

Artist Pascale Ouellet aka Bigoudi donates a painting for the Kidney Foundation.

A little bit of my history...

Fifteen years ago, on June 16th, Micheline Vaillancourt, my mother, gave me a kidney. Fifteen years ago, she was giving me life for the second time, and this time, it also meant the gift of freedom. Why? Because before that special June 16th 1994, I was on hemodialysis, stuck to a chair at the hospital, three days a week for 1-1/2 years...

Being there so often, the hospital became my second home. I met some incredible health workers and other patients that did not have the luck I had to get out of there some day. While I have always been a strong supporter of Organ Donation, I also became aware of the people who will have to live their lives, entirely or partially, with kidney disease.

Lots has happened in my life in the last 15 years: I finished my studies in Montreal, worked in different creative fields and moved out West. I have been living in Canmore (AB) for the last 7 years where I enjoy an active lifestyle with two great life companions, my husband and my cat! And now, I am also doing what I have always dreamed of: I am living from my art.

So, to celebrate the anniversary of our kidney transplant, my mother, who resides in Quebec, will come and visit and we will go for a hike in the beautiful Rockies to acknowledge our healthy lives. But I also wanted to do something special for the volunteers that are devoting their energy for the Kidney Foundation of Canada to support the people who did not get my luck.

And this is why I decided to donate a 36"X36" painting (value \$2500) for a raffle with all the profit going to the Kidney Foundation.

The draw will happen this coming June 20th, the day of the opening of my new exhibition called "Bigoudi: Field Work in Wax" at Elevation Gallery in Canmore. 500 tickets will be for sale for \$5 as of April 27th at the gallery where the piece will be on display until June 20th.

For more details, visit my website at www.bigoudi.ca or Elevation Gallery at www.elevationgallery.ca

Thank you, people and volunteers from the Kidney Foundation, for your dedication and work with people with kidney disease.

Best regards,

Pascale Ouellet, 32 years old, kidney transplant recipient since June 16th 1994.