

Statue wax

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Life-size statue of Marguerite Bourgeoys with head in wax and hands in resin.

Accession Number 2021.56.04

Period 21st century

Materials fiber, metal, plastic, wax

Historical context

Sieur de Maisonneuve was looking for someone to take charge of children's education when he visited his sister in Troyes, France, in 1652. She introduced him to Marguerite Bourgeoys, a 32-year-old member of the external congregation of Notre-Dame. De Maisonneuve quickly convinced her to move to New France. She arrived in Ville-

Marie in 1653. There were no school-age children yet. So she helped the settlers with various tasks. Today, she would be called a social worker. The first school was finally opened in 1658, in a stable. By 1666, she and her teachers were also taking care of the King's Daughters. To ensure the survival of her work, Marguerite wished to found a new community whose vocation would obviously be teaching. She returned to France to complete the necessary steps. There, she obtained the King's letters patent. In 1698, the Congregation of Notre-Dame de Montréal was canonically erected as a religious community, and Marguerite Bourgeoys took the name Sister Marguerite of the Blessed Sacrament. She also opened a boarding school for noble families, the *ouvroir de la Providence* for less fortunate girls, and several other small schools. Her pedagogy was based on free schooling and highly competent teachers. In short, relatively modern skills.

The costume she chose was very close to the secular costume of the time. She wanted it to be this way, as she believed that the purpose of female teachers was to act in the world and for the world. It consists of a white bonnet, a black headdress tied under the chin, a long, unadorned black dress and a simple silver cross.

This wax statue of Marguerite Bourgeoys was designed by and for the Montreal Grévin Museum (2012-2021). Some of the statues were distributed to various Quebec museums when the Musée Grévin closed.