



MEDIA RELEASE

100 women collaborate, celebrate 100 years of International Women's Day, and give back.

Tuesday January 25, 2011

AYR, Ontario — According to the history annals of International Women's Day, the first event took place in small towns and villages in 1911. This coming March, 100 years later, a 100-woman art exhibit at AyrSpace gallery in the village of Ayr, Ontario, commemorating the centenary is a perfect fit.

“We put the call for international women artists out on November 1, 2010, and by December 1, 2010, we had heard from over 200,” said Jill Yuzwa, curator of AyrSpace. “It went out through artists’ social networks, but we also invited emerging artists. The quality of the works are high, but also important to this exhibit is the process of engagement, and the women’s stories.”

International Women Celebrate! was the theme chosen and the exhibit and sale was conceived to 1) observe the centenary of International Women's Day; 2) bring together an international artistic response; and 3) contribute to the relief effort for Haitian women and their children, through the donation of partial proceeds from the sale of the artworks.

Now 106 artworks strong, the exhibit will open for an artists’ celebration over the March 5-6 weekend. An official gala for community invitees will take place on Tuesday March 8, 2011, International Women's Day. The exhibit will be open to the public for five weeks—from Wednesday, March 9, 2011, to Sunday April 10.

Women from India, the Netherlands, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates and the United States are joining Canadian women in this exhibit and sale. Several Canadian collaborators were born in Chile, England, Finland, Holland, Hong Kong, Iran, Jamaica, Mexico, Switzerland and Zimbabwe.

Yuzwa knew for some time that 2011 marked the centenary of the event, but it was not until she met Daily Painter Kim Rempel from Beamsville, Ontario, that the idea came together. Rempel assisted by putting a callout through her Daily Painters blog. Artist and graphic designer Jeanette Obbink from Paris, Ontario, is assisting Yuzwa with the publication of a book featuring the exhibited artworks and the stories of the women who created them.

AyrSpace, located at 44 Stanley Street in downtown Ayr, opened in October 2008 as a socially innovative collaborative for local, rural and small-community artists. www.ayrspace.ca

- 30 -

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