

Lisa Shepherd

Lisa Shepherd is a British Columbia Métis who owns and operates “Lisa Shepherd, Métis Artisan,” a business which was named BC Aboriginal Business of the Year in 2013. Her art is housed in the permanent collections of the Gabriel Dumont Institute Museum in Saskatoon and the Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives in Jasper, Alberta.

In 2014, Lisa Shepherd was selected by Luciano Benetton to create a beaded art piece to be a part of the *Imago Mundi Luciano Benetton Collection*. This touring exhibit is a collateral event to the *Venice Biennale* and is a global project that looks to the new frontiers of art in the name of coexistence of expressive diversity.

In 2012, she created the beaded vest worn by Dr. Janet Smylie as she received her *INDspire Award* for Health. She worked with Maria Campbell on the design and incorporated elements of a painting that Christi Belcourt had done for Dr. Smylie, with Belcourt’s permission.

In 2013, she was commissioned to create custom beaded garments for Disney's television pilot called, “Big Thunder.” The garment pieces were worn by Aboriginal Actress Michelle Thrush.

Lisa Shepherd is a contributing artist and Promoter/Advisor to the *Walking With Our Sisters* project. *Walking With Our Sisters* is an installation art project of 1,700 pairs of moccasin tops or “vamps” commemorating and representing an estimated 824 Aboriginal women and girls who have been murdered or gone missing in Canada since 1961. She also ran a beading group at Fraser Valley, BC to do vamps for the project. The commemorative exhibit was launched in the fall of 2013.



Vamps created by Lisa Sheppard for *Walking With Our Sisters*



Lisa Shepherd is a well-known Métis artisan recognized for her traditional Métis beadwork art pieces and garments, her work as a Métis dancer and teacher, and for her storytelling through theatre. She is a nationally recognized Métis jigger and performed on the world stage at the Aboriginal Pavilion during the 2010 Olympics. She has also written a one-act play (theatrical dance piece), called “Bannock & Oatmeal,” which has been performed with a troupe of four across British Columbia and Alberta.

As a visual artist, Shepherd’s fabric art received international attention when she was commissioned to create beaded garments for the opening ceremonies of the 2010 Olympics. The garments now reside at the Gabriel Dumont Institution Museum.

Lisa Shepherd is related to many well-known Métis families. She is a third great-granddaughter of Cuthbert Grant (1796-1854) and a fourth great-grandniece of Isidore dit Ecapow Dumont (18010-1885). She is also a distant cousin of Suzette Swift (née Chalifoux) who was born in 1866 at Saint Albert, Alberta and died 1946 in Jasper, Alberta. Suzette Swift has been called the First Lady of Jasper. Her beadwork was documented in journals. She and her husband, Lewis Swift, were among the first homesteaders at Jasper House.

Artist taps past with pop art

Brian Lewis, *The Province*

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[Edited]

Using a six-metre high fibreglass replica of Coca-Cola's traditional contour bottle as her canvas, Shepherd created a personal legacy of her Métis background, including the beaver-fur bottle cap, a traditional Métis sash, intricate stitching and beadwork, and photos of some of her ancestors in sepia tone that reach back to Riel's era.

Aptly titled “The Awakening”, her creation is now on display at the Aboriginal Pavilion at Hamilton and Dunsmuir in downtown Vancouver.

It's also on the auction block (www.ebay.ca/charity) with the bidding starting at \$2,500 and a "Buy It Now" price of \$30,000. The proceeds go to the Aboriginal Youth Legacy Fund.

So how did this University of the Fraser Valley fashion design graduate, who is now a full-time, home-based artist, end up with a very large -- and very naked -- fibreglass Coke bottle in the middle of her living room last fall, one that was in dire need of being dressed?

Through her association with the Métis Nation of B.C., Shepherd received the Coca-Cola application form last July, and the company subsequently accepted her design elements, which had to reflect something about the artist.

Since most of her regular artistic work involves designing, stitching and beading intricate moccasins, jewellery and garments (her web-site is www.lisashepherd.ca), Shepherd also designed 15 Métis costumes for dancers in the Olympic opening ceremony.

One included a replica of a beaded jacket often worn by Riel.



VANCOUVER, Feb. 15, 2010 /CNW/ - Today, Coca-Cola selected Lisa Shepherd as the final artist in its Aboriginal art bottle program. In total, 15 artists were selected from more than 100 Aboriginal artists across Canada to participate in the program, which was designed to leverage the Olympic opportunity and help the Aboriginal community share its culture with the world. The program will also help the Aboriginal community financially. From February 15 - 25, 2010, each Coca-Cola Art Bottle will be available to collectors from around the world for purchase at the Aboriginal Art Bottle Auction. All proceeds will go to the Vancouver 2010 Aboriginal Youth Legacy Fund, which supports First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth across Canada.

"Our cultures are thriving and we want to share them with the world," said Tewanee Joseph, Chief Executive Officer of the Four Host First Nations, Official Partners of the 2010 Winter Games. "When visitors come to the Games, they will experience First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultures in an unprecedented way, from works of art in prominent locations at venues to youth acting as torchbearers and flame attendants during the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Torch Relay. The Coca-Cola Aboriginal Art Bottle program is another exciting example of how the diversity of Aboriginal peoples will be showcased during the Games."

The Aboriginal art bottles have been unveiled regionally, across the country, throughout the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Torch Relay. The artists, both amateurs and professionals, are First Nations, Inuit or Métis. An independent adjudication panel conducted the review. The Art Bottles will be on display in Vancouver at various locations during the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games.

"Lisa Shepherd's bottle is titled "the awakening" and represents the art, culture and lifestyle of the Métis people while remembering and honouring the ancestors. The design of the bottle itself brings together elements that are distinct to the Métis people: beaver fur, the Hudson Bay blanket, the combination of leatherwork with floral beading on wool that was so unique to the Métis, the sash that historically had so many practical uses and photo images of the ancestors.

Métis Artist's Beadwork Sells for \$3000 at Art Auction

By admin, Canadian Bar Association on October 13th, 2010

When Lisa Shepherd, Métis Artisan, donated some beaded artwork to The Aboriginal Law Student Scholarship Trust fundraising gala event, it was because she believed in the cause. She never expected her art to receive as much attention as it did.

Formed from a partnership between the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF) and the Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch (CBABC), the purpose of the scholarship fund is to advance legal education for Aboriginal persons by providing annual scholarships to attend law schools in British Columbia.

Shepherd donated a framed beadwork that she created in honour of the Trust and the work being done to protect Aboriginal rights, and create positive change for Aboriginal

peoples and communities. The beadwork included a traditional Métis five petal flower surrounded by Forget-me-nots to represent the strength and spirit of the Métis, no longer the “forgotten people.” It was Shepherd’s hope that it would serve as inspiration to an Aboriginal lawyer or law student, and remind them of the higher purpose that their gift serves. The framed beadwork sold in the silent auction for \$375.

A beaded shawl that was created by Shepherd was also at the auction, given by a private donor who purchased it at the Aboriginal Artisan Village during the 2010 Olympics. Shepherd remembers the shawl being purchased, but didn’t know it would be destined for the auction. It kicked off the live auction, selling for a final bid of \$3000.

The gala event took place at the Sheraton Wall Centre Hotel on September 30, 2010. More than 300 members of the Bench and Bar, and their guests enjoyed festivities including the live and silent Aboriginal art auction, as well as entertainment and a west-coast inspired menu. The night raised more than \$80,000 for the Trust.

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