



Cloth Lullaby: The Woven Life of Louise Bourgeois

By Amy Novecky

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Louise Bourgeois (1911–2010) was a world-renowned modern artist noted for her sculptures made of wood, steel, stone, and cast rubber. Her most famous spider sculpture, *Maman*, stands more than 30 feet high.

Just as spiders spin and repair their webs, Louise's own mother was a weaver of tapestries. Louise spent her childhood in France as an apprentice to her mother before she became a tapestry artist herself. She worked with fabric throughout her career, and this biographical picture book shows how Bourgeois's childhood experiences weaving with her loving, nurturing mother provided the inspiration for her most famous works. With a beautifully nuanced and poetic story, this book stunningly captures the relationship between mother and daughter and illuminates how memories are woven into us all.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 2 Up—This picture book biography of artist Louise Bourgeois (1911–2010), who was best known for her installation art and sculpture, highlights the roots of her inspiration. Through text and images, the author and illustrator emphasize the aspects of Bourgeois's childhood that influenced her: the river that flowed past her house, the colors of the flowers and plants in the garden, the "web of stars above her," and her nurturing mother, who taught her how to weave and repair tapestries. Novecky makes excellent use of simile ("Her family lived in a big house on the water that wove like a wool thread through everything.") and alliteration ("She taught her about the warp and the weft and how to weave."). Bourgeois's mother is also compared to a spider—"a repairer of broken things." As the story progresses, the images of flowers and plants, the cloth, and the water become larger, sometimes taking up most of the page. The perspective also changes, as readers see what Bourgeois saw as a young girl—the beauty of nature, her mother at work, and the tools her mother used—and, finally, her creations: giant spiders and webs, spirals and circular webs, and cloth drawings and books. VERDICT An inventive introduction to the work of a celebrated artist and a useful mentor text for exploring how language and imaginative, varied illustrations can work together to convey an idea.—Myra Zarnowski, City University of New York

Review

STARRED REVIEW

"With evocative, gorgeous illustrations and an inspirational story of an artist not often covered in children's literature, this arresting volume is an excellent addition to nonfiction picture book collections, particularly those lacking titles about women artists."

(*Booklist*)

"An inventive introduction to the work of a celebrated artist and a useful mentor text for exploring how language and imaginative, varied illustrations can work together to convey an idea."

(*School Library Journal*)

STARRED REVIEW

"The evocative, hand-lettered text, peppered with quotations in red ink, provides an impressionistic portrait of the memories, colors, sounds, and images propelling Louise's art. These motifs connect the imaginative ink, pencil, pastel, and watercolor illustrations, done in a palette of indigo, red, and gray. Bold, repetitive patterns of stylized flowers, woven crosshatches, spirals, giant spiders, and musical notes form the perfect background for the cloth lullaby Louise weaves for herself. Splendid visual and verbal introduction to little-known artist Louise Bourgeois."

(*Kirkus*)

About the Author

Amy Novecky is the author of *Georgia in Hawaii* and *Me, Frida*, which won the Pura Belpré Honor Award and was an ALA Notable Book. She lives in San Francisco. www.amynovecky.com.

Isabelle Arsenault is an award-winning illustrator whose first children's book received the prestigious Governor General's Award for children's literature in French (illustration). She lives in Montreal.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

June Edwards:

What do you in relation to book? It is not important with you? Or just adding material when you need something to explain what the one you have problem? How about your time? Or are you busy man? If you don't have spare time to accomplish others business, it is make one feel bored faster. And you have spare time? What did you do? Everybody has many questions above. They have to answer that question because just their can do in which. It said that about reserve. Book is familiar in each person. Yes, it is proper. Because start from on guardería until university need that Cloth Lullaby: The Woven Life of Louise Bourgeois to read.

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