



# Salish Weave Collection

January 2017, Issue 11



Jointly organized by the BC Art Teachers Association and the Canadian Society for Education Through Art, the Intersections 2016 Art Educators Conference was held at the University of Victoria in October. Registrants had the opportunity to attend a keynote by world-renowned Haida artist and activist, **Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas**, as well as participate in sessions focusing on new and best practices in the studio, in the classroom, and in the community.

The Salish Weave Collection was honored to participate in a few of the sessions offered at the conference. Led by Coast Salish artists, **Butch Dick, Chris Paul, Angela Marston, and Cosiniye Paul**, the “*Salish Weave Workshop*” focused on Salish culture, the artists’ work and its place in their communities, and how resources like the Salish Weave Collection can support teachers in making local connections in the classroom. The “Gallery Educator’s Panel,” entitled “*Uy shkwaluwuns “To be of a Good Mind and a Good Spirit”*,” was a roundtable discussion and presentation highlighting how local histories and cultures are being taught through art collections and arts-based institutions in Victoria and the Lower Mainland. Speakers from the Museum of Anthropology at UBC, the Burnaby Art Gallery, and the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria shared how they have approached their program development through collaborative strategies with local nations and teaching professionals.

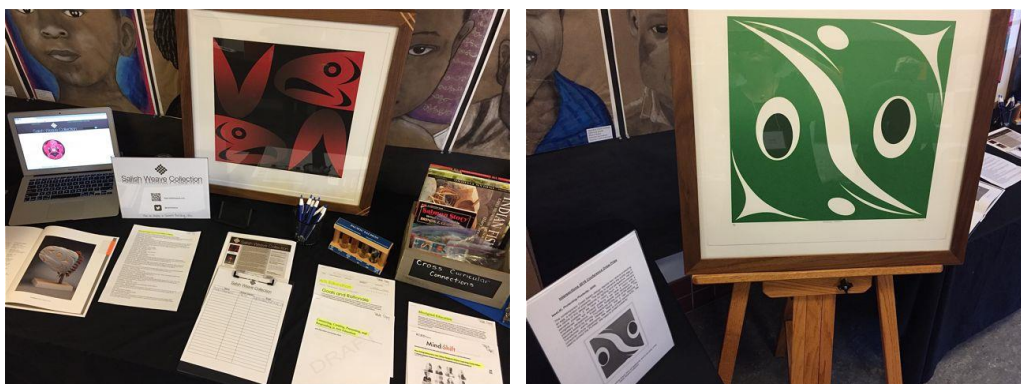


Held at UVic’s First People’s House, introduced by Dr. Raif St. Clair, Dean of Education, and moderated by Dr. Nick Claxton, the Gaitskell Invited Talk, ***SHOIs TFE WILNEW “Art of the People”***, saw the above artists’ expand further on their creative careers, their own education in art, and how art can be used to teach and heal in a collective and inclusive society. Questions from the audience ranged in

topics from creative influences and materials, to appropriation and reconciliation. Such enlightening and dynamic presentations!



The Salish Weave Collection was also present in the conference marketplace with an information table displaying an example of the Box Sets that have been gifted to local public school districts over the last few years. To be used as a teaching resource, educators were encouraged to register with the Collection's website for digital access not only to the Box Sets, but also to the artist statements and other art and culture resources that might be used with their students. For further information on registration, please visit the website at [salishweave.com](http://salishweave.com).



Salish Weave Collection also provided a draw prize for the conference -- lessLIE's print, "*Protecting Posterity*" (2005), which was on display at the Salish Weave marketplace table for the duration of the conference.

PC: B. Greenhow

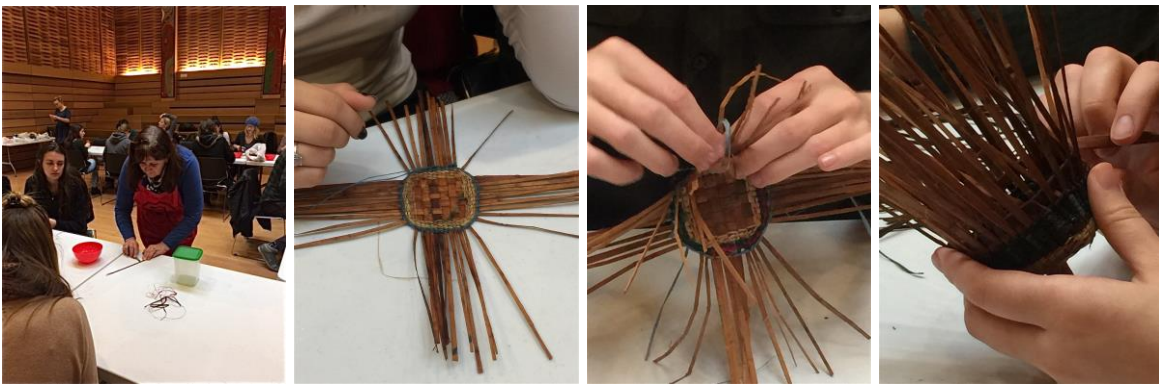


The Salish Weave Collection sponsors the Visiting Artist Program in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Victoria. This unique program brings artists into the classroom to share their knowledge of culture and creative practice into the curriculum. Through this hands-on arts-based learning, student awareness of the history and contemporary cultures of Coast Salish peoples and their territories is greatly expanded and enriched.

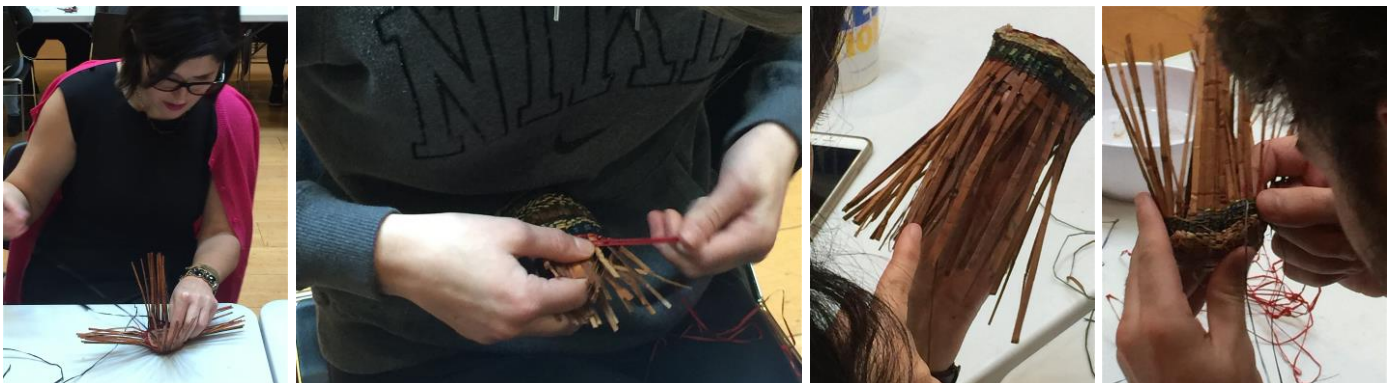
At the end of the Fall 2016 term, students enrolled in Dr. Andrea Walsh's ANTH 305 course were introduced to the materials and techniques used in making traditional Salish baskets. Cowichan Tribes member and UVic's own Cultural Protocol Liaison Officer, **Deb George**, passed around examples of her woven baskets to show all the possible textures and patterns that one can incorporate into such beautiful yet practical creations.



Using wet cedar bark, George demonstrated how to prepare and cut the strips needed to plan, weave, and secure the base for the basket. Once the bottom was complete, the strips were folded up to create the structure for the sides. Students were then able to choose a variety of plant fibre material to weave their chosen patterns, including various widths of cedar bark and dyed raffia.



Once students became more comfortable with the various strategies used to weave, it was interesting to see how each learner preferred to work: on a table, on one's lap, close to the chest, close to eye level.



Regardless of differing techniques, one thing was clear: the students were entirely engaged. So engaged in and committed to this creative process, in fact, that many continued weaving long after the class had officially ended. No one wanted to leave the Great Hall, to cease the artistic and learning process, or end such a meaningful and healing opportunity, one shared by all.



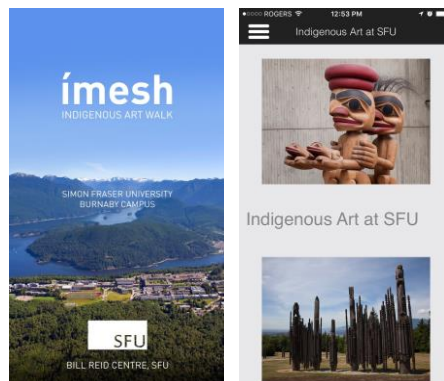
As part of this event, students also learned that it is part of Salish tradition to give away the first one of everything you learn to make. Therefore, half the students will donate their baskets for a spring raffle, organized by Dr. Walsh, to raise money to send a survivor of the Alberni residential school to Ottawa in 2017. The Museum of History is currently redesigning its Canadian History Hall to display 15 000 years of history, including examples of stories and children’s art from Canada’s residential school era.

PC: Salish Weave

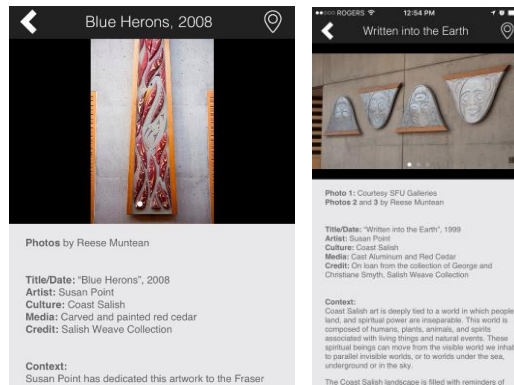


In November 2016, SFU Burnaby and the Bill Reid Centre shared a newly developed app for iOS users to increase the awareness of the Coast Salish Territory upon which the campus sits.

Bryan Myles, director of the Bill Reid Centre for Northwest Coast Studies in the Department of First Nations Studies, developed the app *imesh*, which means **“to walk”** in *Skwxwú7mesh snichim*, the language of the Squamish people. This Indigenous Art Walk app guides visitors around the Burnaby campus and Burnaby Mountain Park and describes the Indigenous works of art on display. Users can search for and visit works of art in specific venues, or take a tour using GPS services. At each location, the app presents the user with information about the artist, the art piece, and the perspectives from which it was created.



Two pieces by **Susan Point** on loan to SFU from the Salish Weave Collection are included in the app: “Blue Herons” (2008), and “Written into the Earth” (1999).



Future app developments will include android versions; lists of services and supports for Aboriginal students and visitors; and a Coast Salish Lands Tour that will use local dialects to name and describe culturally significant landmarks in the area.

PC: R. Muntean; SFU Galleries, imesh app



Showing during the month of August 2016 at the Alcheringa Gallery in Victoria, Lyackson artist **Dylan Thomas** presented his first solo exhibition. On August 13 to a packed house, Thomas explained the influences behind his “Sacred Geometry” creations and how his Coast Salish culture is reflected in each piece. Using mathematical tessellations and algorithms reminiscent of Escher and Hindu mandalas, he challenges the use of traditional Salish motifs to connect with the patterns that exists everywhere in the natural world: from the concentric growth rings in trees, to the radial symmetry in flowers, to the spiral geometry of mollusk shells. As spoken by Thomas, “Geometry pervades the Cosmos.”

For more information about the inspiration behind Thomas’s prints, please read the brilliant essay that accompanied the exhibit (<http://numerocinqmagazine.com/2016/10/01/sacred-geometry-essay-art-qwulthilum-dylan-thomas/>).



PC: Alcheringa Gallery



In January 2015, the first steel was cut at the shipyards in Gdansk, Poland, for a new series of intermediate class ferries that will sail routes on the southern BC coast in 2017. Three ships, introduced as the Salish Class Ferries, will be replacing 50-year-old vessels that the BC Ferries Corporation will retire from its fleet. BC Ferries and the First People’s Cultural council then announced in January 2016 the names of three Coast Salish artists who would create the designs that would envelop the hulls of the Salish Eagle, the Salish Orca, and the Salish Raven. The vessels were named to recognize the Coast Salish peoples as the original sailors of the Salish Sea.

**Darlene Gait** of the Esquimalt Nation designed the artwork that will enrich the Salish Orca both inside and out, and will sail on the Comox-Powell River route. Created with vibrant colours, Gait’s pod of orcas is like a family navigating through the waters. “I look forward to sharing my artwork,” said Gait in a media release last March. “It was created from a love that runs deep, a love that embraces my family today and those who we consider still with us but living in the world of spirit. The orca whales and wolves are also separated by two different worlds. I look forward to sharing with you my story.”



As an artist from the Stz’uminus Nation, **John Marston** demonstrates how the Eagle is a highly respected symbol of his culture’s connection to the natural world. In a September media release, Marston explained, “The Eagle has long been connected to us and carries our prayers to the Creator. Our guardian in life, we look to the teachings he offers us. The Eagle is beautiful and graceful with the never-ending strength to survive. Over the years as an artist I have learned from our ancestors’ old artworks. It is important to me that this design was strongly influenced by these old masterpieces.” Not only does Marston look to the past for creative guidance, he also embraces the artistic opportunities of the future: “Gliding along the Salish Sea, the Salish Eagle is shifting from our ancient roots into a time where our history is coming alive into the forefront of our modern society.”



**Thomas Cannell** from Musqueam is the artist whose designs will adorn the Salish Raven. The artwork for this vessel will be shared publically in the upcoming months.

PC: BCFerries Media Relations; A. Marston

**In the upcoming newsletter...:**

- 2017 exhibitions displaying works from the Salish Weave Collection
- Update on school programs and the Salish Weave Collection Box Sets
- and ... other exciting events in the region. Stay tuned!