

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

The Moccasins

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Keith Nolan

Moccasins were the original footwear of the First Nations people. The soft-soled shoes enabled them to hunt quietly and to move quickly through the bush. Different tribes made different designs, but they were either one piece or two piece with an apron inserted at the top.

Women made the moccasins out of traditionally tanned moose hide. This hide was scraped, softened, and smoked to protect and waterproof. These moccasins are made in the traditional way.

In my painting of the moccasins, I wish to show the beauty and intricate art work of the traditional footwear for the First Nations people. Not only were they very practical shoes, they were also beautiful testimonies to the skills of their creator. Moccasins were decorated with porcupine quills, and beads, later on; they were sewn with sinew into very detailed designs. The women based their designs from the wild flowers of the bush, improvising to create beautiful art.

In my painting I have one woman's moccasin resting beside one man's moccasin. This is not only to show the difference of the design and of the size between men and women, but also to symbolize that men and women walk together as one, even though they are different.