

The Dancer and the Dance, the Painter and the Paintbrush

Written in Memoriam by Jasmin Thomas – St. Matthew School, Saskatoon

Bob Boyer had a great impact on Canada. He was an aboriginal artist from Saskatchewan. He died in August of 2004, his impact in this year is great because he can no longer create and express the ideas of aboriginal people in his art. His impact was felt through his political paintings and the understanding of aboriginal people. Boyer led the way in the creation of aboriginal art. His work has been shown all over the world. He's made a great impact on many people. Boyer developed the fine arts program at the First Nations University of Canada, and through powwows he celebrated his culture and identity.

Boyer did not forget about his culture and he celebrated it through his paintings. He has made many paintings that have affected Canadians and people all over the world. One was "*Blanket Statements*". He painted a variety of symbols on blankets to show how the white people had given the Aboriginals blankets with the small pox virus, which killed many Aboriginals. Boyer used paintings to speak to people instead of words; words can be forgotten the ideas in his art will not be forgotten.

Boyer was not only an artist but also a teacher. He had taught at the First Nations University of Canada from 1979 to 1997. He was founder and developed the fine arts program at this university. Boyer's actions have become one "the dancer and the dance", the painter and the paintbrush. His paintings have involved teachings since the beginning.

Boyer developed the fine arts program at the First Nations University of Canada. He headed the art department for the university. He was a graduate of the Fine Arts program at the University of Saskatchewan. He was an art teacher in Prince Albert and then he joined the staff at the Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina. When in Regina he started work for the provincial government and was asked to join the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, which became the First Nations University of Canada. This is a major contribution to the people of Canada. Boyer says, "Education goes beyond teaching. You can teach information, you can teach skills. But education involves the whole human being". He taught the whole person.

Bob Boyer never forgot his culture it was in his art and his heart. Boyer had a very close relationship to his art and his community. The powwow is something that all Aboriginals do to confirm their identity and to celebrate. Boyer would go to powwows for this reason, at his last powwow he died dancing. His great impact on Canada will last forever because his artwork will last forever.