

Hoddinott (Dumont), Donna Lee

Donna Lee Dumont has roots in the Red River Settlement. She is a descendant of Hudson's Bay Company explorer and mapmaker Peter Fidler and his Cree wife, Mary Mackegonne. An educator, artist, and storyteller, she is a participating artist in *Walking With Our Sisters* project.

Donna Lee produced the artwork for Don Freed's album *The Valley Of Green And Blue* (produced by the Gabriel Dumont Institute). This CD also featured extensive liner notes, including the lyrics, historic photos, and Donna Lee Dumont's gorgeous original artwork. She was nominated for an Aboriginal Peoples Choice Music Award for the album's cover design.

In her artist's statement she writes:

I have had an interest in the arts since childhood. As a young person, I packed paint supplies to go sketching in northern Ontario. In northern Saskatchewan, I had the opportunity to paint with A. Y. Jackson. Several audited art classes at the University of Saskatchewan were pursued until I became a full-time student and achieved a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Bachelor of Education.

Oriental brushwork was another interest, and I studied with Professor Szeto Kei in Vancouver for a period of five weeks of private lessons. Some art-related accomplishments include several one-person art shows in Saskatoon, the development and delivering of a Native Art Program for high school students, and being the illustrator for a book, "Byron Through the Seasons," a Dene-English story book for children.

I have always loved colour, shapes, texture and stories of the past. My new paintings seem to be a natural progression of this passion. All the images, cultures, people and places I have experienced seem to appear in my work. I am intrigued by the spirituality of diverse cultures and express this realization through paint.

Because of my teaching experience in a northern Dene community and my teaching in a Saskatoon high school of many cultures, I realize and understand the sameness of all cultures. Cultures are like a conglomerate rock held together by different parts and thereby creating a beautiful stone. Similarly, my paintings include elements of everything that I have read about, that I have seen, and in which I believe.

In 2012, the Gabriel Dumont Institute published *Peter Fidler and the Métis*, a children's book authored and illustrated by Donna Lee. The book has an accompanying CD, narrated by Donna Lee. In 2014, Donna Lee Dumont illustrated *Manny's Memories* by Ken and Angela Caron, and in 2017, illustrated Marion Mutala's *Kohkum's Babushka*.

