L.M. Montgomery’s Wedding Dress

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The project broadly selected women who were storing dresses as memory. The women emerged as strong contributing members of family, community, and country. My own roots stretch back to the mid-1700s in Nova Scotia, and so all subjects are Canadian. I collected stories and pictures of each subject.

I crossed paths with Kate Macdonald Butler, L.M. Montgomery’s granddaughter, and it was that meeting that prompted the painting of Montgomery’s wedding dress. I could not borrow the dress because of its condition, but I did work with the archives in PEI, and a photographer was brought in to document the entire dress. I combined these details with a written overview of the dress from when it was on display. The white roses close to Montgomery’s waist reference her wedding bouquet, while all the other flowers are taken from *Anne of Green Gables*.



Lucy Maud's Wedding Dress, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 36" x 60".



Unveiling of the work at Leaskdale, Ontario, 2019. The work was donated to the L.M. Montgomery Society of Ontario in Leaskdale, Ontario, in 2023.

Here are some other paintings with an emphasis on writers from the dress project:



Margaret's Dress, acrylic on canvas, 36" x 48". I approached Margaret Atwood after reading *Cat's Eye*. She chose the dress coat that she bought in Australia while writing that book.



Adrienne's Dress, acrylic on canvas, 36" x 48". I read the book Canada's House about the work done at Rideau Hall years after Adrienne Clarkson was Governor General. The book prompted contact. She selected a Yumi Eto snowflake dress to be used as subject.



Barb's Dress, acrylic on canvas, 36" x 48". Dress worn by writer Barb Mitchell at her readings of Canadian writer W.O. Mitchell's work. The initial contact happened after I read a piece by Barb Mitchell describing her attending a formal dance with Orm Mitchell. When she arrived at the Mitchells' house, his father W.O. Mitchell had an orchid corsage ready. The stem was attached to a test tube filled with water, so she had to return the corsage after the event. The dress was not available, so she loaned the performance dress instead.

Bio: Jane Eccles is a painter living and working in Bowmanville, Ontario. She has painted a hundred works based on the dresses of Canadian women, including Canadian icons.

Article Info

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