

Close to You Contemporary Textiles, Intimacy and Popular Culture

NEW EXHIBITION AT THE TEXTILE MUSEUM OF CANADA

June 4 – October 12, 2008

Curated by Sarah Quinton

Opening reception: Wednesday June 4, 6:30 – 8:00 pm. Remarks at 6:45 pm.

Generous Supporters:

The Anne Angus Contemporary Program Fund
Imperial Tobacco Canada Foundation

Close to You examines the use of idioms and images from popular culture in the work of five artists from Canada and the United States. Using craft as the medium **Ai Kijima, Scott Kildall, Allyson Mitchell, Mark Newport and Michèle Provost** explore mass media messages about **popular myth, comic book heroics** and contemporary social and sexual customs. They critique these mass-mediated ideals, scripted gender roles and mass production through mechanically reproduced images or music, or by inserting themselves into **humorous and revealing scenarios**.

The artists in *Close to You* have chosen to work in textiles because of their intimate and evocative qualities as well as their status (high versus low) within the larger sphere of contemporary art. Never far from the surface, the debate over low and high culture is a thread found in nearly every piece in the exhibition.

With **life-sized knitted superhero costumes**, a **9ft sexy Sasquatch** and panoramic views of a fragmented **pop culture fantasyland** where Thomas the Tank and Led Zeppelin share the same psychic space, the artists in *Close to You* present a labour-intensive examination of the world mass media has created around us. Smart and cheeky this exhibition also features a salon style installation of meticulously **embroidered lyrics from 44 rock and roll favourites** and a **racy homage to Warhol**. This conceptually clever exhibition runs to October 12 at the Textile Museum of Canada. An illustrated catalogue co-produced with Dalhousie Art Gallery, Halifax, is available.

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For additional information, interviews or visuals:

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Museum Hours

Open 7 days a week 11 am – 5 pm
Wednesdays 11 am – 8 pm

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Artist's Talk: Mark Newport
Wednesday June 4, 5:30 pm

Close to You artist Mark Newport's knitted superhero costumes and embroidered comics have been exhibited throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. He is Artist-in-Residence and Head of the Fiber Department at Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan.

Members \$10, Non-members \$12, Full-time students Pay-What-You-Can.

Tickets may be purchased at the TMC's front desk. Please arrive early, seating is limited.

Kidsummer: Super You!
Wednesday July 2, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Bring the kids and have fun making your own superhero patch or mask inspired by works from the exhibition *Close to You*. Visit the exhibition and see "Bobbleman," "Sweaterman" and other contemporary art pieces inspired by popular culture.

Free for children under 12 and adults with children. Advance registration is required, spaces are limited. To register, visit www.todaysparent.ca

Conversations in the Gallery
Wednesday July 9, 6:30 pm

Allyson Mitchell and Michèle Provost, two of the artists exhibiting in *Close to You*, will meet in the galleries to discuss the exhibition with each other and the audience.

Members \$10, Non-members \$12, Full-time students Pay-What-You-Can.

Tickets may be purchased at the TMC's front desk. Please arrive early, seating is limited.

Curator's Tours
Wednesday July 23 and September 3, 6:30 pm

Join Sarah Quinton in the galleries for a tour of *Close to You*.

Free with admission.

Workshop: Crazy Quilts with Ai Kijima
Saturday September 20, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Participants will explore imagery, colour, shape and composition using heat fusing. Kijima will present examples of her artwork and step-by-step displays of her quilting technique.

Members \$50 Non-members \$65, Full time students \$40, Materials \$2. Advance registration is required, class size is limited. To register, call 416-599-5321 x2221.