

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:** Iris Madelyn, [REDACTED]

**Women veterans purge military uniforms and memories to create a work of art.**

*Iris Madelyn is one of 20 women featured in Paper Dolls, a handmade book made of recycled military uniforms which explores women in the military and the stories their uniforms tell.*

**Chicago, Ill.** – Local Marine Corps veteran, Iris Madelyn, shares her story about military service in the upcoming book, Paper Dolls. The book, which will be published on Veterans' Day, Nov. 11, 2013, features 20 deeply personal stories of women veterans as they recall memories from their service related to specific uniforms. A Chicago northsider, Madelyn has worked with local veterans in the creative arts since 2009. In this recent project, Madelyn's work appears alongside women veterans writing from as far as Afghanistan and San Francisco. Paper Dolls will be printed in a limited edition version with screen-printed illustrations of the uniforms referenced in the stories, each with the requisite tabs required for fastening on to the book's own paper doll. A commercial edition of the book will be available by early next year. Paper Dolls can be purchased through [Shotwell Paper Mill's website \(www.shotwellpapermill.com\)](http://www.shotwellpapermill.com) and 30% of the profits will go to a women veteran's organization.

"It was difficult to get rid of my old uniforms. They hold a lot of memories, but seeing them turned into a beautiful art book was a wonderful and transformative experience for me," said Madelyn, the [March 2012 Illinois Veteran of the Month](#) award recipient. Madelyn donated some of her old Marine Corps uniforms to be turned into pulp and recycled into the paper on which the handmade book is printed. Madelyn's story, The Big Picture, recounts her memories of picture day in basic training, the first time most marine recruits get to wear the prestigious dress blue uniform. Other women featured in the book also helped to create paper in a series of workshops at San Francisco's Shotwell Paper Mill, where women turned their uniforms into paper pulp.

Madelyn was honored by the state of Illinois for her contributions to transitioning veterans and her work with veterans in the creative arts. A volunteer community liaison at Chicago's [National Veterans Art Museum](#), Madelyn advocates for the therapeutic effects of storytelling and the arts among veterans. "Some of the stories we carry with us are not easy to express in casual conversations. The creative arts give us space for expression, reflection and healing," Madelyn said. "Re-purposing old uniforms, like re-telling our stories in a safe space, allows veterans to make sense of many disjointed memories and help to create a new narrative."

Paper Dolls is a true collaboration between women like Madelyn that contributed stories and uniforms, and the creators of the book, artist [Pam DeLuco](#), co-founder of San Francisco's Shotwell Paper Mill, and illustrator [Annemaree Rea](#). Huffington Post calls Paper Dolls "a feat of screen-

printing, [and] an impressive anthology of modern day veterans.” Madelyn’s other collaborations include a theatrical performance by Chicago’s [Rivendell Theatre Ensemble](#) bringing stories of local women veterans to the stage beginning Nov. 21, 2013 with their Women at War Project.

To learn more about Madelyn’s work, visit her online at [irismadelyn.com](http://irismadelyn.com).

Paper Dolls can be purchased through [Shotwell Paper Mill’s website](#) at [www.shotwellpapermill.com](http://www.shotwellpapermill.com) beginning Nov. 11, 2013.