

I call this piece: Theetryą' ts'à' gwiyeħ'at choo / Copper and the Queen

This is a multimedia piece consisting of particle board, steel, copper, porcupine quills, pennies, white heart trade beads, abalone, acrylic paint, shell buttons.

It symbolizes our relationship with the Crown, how we value copper and measure wealth.

Mahsi Cho to my good friend and mentor, Marie Wustner for pushing me past my comfort zone and creating space for me.

Theetryą' ts'à' gwiyeħ'at choo / Copper and the Queen

Copper

Value

Queens

And valor

Shields of wealth

Distribution of health

Our lives were balanced

Until you brought Hell

Cloaked in black and white

Stories they tell

Of evil sights

And devil deeds

Pray our sins away

Tickets to "heaven" on layaway

To be paid off through assimilation

Self mutilation

and spiritual assassination

Our children pick up

The broken pieces that have been

chipped away by shame

The youth create mosaics

Neon flame

Calling in spirits and

Healing rain

Nurturing seeds

On ancestral terrain

Roots stretch past pain

Our connection

Will

Never

Be
Broken
Break
Copper to show our dissatisfaction
Wear disgust like its fashion
Laws of the land shattered
The laws that really matter
It's been spoken
By Matriarchs invoking
Leii Nahshii, Geh'an Vidzaih eh'ok, T'o Nagah'ok/ Our dreams, our spirit, our existence

Nagoohiindaak, Melissa Frost, is a descendent of Shirlee Frost, her mother Alice Frost and her mother Joanne Njootli. She comes from the Wolf clan/Ch'ichyàa from the Vuntut Gwich'in First Nation of Old Crow, Yukon. Melissa is an aunty and a cousin who works for mother earth and our future generations. She has forged a career out of her passion for the arts and community work with youth. Melissa tries to channel traditional teachings and positive, hopeful messages when writing or performing.