



Melanie Gamache

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Borealis Beading

### **Artist Statement**

Melanie Gamache is a Manitoba Métis Artisan. She started beadwork as a form of meditative therapy, and it has helped her to dig deeper into her Métis culture and heritage, discovering her connection and responsibility with beading and the environment. Each piece she creates is an expression of gratitude to her ancestors, “The Flower Beadwork People”.

### **Artist Biography**

Originally from Laurier, Manitoba, Melanie Gamache has settled on an acreage in Ste Genevieve, Manitoba. She is a self-taught beadwork artisan who prides herself on continuing to learn about her Métis culture and heritage.

Melanie began her beadwork journey during the winter of 2014-2015. It started as a form of meditative therapy, and it has helped her to dig deeper into her Métis culture and heritage, discovering her connection and responsibility with beading and the environment. Some of her Metis practices include harvesting, such as berry picking and hunting. As a harvester she is a firm believer that it is our responsibility to use as much of an animal as possible and give thanks for all that is taken from Mother Earth, leaving enough for regeneration.

Her beadwork is created using the 2-needle beading technique which is a traditional method used by her ancestors. Each piece she creates is based on research of historical pieces seen in private collections and museum archives. Although she recharges her creative side with the historic beadwork pieces, she strives to show that the traditional techniques can be used for more contemporary pieces in the modern world.

Over the past few years Melanie Gamache, Borealis Beading, has facilitated several workshops through art councils in rural Manitoba. Her workshops are a hands-on creative learning experience where participants learn the art and skill of 2-needle beading along with the cultural and historical significance to the Métis people, “The Flower Beadwork People”. She delivers her workshops in a style reflective of the traditional beading circle format where friends and family would meet to share stories and talk about their day while passing on the traditional art of beadwork.