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November 21, 2011

Senior Melissa Potter Devotes Paintings, Photography to Recapturing Childhood Innocence

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.— The Gardner-Webb University Department of Visual Arts is proud to present the senior art exhibit for Melissa Potter, currently on display in Gardner-Webb's Dover Memorial Library through Dec. 16. The show features original acrylic and pastel paintings, charcoal drawings and photography, all devoted to expressing the honesty and innocence of childhood.

"I definitely feel relieved that the pressure is off, and now I can just enjoy the collection altogether," Potter said at the exhibit's opening reception. Most of the pieces portray children's faces or interactions with one another because, Potter said, children's "purity and genuineness" inspires her.

"No matter what children do, they do it honestly," said the aspiring preschool teacher. "When they're in a bad mood, they're honestly in a bad mood. When they're happy, they're really joyful. I love the boldness with which they live life, and my show is about taking that childlike boldness and genuineness and recapturing it in our own lives, in our faith and our love."

A distinctive feature of Potter's work is her striking use of color to illuminate the beauty of children's faces, and the complexity of the emotions behind them. "The colors represent the energy with which children live their lives. That just radiates from their faces, and hopefully it radiates from my paintings as well," she said.

Ultimately, Potter considers her artistic gifts "a calling," and said she hopes this is the first of many feature exhibits in her future. "I definitely feel like God's given me a gift, both to continue to work with children and to do art. I'll use them however He tells me."

For more information about this exhibit, the Department of Visual Arts, or the greater School of Performing and Visual Arts at Gardner-Webb University, call 704-406-4656.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University seeks a higher ground in higher education – one that embraces faith and intellectual freedom, balances conviction with compassion, and inspires in students a love of learning, service, and leadership.