Stories from the Heart

Aug. 22-Jan. 14, 2015 Youth Library Gallery

About the Exhibition

This exhibition features sweet and touching images of childhood. The works are touching stories about challenges and sorrow and above all, journeys of hope.

About the Artists

melissa m. button, of Phoenix, is an Arizona native and a faculty instructor in the Herberger Institute of Design and Arts at Arizona State University. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in architecture at ASU in 1994 and returned in 1998 to pursue a Master of Fine Arts degree in painting/drawing. Her studies in architecture led her to explore the balance between the natural world and the structural world. Her work seeks to capture a moment where order and chaos merge with one another to reveal a unique balance.

"This series, titled 'little girls,' was born out of a tragic event in my life," button said. "Not knowing how to deal with the grief left behind from the loss of my niece, I began making these mixed media collages with faceless little girls. My niece has become my inspiration of what it means to let go, and let whatever is inside to flow out



melissa m button: Finding My Way Home

onto the canvas. No fear, no hesitation and with complete confidence in the honest expression of making marks. What began as a means of dealing with the pain and loss of my god-child has become a journey where I often find myself identifying with the faceless figures in the work.

"Although on the surface our work is similarly related in the subject matter of children, both the process and the connection to the work differ.... [Sepulveda] focuses on the universality of mankind. My experiences are personal...the loss is a part of me. Yet loss is not exclusive

to me; we, as humans, all experience loss, and the emotions, although our own, also become a shared experience." http://melissa.erniebutton.com

Angelica Sepulveda, of Tempe, grew up in Colombia, South America. Ever since she was little, she loved to replicate the world around her in drawings. In 1996 she came to Arizona. She enrolled at Mesa Community College to study web design, but soon realized that her true passion was in expressing herself through painting and clay. She decided to change her career path and pursue an associate's degree in fine arts at MCC. Her work has been exhibited at MCC and the Alwun House in Phoenix.

"In 'Children of the World' I incorporate strong complementary and tinted colors in order to emphasize the individual expressions of the children," Sepulveda said. My intention is to redirect the audience's focus from each



Angelica Sepulveda: "Mistrust" from the Children of the World series

[child's] nationality to the universality of their expressions. With this series, I wanted to create awareness in our community of the fear, helplessness and hope of these little ones and, on a broader scale, of children [who] suffer from abuse. I hope to inspire my audience to reach out and to make a positive difference in our world.

"My portraits incorporate high key, complementary colors, and the subjects look directly at the audience. In button's collaged series, the girls she depicts are displayed in very soft, almost monochromatic colors and appear to be moving from one place to the other. While I emphasize the expressions of the children I paint, button's girls are faceless, perhaps to help the audience identify with them. Our work is similar in the subject matter of children and childhood memories."