

On the occasion of the conferring of the degree of

Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*
upon

Joane Marguerite
Cardinal-Schubert

There is complexity in a raindrop, complexity in a conversation. When seeking to sort out the intricacies of an individual, or a history, or a people, we are faced with cascading images, sometimes reflecting, sometimes distorting, always illuminating.

As we attempt to find our way through the labyrinth of the human psyche, we also find myriad reactions to these images. There is no simple event. There is no simple response. In her chronicles of the human condition, Joane Cardinal-Schubert has defied categorization for over thirty years. She is a visual artist, a writer, a curator, a poet, and an activist. She harnesses a diverse range of media to craft her artistic vision, and can find beauty in the natural world from a chicken gizzard to a stone pictograph. Her outlets for expression can be a canvas on an art gallery wall, or the stairwell of thirteen floors of the Social Sciences building.

In venues around the world, she has drawn critical exuberance, outrage, and awe as she forces her audience to confront these distillations of life without aversion. She conjures images and memories of a past that have oft been filled with harshness and cruelty. Yet, within this context, she celebrates the virtues and complexities of the Aboriginal peoples through her art.

It has been said that the function of the artist is to disturb. In the work and life of a dedicated artist, we see the blurring of the lines between the personal, the historical, and the political.

Eminent Chancellor, I present to you Joane Marguerite Cardinal-Schubert, story-teller, interpreter, healer, and renowned visual artist.

Let us honour this passionate educator of our society. Let us treasure this shepherd on our journey through complexity to understanding.

On behalf of the Senate and the University, I invite you to invest her with the Degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

June 13, 2003.