



University
of Victoria

Legacy Art Galleries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Creativity and Resilience are revealed through Children's art from
Indian Residential and Day Schools at MOV with
- There is Truth Here -**

***Indigenous children's art, created at residential and day schools, opens
pathways for healing and reconciliation***

VANCOUVER, BC – The **Museum of Vancouver** (MOV) is pleased to announce its newest feature exhibition **There is Truth Here, Creativity and Resilience in Children's Art from Indian Residential and Day Schools**. Curated by **Andrea Walsh**, associate professor of Anthropology at the **University of Victoria**, and originally held at the **Legacy Art Gallery** in Victoria, the exhibition has been adapted with additional works from the MOV collection. **Sharon Fortney, Curator of Indigenous Collections and Engagement** at MOV, leads the project of bringing the exhibition to Vancouver. **There is Truth Here**, opening on April 5, 2019, focuses on rare surviving artworks created by children who attended the Inkameep Day School (Osoyoos), St Michael's Indian Residential School (Alert Bay); the Alberni Indian Residential School (Vancouver Island) and Mackay Indian Residential School (Manitoba). The focus of the exhibition is not on the schools themselves, but upon witnessing the experiences of the children/survivors as conveyed through their childhood artworks – for some the only surviving material from their childhoods.

To offer context and a unique, local counterpoint to the exhibition MOV is excited to announce a partnership with Capture Photography Festival, who have had the opportunity to commission Roxanne Charles, an artist and member of the Semiahmoo First Nation, who will be producing a local response to **There is Truth Here**. Roxanne will be drawing inspiration from archival photographs from MOV's collection of everyday life at St. Mary's Residential School in Mission, BC.

"MOV has embraced Reconciliation as a guiding principle, and this brings a responsibility to provide opportunities to educate our visitors about residential schools and other oppressive policies enforced in Canada since the mid nineteenth century." Says Sharon Fortney, Curator of Indigenous Collections and Engagement at MOV, "We will be adding some items from the MOV collection to the exhibition. The artworks featured at the Legacy Gallery were largely works on paper, but for this installation we will be adding some wood carvings from St. Michael's school in Alert Bay, and other items that speak to handicraft programs in Lower Mainland schools attended by the host nations and their neighbors."

There is Truth Here brings a new line to bear on the role of art as part of children's knowledge, identity, and experiences of Indian Residential and Day Schools. Through paintings, drawings, sewing, beading, drumming, and singing, and drama produced by children and youth who attended them in British Columbia and Manitoba the exhibition seeks to contribute in vital and new ways to dialogues and initiative about true telling, reconciliation, and redress in Canada.

"When we think about the visual legacy of the residential schools, they are in the thousands of pictures of children. But they were taken of children, not by children. And they were taken to demonstrate the value of what the government saw as this assimilative policy that was being carried out in the schools. So, these pictures are often of children in uniforms, and they are

anonymous. But they are not, because they were brothers and sisters and cousins and daughters and sons and grandsons and granddaughters. And although we can't—nor should we—feel like we have access to those relations, what the art does is highlight that all the children in those pictures were wonderful little children...they had ideas and they had creativity," says Andrea Walsh, curator of the exhibition. "There is a creativity to these pieces and there is a resilience to them. They were staying strong. The pieces here are evidence of that strength."

The first-person perspectives of Survivors and former students, their families, and communities are told via children's creativity to bring a multi-generational perspective on the lives of children in the schools. The exhibition explores the common thread of historical resilience in the creation of the artworks and speaks to the importance of the art today as nodes of healing and resurgence.

About UVIC Legacy Art Galleries

The University of Victoria Art Collections consists of some 19,000 art objects which support the teaching and research programs of the University. Since the founding of the collection in 1953 a number of named collections have provided the thematic direction of the acquisition program. As a leader in cultural and academic collaborations, we reach across disciplines, within and beyond the university to engage curiosity, inspire creativity, and foster research and learning through art.

About Museum of Vancouver

The Museum of Vancouver connects Vancouverites to each other and connects Vancouver to the world. The museum's programs, exhibitions, and collections bring people together and inspire conversation about the future. The museum, an enthusiastic civic advocate, is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to inspiring a socially connected, civically engaged city.

Institutional Partners: City of Vancouver, BC Arts Council, and the Province of British Columbia
Partners in Reconciliation: Vancity, City of Vancouver Cultural Services,

Listing Information

Dates:

Location:

Website:

There is Truth Here – Creativity and Resilience in Children's Art from Indian Residential and Day Schools

April 5, 2019 – January 2020

Museum of Vancouver: 1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, BC
museumofvancouver.ca

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