

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY FOR IRVIN HEAD - SCULPTOR

Irvin Head is a Metis man of Cree and Belgian descent. He was born and raised in Northern Manitoba and resides in Cranberry Portage.

Irvin discovered a great passion for carving and artwork and as others told him, great skill as well. The mediums with which he works are Soapstone, Alabaster, Pipestone, Moose Antler, and Diamond Willow. Irvin has been asked to make, and has made many gifts for the Aboriginal leaders of today and for many Elders in the communities he visits. Irvin has also become widely known as a very knowledgeable, yet humble teacher. He is always willing to share what he knows. It appears as though the natural resources that Irvin works with are not being brought to life by him, but are instead bringing life to him.

Irvin has shown his work internationally in Switzerland, Germany and France and also nationally across Canada. Irvin is the Co-Chairperson of the Cranberry Aboriginal Arts Committee and the Co - President of the Manitoba Aboriginal Arts Council Inc.

ARTIST STATEMENT

I have been involved in the arts over the past ten years in varying capacities. First and foremost, as an artist: specializing in the sculpting of stone. I have used the mediums of Cedar Hardwood, Cocobolo Harwood, Oak Hardwood, Maple Hardwood, Diamond Willow Wood; in addition to South African Wonder stone, Granite, Brazilian Soapstone, Limestone, Marble, Alabaster and Antler. I am a self taught sculptor/carver and have taught many upcoming artists in Manitoba and other areas of Canada and overseas. I regularly instruct youth in our region in the art and significance of soapstone carving.

My artwork has been shown across Canada and the also the countries of the United States, China, Switzerland, France, Germany, and Australia. I also own and operate an independent art gallery in my home community of Cranberry Portage, Manitoba. In the gallery I showcase the work of many of Manitoba's finest northern artists. During the peak season of summer, visitors have an opportunity to meet and get to know the artists creating the work, as they often will do demonstrations of their art form during this time.

Most recently, I submitted a proposal and was awarded the commission, to engage with the local community of Thompson, Manitoba and surrounding First Nation communities' representatives. The project that was proposed was to complete an inclusive consultation with these groups of people, to fulfill a request for proposals to design, create and install cedar wood panels that would tell the history of the people of the region and the significance of said history in the local educational facility of University College of the North, Thompson campus. As the campus was newly designed and under construction, I also consulted and worked successfully with the engineering firm of Smith Carter Architects & Engineers, in addition to the contracted construction company PCL Constructors Canada Inc. The project was completed very successfully in the time required and on budget. All contractual obligations were fulfilled in collaboration with all parties involved. The resulting installation was of two very large redwood cedar panels with a historical focus carved within, that were provided an exemplary display location at the absolute main entrance of the new campus facility.

Previous to the UCN project, I was part of an elite group of Aboriginal Artists who participated in a collaborative project. This project was requested by the VANOC Committee, in direct relation to the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. Within this request, we were asked to produce an art installation in sculptural form, which would be placed at the main entrance of the Olympic Curling Venue, in Hillcrest

Park, Vancouver. The piece we produced was of nine ravens in a circle, entitled "Grand Entry". I was also selected as a lead artist on this project.

Each raven was approximately eight feet high and was to be placed individually on six foot pedestals, bringing the height of each piece to fourteen feet. All of the artists in the group were also commissioned by the VANOC Committee to produce two individual pieces of artwork each that were to be shown and auctioned off at an Olympic Art Auction and Gala. This Gala was held in October of 2009. The artists were invited to attend as this would be a form of an international press release to present the art installations to the Canadian and International Sponsors of the Olympic Games. Immediately following the event, we were able to showcase other samples of our artwork. In this particular venue I had the opportunity to network and showcase with the other seventy Aboriginal artists from across Canada who had been invited to participate by the VANOC Committee.



101 Portage Road - SW - (Box 23)
Cranberry Portage, MB R0B - 0H0
P - 204-[923-0282](tel:204-923-0282)
E - northernbuffalo@hotmail.com
W - www.irvinhead.ca