

Written by **Jennifer Lamb**, Director, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, June, 1991

This exhibition (1991) presents a small sample of the creative embroidery that has become an integral part of Merry's life. When she was four years old she was given needle, thread and cloth and, since then, has always been attracted by the richness and the clarity of the colour of the thread.

She describes her work as 'painting with a needle': the needle takes the role of the brush, the thread the paint and the cloth the canvas. As with any artist, her ideas flow with her materials and this is exemplified in the lyrical freedom of her work.

She designs all her embroideries and believes every embroiderer should make his or her own designs; while the first attempt may not succeed, it will, at least, be original and every subsequent design will mark an improvement, ultimately leading to work which embodies an aesthetic goal.

Her ideas come from anywhere - she just begins by drawing and lets the design emerge from her hand. At times, she begins drawing on paper and transferring it to cloth, for others she draws directly onto the cloth, or she may simply begin by stitching. Whatever its beginnings, each work is a free expression of her creativity.

That creativity is not restricted purely to visual imagery as she often includes words - whole delightful stories, in fact. These, too, are of her own making and, in turn, serve as inspiration for her embroidered images.

Simone Merry has had no formal art training as such, and perhaps, that is what makes her embroideries so fresh and whimsical. They are not shackled by the aesthetics of conventional art making - of what is deemed to be 'right'. They are instead, the free meanderings of a creative spirit.....