

Ethnohistorical collection

Arrow belt

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Collections / arrow belt



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Arrow belt with herringbone pattern. The belt is made of wool in brown, yellow and black. Its colors are derived from synthetic dyes. The end of the belt is folded over a wooden buckle. A wool thread is sewn to the base of the bangs, which have been cut.

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Period 1st half of the 20th century

Materials fiber, wool

Technique braided

Measurements 7,5 x 82 cm

Historical context

In 1970, the practice of fléché was enjoying a resurgence in popularity. As a new Québécois way of speaking emerged and freed itself from traditional canons, particularly following the opening up of Québec to the world with Expo 67, some experienced hands began to teach darting publicly. Despite this counter-current trend, links were forged between a number of dart makers in the Montreal area. Associations were formed and books published.

The presence of a wooden buckle gives this arrow belt a distinctive aesthetic, as do its cut bangs and unconventional colors. While this piece may seem surprisingly different from more conventional belts, it needs to be seen in context. In the 1970s-1980s, craftsmen and women wanted to move away from standards and modernize their practices. Whimsical pieces with contemporary colors, unexpected shapes like this belt, and a wider range of patterns were commonplace.

The piece presented here also allows us to take a closer look at the fléché technique.

Its chevron pattern is a weaving motif common to many cultures, from which the fléché was developed. While the chevron is a widespread motif in the practice of fléché, it is less common to observe it “on its own”. In this case, the term “fléché” may be disputed, as chevron is not exclusive to this braiding technique.

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