



We become educators through our art because every piece communicates knowledge of our land, our language, our beliefs, our stories, and our ways of being. It's been a privilege to learn and teach these traditional skills. By passing on the knowledge and teachings, we mentor our youth to ensure this knowledge isn't lost to antiquity.

Thankfully, I had the opportunity to work at the Royal Alberta Museum for a number of years, working in the education department delivering school programs to children. Being in the Indigenous gallery, to visit the collections where our ancestors' works can be viewed and studied, was a great inspiration.

I gained such an appreciation for the work the curators do and for giving me the opportunity to investigate. I was always amazed by the intricate and beautiful artisanship of exquisite pieces in the collection being preserved for future generations. Hands that make are the hands that love.

An artist's work can be very solitary and sometimes lonely, but it can also be a calming form of meditation and therapy.

As for most of us, we love what we do, and it is our passion that pushes us onward. And as 'Art Creators' and 'Art Lovers' we find in our humility the encouragement and support to keep doing what we love.

Often, we are motivated to create, so we can sell our artwork to pay bills, and we are very thankful to those who appreciate what we do by purchasing our work.

As the Indigenous Artist-in-Residence for the City of Edmonton, I am thankful for the opportunities, such as this one and many others, that have broadened my horizons in furthering my art experience. It's been my pleasure.

And to every artist:

- Keep creating
- Keep telling your stories
- Keep educating
- Keep shining

AiyHiy,

MJ