

MEDIA CONTACT:

**Wendy Aitkens**  
Curator, Galt Museum & Archives  
403.320-3907 |  
[waitkens@galtmuseum.com](mailto:waitkens@galtmuseum.com)

**Starsha Battrick**  
403.634-5557 |  
[Starchild.art creations@gmail.com](mailto:Starchild.art creations@gmail.com)



## "IN PURSUIT OF FAIR TRADE" FOCUSES ON ECUADORIAN COLLECTIVE

PHOTO EXHIBIT ON THROUGH APR 26.09

Stunning photographs by recent University of Lethbridge Anthropology graduate **Starsha Battrick** are on display at the Galt Museum & Archives until April 26 in the exhibit *In Pursuit of Fair Trade* – a collection of works highlighting the village of Principal in Ecuador and, in particular, a group of women who have formed a fair trade cooperative to improve their lives and community.



*Battrick's images are a tribute to the women interviewed and honours their courage and strength.*

### FAIR TRADE

A consumer-driven movement to promote fair prices and reasonable conditions to help marginalized producers, artisans and labourers move from a position of vulnerability to one of security and economic self-sufficiency.

Fair Trade promotes environmental stewardship and community building, ensuring projects improve education and health care in the communities.

Battrick visited Ecuador during a 2006 Anthropological field school. Principal is a small Andean village of 800 people tucked deep in a high mountain valley in Ecuador at 9000 feet above sea level.

While a fellow traveler interviewed the women, Starsha photographed them as they made their woven hats, baskets, placemats, purses and jewellery from palm frond imported by donkey from another village.

"Cameras are rarely in the community and are mainly used to take pictures for national identification cards or for a jail record," says Battrick. "For their comfort level and with their permission many photos were taken discreetly, to try and capture the women as naturally as possible."

According to Battrick, "limited access to markets forces the women to sell their goods to hat intermediaries, who pay between \$1.50 and \$2.00 per hat. That price barely covers the cost of their materials, and offers no compensation for the 24-72 hours of work it takes to weave it."

The intermediaries travel to cities and sell the products for much more than they paid for them. When these products reach resale in other countries, a well-made hat will sell for up to \$200. Battrock says that “the cooperative helps the women obtain a fair price for their wares, but the cooperatives market niche is very small, often only a few bus loads of students each year.”

In addition to her experience in Ecuador, Battrock also gained experience as a guest curator when she worked with Galt Museum Curator Wendy Aitkens.

“People in southern Alberta are interested and concerned about people in distant countries who struggle to make a viable living,” says Aitkens. “It has been a pleasure working with Starsha to provide an exhibit that describes a wonderful group of Ecuadorian women and their frustrations and successes in developing a Fair Trade initiative.”

***In Pursuit of Fair Trade*** will be displayed until April 26, 2009 in the lower level foyer. A related online exhibit will be made available on the photo-sharing site [flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com) when the exhibit closes.

Along with the Fair Trade themed exhibit, the Galt Museum Store will be selling **Café Femenino** for the month of April – a fair trade coffee by women coffee producers of the Café Femenino Collective in Peru roasted locally by Cuppers’ Coffee & Tea Company. For more information on the collective, visit the Café Femenino Foundation website at [www.coffeecan.org](http://www.coffeecan.org).

The Galt Museum is open Monday to Saturday, 10:00 am to 4:30 pm; Sundays + holidays from 1:00 to 4:30 pm [closed Easter Sunday]. For information on other exhibits, events and programs, please check [www.galtmuseum.com](http://www.galtmuseum.com).

– 30 –

The Galt Museum is located at the west end of 5 Avenue South, off Scenic Drive, Lethbridge, Alberta  
Access to parking lot from 4 Avenue South | enter Galt through the sliding north doors  
tel 403.320-3898 | info: 320-GALT | fax: 403.329-4958 | [www.galtmuseum.com](http://www.galtmuseum.com)  
MAIL 910 – 4 Avenue South, Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 0P6