

Shelly Fletcher

My name is Shelly Fletcher, I am a member of the Missanabie Cree First Nation, Second generation residential school survivor and recent BFA graduate from Algoma University in 2012. A big part of my returning to finish my degree as a mature student was the fact that my Father and many of my Aunts and Uncles were students at Shingwauk. My inspiration for this painting comes from the residential school survivors who also happen to be my family and friends. They have taught me many valuable life lessons. When I think at any time that my life is bad I am corrected very quickly listening to their stories. I have always had the choice.

A group of generations stand in a sweetgrass wreath with wigwams framed in open books. The generational impacts of the residential school legacy resound today in the children of survivors like me and many of my family. I say that it is painted in the woodland style but I added more realism to the figures in order to capture a more emotive and less mythical feeling. This is not a legend. I wanted to represent all First Nations in Canada whose lives were affected by a corrupted version of a sacred vision. The silhouette of the old Shingwauk building I did not want to glorify it in it's representation but more to be viewed in a state of remembrance of a past that has been transformed today into the original vision of Shingwaukonse.

Chi-Miigwetch,

Shelly Fletcher

