

Rathlin Development & Community Association

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'RATHLIN REFLECTIONS': threads from an Island home INSTALLATION

"It's hard to explain what I love, but it's maybe the quietness of the Island – the quietness and the open space. It's just Rathlin, and it's the place I was a child."

Nearly 20 years ago a group of Rathlin women gathered to piece together their stories of Island life. While they talked, they sewed and over the next year images from their conversations were transformed into a beautiful quilt. Sixteen colourful panels depict scenes from the Island's story, each stitched around a centrepiece map of the Island and the sea.

The quilt usually hangs in the Island's Boathouse Museum but the memory of good times spent on its creation hung in the minds of the women until, last year, they gathered again, with some new island friends to continue the adventure.

Supported and encouraged by Roberta Bacic, the Chilean Curator for Textiles in the Verbal Arts Centre, Derry, a group of Rathlin woman, toddlers to grandmothers, have created a number of new textile panels for exhibition in the Centre.

The installation, 'Rathlin reflections', centres around the women's first 'Boathouse Quilt', and will include the new textile work as well as examples of writing, crafts, artefacts and photographs from Rathlin. It will be launched at 12 noon on Tuesday 8th March, the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, with a presentation of song, poetry and readings from the Island. The installation will remain in the Verbal Arts Centre for six weeks before returning to its home on Rathlin, Northern Ireland's only inhabited offshore island.

This installation on display at the Verbal Arts Centre will be up from March 8th to April 14th 2011. It is part of a continuous series of arpilleras, quilts and installation exhibits curated by Roberta Bacic in Derry, which started March 8th 2008 and led up to International Women's Day 2009 and beyond.

The project is supported by The National Lottery through the BIG Lottery Fund

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