

Yvonne Chartrand

Yvonne Chartrand is a contemporary choreographer and dancer as well as a national award-winning master Métis jigger and instructor. Her ancestors come from the Métis community of St. Laurent, Manitoba. She is Artistic Director of the Vancouver based contemporary and Métis dance company, *Compaigni V'ni Dansi* where the Louis Riel Métis Dancers perform traditional Métis dance and selected contemporary works.



Yvonne Chartrand is the daughter of Jules Chartrand¹ and Anne Stoesz of St. Laurent, Manitoba. Her father is the son of Aime Chartrand and Antoinette Bouvier. Her father, Jules, is now a Professional Tour Guide and gives lectures on Metis history at the Universities of St. Boniface, University of Winnipeg, and University of North Dakota. In 2004, he travelled to Washington and gave the opening prayer at the opening of the St. Laurent Michif display at the new Museum of the North American Indian. In 2003, Jules appeared and recited Louis Riel's poetry in "A Poet and a Prophet" production of the *Compaigni V'ni Dansi*. Yvonne's uncle, Paul Chartrand, is a former Commissioner of the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*.

¹ On his paternal side Jules is the great-grandson of Jean Baptiste Larence (born 1794, died January 20, 1854) who is buried in the Metis cemetery at Pembina, North Dakota. Jean Baptiste's daughter Clarisse Larence married Jule's grandfather, Jean Baptiste Chartrand (b. 1870). His great-grandfather, Pierre Chartrand was married to Marie Pangman the daughter of Marguerite-Angélique (Wewe-gekabawik) and Pierre 'Bostonais' Pangman Jr. (b. 1794). Pierre Chartrand was the son of Baptiste Chartrand and Jenwah'bik'ahbik also a Saulteaux woman. Pierre Chartrand's brother Michel was married to Marie's sister, Marguerite Pangman. The Chartrand family is one of the four founding families of Fond du Lac, Manitoba (now St. Laurent) on the southeast shore of Lake Manitoba. The other founding families of this community were the Pangmans, Lavallées and Sayers.

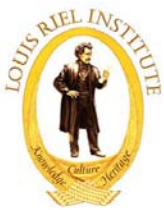
Ms. Chartrand began her dance career with *The Gabriel Dumont Dancers* in 1986 while attending the Fine Arts Program at the University of Manitoba. She has trained with contemporary dance in Winnipeg, Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, New York and the Banff Centre for the Arts. She graduated from *Main Dance Place* in Vancouver in 1998 and trained for three years with *The Full Circle Ensemble*, as part of Margo Kane's Company, *Full Circle: First Nations Performance*.

In 1999, Ms. Chartrand created *Marguerite*, a solo performance honouring Métis women. The company has since produced *A Poet and Prophet; Gabriel's Crossing* and *The Crossing*, celebrating the first annual Louis Riel Day in 2006. *The Crossing*, produced in collaboration with Métis writer Maria Campbell, inspired two community projects including performances at the Batoche National Historical Site of Canada. In 2008, the Batoche project received a Tourism Saskatchewan award for creative excellence. Ms. Chartrand's most recent solo contemporary work *Stories from St. Laurent* premiered in Vancouver, where she currently resides. *Cooking it up Métis* is in development and is set to premiere in March 2012.

On June 22, 2011, Yvonne Chartrand won the Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award for dance. Chartrand is the artistic director of the Vancouver-based contemporary and Métis dance company *Compaigni V'ni Dansi*, which performs both traditional Métis dance and selected contemporary works. This annual award recognizes outstanding mid-career artists in the seven disciplines funded by the Canada Council for the Arts. Winners are chosen from the pool of applicants from the Grants to Professional Artists programs. The prizes were created with funds bestowed to the Canada Council by the late Victor Martyn.

Reference:

Yvonne Chartrand, personal communications, Metis Fest 2012, Killarney, Manitoba, July 28-29, 2012.



Edited and Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell
Coordinator of Metis Heritage and History Research
Louis Riel Institute