

Ethnohistorical collection

Arrow belt

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Collections / arrow belt



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Arrowhead belt with 3 lightning bolts in dotted border. The belt is made of yellow and blue wool. The bands 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 x 116 cm

Historical context

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. Throughout the first half of the century, conservation and promotion initiatives were gradually launched by ethnologists, specialists and a handful of dart makers, including Cécile Barot, creator of the belt shown opposite. Although the public was not very receptive, the practice of darting continued.

The piece presented here symbolizes the safeguarding of a complex and patrimonial weaving practice. The braiding is particularly well executed, testifying to the craftswoman's great technical mastery.

What's more, the colors reflect the craftswoman's desire to revive this know-how. While the arrow belts of the early 20th century feature the standard colors of older pieces, the 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 (1903-1957) is a well-known Quebec craftswoman. Having learned the art of fléché in Charlevoix, she went on to practice it in

Montreal, becoming one of the leading defenders of a dying art form. She exhibits her creations at various craft fairs, where she also gives demonstrations. In tribute to her dedication to this revival of the practice, she was awarded the Grand Prix d'artisanat de la province de Québec in 1951.

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