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[wîskwêpitâkan] - sacred bundle

Adele ᐱᑎᐅᑏᐱᐱᐅᑏ Arseneau
June 19, 2023 —————> July 14, 2023
Pendulum Gallery



This body of work is near and dear to my heart, what one might call a personal ceremony to honor the children and survivors of the Residential School systems. Assembling 161 unique tihkinākan (cradleboard) and wāspison (mossbag) combinations by hand: a culmination of hidetanning, beadwork, carving and community. All the things, we in the Native communities have struggled to regain, redefine and reconnect because of the legacy and impacts of the Residential schools. In creating a community around this issue - an issue that outlines the tremendous violence of settler colonialism - the body of work is both sculptural as well as a performance of what can be called “an act of love”. By fore-fronting the world-altering love of Indigenous communities, Adele ᐱᓕᓕᓐᓂᓐᓂᓐ Arseneau has created an exhibit that places grief and celebration in devastating symmetry.

The ᐅᓐᓂᓐᓂᓐ [wiskwêpitâkan] - sacred bundle – one for every school named in the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement are nestled in the soft fur of reclaimed traditional home tanned animal hides, returning sacred Indigenous children to the comfort of culture from which they were stolen. The stolen are represented in their beauty and vibrancy so that we may witness what violence destroys and life embodies in every mossbag. May these stories remain ever in our collective consciousness.

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It took a community who believed in this work and assisted in the actualization of it. I would like to acknowledge the contributions of:



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bailey macabre
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Sandy Scofield
Sarah Cavanaugh
Sebastian Laufer
Shevonne Hall
Suzan Kostiuk
Syrus Marcus Ware
Tanysha Dutton

*Kinināskomināwāw/
maarsii nitotemakanak.*



*My work is about stories and sharing awe through detail.
We are the stories we hear and tell each other, this is our world.
Through story we find connection, and relation to one another's
experiences.*

This is my language, these are my stories.



Adele Lⁿb·rΔ·nq·o Arseneau

A disabled nehiyaw/Michif multi-disciplinary artist, Adele creates bespoke work with stories to engage audiences through relatable feelings and experiences thus weaving connection to cultural, social and environmental issues. It was the way her family taught her to learn and share knowledge.

Displaced from her family's traditional territory of Northern Saskatchewan, Adele grew up with the Dakelh (Carrier) people of British Columbia in Prince George, and Fraser Lake. Moving away from the traditions of her adopted family while journeying towards those of her biological family.

She carves cedar, beads contemporary Métis and plains style traditional beadwork, creates hide textiles and digital art. She has completed the Reconciliation Carving program at Langara, and holds diplomas in both Fine Art and Graphic Design. In 2019 she finished a hide tanning residency with Fern and Roe and continues to mentor upcoming hide tanners.

Currently, she is a member of the Triia Native Art Collective in Montana, Cowichan Valley Arts Council, North Vancouver Arts Council, Seymour Art Gallery, CARFAC and a consultant for the Metis Nation BC's Culture & Heritage Working Group. Since 2015, her work has shown in galleries from North Vancouver to Toronto, including public art with the City of Vancouver.

Dedicated to reconnecting culture, she looks forward to where her artistic journey is going to take her.

Her portfolio can be viewed at: <https://aarseneau.com>
or on Instagram at: @metiscaron



I want to open up this writing by centralizing two key elements that come out of the exhibition ᐅᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ [wiskwêpitâkan] “sacred bundle”: First this work requires us to continue to witness and talk about the devastations that were confirmed, but always known, regarding the initial and ongoing discovery of the 215 unmarked graves in Kamloops. These atrocities that are inflicted on Indigenous peoples happened across Turtle Island and too quickly get forgotten when the news headlines move on. Forgetting will never be an acceptable reaction to this violence. Adele ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ Arseneau has created a powerful body of work that forces us to confront this historical violence and requires us to continue to talk about it. Our reparations require that we both continue to witness these stories and that in doing so we actively commit to and engage in change. But, these histories of violence and devastation are in fact histories of whiteness. Too often do we see trauma and inscribe that on Indigenous bodies and communities without recognizing that what we are looking at is the ugly histories and contemporary practices of settler colonialism.

This brings me to the second striking element of this exhibition. This body of work invites us as an audience into a space that also has us immersed in joy, beauty, community, and strength. The work draws on skills, traditions, and practices that the artist reminds are ongoing acts of resistance to learn, practice, and reclaim. In creating work that is rooted in traditional practices the exhibition creates space to revel in the power that exists not only in practicing hidetanning, beadwork, and carving but also in learning and teaching these in spaces that deeply honours traditional protocols. The community that Adele has brought together around this work has created sacred spaces for Indigenous kinship to be nurtured. In an equally remarkable way Adele has invited non-Indigenous community members in as a practice of trust. With a deep respect for protocols taught by elders, Adele passed along traditional practices to Indigenous disabled youth. With a spirit of generosity Adele found elements of the work - specifically elements that were not traditional teachings or practices - as a place to have conversations with non-Indigenous community members. The learning that happened in each distinctly separate space has been life-altering for all.

And so I wrap up my thoughts with a reflection of: why have I curated this body of work in the context of Disability Arts and Culture. While I could write an entire chapter on this, what I will focus on here is this: ᐅᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ [wiskwêpitâkan] - sacred bundle is a body of work that needs to be centered in our conversations about the disabled experience. But, what the takeaway from the complex stories represented through this work will be different for everyone. If we pause and listen carefully we see and learn that settler colonialism has upheld and contributed to the ongoing disablement of Indigenous peoples, communities, and land in devastating ways - and when we only acknowledge this when it's a headline in a newspaper we are a part of the problem. We also are taught that in stories of Indigenous disability we can also center joy, reclamation, reconnection, and redefinitions of what it means to be both Indigenous and disabled in this world. This exhibit is set-up with large framed hides tanned by Adele, on which the ᐅᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ [wiskwêpitâkan] - sacred bundle are hung. Let me invite you into this circle to pause and consider what it is to be in relationship with the stories that you are hearing: take them with you, and share them with your communities.

Jenna Reid
Curator
Artistic Director,
Kickstart Disability Arts & Culture





When the discovery of the bodies of 215 children at the Kamloops Residential School site was first announced, the news rippled through our communities and put us all in a state of mourning. The stories our relations and ancestors had been telling us for generations were confirmed. Each of the discoveries, in Kamloops and beyond, represents a child, a family member, one of our kin who never made it home.

Adele ᐱᓕᓕᓐᓂᓐ ᐱᓕᓕᓐᓂᓐ Arseneau's work in ᐅᓐᓂᓐᓂᓐ ᐱᓕᓕᓐᓂᓐ [wiskwêpitâkan] - sacred bundle tells an intergenerational story; the use of mossbags and cradle boards not only demonstrates the significance and cultural importance of our children, they also represent a duality that is both striking and harrowing. Each of these pieces represents one of the 140 institutions listed in the Canadian Residential School agreement - which are consistently being uncovered as mass grave sites, yet they are further indicative of the absence of these children who have been taken from us - an array of mossbags sit displayed on hide lovingly prepared by Adele.

This exhibition is an act of love - not only does it raise awareness and bring attention to the mass genocide our people have faced at the hands of the Canadian government, it showcases Adele's love and care for each of the

children who never made it home. The amount of tedious, painstaking work to not only make each mossbag and cradle board, but also to gather materials and prepare the hides becomes an act of meditation. It's a way for Adele to turn something tragic and horrendous into a communal act of love.

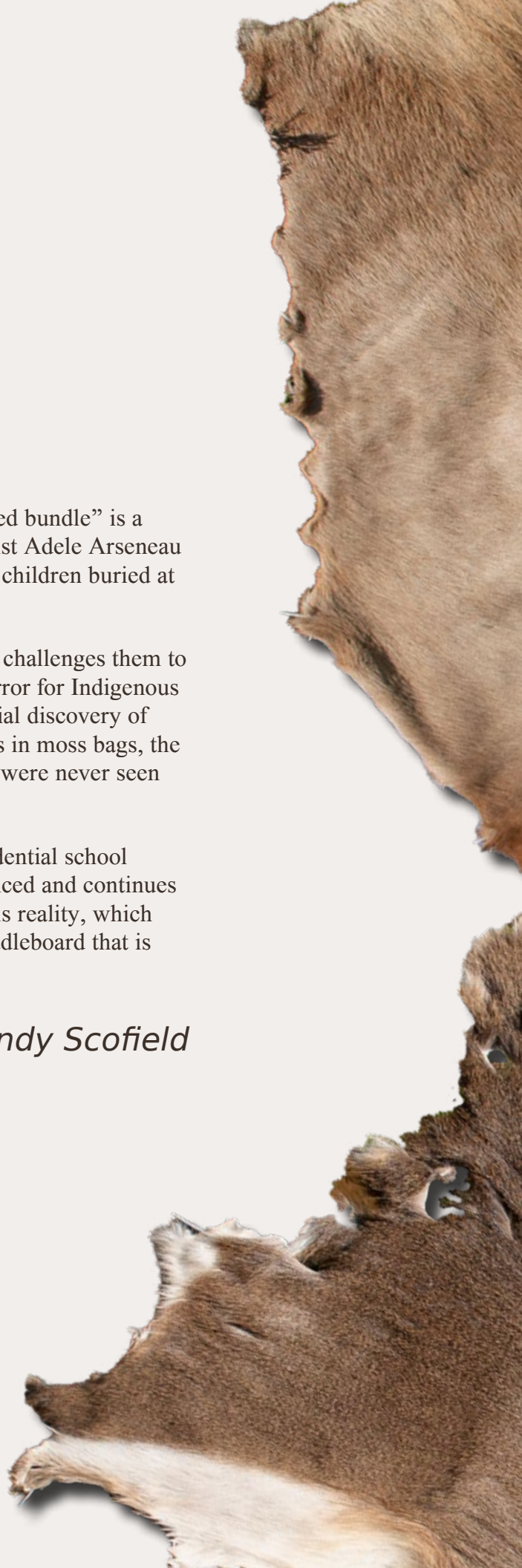
These pieces bridge the gap between the historical and the present, as well as the past and our future. They ask us to look at where we have come from, what this country has done to those who come from this land, and question where we are headed as a society. Who are we as a country if we have enabled the mass murder of Indigenous youth at the hands of our government in tandem with the churches? How do we move forward in a way that honours these children and protects the Indigenous youth of today?

ᐅᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ [wiskwêpitâkan] - sacred bundle also holds space for our disabled, Indigenous relations. Not only is Adele a disabled artist, but they also reached out to disabled Indigenous youth to assist in the creation of these pieces. The significance of inviting our disabled kin into this space and to be involved in the creation of this work is immeasurable, as we are often gatekept from such places and are not often seen as worthy or capable of such creation.

bailey macabre







ᑎᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ [wiskwêpitâkan] - “sacred bundle” is a body of work by nehiyaw michif artist Adele Arseneau that speaks to the sacred lives of the children buried at Residential schools.

The collection invites audiences and challenges them to consider the ramifications of this horror for Indigenous people today beginning with the initial discovery of 215 missing children- faceless babies in moss bags, the children who never came home that were never seen again by their families.

Adele is the granddaughter of a residential school survivor and her family has experienced and continues to experience the ramifications of this reality, which is honoured through the one sole cradleboard that is displayed apart from the rest.

Sandy Scofield

*Prince Albert:
Onion Lake Church of England,
St. Alban's, All Saints, St. Barnabas,
Lac La Ronge*

Prince Albert,
Saskatchewan

Mohawk Institute

Brantford,
Ontario



*Guy Hill:
Clearwater, The Pas*
*formerly Sturgeon Landing,
Saskatchewan*

The Pas,
Manitoba



Shubenacadie

Shubenacadie,
Nova Scotia





Poplar Hill

Poplar Hill,
Ontario



File Hills

Balcarres,
Saskatchewan



*St. John's,
Wabasca Anglican/
Church of England*

Wabasca,
Alberta



Brandon

Brandon,
Manitoba

*Lapointe Hall:
Fort Simpson
Roman Catholic*

Fort Simpson,
Northwest Territories



All Saints, Aklavik Anglican

Aklavik,
Northwest Territories

*Muscowequan:
Lestock, Touchwood*

Lestock,
Saskatchewan





*Port Simpson:
Crosby Home for
Girls*

Port Simpson,
British Columbia



Old Sun

Gleichen,
Alberta



Kamloops

Kamloops,
British Columbia



Regina

Regina,
Saskatchewan



Dauphin, McKay

The Pas/Dauphin,
Manitoba



*Fort George:
St. Philip's*

Fort George,
Quebec



*Federal Hostel
at Port Harrison:
Inoucdjouac,
Innoucdouac*

Inukjuak,
Quebec

*Fleming Hall:
Fort McPherson*

Fort McPherson,
Northwest Territories





Blue Quills: Saddle Lake, Sacred Heart
formerly Lac La Biche

St. Paul,
Alberta



Breynat Hall: Fort Smith

Fort Smith,
Northwest Territories



Round Lake

Stockholm,
Saskatchewan



Pelican Lake: Pelican Falls

Sioux Lookout,
Ontario





*Norway House
United Church*

Norway House,
Manitoba



*St. Mary's: Blood,
Immaculate
Conception*

Cardston,
Alberta



*Federal Hostel
at Cape Dorset*

Kinngait,
Nunavut



*Crowfoot:
St. Joseph's,
Ste. Trinité*

Cluny,
Alberta



*Federal Hostel
at Payne Bay: Bellin*

Kangirsuk,
Quebec



*St. Mary's:
Kenora,
St. Anthony's*

Kenora,
Ontario



*Cariboo:
St. Joseph's,
Williams Lake*

Williams Lake,
British Columbia



*Shingle Point
predecessor to All Saints,
Aklavik*

Shingle Point,
Yukon



*Chesterfield Inlet:
Turquetil Hall*

Chesterfield Inlet,
Nunavut



*Thunderchild:
Delmas, St. Henri*

Delmas,
Saskatchewan



*Grouard:
St. Bernard's,
Lesser Slave Lake
Roman Catholic*

Grouard,
Alberta



*Federal Hostel
at Frobisher Bay:
Ukkivik*

Iqaluit,
Nunavut



*Amos:
Saint-Marc-de-
Figuery*

Amos,
Quebec



*Sarcee:
St. Barnabas*

T'suu Tina,
Alberta



*Spanish Boys
School:
Charles Garnier,
St. Joseph's
formerly Wikwemikong
Industrial*

Spanish,
Ontario



Sandy Bay

Marius,
Manitoba

St. George's: Lytton

Lytton,
British Columbia



*Fort George:
St. Joseph's Mission,
Résidence Couture,
Sainte-Thérèse-de-
l'Enfant-Jésus*

Fort George,
Quebec



*Federal Hostel
at Baker Lake,
Qamani'tuaq*

Qamanittuaq,
Nunavut





*Akaitcho Hall:
Yellowknife*

Yellowknife,
Northwest Territories



Kivalliq Hall

Rankin Inlet,
Nunavut



St. Albert: Youville

Youville,
Alberta

Sacred Heart

Brocket,
Alberta



*St. Paul's:
Blood, Anglican/
Church of England*

Cardston,
Alberta



Grandin College

Fort Smith,
Northwest Territories





Pointe Bleue

Pointe Bleue,
Quebec



*Gordon's,
Gordon's Reserve*

Punnichy,
Saskatchewan



Birtle

Birtle,
Manitoba



*Federal Hostel
at George River*

Kangirsualujjuaq,
Quebec



Lejac: Fraser Lake

Fraser Lake,
British Columbia





Morley: Stony

Morley,
Alberta



*Assiniboia:
Winnipeg*

Winnipeg,
Manitoba



McIntosh

McIntosh,
Ontario



Fort George Hostels

Sept. 1, 1975 - June 30, 1978
Fort George,
Quebec

*Federal Hostel at
Fort Franklin*

Déline,
Northwest Territories



*Stirland Lake
High School:
Wahbon Bay Academy*

Sept. 1, 1971 - June 30, 1991
Stirland Lake,
Ontario



Kuper Island

Kuper Island,
British Columbia





Coqualeetza

1924 - 1940
Chilliwack/Sardis,
British Columbia



Sturgeon Lake: St. Francis Xavier

Calais,
Alberta



Portage la Prairie

Portage la Prairie,
Manitoba

*Cecilia Jeffrey:
Kenora, Shoal Lake*

Kenora,
Ontario



*St. Cyprian's:
Queen Victoria's
Jubilee Home*

Brocket, Piegan Reserve,
Alberta



Chapleau: St. John's

Chapleau,
Ontario





*Lebret: Qu'Appelle,
Whitecalf, St. Paul's
High School*

Lebret,
Saskatchewan



*Edmonton
formerly Red Deer Industrial*

St. Albert,
Alberta



Joussard: St. Bruno's

Joussard,
Alberta

*Shingwauk:
Wawanosh Home*

Sault Ste. Marie,
Ontario



*Federal Tent Hostel
at Coppermine*

Coppermine,
Nunavut





*Notre Dame Hostel:
Norway House Roman
Catholic, Jack River
Hostel*

*replaced Jack River Annex
at Cross Lake*

Norway House,
Manitoba



St. Paul's Hostel

Sept. 1920 - June 1943
Dawson City,
Yukon



*Fort Frances:
St. Margaret's*

Fort Frances,
Ontario

Crowstand

Kamsack,
Saskatchewan



*Cote Improved
Federal Day School*

Sept. 1928 - June 1940
Kamsack
Saskatchewan

*Fort Hostel at
Great Whale River:
Poste-de-la-Baleine*

Kuujjuaraapik/Whapmagoostui,
Quebec





*Federal Hostel
at Broughton Island*

Qikiqtarjuaq,
Nunavut



*St. Anne's:
Fort Albany*

Fort Albany,
Ontario



*Holy Angels:
Fort Chipewyan,
École des
Saints-Anges*

Fort Chipewyan,
Alberta



*Lac la Biche:
Notre Dame des
Victoire
predecessor to Blue Quills*

1893 - 1898
Lac la Biche,
Alberta

*Mount Elgin:
Muncey, St. Thomas*

Munceytown,
Ontario



St. Philip's

Kamsack,
Saskatchewan



*Yukon Hall:
Whitehorse,
Protestant Hostel*

Whitehorse,
Yukon





Beauval: Lac la Plonge

Beauval,
Saskatchewan



*Assumption:
Hay Lakes*

Assumption,
Alberta



Ermineskin

Hobbema,
Alberta



Kitimaat

Kitimaat,
British Columbia



*Anahim Lake
Dormitory*

Sept. 1968 - June 1977
Anahim Lake,
British Columbia



St. Mary's: Mission

Mission,
British Columbia

*Marieval:
Cowesess,
Crooked Lake*

Grayson,
Saskatchewan





Fort Pelly

Fort Pelly,
Saskatchewan



Elkhorn: Washakada

Elkhorn,
Manitoba



*Sacred Heart:
Fort Providence*

Fort Providence,
Northwest Territories



*Stringer Hall:
Inuvik Anglican
Hostel*

Inuvik,
Northwest Territories





Wawanosh Home

Jan. 1, 1879 - Aug. 5, 1892
Sault Ste. Marie,
Ontario

Federal Hostel at Cambridge Bay

Cambridge Bay,
Nunavut



Federal Hostel at Eskimo Point

Arviat,
Nunavut

Cross Lake: St. Joseph's, Jack River Annex predecessor to Notre Dame Hostel

Cross Lake,
Manitoba





*Federal Hostel
at Pangnirtung:
Pangnirtang*

Pangnirtung/Panniqtuuq,
Nunavut

*Sturgeon Landing
predecessor to Guy Hill,
Manitoba*

Sturgeon Landing,
Saskatchewan



*Fort William:
St. Joseph's*

Fort William,
Ontario

Whitehorse Baptist

Whitehorse,
Yukon





*St. Michael's:
Duck Lake*

Duck Lake,
Saskatchewan



*Churchill
Vocational
Centre*

Churchill,
Manitoba





*Federal Hostel
at Belcher Islands*

Sanikiluaq,
Nunavut

*St. Anthony's:
Onion Lake Roman
Catholic*

Onion Lake,
Saskatchewan



Lower Post

Lower Post,
British Columbia

*St. Joseph's:
Dunbow*

High River,
Alberta





*Christie:
Clayoquot, Kakawis*

Tofino,
British Columbia



Carcross: Chooutla

Carcross,
Yukon



*Coudert Hall:
Whitehorse Hostel,
Student Residence
predecessor to Yukon Hall*

Whitehorse,
Yukon



*Cranbrook:
St. Eugene's,
Kootenay*

Cranbrook,
British Columbia



*Fort Vermilion:
St. Henry's*

Fort Vermilion,
Alberta



*Pine Creek:
Camperville*

Camperville,
Manitoba



*Hay River:
St. Peter's*

Hay River,
Northwest Territories



*Battleford
Industrial School*

Dec. 1883 - May 1914
Battleford,
Saskatchewan

*St. Michael's:
Alert Bay Girls' Home
Alert Bay Boys' Home*

Alert Bay,
British Columbia



*Bompas Hall:
Fort Simpson Anglican*

Fort Simpson,
Northwest Territories



*Spanish Girls School:
St. Joseph's,
St. Peter's, St. Anne's
formerly Wikwemikong Industrial*

Spanish,
Ontario





*Federal Hostel
at Pond Inlet*

Mittimatalik,
Nunavut



*Immaculate
Conception, Aklavik
Roman Catholic*

Aklavik,
Northwest Territories



Ahousaht

Ahousaht,
British Columbia



*Desmarais:
St. Martin's,
Wabasca Roman
Catholic*

Desmarais-Wabasca,
Alberta

*St. Augustine:
Smoky River*

1900 - 1907
Smoky River,
Alberta



La Tuque

La Tuque,
Quebec

*Federal Hostel
at Igloodik*

Igloodik/Iglulik,
Nunavut





*Sept-Îles:
Notre-Dame,
Maliotenam*

Sept-Îles,
Quebec

*Grollier Hall:
Inuvik Roman
Catholic*

Inuvik,
Northwest Territories



*Cristal Lake High
School*

Sept. 1, 1976 - June 30, 1986
Cristal Lake,
Ontario

*Federal Hostel
at Lake Harbour*

Kimmirut,
Nunavut





*Bishop Horden Hall:
Moose Fort,
Moose Factory*

Moose Island,
Ontario

Mistassini Hostels

Sept. 1, 1971 - June 30, 1978
Mistassini,
Quebec



*Lesser Slave Lake:
St. Peter's*

Lesser Slave Lake,
Alberta

*Whitefish Lake:
St. Andrew's*

Whitefish Lake,
Alberta





*St. Joseph's:
Fort Resolution*

Fort Resolution,
Northwest Territories



Alberni

Port Alberni,
British Columbia



Sechelt

Sechelt,
British Columbia



*St. Paul's:
Squamish,
North Vancouver*

North Vancouver,
British Columbia

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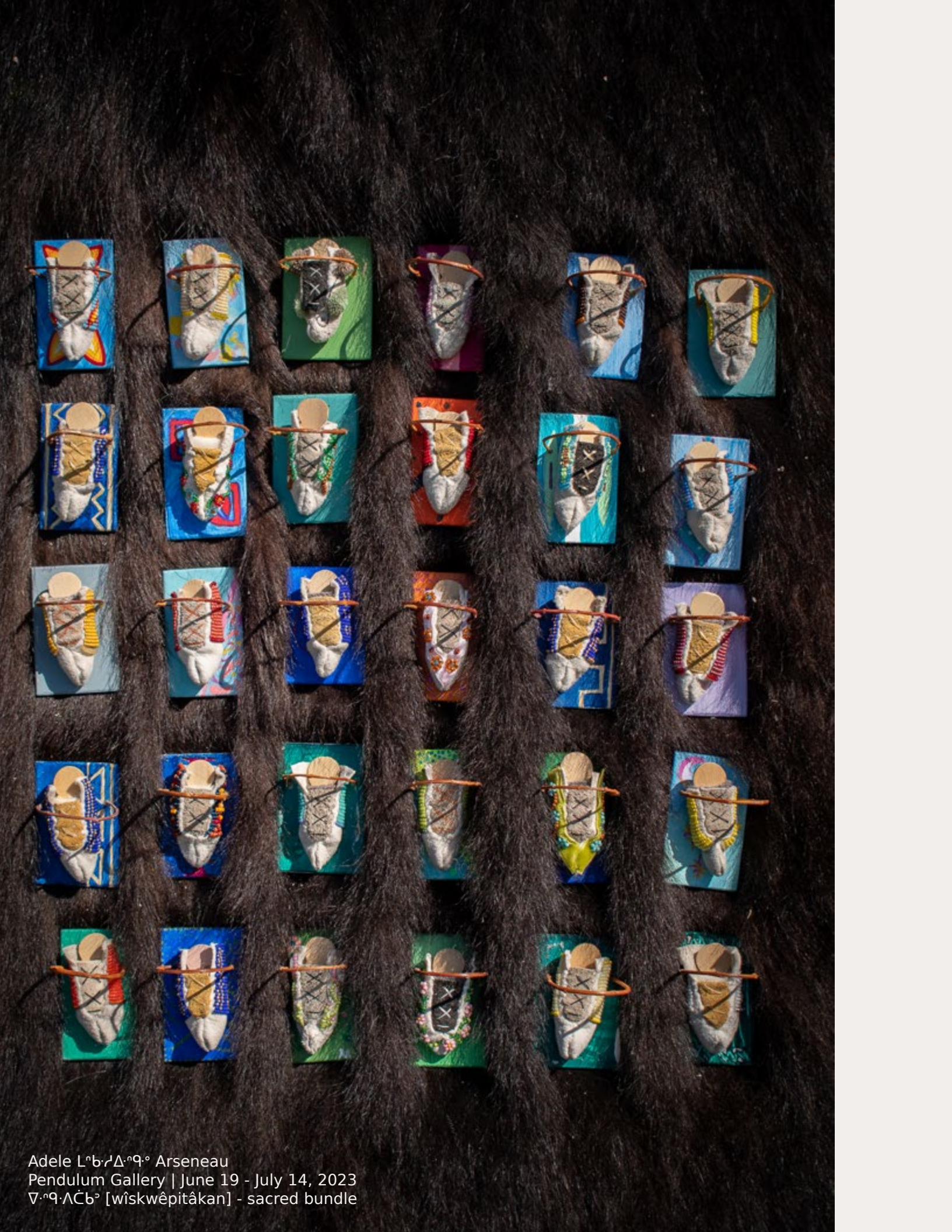
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Adele L'abrd'arseneau
Pendulum Gallery | June 19 - July 14, 2023
V'q'Ac'b' [wiskwêpitâkan] - sacred bundle