

Gregory Scofield (b. 1966)

Gregory Scofield is a participating artist and 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.



Greg comments: “These are the vamps for the project. I didn't complete the edging on one of the vamps to symbolize the unfinished lives of our sisters in spirit. The red thread is to symbolize hope and change, the two things that cannot be taken. My prayers go out to the children, sisters, mothers, nieces and nephews, fathers and brothers of all our missing and stolen sisters. Blessings to each of you and may your fingers stitch beauty.” To learn more go to <http://walkingwithoursisters.ca>.

Greg Scofield, Métis poet, beadwork artist, dramatist and non-fiction writer is a graduate of the Gabriel Dumont Institute Native Human Justice Program. He has had two radio dramas produced by the CBC, “The Storyteller” and “Follow the Buffalo Home.” His maternal ancestry can be traced back to the fur trade and to the Métis community of Kinosota, Manitoba, which was established in 1828 by the Hudson's Bay Company.

Greg is the 2013 Carol Shield’s Writer-in-Residence at the University of Winnipeg. He delivered the eighth annual Distinguished Lecture, “Update Your Status” at the University of Winnipeg on March 7, 2013.

Gregory has received the *Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize*, the Canadian Authors’ Association *Most Promising Young Writer Award* and the *Confederation Poets’ Prize*. He has published five highly praised books. His poems have also appeared in Daniel D. Moses and Terry Goldie (Editors): *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English*, (Second Edition, Oxford University Press, 1998). He was the subject of a feature length documentary, *Singing Home The Bones: A Poet Becomes Himself* (The Maystreet Group, 2007) that aired on CHUM TV, BRAVO!, APTN, and the Saskatchewan Television Network. A former outreach worker dealing with street youth in Vancouver, Gregory Scofield has taught First Nations and Métis Literature at Brandon University and the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design. He has served as Writer-in-Residence at the University of Manitoba and Memorial University of Newfoundland.

In Scofield’s first book of poetry, *The Gathering: Stones for the Medicine Wheel* (Vancouver: Polestar Press, 1993), he traces his biographical journey towards spiritual renewal and acceptance. This book won the *Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize*.



In *Native Canadiana: Songs for the Urban Rez* (Vancouver: Polestar Book Publishers, 1996), Scofield writes of street life, his family, Métis dispossession and the effects of Bill C31. Michif Cree words are incorporated into his poems and he captures the cadence and rhythm of Michif speakers in several poems. The book has a glossary of Michif-Cree terms. This book won the Canadian Author’s Association *Most Promising Young Writer Award*. He published *Love Medicine and One Song: Sâkihtowin-mashihkiy êkwa pêyak-nikamowin*. (Polestar), in 1997.

In the book, *I Knew Two Métis Women* (Polestar Book, 1999) Scofield pays tribute to his mother Dorothy Scofield and his “aunt” Georgina Houle Young. He weaves legendary country and western music into the laughter, pain and strength of his mother and aunt. Tall tales, humour and love helped them deal with the vicissitudes of life. It is frankly autobiographical and a rich, multi-voiced tribute to a generation of Aboriginal people.

The book, *Thunder Through My Veins: Memories of a Métis Childhood*. (Harper Flamingo, 1999) is an often-disturbing autobiography, where Scofield relates his journey to rediscover his racial identity. Constant loss, poverty and violence marked his child-

hood. He draws on the wisdom of his relations to find release from the past. Michif-Cree speakers will appreciate the inclusion of Michif-Cree language descriptive phrases. This book should be required reading for all those who wish to do social work with Native children.

Scofield contributed three poems to the recent 2011 anthology *Manitowapow* (James Sinclair and Warren Carriou (Eds.)).¹



Publications:

Scofield, Gregory. *The Gathering: Stones from the Medicine Wheel*. Victoria: Polestar Book Publishers, 1993.

_____ *Native Canadiana: Songs From the Urban Rez*. Victoria: Polestar Book Publishers, 1996.

_____ *Love Medicine and One Song / Sâkihtowin-Maskihkiy êkwa Pêyak-Nikamowin*. Victoria: Polestar Book Publishers, 1997.

_____ *Thunder Through My Veins: Memories of a Métis Childhood*. Toronto: HarperCollins, 1999.

¹ Gregory Scofield, “Women Who Forgot the Taste of Limes,” “The Repatriation of Mrs. Ida M. Scofield,” and “Prayer Song for the Returning of Names and Sons.” In *Manitowapow*, James Sinclair and Warren Carriou (Eds.) Winnipeg: Highwater Press, 2011: 313-320.

_____ “Prayers for Nightmares (Chasing Out the Crows).” *Prairie Fire*. Vol. 22, No 3. (2001): 112-117.

_____ *Singing Home the Bones*. Victoria: Polestar Book Publishers, 2005.

_____ *I Knew Two Métis Women*. Victoria: Polestar Book Publishers, 1999

_____ *Kipocihkân: Poems New and Selected*. Gibsons, B.C.: Nightwood Editions, 2009.

_____ Introduction by Warren Cariou. *Love Medicine and One Song / Sâkihtowin-Maskihkiy êkwa Pêyak-Nikamowin*. Cape Croker F.N.: Kegedonce Press, 2009.

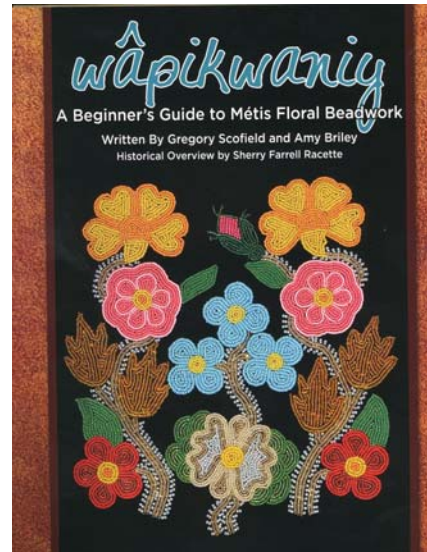
Tapway! Scofield “brings us horses, wind runners, with bellowing nostrils and braided tails.”

_____ *I Knew Two Métis Women: The Lives of Dorothy Scofield and Georgina Young Houle*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2009

This book is accompanied by one CD containing poetry readings and one CD containing country music performed by Métis musicians.

_____ *Louis: The Heretic Poems*. Gibsons, B.C.: Nightwood Editions, 2011.

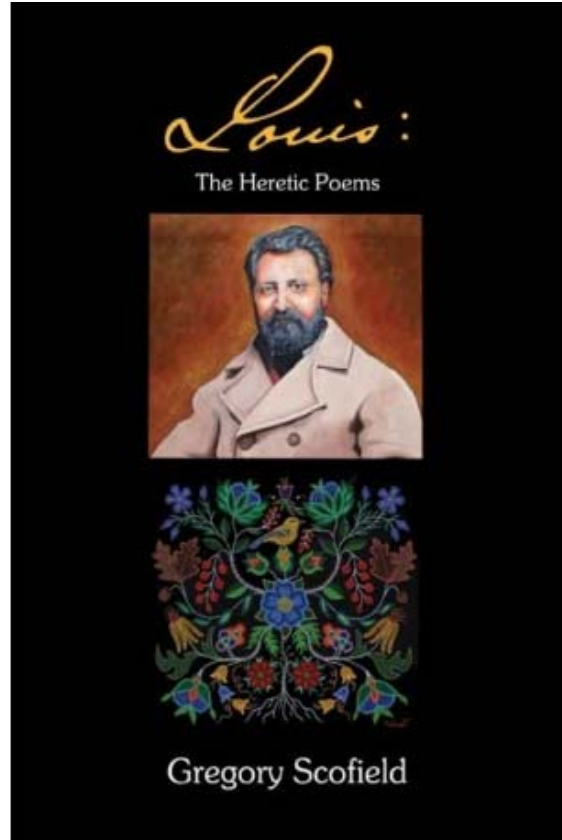
Scofield, Gregory and Amy Briley. With historical overview by Sherry Farrell Racette. *Wâpikwaniy: A Beginner's Guide to Métis Floral Beadwork*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2011. This book discusses supplies (beads, material, templates) choosing bead colours, fabric backing, beading flowers, petals, leaves, stems and gives tips and tricks. The book is accompanied by a DVD video.



Scofield, Gregory. *Louis: The Heretic Poems*. B.C.: Nightwood Editions, 2012.

When I read this most recent “tour de force” by Scofield I am reminded of the Auberon Waugh aphorism: “There are countless horrible things happening all over the country, and horrible people prospering, but we must never allow them to disturb our equanimity or deflect us from our sacred duty to sabotage and annoy them whenever possible.”

It has always been a mystery how venal men without appreciation for the rights of others can temporarily prevail. To these men Scofield gives a hearty “va chier!”



Scofield, Gregory and Amy Briley. with an historic overview of moccasins by Sherry Farrell Racette *maskisina: A Guide to Northern-Style Métis Moccasins*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2011.

maskisina: A Guide to Northern-Style Métis Moccasins is a follow-up to the highly successful *wapikwaniy: A Beginner's Guide to Métis Floral Beadwork*. Much like *wapikwaniy*, *maskisina* guides readers, step-by-step, on how to create their very own moccasins. It contains detailed photographs along with each step and also includes a DVD tutorial. It also includes a historic overview of moccasins by Sherry Farrell Racette. Patterns for cutting the correct sizes for the soles and vamps are included in the book.

maskisina

A Guide to Northern-Style Métis Moccasins

Written By Gregory Scofield and Amy Briley
Historical Overview by Sherry Farrell Racette



Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell
Coordinator of Métis Heritage & History Research
Louis Riel Institute