

Bio:

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Danielle Elizabeth Piper nitsiyihkason. My name is Danielle Piper, and I am an interdisciplinary artist based in Mohkinst'sis, Treaty 7 territory. I am a band member of Cold Lake First Nations in Treaty 6 territory, and of nehiyaw, Métis, denesuline and European mixed ancestry.

My artistic practice is rooted in traditional craft techniques and articulated in a mixture of nêhiyawêwin-my ancestral language, and english. Utilizing craft, I've found the potential for material exploration to become a gateway through which to deconstruct the colonisation of our everyday lives. The slow labour of craft echoes that of reclaiming my language and cultural identity, as well as the labour required of us all to build forward in mutual understanding.

I believe that as an artist my foremost duty is to my ancestors, to honour work that they did to survive and pass down the knowledge that we all need to move forward in a good way. My next responsibility in making is to honour the materials and the land itself through deep consideration for the lived histories held within them. I am striving to express the complex interconnectivity of our existence in human bodies through the use of varied materials including animal skins, seashell, porcupine quills, fish scales and plant fibres, but also paints, nylon, synthetic furs, and upcycled textiles. Animal and plant materials have perhaps a more obvious context for their past lives, yet the synthetic and recycled materials you also find littered through my work deserve the same level of recognition. With needle and thread, I explore the tensions within the land as I work to heal alongside her.

Danielle will also be working with other artists on preparing a moose hide and an elk hide for making traditional smoked leather.

*Danielle is an interdisciplinary artist and a member of Cold Lake First Nations. She holds a Bachelors of Fine Art with Distinction (in Drawing) from the Alberta University of the Arts. She has exhibited and attended artist residencies across Alberta, including at the Banff Centre for Creativity and Arts and the Calgary Public Library. In 2022, Danielle began leading workshops for groups of all ages and found a passion for teaching and engaging with youth. She is also a board member of Sparrow Arts Society, and the originator of Wasakamapiwak Collective.*

Project Statement:

Beadwork has been a wonderful teacher in my life, and through it I can more fully appreciate the connection I hold to my Metis ancestors. In the drawing of these 7 unique frames, I spent a lot of time examining my own family beadwork, as well as numerous museum pieces. I particularly focussed on the 1880's period, to match the era of the photos chosen by Matt Hiltermann. As digital art, this is somewhat different to what I normally create, and was a

great exercise in appreciating the unique swirls and balanced asymmetry which characterizes our beadwork. I also chose colours for the backgrounds which reflect the materials mostly used traditionally; buckskin, velvet and wool. In inviting participants to spend time with these designs and add their own touch through beading, I hope that people learn more of the unique qualities of Metis beadwork and are more able to differentiate it from others. As the panels live, they will slowly become filled with beadwork, heavier and heavier with the touch of hundreds of people's work and care, helping to build community as they go.