

**Victoria Hospitals Foundation Launches Art Booklet,
Partners with Winchester Galleries**

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For Immediate Release

Victoria, BC – A book entitled - *Fuse* - featuring visual art, photography and creative writing by people living with mental illness is now available for public purchase, the Victoria Hospitals Foundation announced today. Compiled by the Foundation, and local writer/professor Melanie Siebert in support of the Courtnall Celebrity Classic, *Fuse* showcases local writers and artists as a way raise awareness and reduce stigma around mental illness.

“This is a remarkable collection of visual art, creative writing and photography,” said Melanie McKenzie, Executive Director of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation. “In the past mental illness has been such an uncomfortable subject, and those suffering from the illness have been stigmatized and isolated. It’s time all that changed. The artists featured in this book are extremely talented and deserve our attention.”

The title, *Fuse*, was suggested by Siebert who helps people living with mental illness by leading a small writing group out of the new Patient Care Centre at Royal Jubilee Hospital. Siebert sees imagination as the fuse that, once lit, can assist in healing and recovery.

She said, “The artists featured in this book all have a personal experience with mental illness. And I think they would all agree that art and creativity has at times been a lifeline.”

To provide further exposure to the artists the Winchester Gallery (Humboldt Valley) is showing high-quality prints from *Fuse* until August 6th. The prints are reasonably priced with all proceeds going directly to the artists.

“We’re happy to be able to make this contribution to the community,” said Elizabeth Levinson for Winchester Galleries. “This work is a small window into the significant skill of these artists. I’d encourage all who can to take the time to drop in and view their work.”

About the Victoria Hospitals Foundation:

The Victoria Hospitals Foundation works in partnership with the Vancouver Island Health Authority to enable donations to Vancouver Island’s two largest and most comprehensive hospitals: the Royal Jubilee and the Victoria General. Every year we fund 40 per cent of capital equipment purchases for these hospitals, and last year this amounted to more than \$6 million for urgently needed medical equipment and special projects that help these two hospitals provide care to all 752,000 residents of Vancouver Island. Since 1989, the Victoria Hospitals Foundation has raised more than \$76 million to benefit our hospitals. For more information, call the Foundation at 250-414-6688 or go to www.victoriahf.ca.

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