



CRISTINE MOCKETT & KARINA BERGMANS



[Christine Mockett](#) is a fibre artist and sculptor born in England and raised in Southern Ontario. In 1996, she completed a BSc at the University of Waterloo. In Australia, she studied clothing design and operated a business in Sydney for four years. Garments now appear in her artwork as a second form of architecture, closer to the body and portable. When she returned to Canada she developed a professional interest in art and completed a BFA at Concordia University in 2006. Her artwork has since appeared in the Preston Catalogue, Fiberarts, Embroidery

Canada and Fibre Quarterly, and has been exhibited and collected in Canada, the USA, Italy and Australia. Her current work addresses issues of place, and the interrelationship between architecture and human presence.

[Karina Bergmans](#) is a multi-disciplinary artist who works in the mediums of fiber art, sculpture, and installation. What unifies her diverse artistic practice is the incessant use of reclaimed fiber and materials. She has always been making things and playing around with yarn, but it wasn't after finishing her degree in psychology that she knew she wanted to be an artist. She then took part time classes in ceramics, drawing, painting and sculpture. It has been a long evolution and exploration in many mediums for Karina, but she finally found her niche.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Fibre artists Christine Mockett and Karina Bergmans led the creation of fibre sculpture figures with clients of Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre. Christine and Karina guided the participants through the sculpture making process using materials such as wood dowels, concrete, textiles, yarn and paint. They provided women who are in a transition in their lives, how to incorporate an art component to their routine, hoping that it will assist them into developing new interests and healthy habits.

PARTNER SITE

[Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre](#) was founded in 1979 after a group of concerned community members identified the need for services that addressed the unique needs of women who used substances. Amethyst was the first addiction treatment centre of its kind, in that the services provided incorporated a gender-based analysis in order to recognize the specific ways in which women experience substance use and addiction. Since that time, Amethyst has evolved through many incarnations to meet the ever-changing needs of women in our community.

ABOUT ART PLACE

Art Place is a community outreach program of AOE Arts Council, funded in part by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. In its inaugural year, the new social practice professional artist-in-residence program will enable six jury selected artists and groups of artists the opportunity to offer unique free-of-charge artistic services in collaboration with community sites across the city of Ottawa. Each artist or arts group will be paired with a non-profit organization for a period of 5 to 8 weeks. The artists will work with a designated site partner and its participants to create an artistic project. Art Place will bring together different participants to work collaboratively and generate awareness for socially-driven issues.

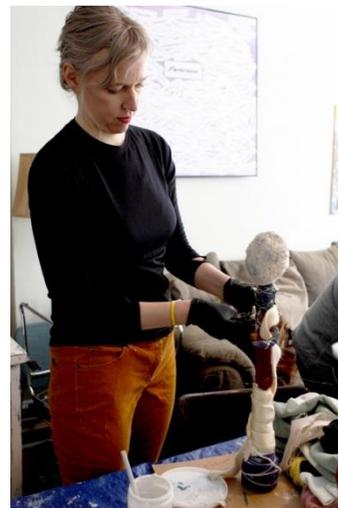
ART PLACE INTERVIEW WITH CRISTINE MOCKETT & KARINA BERGMANS

April 13, 2015

For their Art Place project, Ottawa fibre artists Christine Mockett [CM] and Karina Bergmans [KB] led the creation of fibre sculpture figures with clients of the Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre. Christine and Karina guided the participants through a sculpture making process using materials such as wood dowels, concrete, textiles, yarn and paint. They provided women who are in a transition in their lives, how to incorporate art as a component to their daily routine, hoping that it will encourage self-expressions through art and healthy habits.

You are both professional fibre artists, how did you come to work together for this artist-in-residence Art Place project?

I [CM] have been making sculpture figures with painted surfaces for a while and thought that having uncoated fibre surfaces would allow the materials more of a voice. Karina has been working with fantastic fibre forms, constructions



and surfaces for a while and both of us had experience making clothing. We have known each other for years but never worked together on a project. We thought if we put pieces of our two art practices together we'd have something really expressive for our participants to work with, and new ideas would evolve as things progressed. [CM]

Did you learn new techniques from each other during the Art Place project period?

Karina and I definitely learned a lot from each other. I shared my concrete mixing, armature building and wrapping techniques, and Karina shared her clothing construction, fibre surfacing ideas and enthusiasm for colour.

Both Karina and I also learned from the ladies participating in our workshop. They took our starting point ideas and made them their own.

We also learned more about what a joy teaching can be. [CM]

How would you describe your experience at the Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre?

The Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre is a great place to engage in an art project. Genevieve Charest, in public relations, and Gundel Lake, the support worker who attended our sessions with the participants, were both fantastic and supportive throughout.

The Art Place Project was very welcomed in their organization and every effort was made to accommodate our need for teaching space and allocation of materials, which we were able to store on-site. We were able to convert one of the group meeting rooms into a make-a-mess space. We moved furniture, put down tarps, brought in folding tables and chairs and heaps of materials and sculpture making items.

The enthusiasm and support provided by the Amethyst Centre was wonderful, and it was the perfect situation for the project we proposed. We would happily work with them again if the opportunity arose, and would recommend the location for future projects.

The ladies at Amethyst who participated in our project were the heart and soul of the project. Their creativity, willingness to try new things, enthusiasm and humour made the project a success and a joy to do. [CM]

Within the project, you led a series of workshops on fibre sculpture making. What do you think the participants learned from their experience?

Participants helped each other, worked together and learned to be non-judgmental about the creative process and their own abilities. They were given the basic idea of the project and



helped throughout the process, but there were no creative rules that meant success or failure.

In the initial session participants each were given a sketch book. Each person started a drawing in their book and passed it to the next person, who added to it. This encouraged participants to learn that their contributions were valuable to all.

The participants learned about sculpture making and were introduced to materials they had not previously used. They learned they could pour concrete, had a health and safety lesson, and used acrylic mediums in unconventional ways.

Participants have also learned about using recycled materials and that pretty much anything can be transformed into something creative. Old cereal boxes became concrete forms, worn out clothing became sculpture bodies, scrap wood became props, etc.

All the participants seemed to have been involved in art making in some capacity in the past and were drawn to taking the class. Being in a transition in their lives, incorporating an art component into their routine may assist them in developing/rediscovers creative interests and healthy habits.

Participants were given follow up information (supply sources, community art access ideas, etc.,) and discussion about making a space for art in their lives.

Participants and instructors were reminded through working together, how life enriching creative time can be. Sharing ideas and working together are the greatest rewards. [CM]

Can you describe the atmosphere during your workshops?

There was an abundance of creative enthusiasm. Participants were overflowing with ideas on building their sculptures. They used the materials we brought, but started bringing in more of their own to share with each other and



head in new directions.

The workshop felt like a family held in a building that seems to give you a hug when you walk in the door. There was laughing, joking, sharing of ideas and opinions, and a general sense of enjoyment.



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