

Ethnohistorical collection

# Arrow belt

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Collections / arrow belt



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Arrow belt with arrowhead and lightning motif. The belt is made of red, blue and white wool. The bangs are made up of braids, themselves divided into several braids. A label mentioning the craftswoman is sewn onto the belt.

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Accession Number 2021.15.17

Fabricant / Éditeur Centrale d'Artisanat du Québec

Artiste / Auteur Barot, Cécile

Date 1957 an

Materials fiber, wool

Technique braided

Measurements 4 x 106 cm

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## Historical context

This arrow belt was made by Cécile Barot (1903-1957), a well-known Quebec craftswoman. Having learned the art of fléché in Charlevoix, she went on to practice it in Montreal, where she became a leading advocate of an endangered art form. Her contribution earned her the Grand Prix de l'Artisanat de la province de Québec in 1951.

Arrow belts were developed by French Canadians in the latter part of the 18th century. At the turn of the 20th century, they became essentially a folk element. Gradually, conservation and promotion initiatives were launched by ethnologists, specialists and a few dart makers, including Cécile Barot. This renewed interest was limited to the 1930s and 1940s. Until the 1960s, Madame Barot was one of the few craftswomen to attempt to perpetuate darts, offering pieces such as this one.

A symbol of the preservation of a complex weaving practice, this belt testifies to the craftswoman's great technical mastery. The colors reflect the desire to revive this know-how: while early 20th-century arrow belts sport the standard colors of the old pieces, post-war confections like this one are differentiated by their different shades of color. In fact,

the few craftsmen from this period are striving to revive this technique by adapting it to contemporary tastes and uses.

Cécile Barot's creations, like this belt, are relatively narrow. This size certainly enabled her to produce more of them, and to emphasize the fléché.

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