

Ethnohistorical collection

# Arrow belt

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Arrowhead belt with 3 lightning bolts in a dotted border. The belt is made of white wool with shades of mauve. The bangs are composed of braids, themselves divided into several braids. A label mentioning the craftswoman is sewn onto the belt.

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Fabricant / Éditeur Centrale d'Artisanat du Québec

Artiste / Auteur Barot, Cécile

Date 1957 an

Materials fiber, fine wool

Technique braided

Measurements 5,5 x 114 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 one of the leading defenders of an endangered art form.

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 folkloric element. Gradually, conservation and promotion initiatives were launched by ethnologists, specialists and a few dart makers, including Cécile Barot. However, 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. Her contribution to the revitalization of this craft earned her the Grand Prix d'artisanat de la province de Québec in 1951. While weaving is a complex practice prone to imperfections, the belt shown here is perfect. At the time, synthetic dyes were available in a wide range of colors, making it possible to achieve numerous shades, such as these mauves. They were also instrumental in making darts part of today's fashions. Indeed, the few craftsmen of the period are working

hard to revive this technique, 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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