nature, and my daily walk beside the Kennebecasis River, are vitally important to me, connecting me with the beauty of the wildlife, the cliffs, the water and the trees. There is a stillness and a strength when I stand amongst the trees or lean against the rock. What I learn from listening, about the wisdom and beauty in nature, fills me with awe and gratitude.

One day, I came across some gorgeous handmade printing paper that my late father, John Hooper, had tucked away in his studio. I found myself loving the meditative process of ripping leaves and sewing them together. It became a practice in "being", in letting go; as I stilled my busy mind and my "doing" body, I could become peaceful and reflective. In this "dream time" I have had some insightful, profound experiences that have been transformational. Some words and writing, simple yet somehow significant, came out of this process and they are the basis of my *Beyond Words* project.

Elma McKay

Many students were fortunate to benefit from Elma's expertise when she taught in the metal studio at the New Brunswick College of Craft and Design, the same school she attended herself. Elma is recognized as a meticulous silversmith and has numerous publications, commissions and shows to her credit.

An example of her dedication and painstaking commitment to her craft is the project she is currently completing. It is the culmination of twelve years work on the concept of keys and will tour Europe in 2009. Her New Brunswick Bicentennial Project, crafted in silver, is based on our provincial history. It travelled through the States for five years before becoming part of New Brunswick's permanent craft collection. The piece she created for the Art and Artifact exhibition, a copper wire, life size horse's head based on a Chinese pottery horse, is still on display in the New Brunswick Museum.

Elma lives in Westfield, New Brunswick, where she takes care of her father, the inspiration for her piece in this exhibit.



Blind Book - Mapped
Mixed media, 72" x 16"

Blind Book is a linear conversation in six segments. The six segments are a reference to the Braille language, which consists of the placement of six raised dots, to produce a script read by the fingers.

The six canvases are mounted on a backboard of contrasting colour, a system that gives visual aid by the placement of light against dark.

The canvases are covered in semi-transparent Mylar with cut out circles in descending sizes. As we read left to right, this work is to be viewed left to right, with the most vision represented on the left and decreasing to a state of blindness on the right. The Mylar sheets are fixed to the canvases at the upper corners with bubble covered tacks. The clear bubbles are another helpful aid used by the visually impaired to mark a multitude of things such as the position of ON/OFF switches, calendar dates, pill containers, and even soup cans.

Each canvas represents an experience in the life of my father who, for the last twelve years, has lived with AMD, Age-related Macular Degeneration.

The first canvas, *Mapped*, represents spatial awareness and the ability of the visually impaired to navigate their surroundings. The notched doorframe represents misjudged steps when objects are not positioned in their proper places.

The second canvas, *Meeting*, represents the situation of my father meeting a group of people. Most people give their greeting without saying their name, leaving my father to wonder who he is conversing with.

The third canvas, *Trust*, represents my father's experience of shopping at the market. With outstretched hands, he holds his star shaped leather wallet open for the retailer to count the money owed. Sighting currency is difficult.

The fourth canvas, *Faith*, represents my father's leap of faith every time he crosses the road. Visually impaired pedestrians are at a disadvantage when they place themselves at the motor vehicle drivers' judgement.

The fifth canvas, *Performance*, reflects the sad fact that if one is visually impaired, like my father, the seat in the front row is no better than the seat in the back row. The result is the same; he still cannot see the performance.

The final canvas, *The Bus*, reflects the need for all visually impaired persons to rely on others for their transportation. Having a bus service in the community helps relieve the loss of personal independence. However, the question remains, how does the visually impaired person know which bus to take?

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Andrea Meeson

Along with her husband Brian, Andrea Meeson splits her year between urban Toronto and coastal Nova Scotia. She loves the retreat to their cottage on Digby Neck and her involvement in the fishing community is evident in her 'book'.

She used to indulge her creativity by working as a talented chef in The Tall Poppies, a restaurant she owned and operated with her sister. Across the road, she would visit the Art Gallery of Toronto, because although she has no formal training, Andrea has maintained a lifelong interest in the Arts.

Since her retirement, Andrea has had an enormous amount of fun knitting, quilting and, more recently, rug hooking. Her sense of play is evident in *Home to Liza*. And there is a certain irony that she should be participating in *Beyond Words* as an artist because she began her working life as a primary school teacher specializing in the teaching of reading.



Home to Liza: A Tribute to a Vanishing Way of Life
Wool rughooking, 54" x 6" x 8"

I have summered for over forty years in the Nova Scotia fishing village of Sandy Cove on the Digby Neck. Over the last few years I have been part of a group of talented rug hookers who work in widely different styles. I became interested in the medium as a way of telling stories

In recent years fishing has declined, and in this piece I have tried to tell a story of a disappearing way of life.

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Brian Meeson

One of Brian Meeson's earliest memories is of hammering rusty nails straight so they could be reused. On his childhood farm, nothing was thrown away; even after a decade of neglect, it might be just what was needed to fulfil a different function. The obsession with holding onto and converting what others would simply toss away has lingered. Improvisation with materials; intuition as to the way things are put together and work; a good pair of hands; and a sense of shape and movement have all contributed to Brian's work in theatre and, more recently abstract sculpture.

A now-retired theatre director and teacher from Ryerson University, Brian began sculpting as an extension of experiences in performance and carpentry. He describes himself as a bricoleur, someone who invents his own strategies for using existing materials in a creative and resourceful way. His first works were two performance pieces, combining music, wood carvings, mixed-media installations and fire at Atlin Centre for the Arts, B.C. in 1986. This led to a performance involving a large sculptural piece and aerial movement at Ryerson Theatre in 1987. Still pursuing the unusual, Brian began working in lost-wax technique producing small bronzes, but then, at the Al Green Studio in Toronto, he became fascinated with Winterstone, a specially formulated cementacious sculptural medium. He experimented with larger works, often incorporating rocks, driftwood and metals.

The 'book' which you see in this exhibition is an example of how he combines Winterstone and metal. Several of his pieces are now in private collections Canada, England and South Africa.



Leaf to Leaf
Winterstone, copper, found wood, 40" x 9" x 15"

Two shapes, the leaf and the flame, together with helical movement persist in my current work. I have been influenced by the architecture of Calatrava and Scarpa; the American furniture craftsman, Wharton Esherick; the art theories of Rudolf Arnheim and William Hogarth; and the sculpture of Bernini and Andy Goldsworthy. Beyond these influences, the greatest forces in my creative life have been Antoni Gaudi and Anton Chekhov, both of whom had the patience to work through all the details that make perfection seem attainable. Having seen the beauty and perfection that others have achieved in this exhibition, and which I lack the patience and vision to match, is a humbling and exciting experience.

Leaf to Leaf is a six-page sculpture that can be "read" at several levels.

Its form narrates the life cycle of wood from budding leaf through dying tree to paper.

Colour depicts the movement from Spring to Fall.

Leafing through a book (suggested by the sixth element), we give little thought to the trees killed for its production and our pleasure; it is a cost considered necessary for our spiritual nourishment. If only all words were necessary food for our well-being! But the insatiable human need for printed material demands industrial growth of pulpwood and the poisoning of land through the application of chemicals.

Herbicides and pesticides transfer toxins through trees; metaphorically, this unread story is told through the element of lead. Until the invention of computer software, all print was set in fonts cast in lead. What is now a metaphor for the hidden creep of industrial pollution used to be an inescapable feature of all printing.

At its simplest and most direct, *Leaf to Leaf* is a sculpted story, an attempt to give movement and shape to space.

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Alison Murphy

The youngest of the nineteen exhibitors, Alison grew up in Hampton familiar with the work of many of the other artists represented here. She attended the N.B. College of Craft and Design and was a student in Linda Brine's textile studio. During her final year at college, Alison was the recipient of the Nel Oudemans Scholarship, as well as the New Brunswick Arts Board Scholarship which is designed to "recognize students who have demonstrated exceptional artistic talent and potential". In 2005, Alison established a business *Flame and Fibre* with glass artist Lee Bichard and in 2007 she had her first solo show, *Home*, at Handworks Gallery in Saint John. In the same year she was the recipient of a New Brunswick Arts Board Creation Grant. Her textile wall hangings cross the line between fine art and craft, and have been sold at retail shows and galleries throughout the Maritimes.

Alison credits her love of colour to the year she spent in South Africa on a Rotary exchange, and she has worked as a weaver and dyer at Kings Landing Historical Settlement where she learnt about natural plant dyes and the lives of Loyalist settlers. She credits Linda for pushing her to look at the historical, spiritual and feminist elements of the textiles with which she works and these elements are clearly represented in her 'book'.



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Frayed Landscape
Mixed media/textiles, 55" x 37"

Recently, Lee and I, and our daughter Lily, moved into our first home in the rural community of Upham. I spend a great deal of time exploring my new surroundings and I have discovered remnants from the people who lived and worked this land in the past. I often wonder about their lives and the way they would have perceived this beautiful river valley. I feel as if the area has slowly been telling me its story, hinting at the lives of those who came before. Rusty old tools, glass bottles, once cared for gardens, reveal something personal and intimate about the people who also called this place home. They tell of the old steam railway that once ran through my field, of the log drivers, the mills and the farmers whose lives were all framed by this same backdrop. And I wonder too about the aboriginal communities who lived here before them and left such a soft footprint on the land.

Books, to me, encourage that same intimate connection as the reader engages with another space and time. My 'book' looks at the past, present, and possibly the future. It shows how the landscape is ever-present in human history, and how it has been respected, loved, manipulated, used, and sometimes abused over time. I needed to end my story with a suggestion of hope, because in Nature is the cycle of birth and restoration and I have to believe in that for Lily's future.

John Murphy

John describes his 1998 Rotary Group Study trip to South Africa as life-altering. He had already been a member of Amnesty International, but now he became more active. His position as high school Art teacher enabled John to combine his commitment to human rights with his role in the classroom.

Like George Fry, John originally studied at Goldsmiths College in London, England, receiving his National Diploma in Design in 1963. He received a B.A. in Humanities in 1973 and taught Creative Arts for some years in London. It was George Fry who offered him his first teaching position in New Brunswick in 1974, even though they had not met one another at this point in time.

Once he decided to make Hampton, N.B. his home, John's talents took him beyond the classroom as he directed, acted and designed sets for many plays both in the school system and with the Saint John Theatre Company. His knowledge of original folksongs in our province is extensive and some of you will be familiar with his singing as part of the folk trio Hal anTow.

John earned his Masters Degree in Art Education in 1990; received the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence in 2002; and accepted the Excellence in Art Education Award from the Canadian Society for Education through Art in 2007. Upon retirement, John purchased an etching press of his own and, when time permits, is fast re-discovering his latent love of print-making. It is only fitting that he would choose to reflect his enduring interest in human rights with his favourite medium.



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The Disappeared
Collagraph and woodcut prints in wooden prayer wheel, 84" x 24" x 72"

I have been involved with Amnesty International for a long time, particularly in its effort to shed light on the human rights situation in Colombia and the plight of the families of the 'Disappeared'. These families create simple memorials to their missing loved ones in public places, such as a stall at the local market, or on a street corner. Words are not always necessary: a shoe, a piece of jewelry or a torn shirt, says it all. My 'book', however, does include words borrowed from other sources. Fragments from Sidney Carter's song *Like the Snow* and Colombian poet Jose Mejia's *You will not disappear*, are embedded in the visual text to encapsulate the way in which the memories of those gone haunt the consciousness of those left behind. My collagraph and woodcut prints explore fragments and traces as powerful signs of irrepressible human presence. Three prayer wheels house the prints and, when turned, invite the viewer to remember, to contemplate and, perhaps, to act.

Please take a moment to read and sign the accompanying petition.

Peter Powning

Since 1970, Peter Powning has lived and worked as an artist in the hills of southern New Brunswick. His life is characterized by intense periods of work preparing for exhibitions and commissions, punctuated by periodic travel. While Powning's award-winning work is shown internationally, it is imbued with qualities distilled from a life lived close to the silence, space and seasonal rhythms of his home, the fields, forests and shorelines of Canada's east coast.

He was awarded the prestigious Bronfman Award in 2006 (now a Governor General's Award). He has many public and private commissions to his credit. He has an active exhibition schedule and has work in many public and private collections.

Peter Powning is married to author Beth Powning. They have one son, Jake Powning, a swordsmith who shares studio space with Peter and lives nearby with his family.



Sprouting Romance on a Plate
40" x 33" x 2"

I've been working with books and glyphs as objects for some time now with text as visual felt meaning, as opposed to read meaning. Book as iconic object.

As a visual experience, text can be freighted with something more than the graphic representation of language. It has a sense of portent without the burden of specified content, it is its own content. Think of written text in a language or glyphic form you can't read, cuneiform perhaps, Japanese characters. Textual texture. Cultural code.

The book as object works much the same way. A book is an iconic cultural object that has its own gravitas as vessel of cultural freight even without reference to its particular content.

In this piece, *Sprouting Romance on a Plate*, I am engaged with the text of a Japanese novel as graphic texture and cultural trope (the romance novel), the green sprouts emerging from its fertile pages, romance served up young and green.

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Karen Shackleton

Karen graduated in 1991 from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design with a B.F.A. majoring in studio painting. Since then she has had numerous solo exhibitions and contributed to many group exhibitions.

Her work can be found in many private collections as well as the University of New Brunswick's permanent collection and The New Brunswick Museum's collection of work from Sheila Hugh Mackay's estate. She has received several grants and awards and has participated in several artist residency programmes.

She currently resides in the village of Gagetown with her partner and fellow artist Peter Thomas.



Sheep: A Picture Book for Insomniacs
Mixed media, 40" x 12" x 12"

When I was first invited to join this exhibition project, I was unsure of what direction I would take. I had done some bookbinding in the past and knew that I would enjoy creating the "architecture" of the book, but what would the contents be? I toyed with perhaps illustrating a favourite poem or maybe just creating a series of blank journals. Both worthy ideas but they didn't say enough about me or my interests and passions.

I am, by choice, a visual artist and most of my work is of or related to landscape. I wanted to create a picture book. Having decided that much, the next step was to choose a theme, a reason for a series of pictures to be bound together in one volume. Picture books without text are most commonly geared towards children; could I make a more mature version of an essentially childish format?

One creature related to the landscape, especially the British and Irish landscapes I have often painted, is sheep. Over the years, I have painted many of these amusing and individual animals. The subject of sheep naturally led to the theme for the book. This is the beginning of what I hope will be a series of insomniac books.

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Peter Thomas

Peter holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Ceramics from Claremont Colleges, California and a Diploma and Post-Graduate Fellowship from the Edinburgh College of Art. He has worked, studied, taught and exhibited in Britain, the USA and Canada.

He is an active volunteer in the arts sector and has served extensively on provincial and national art and craft organizations as well as government and other advisory boards. His work has been featured in several publications, including the recently published *Studio Ceramics* in Canada and is in the permanent collection of the Saint John Museum and private collections throughout North America and Europe.

He lives and maintains his studio in the Village of Gagetown, New Brunswick, specializing in sculptural and functional ceramics. Peter has been an instructor in the Ceramics studio at the New Brunswick College of Craft and Design since 1986.



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And then we tell ourselves
Beyond /the mark / mask. / color sound the form / there are no words
Earthenware, 14" x 50"

I do not, as a rule, begin with a title for my work, and then search for an image; ideas creep up on me. They go through an extended gestation, troubling my waking and sleeping hours until a concept materializes. Another hiatus ensues, where ideas and technicalities collide; the image shrugs, shifts and changes rather as a caterpillar moves through chrysalis to butterfly. Given the time lines for this particular project, there was little opportunity for any of that, but the format offered a different opportunity: that of working communally. So sincere thanks to the other artists involved, for their valuable suggestions.

My work has two titles. The first title, *And then we tell ourselves*, is written sequentially on the piece in Jewish, Arabic, Sanskrit, Chinese and English. These are, more often than not, and between each other, tongues of invective, anger, domination and incomprehension. They create implacable dialogues through which we validate our otherness, our hierarchies. Yet the voices of great thought and beauty lie within these languages. When set free these may liberate us through the knowledge of our commonality.

The second title refers to this show, which is, ultimately, about art. Irrespective of discipline, art can only be defined as such when its impact is 'beyond words'. My sculpture references the marks of human kind, from the first footprint that said we were here, to the books which have influenced societal thought. It marks some of the losses and misconceptions of our thought lines as well as the wonders of translation. The form refers to history stones; obelisks, and natural rock pillars, reflecting the stratification of story and time. Through this runs the thread of the evidence of our human passage, which is art itself.

*Beyond
the mark
mask.
color sound the form
there are
no
words*