



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Public Library

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Cheryl Parry Art Exhibition “The Cloths of Heaven”**

#### **Looks at Little Known Chapter of Irish History**

***Free Exhibition will be on Display Nov. 19 through Feb. 28 at Mission Valley Branch Library***

SAN DIEGO – The Visual Arts Program of the San Diego Public Library will present “Cheryl Parry – The Cloths of Heaven,” an installation with paintings, video and performance art at the Mission Valley Branch Library from Nov. 19, 2006, through Feb. 28, 2007. The exhibition is free and open to the public and will include a special program on opening day.

“The Cloths of Heaven” is the culmination of artist Cheryl Parry’s four-year exploration of one of the most shocking and, until recently, hidden chapters in the history of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Between 1850 and 1996, 30,000 girls and women fell victim to the excessively puritanical, Church-dominated mores of the times. Judged unfit to live in Irish society for infractions as minor as being too pretty or flirtatious, they were banished to the convent-run Magdalene Laundries where many of them endured a lifetime of isolation, enslavement and suffering. Many Magdalens who were unwed mothers were forced to give up their children up for adoption to Irish Catholic families in the United States. The discovery of the unmarked graves of 133 women on the convent grounds at the Magdalene Laundry in Dublin in the mid-1990s inspired wide-spread outrage and focused attention on this little-known period in Irish history.

Parry’s exhibition re-interprets Irish poet W.B. Yeats’ love poem, “The Cloths of Heaven,” in the context of the Magdalene Laundries and includes oil paintings of faces and cloth, a video by the artist, and a performance art/dance developed with choreographer Patricia Maldonado and musician Robert Edwards. An artist’s reception will be held Sunday, Nov. 19 from 1 to 4 p.m. As part of the event, the 15-minute video will be shown at 1:30 and 2:45 p.m. In addition, the performance art/dance will be conducted at 2 and 3:15 p.m. Like the exhibition, these programs are free and open to the public.

The Mission Valley Branch Library is located at 2123 Fenton Parkway. For more information, call the library at 858-573-5007 or visit the San Diego Public Library’s web site at [www.sandiegolibrary.org](http://www.sandiegolibrary.org).

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*The City of San Diego Public Library – Your Link to the Past and Gateway to the Future*

*The Library’s Visual Arts Program is a nationally recognized series of exhibitions, lectures, a television program and other art-related activities. The mission of the program is to demonstrate the Library’s role as a cultural institution embracing a broad range of disciplines, while assisting San Diego’s mid-career and older professional artists in achieving wider local, regional and national attention. Visual Arts Program exhibitions are made possible, in part, by contributions from individuals, volunteer efforts and the Friends of the Central Library. For more information about the Parry exhibition, or tax-deductible contributions to the Visual Arts Program, please contact Library Curator Mark-Elliott Lugo at 619-238-6627.*