



Beading Métis Resurgence

David Heinrichs | Vi Houssin
Claire Johnston | Jennine Krauchi
Brianna Oversby

Curated by Jennifer Gibson
and Cathy Mattes

February 12 – April 17, 2026

Known as “The Flower Beadwork People”, the Métis hold specific ties to the land, unique political structures, and strong cultural practices, language, and histories. Ancestor art-makers wrapped their loved ones in beaded prayers to protect and guide them in spiritual practice and democracy building, and to remind colonial settlers that the wearers of beaded garments were of this land.¹ They beaded through trying times and did so with dreams that one day their beaded love would be found by future ancestor artists. This exhibition is in part a result of their dreaming.

Beading Métis Resurgence expands the practice of and critical discourse around contemporary Red River Métis beadwork. The exhibition features work by Jennine Krauchi, David Heinrichs, Vi Houssin, Claire Johnston, and Brianna Oversby, five brilliant makers who honour their Métis culture and knowledge systems while forging new artistic trajectories. All hold deep expertise and respect for ancestor art, the ability to beautifully share stories visually, and a love for materiality. They are rigorous with their experimentation with materials and concepts, and carry a commitment to being in relation with each other via reciprocal beaded love.

At the heart of *Beading Métis Resurgence* is the honouring of Jennine Krauchi’s legacy as a matriarch who has guided the revitalization of Métis beadwork by creating magnificent pieces seen in national and international museums and exhibits. Jennine originally learned beadwork and sewing during her youth from family and community members, and began beading in earnest in the 1990s. Her selfless cultural offerings began at a time when interest and opportunities to learn about ancestral art-making was more limited, and her actions have inspired many others to keep, or bring their Métis hearts home, with beadwork. She has led numerous beading and quilling workshops in public schools and universities, at festivals, at the Manitoba Museum and C2 Centre for Craft, and for visual art organizations like Mentoring Artists for Women’s Art (MAWA) where she was a mentor in their Foundation Mentorship Program from 2022 to 2023. As well, she continues to mentor artists by gathering with them around her kitchen table and sharing her expertise, teachings, and encouragement on a regular basis. This exhibition makes evident Jennine’s

¹ Cathy Mattes, “Wahkootowin, “Beading and Métis Kitchen Table Talk: Indigenous Knowledge and Strategies for Curating Care” in *Radicalizing Care, Feminist and Queer Activism in Curating*, edited by Elke Krasny, Sophie Lingg, et al. (Sternberg Press, 2021), 135.

on-going intergenerational mentorship and collaboration with David, Vi, Claire, and Brianna.

As Jennine notes, Métis beadwork designs are often worn on the body and tell stories “that draw from our ancestors and our culture.”² Her seminal work, *The Lady*, majestically stands at the centre of the gallery and epitomizes this premise. Jennine made this piece during pandemic lockdowns when she was able to devote hundreds of hours to its creation. *The Lady* was inspired by *Farandole*, the artist’s 2011 international collaboration and touring exhibition with Breton designer and embroidery artist Pascal Jaouen.³ With *The Lady*, Jennine merges contemporary European fashion and customary Métis style, while challenging historic gender binaries found in cultural dress. Talented women-identified ancestors would make elaborately beaded garments for men and children, or to sell or trade with Euro-colonial visitors and settlers. But *The Lady* is designed for the modern Métis woman. Her stylish coat and pillbox hat reference a traditional capote and men’s smoker’s cap, the boots with beaded spats are a formal alternative to moccasins, and the muff is based on a traditional *sac de feu* (tabbed fire bag, also commonly called an octopus bag) which men used to carry



Jennine Krauchi, *The Lady*

2 Cathy Mattes, “Artist Feature-Jennine Krauchi” in *Pawaatamihk-Journal of Métis Thinkers*, Vol.1, No.1 (2023). <https://pawaatamihk.uwinnipeg.ca/index.php/Pawaatamihk/issue/view/1>.

3 *Farandole* was exhibited at La maison des artistes visuels francophones in 2012. Curated by Jenny Western, it featured the work of Pascal Jaouen and Colette Balcaen, with beadwork by Jennine Krauchi with Jenny Meyers.

essentials for survival. Jennine's virtuosic attention to detail carries through the entirety of *The Lady* – her exquisite floral beadwork across the muff, hat and boots in front is amplified along the back of the coat in a singular flowing composition that extends organically across the bottom and grows up along the spine to the neck.

Jennine's connection with David, Vi, Claire and Brianna developed over the past eight years. She met David Heinrichs first, initially seeing his beadwork in 2018 at the Louis Riel Institute's Flower Beadwork Circle. Jennine recognized David's talents and began informally mentoring him in creating a *sac de feu*.

Beading Métis Resurgence features David's unique wearable neck piece *Armour*, which conveys his immense respect for the intricacies of ancestral fire bags. The curved shapes and looped, beaded tassels along the bottom edge of the neck piece echo these unique bags, and his use of maroon-red velvet backing and floral motifs all nod to the innovation, creativity, and love of materials held by ancestor artists. David, however, departs from a perfectly symmetrical design often favoured by beaders and breathes life into the central flower by positioning it slightly tilted. This central flower has five petals in two different tones, a signature style the artist repeats in the roses on his newest work, *Vest*. *Vest* is an exuberant declaration of the artist's identity as a queer Métis man. Here, David combines customary materials such as home-tanned hide, leather fringes, and beaded florals with flashy leopard print denim. The flowers chosen by the artist are queer-coded: pansies, lavender and roses.



David Heinrichs, *Armour*

Queer joy extends to Vi Houssin's work in the exhibition. Her *Nipple Pasties II*, is a playful, sparkly and sexy tribute to trans women like herself, beaded in the colours of the trans flag. The artist notes that the beaded motif centring this proudly queer and meticulously rendered work is not a specific flower, though it could read as a prairie rose which is said to be a symbol of Métis resilience. Vi met Jennine in 2022 when the latter was her



Vi Houssin, *Lot's Wife*

artist mentor for MAWA's Foundation Mentorship Program. In Vi's work *Lot's Wife*, the training she received from Jennine and her study of ancestor art is evident in the intricate floral motifs covering the red velvet background. Thematically, this piece invokes a biblical narrative to respond to contemporary social justice issues. The story is one of forced migration: Lot's wife (who is unnamed) had to flee her community abruptly as it was being destroyed. Today, there are similar situations of displacement near and far due to war, famine, climate crises, or other human caused disasters. Vi's richly coloured beadwork, accentuated with gilded beads, gives way to monochromatic white, referencing the transformation of Lot's wife to a pillar of salt as she looks back in longing and despair for the home to which she could not return.

Claire Johnston also combines their devotion to ancestral techniques with present-day social justice concerns in their artistic creations. *Stop Using All!* is a beaded fire bag that Claire began while under Jennine's tutelage in 2022. Claire set the piece aside for some time, deciding to pursue their love of the miniature to produce tiny, beaded fire bag earrings and many



Claire Johnston, *without children there is no sweetness*

other small works. During the past year, however, Claire became distressed witnessing how AI has been used to steal original bead designs created by Indigenous artists. Compelled to respond, they returned to complete their full-size *sac de feu*, adorning it with lushly beaded florals and expressive swirling patterns signifying their ancestral Métis heritage. Claire included a bold message on each side of the bag, proclaiming with beads their opposition to AI-related art theft. A counterpoint to this piece is Claire's child-sized vest entitled *without children there is no sweetness*. Claire has a special connection with children, noting how important it is to both teach and learn from children. They made this home-tanned child's vest as a gift to their younger self, imagining how much they would have revelled in wearing such a garment. Like Claire's fire bag, this vest showcases the artist's careful attention to detail and is the result of countless hours of studying ancestral materials and methods, self-reflection, and observation of the world around them.

Like Claire and Vi, Brianna Oversby met Jennine in 2022. Their first encounter was when Brianna enrolled in a quilling workshop that Jennine taught at the Manitoba Museum which was organized by MAWA. Soon afterwards, Brianna, Claire, Vi, David and Jennine all began gathering at Jennine's home to bead together. Brianna's work is concerned with

how artmaking takes care of our bodies, a concept they explore across multiple forms and media. Upon entering the gallery, visitors encounter three of their drawings that might read as studies of organic forms. One or two bold, brightly coloured lines trace a path across and through each of these delicate graphite images, perhaps akin to the wandering line of a needle and thread strung with beads. Meandering beaded lines and shapes also lead us through *Carrying*, Oversby's unique garment that is part vest and part satchel. Organic and inorganic elements such as flowers, buds, leaves, mycelium, and chain links, are sewn in relation with curving, sharp, soft and hard forms that travel across the smoked moosehide, recording complex and layered lived experiences.

The works in *Beading Métis Resurgence* carry historical references that signal these five artists' respect and love for ancestral beadworks, and their makers. At the same time, Jennine, David, Vi, Claire and Brianna pursue innovative techniques and experiment with materiality through their incorporation of traditional and contemporary materials.

They bead bold new forms of wearable art, and use their beaded creations to point out contemporary concerns, social injustices, and reflect upon personal life journeys. Their work is a celebration of their personal stories, cultural contributions, and deep commitment to one another, with Jennine being the center of their collective heart. Through the work of these artists, the resurgence of Métis beadwork is firmly asserted and knows no bounds, just as the ancestor artists would have wanted.

Cathy Mattes and Jennifer Gibson,
Exhibition curators



Brianna Oversby, *Carrying*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

David Heinrichs (he/him) is a Queer Michif beadworker from Winnipeg. David began beading about thirteen years ago, but over the last seven years he became more intentional about time spent working with beads, visiting ancestor pieces in the Manitoba Museum and other archives. He has also worked with porcupine quills and silk embroidery using techniques found in historical Métis art. David has created pieces for those close to him, gifting and adorning them with beadwork to show them that they are loved and honoured. He incorporates his academic background in biological sciences and his passion for connection with the land and plant kin into his beadwork. His work also shares parts of his family's history and story whether that is stories of the ancestors, or his immediate family. As a queer man, creating beadwork allows him to subvert colonial gender roles and expectations. His family names include Poitras, Champagne, Fisher, and Grant with recent family connections to St. Vital and St. Boniface. He is a citizen of the Manitoba Métis Federation and a member of the Two-Spirit Michif Local who lives in Winnipeg with his partner, cat, and dog. His work has been shown at Remai Modern, C2 Centre for Craft, Buhler Gallery in Canada, and at Musée cantonal d'archéologie et d'histoire in Switzerland.

Vi Houssin (she/her) is a transgender beadwork artist and drag performer. Her family is of white settler and Red River Métis ancestry. Her Métis family names are Ritchot, Poitras, Larence and Plante, and her ancestors held scrip in St. Vital and St. Boniface. She is a proud member of the Two-Spirit Michif Local and a citizen of the Manitoba Metis Federation. Vi works and lives in Winnipeg, Canada on Treaty 1 territory where she was born and raised. Vi's work explores the conventions of beadwork as an artistic medium, and as an expression of her Indigeneity. She uses both a traditional Métis two-needle stitch method as well as off-loom bead-weaving in her work to honour her Michif heritage and contribute to the proud craft of her ancestors. She seeks to continue the legacy of contemporary Indigenous artists who affirm that their craft is art, not just artefact, and challenge the fiction that Métis art and culture are sedentary. Vi's work has been supported by the Canada Council for the Arts. She has exhibited her work locally, nationally and internationally. Her most recent show, the solo exhibition *Landfear*, was presented in 2025 at aceartinc.

Claire Johnston is a Red River Métis and settler visual artist based in Winnipeg/Treaty 1 Territory. Some of Claire's Métis family names include Johnston, Brown, Richards and Thomas. Heavily inspired by the aesthetics of historic Métis Grandmother beadwork, Claire creates slow floral beadwork that responds relationally to the past and present. As a teacher and learner, they believe strongly in supporting Métis material art traditions, which are often laboriously sustained by Métis women and Two-Spirit people. In 2025 Claire was selected as a Canada Council Venice Fellow to study Venetian conterie (seed beads) and their connection to Métis beadwork. In Venice, they visited with impiresa (traditional bead threaders) and learned about the history and preservation of Venetian glass bead traditions. In the past three years, Claire's work has been shown locally at Nuit Blanche, Urban Shaman Gallery, Rosemary Gallery, University of Manitoba School of Art Gallery, and Festival du Voyageur. Nationally their work has been exhibited at Tangled Arts and the Bill Reid Gallery, and internationally at Le Musée cantonal d'archéologie et d'histoire in Lausanne and at the Venice Biennale of Architecture. Claire is currently working on a large-scale public artwork commissioned by the Winnipeg Arts Council, scheduled to be unveiled in September 2026. Claire is a Sundancer, a step-parent, an auntie, and an MMF citizen with membership with the Two-Spirit Michif Local.

Jennine Krauchi is an internationally recognized Métis artist and citizen of the Manitoba Métis Federation, whose work is profoundly rooted in her culture and community. As an artist, teacher, mentor and advocate, Krauchi has championed the shared inheritance of Métis beadwork, and her work connects its rich past to contemporary concerns. A descendant of Pierre McLeod and Jane Monkman, she learned beadwork from her mother and sewing from her father. She later spent many years learning from her Métis and First Nations elders. Her media include beadwork, quillwork, embroidery and textile design. Her work has been shown and collected by museums and galleries in Switzerland, Ireland, Scotland, France, United States, and Canada. Krauchi also works as a historical consultant for museums in both Europe and Canada. Her art has been included in exhibits at the National Gallery of Canada, Remai Modern, Winnipeg Art Gallery, the Textile Museum of Canada and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, among many more. She was commissioned to design a commemorative silver coin honouring the Métis Nation for the Royal Canadian Mint. Krauchi is currently working on a major permanent outdoor beadwork façade for the Red River Métis National Heritage Centre in Winnipeg. In 2024, she received the Manitoba Arts Council Award of Distinction, the Winnipeg Arts Council Making a Difference Award, and an Indspire Award. She devotes significant time to leading workshops and mentoring emerging artists to share her expertise.

Brianna Oversby (they/them) is a teacher and interdisciplinary artist living along the Winnipeg River on Red River and Treaty 1 Territory. Their family are Scots-Métis, German, British & Irish settlers. Brianna's Métis family are originally from the Ochre River/Makinak area of Manitoba, and before that Poplar Point. Their ancestors claimed scrip in Poplar Point, St. Paul, and St. James, and family names include Wishart, Spence, Flett, Hallett. Brianna is a member of the MMF (2S Michif Local). Brianna has a fire for learning to stitch and build the things we need. Their practice is held by a passion for the land and is rooted in utility, belonging and remembering. Brianna incorporates aspects of Métis handwork and craft practices alongside techniques from their other lineages and fine arts practices across disciplines. In 2020 Brianna (Breezy) published 'The Saddle Hurts, Too', a short volume of poetry and essays with Metatron Press. Brianna has a BFA in Art Education from Concordia University and completed their M.Ed at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where their focus was on building healing-informed practice for learning spaces.

ABOUT THE CURATORS

Cathy Mattes (MMF citizen, Westman local, Southwest Region) is a curator, writer, and art history professor based out of Sprucewoods, Manitoba. Her curation, research and writing centers on dialogic and Indigenous knowledge-centered curatorial practice as strategies for care. She has a PhD in Indigenous Studies from the University of Manitoba, and she currently teaches at the University of Winnipeg in the History of Art and Curatorial Studies programs. Mattes has been beading since she was 20 years old and has taught beading and moccasin-making in workshops, university courses, and around her kitchen table with family and friends.

Jennifer Gibson is Gallery 1Co3's Director/Curator. She is a settler of Ukrainian and French-Canadian heritage who is grateful to be living and working in Winnipeg on Treaty One Territory and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. Over the past 25 years, she has organized dozens of exhibitions of artists living and working in and beyond Treaty One Territory and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis, especially those from equity-deserving communities. Through her work, she aims to promote an accessible, though rigorous, multi-disciplinary approach to learning through the visual arts. She is a proud alumna of the University of Winnipeg (BA, Honours) and has a Master of Arts degree in Canadian Art History from Carleton University.

LIST OF WORKS

Works are listed on the wall in order of their appearance, beginning along the east side of the gallery, continuing clockwise and concluding with the beadwork displayed in the middle of the gallery. Measurements are height x width x depth.

David Heinrichs, *Vest*, 2026, beadwork on brain tanned caribou hide, denim, antique Italian and French glass seed beads, antique French steel cut beads, modern Czech and Japanese glass seed beads, approximately 115 x 63.5 cm. Collection of the artist.

David Heinrichs, *Armour*, 2025, beadwork on red cotton velveteen, antique Italian and French glass seed beads, antique French steel cut beads, modern Czech and Japanese glass seed beads, 15 x 14 cm. Collection of the artist.

Claire Johnston, *STOP USING AI!* (octopus bag), 2022-26, beadwork on blue melton wool, cotton lining, silk bias tape, home-tanned deer hide (tanned by the artist), antique Italian and French glass seed beads, antique French steel faceted beads, contemporary Czech seed beads, silk thread, wool embroidery thread, micro-fused braided polyethylene bead thread, 43 x 20.5 cm. Collection of the artist.

Claire Johnston, *without children there is no sweetness*, 2022-23, beadwork on home-tanned moose hide, purple melton wool, home-tanned deer hide, cotton lining, antique Italian and French seed beads, antique French steel faceted beads, contemporary Czech seed beads, silk floss, micro-fused braided polyethylene bead thread, 40 x 32 cm. Collection of the artist.

Vi Houssin, *Nipple Pasties II*, 2026, glass seed beads, nylon thread, crystal bicone beads, nylon thread, rhinestone banding, felt, vinyl, embroidery thread, rabbit fur, each 15 x 8 cm. Collection of the artist.

Vi Houssin, *Lot's Wife*, 2025, glass seed beads, nylon thread, acrylic and fabric paint on velvet, 28 x 35.5 cm. Collection of the artist.

Brianna Oversby, *Carrying*, 2026, moosehide, glass and steel beads, rabbit fur, cotton, linen, silver, 53.5 x 38 x 20.5 cm. Collection of the artist.

Brianna Oversby, *Surface Growth*, 2025, graphite, pencil, crayon, paper, 30.5 x 23 cm. Collection of the artist.

Brianna Oversby, *Feathering*, 2025, graphite, pencil, crayon, paper, 30.5 x 23 cm. Collection of the artist.

Brianna Oversby, *Openings*, 2025, graphite, pencil, crayon, paper, 23 x 30.5 cm. Collection of the artist.

Jennine Krauchi, *The Lady*, 2022, reproduction and vintage seed beads sizes 12 – 15, cabochons, braid trim, wool fabric, kasha satin lining, wool yarn, and crystal fox fur trim, 166.5 x 62 x 96 cm. Indigenous Art Collection, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada.

ABOUT GALLERY 1C03

Gallery 1C03 is the campus art gallery of The University of Winnipeg. The gallery opened in September 1986 with the mission to engage diverse communities through the development and presentation of contemporary and historical art exhibitions and related programming initiatives. The Gallery is also responsible for the development, preservation, and presentation of the University's art collection.

EXHIBITION HOURS

Monday to Friday between 12:00 and 4:00 pm from February 12 until April 17, 2026. Closed February 16 and April 3, 2026. Viewing also available by appointment outside of these hours.

FREE AFFILIATED EVENTS

Opening reception: Thursday, February 12, 4:00 to 6:00 pm

Beading workshop with Jennine Krauchi for UWinnipeg community: Monday, March 2, 12:30 to 2:30 pm at the Indigenous Student Services Centre

Critique and conversation for intermediate to advanced beaders with Katherine Boyer, Jennine Krauchi and Dr. Sherry Farrell Racette: Sunday, March 15, 1:00 to 4:00 pm at Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre. Pre-registration required.

Conversation with the artists: Monday, March 23 at 2:30 pm in EG Hall (third floor of Centennial Hall)

Find your stitch workshop with Cathy Mattes: date TBA

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Gallery 1C03 is located on Treaty One Territory and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis, in Wiinibak, Manido Abi. We acknowledge these are the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anisiniinew, Ininiwak/Nehethowuk, Oceti Sakowin/Dakota Oyate, and Michif (Métis) Peoples. This territory is also a place of significance for the Denesuline and the Inuit, some of whom have been living here for generations. We acknowledge that our water is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation (Shoal Lake 39 is also impacted) in Treaty Three Territory, and that most of our hydro-electricity comes from Treaty Five Territory in northern Manitoba. Through the land, we recognize our connection and commitment to working with the Red River Métis, all First Nations Peoples across Turtle Island, and the Inuit of Canada.

Gallery 1C03 wishes to acknowledge funding for this exhibition from the Winnipeg Arts Council. We express our gratitude to exhibition program partners including the University of Winnipeg Office of the Provost, Office of Indigenous Engagement, Dean of Arts, Department of History, Riley Fellowship, Indigenous Student Services Centre, Métis Inclusion Office, Wii Chiiwaakananak Learning Centre, and the Manitoba Craft Council.

Gallery 1C03

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