# Domestic Art Project

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**Welcome to the 2020 Domestic Art Project!**

***For those of you who did not get a chance to read about or participate in the Domestic Art Challenge leading up to this project, here is a bit of background information.***

This project was inspired by the realization that domesticity and adventure are not mutually exclusive. Contrary to popular literary distinctions, domestic life is adventurous, full of unexpected challenges, situations, and events. In their efforts to survive everyday life, people are constantly navigating the physical and psychological hardships that pose a threat to their security and happiness.

L.M. Montgomery experienced these domestic hardships firsthand and represented them well in her books. In *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), the orphaned Anne Shirley has lived through many difficult experiences prior to her arrival at Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert's home. While she loves to escape into her personal fantasies, it is her ability to recognize the adventure of living that makes her truly heroic. Whether she is in the "depths of despair" or lamenting her "graveyard full of buried hopes" (Montgomery 28, 37), Anne is able to appreciate the significance of the story she is living. The orphan expresses this appreciation best when she tells Marilla:

> "It's all very well to read about sorrows and imagine yourself living through them heroically,
>
> but it's not so nice when you really come to have them, is it?"

(Montgomery 33).

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many unexpected challenges and sorrows into people's lives. At the same time, it has also given them the opportunity to, like Anne, find heroism in the decision to be positive in the midst of extremely difficult circumstances. Kathleen Miller describes Anne as a "social artist" who "brings her world into alignment with her desires by using the materials of domesticity and making a work of living art out of them" (31). The orphan's resiliency and joyfulness, as expressed through her indomitable imagination, allows her to give life "[her] best" and expect life to "give its best to [her] in return" (Montgomery 241).

In an effort to celebrate the best of this difficult time, we invited members of the Montgomery community, through the Domestic Art Challenge, to submit photos and brief written descriptions of the domestic art they have been creating at home during COVID-19 (e.g., photos of gardens, baking, cooking, knitting, sewing, tea parties, painting, crafts, etc.). We used these submissions to put together the Domestic Art Project, which is displayed below. This project takes the form of a digital scrapbook of sorts. It is a 360 degree virtual tour that allows you to explore a scene and click on different items within it. Simply click and drag your cursor on the background image to move it right or left. As you click on the different buttons in the scene, you will be able to zoom in and see some of the beautiful photos and written descriptions people have submitted. You will also see images and video clips containing quotations from *Anne of Green Gables*. Our aim was to put people's creative submissions in dialogue with Montgomery's own words. We hope that exploring this scene encourages and inspires you to craft something lovely of your own.

Thank you for taking the time to view this project!

Sincerely,

Bonnie J. Tulloch, Co-Curator, Domestic Art Project

**Want to learn more about the Domestic Art Project? Listen to Bonnie and L.M. Montgomery & Vision Forum organizer, Dr. Lesley Clement, speak with CBC PEI's Matt Rainnie.**

*Note: All quotations appearing in the videos below are from L.M. Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables. All videos below were created by Bonnie J. Tulloch with the assistance of Heidi Haering and the acting/vocal talents of Karli Ferguson, Bonnie Jackson, Karen Tulloch, Soosan Davis, Kim Tulloch, and Jim Tulloch.*

**Acknowledgements:** In addition to Heidi Haering (my fellow curator), Kate Scarth, Lesley Clement, Alyssa Gillespie, and the participants who have contributed to this project so far (listed in the virtual tour below), I would also like to thank Karli Ferguson, Bonnie Jackson, Karen Tulloch, Soosan Davis, Kim Tulloch, and Jim Tulloch for their willingness to act as models and voice actors in this project.

**Works Cited:**

Miller, Kathleen A. "Weaving a Tapestry of Beauty: Anne Shirley as Domestic Artist." *Canadian Children's Literature/Littérature canadienne pour la jeunesse,* vol. 34, no. 2, 2008, pp. 30-49. *CCL/LCJ*, https://ccl-lcj.ca/index.php/ccl-lcj/article/view/4921

Montgomery, L.M. *Anne of Green Gables*. 1908. Norton, 2007.

Interactive Content

## Article Info

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