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NEW ARTIST RESIDENCY AT THE NEW CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Artist Michelle Montjoy brings Community Looms workshop to the Museum's Innovators LAB

SAN DIEGO – Dec. 6, 2022. The New Children's Museum is collaborating with artist-in-residence Michelle Montjoy on a new workshop, *Community Looms*, in the Museum's makerspace, The Rosso Family Foundation Innovators LAB. The artist residency is funded by a \$10K grant from the ResMed Foundation to support the month-long program.

The *Community Looms* workshop, to start Dec. 7 and run through Jan. 9, is inspired by Montjoy's work in engaging community members to create textile sculptures together. Previously, she has implemented similar versions of this workshop at the Oceanside Museum of Art, Art Produce Gallery in North Park, and Sophie's Gallery in El Cajon.

The workshops at the Museum consist of three large looms, 36 inches in diameter each, in which 6-8 participants work together at each loom to knit material made from recycled or donated T-shirts. Workshop participants will learn Montjoy's loom knitting technique as well as breathing and meditative techniques facilitated by the Museum's Teaching Artists. The finished knitted sculptures will then be displayed in the Museum after the workshop series has ended.

"Using familiar textile material and joyful colors, these oversized hand-built looms transform what is usually a singular activity into a connected, communal action," said Montjoy. "Not only do participants get to tap into the calming nature of simple repetitive looping actions, but each stitch in the knitted sculpture physically represents the time and hand of the person who made it."

This workshop is a continuation of the Museum's collaboration with Montjoy. In September, Montjoy completed a sensory-friendly installation on the Museum's main level called [Breathing Room](#). *Breathing Room* invites visitors with calming blue, grey and white colors and hanging textile sculptures that gently move up and down, replicating breathing cycles. The installation is meant to provide a space for families and children to reflect and relax in an otherwise high-activity environment.

“From the *Breathing Room* installation to the *Community Looms* workshop, our work and partnership with Michelle has been about how community, access and art are all interconnected,” said Gabrielle Wyrick, Chief Curator and Director of Audience Engagement at The New Children’s Museum. “*Breathing Room* was about providing access to a sensory friendly space for our visitors and its next iteration now comes alive in these hands-on workshops with the artist who created the space.”

Funding the *Community Looms* workshop, the ResMed Foundation has been a longtime supporter of the Museum. Their support has been focused on workshops in the Museum’s collaborative makerspace, [The Rosso Family Foundation Innovators LAB](#), where children can learn from resident artists and experts from various fields about experimenting with different ideas, working with a variety of materials and exploring new techniques.

"We are thrilled to work with San Diego-based artist, Michelle Montjoy," said Kristi Burlingame, Executive Director of the ResMed Foundation. "Through her workshop, children will practice working together while learning a knitting technique that most have never experienced before. And since we are in the business of breathing, the ResMed Foundation cannot think of a better partnership than one that teaches young people breathing techniques supported by the Museum's experienced and passionate staff."

The *Community Looms* workshop is free with Museum admission and available in the Museum’s Innovators LAB from Dec. 7 to Jan. 9 at 10:30am and 2:30pm every day the Museum is open for ages 6 and up. An additional drop-in art activity of weaving yarn, recycled T-shirts and natural materials into a tapestry will also be available for visitors of all ages to add their weaving.

[Link to Photos Here](#)

- Community Looms project with children, Photo Credit Tisha Kawcak
- Community Looms project with adults, Photo Courtesy of Michelle Montjoy
- *Breathing Room* at The New Children’s Museum, Photo Courtesy of NCM
- Portrait of Michelle Montjoy, Photo Credit Geoff Cunningham

About Michelle Montjoy

Michelle Montjoy is an Oceanside-based artist who works in a combination of installation, textile, sculpture and socially-engaged practices. A former public school art teacher, her work approach is based in humor, generosity and sustainability. Her work has been shown at MCASD, Art Produce Gallery, San Diego International Airport, Oceanside Museum of Art, Athenaeum Music and Arts Library and others. michellemontjoy.com

About ResMed Foundation

The mission of the ResMed Foundation is to promote novel research as well as public and physician awareness of sleep disordered breathing (SDB). In addition, and in recognition of ResMed's commitment to its local community, the Foundation provides support for STEM and Arts education within San Diego County. The Foundation was formed in 2002 and contributes a

percentage of its annual budget to promote community causes in the areas of education for primary and secondary students (specifically in math, science and technology) as well as the arts in San Diego County. [Resmedfoundation.org](https://www.resmedfoundation.org)

About The New Children's Museum

The New Children's Museum's mission is to spark creativity, exploration and a sense of belonging through interactive art experiences. Located downtown, the Museum collaborates with contemporary artists to design and create art installations and educational programs for children. The Museum brings families together in a rich educational environment that fosters creativity — blending the best elements of children's museums, contemporary art museums and community resources. In 2023, the Museum is celebrating 40 years serving San Diego and 15 years as The New Children's Museum in its downtown location. To learn more, visit [thinkplaycreate.org](https://www.thinkplaycreate.org) or follow them on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).