



Summer Banners Illustrating Coast Salish History to be Installed Downtown

Date: Tuesday, May 28, 2019

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Installation of the City of Victoria's summer banners begins today. Designed by local Coast Salish artist Dylan Thomas, the series of four banners depicts traditional stories about the Lekwungen People, and will adorn downtown lampposts until the end of October.

"As a person with Lekwungen (Songhees) heritage, who was born and raised in Victoria, I feel a profound connection to this area in its modern, historical and pre-historical contexts, all of which I've tried to capture in my banner designs," said Dylan Thomas. "For these banners, I've symbolized some of the lesser-known aspects of this territory's history and mythology."

The City's biennial summer banner program showcases the talents of local artists and reflects the vibrancy and creativity of the city. Thomas' artwork was one of nine submissions the City received in response to a recent Call to Artists, and was selected by the City's Art in Public Places Committee. Thomas' designs are original works created for the summer banner program.

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY:

What: Installation of summer banners downtown
When: Tuesday, May 28, 2019 from 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Where: Douglas Street, between Caledonia Avenue and Belleville Street

The summer banners depict the following Lekwungen stories:

- **Born on the Shores** – This banner depicts Thomas' great grandmother, who was one of the last Lekwungen People born in the Old Songhees Village (currently Songhees Point), less than a year before the reserve was transferred to its current location. The top face is the mother and the bottom face is the infant, representing the two villages where his great grandmother lived.
- **Camossung** – Before it was called Fort Victoria, this land was briefly known as Fort Camossung, named after a girl in a Lekwungen legend who was turned into the boulder that sat in the waters at Tillicum Narrows. The boulder created a rare, tide-dependant, two-directional waterfall until it was blown up with dynamite in 1960. The banner's artwork depicts Camossung with blue water rushing around her.
- **Building the Bastion** – Using the salmon and Salish figure as Lekwungen symbols and the loon as a symbol for Canada, this banner represents the historical collaboration between the Lekwungen People and the Hudson's Bay Company representatives who worked together to build Fort Victoria.

- **Reef-Nets** – Reef-net fishing was exclusively used by Salish communities and involved the skillful maneuvering of canoes to capture salmon on their way to spawning grounds. This banner honours the skill by depicting two salmon above a human figure, symbolizing the Lekwungen People’s respect for the sacred salmon cycle.

ATTACHMENT: Summer Banner Artwork by Dylan Thomas

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For More Information:

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