

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 blue, white, red and yellow wool. The bangs are made up of braids, which are themselves divided into several braids. A label mentioning the craftswoman is sewn onto the belt.

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Accession Number 2021.15.26

Fabricant / Éditeur Centrale d'Artisanat du Québec

Artiste / Auteur Barot, Cécile

Date 1957 an

Materials fiber, fine wool

Technique braided

Measurements 8 x 110 cm

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## Historical context

Fléché is a hand-braiding technique used to create complex patterns. Although this piece is referred to as an arrow belt, its chevron pattern is a braiding motif common to many cultures, from which the fléché was developed. While the chevron is a common motif in arrowwork, it is less common to see it “on its own”. In this case, the term “fléché” may be disputed, as chevron is not exclusive to this braiding technique. 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 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.

To revive the practice, the few craftswomen of the time adapted it to contemporary tastes and uses. The eclectic colors of this belt bear witness to this.

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. In addition to her many creations, Madame Barot gives demonstrations at various craft fairs. In recognition of her dedication to the revival of the practice, she was awarded the Grand Prix d'artisanat de la province de Québec in 1951.

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