

Memories of Home: Siberian Spirits

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Hudson Valley Seed Library Project

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by RACQUEL on DECEMBER 2, 2011 · [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

Irene Nedelyay was the recipient of the 2011 JPMorgan Chase Arts in Our Communities Grant. Born in Siberia, Irene spent most of her life there, learning of the Native-Siberians and their old-fashioned way of life. The Native-Siberians had a simpler way of life, filled with deep-rooted traditions, respect for nature, and beautiful folklore. She was so inspired by the natives that she incorporated them into her artwork. A few years ago, Irene moved to Staten Island. She has not forgotten about her hometown, the memories, the experiences, or the people, and wishes to share her stories with the Staten Island community.

Irene's grant project is an exhibit entitled "Siberian Spirits". In the exhibit, she will showcase a collection of paintings she created of her native Siberia, as she explains,



"My paintings portray people from Siberia and their lives, ceremonies and traditions of Native-Siberians and Mongolians. They will feature particular Siberian Spirits, such as Vit-kan, the spirit of water, Out-inie, the spirit of fire, Suzetka, the spirit of house, and Konsyg-oika, the bear, which is ancestor of people. Native-Siberians believe that their spirits have control over nature and people's lives, so people often present them food or small gifts before hunting, fishing, wedding, and other events."

Along with the paintings, she will have on view her collection of short stories, as well as her memoirs. These pieces are filled with stories she heard while growing up, as well as her collection of experiences living in Siberia. The stories and memoirs will be in both Russian and English.

Also on display, will be Irene's collection of authentic, old-fashioned, fabric dolls, which she made by hand. These dolls are used for everyday life, as well as special ceremonies, like weddings, and to celebrate the birth of a child. Irene will conduct workshops on how to make these dolls, and participants will be able to take their dolls home. The workshops will be free and open to everyone.



Come see Irene's work, and make a hand-made doll at the workshop, at the opening reception of **"Siberian Spirits"**, **Thursday, December 8, 4-6pm at Wagner College, Student Union, Room 201**. Exhibit runs until December 21, 2011.

