

Film Title: Living Archives: C'tasi:a & Suxixeluq (Geraldine and Earl Manson)

Film Synopsis: In the beginning of the film, we see C'tasi:a (Geraldine Manson) putting together pieces of what appears to be a model of long house. As she is sitting down, beside her husband, she introduces herself in her traditional language of Hul'q'umi'num'. We see her as she removes one piece of the long house model and explains "that is the opening for the smoke to come out". She then introduces her husband in Hul'q'umi'num', Suxixeluq (Earl Manson). We follow C'tasi:a & Suxixeluq in one of the collection rooms of the Royal BC Museum as they carefully carry some delicate archives which we later learn are rubbings made of petroglyphs that hold significant meaning to their community. We hear C'tasi:a saying in her traditional language of Hul'q'umi'num' "Hello respected ones, happy to see you, it's been a long time". Throughout the remainder of the film, C'tasi:a & Suxixeluq, share the importance of the petroglyph rubbings which we learn were nearly destroyed by a fire. These petroglyph rubbings were originally copied in what is now known as Harewood Plains, Nanaimo. C'tasi:a explains that it is her intention, after her next book is published, to focus on the repatriation of these archives. As Suxixeluq explains, "So we can relate this to our younger generation, so we can tell the story while we are still here. Our Elders are still here to tell the story, it will be very important for us to bring it back".

Artist Profile: Geraldine Manson, C'tasi:a is a respected Snuneymuxw Elder and Traditional Knowledge Keeper. For many decades C'tasi:a has worked for her communities, shared her Traditional Knowledge, and carried out many other community responsibilities that relate to culture and traditions. She has also dedicated her time to helping residents to understand the importance and sacred significance of ancestors and sites within the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw People. C'tasi:a is the author of *Snuneymuxw History Written in Places and Spaces: Ancestors' Voices—An Echo in Time* and *Snuneymuxw Multstimuxw: Sacred Place Names, their Travels, and Stories*.

Keywords/Topics: Repatriation, Indigenous storytelling, Cultural knowledge transmission through generations

Word Bank: Repatriation, Petroglyphs, Hul'q'umi'num, Long House, Indigenous Storytelling, Traditional Knowledge Keeper, Castings, Harewood Plains, Repatriation, Snuneymuxw, Storytelling.

Word Bank Definitions

Word	Definitions
Castings	Casts can preserve details of original stone carvings. Museums sometimes feature collections of plaster casts, which are replicas of ancient sculptures, and these casts can be valuable for study and preservation, especially when original artwork is lost or damaged.
Harewood Plains	The Harewood Plains are located at the south end of the City of Nanaimo and are home to a mixture of critically endangered ecological species that includes open Garry Oak woodlands, common camas and vernal pools. Ecological conservation groups are actively lobbying both provincial and federal governments to keep this area protected. This area was once a place of significant cultural significance to the Snueymuxw, and it is where the petroglyphs in the film were found. You will find a link to support the Harewood Plains in the resource section below.
Hul'q'umi'num	Hul'q'umi'num is the traditional and ancestral language of the Snuneymuxw peoples. We hear the language being spoken throughout the film by both C'tasi:a and Suxixeluq. You will find a link to an online dictionary for the Hul'q'umi'num language in the resource section below.

Long House	Long houses hold significant cultural and spiritual significance for First Nations people. They might also be called a “smoke house” or “big house”. The longhouse is a traditional gathering space for First Nations peoples. It is a place where cultural work is done, and ceremonies are held and represent the interconnectedness of the community, family ties, and cultural identity. Ceremonies that are held in the longhouse often mark important life events, such as a cultural naming, and passing of life. The long house is typically used on a seasonal basis, beginning in the fall and into the spring.
Petroglyphs	Petroglyphs are images etched or carved into stone surfaces, a form of rock art. They are created through various techniques, including scratching, pecking, incising or carving. They are believed to have served to capture information in prehistoric times. The fact that petroglyphs were found near the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw is evidence of how long their people have been there.
Repatriation	Repatriation is the act of returning something back to the original owners. Museum repatriation involves returning cultural belongings, including artifacts and ancestral remains, held in museums to the original communities who created them or to whom they belong.
Snuneymuxw	Snuneymuxw is the Indigenous name for Nanaimo, derived from the Snuneymuxw First Nation whose traditional territories include Nanaimo, Gabriola, and Mudge Islands and other areas close by. The name “Snuneymuxw” means gathering place of great people or people of many names.
Indigenous Storytelling	Indigenous storytelling is a deeply rooted practice that serves as a vital means of transmitting knowledge, history, cultural values, and spiritual beliefs across generations, often through oral traditions and ceremonies.
Traditional Knowledge Keeper	A traditional knowledge keeper is an Indigenous individual within a community who is entrusted with and carries the traditional knowledge, teachings, and practices of their culture, passed down through generations.

Overarching Questions: Why is it so important to support the repatriation of Indigenous cultural belongings and artifacts for Indigenous communities?

Suggested Class Discussions/Questions/Activities:

1. What do you think C’tasi’a means when she says, “It’s been a long time, yet we forget. It’s like looking in a lens and not seeing anything” .
2. Why do you think “It’s so important to know the history of where we came from and where we are going”?
3. Why is the repatriation of cultural belongings and artifacts so important to Indigenous communities?
4. How might Indigenous communities benefit from the repatriation efforts initiated by museums?
5. What are some examples of the RBCM’s repatriation efforts?
6. How are Indigenous storytelling and museum repatriation efforts inherently connected?

7. Why is it important for younger Indigenous generations to know the stories behind culturally significant belongings and artifacts?
8. What does Article 11, in BC's Declaration of Indigenous Peoples Act, say about Indigenous peoples right to protect their archaeological and historical sites, artefacts?

Teacher Resource Sheet

BC Curriculum Links – Kindergarten – Grade 5

Kindergarten: Arts Education	Grade 1: Arts Education
<p>Big Idea: What sort of rubbings can be created about the things around us?</p> <p>Content: If we create our own rubbings, how might they tell a story about the life around us?</p> <p>Competencies: <u>Reasoning and reflecting</u> Using crayons and paper, choose something in the natural world that you think tells a story. Use the crayons and paper to create a rubbing and share this with the class.</p>	<p>Big Idea: How do rubbings created by First Nations peoples in BC tell us stories about the lives they once lived?</p> <p>Content: While looking at photos of different types of First Nations rubbings, what can we understand about their prehistoric knowledge?</p> <p>Competencies: <u>Communicating and documenting</u> Choose a rubbing to talk about and present your thoughts and ideas to the class.</p>
Grade 2: Arts Education	Grade 3: Social Studies
<p>Big Idea: How can plaster castings be used to record the history of natural objects?</p> <p>Content: Students explore how certain beach related objects, like seashells, pebbles and other 'treasures' can be molded with the use of plaster castings.</p> <p>Competencies: <u>Communicating and documenting</u> Take a fieldtrip to a local beach and select an item you would like to create a cast for. Ensure that the item is returned to the beach once it has been made into a cast.</p>	<p>Big Idea: Indigenous knowledge is passed down through oral history, traditions and collective memory</p> <p>Content: How can we ensure that Indigenous storytelling is considered alongside Western knowledge as equally important.</p> <p>Competencies: <u>Critical and reflective thinking</u> Take some time listening to different Indigenous stories. Reflect on the knowledge that is shared within these stories. How does the knowledge from these stories reflect the Western knowledge taught in school?</p>
Grade 4: Social Studies	Grade 5: Applied Design, Skills, and Technology
<p>Big Idea: Where can we find petroglyphs in our natural world.</p> <p>Content: Students can visit East Sooke park to see a petroglyph that has been etched into the rock alongside the beach.</p> <p>Competencies: <u>Communicating and documenting</u> Students can research the history of this petroglyph and share their research with the class as a discussion.</p>	<p>Big Idea: How can institutions, like the RBCM, support the efforts of repatriation?</p> <p>Content: Explore the various ways the RBCM is working with Indigenous communities to support repatriation.</p> <p>Competencies: <u>Applied technology</u> Watch and learn from the variety of Living Archives videos available on the RBCM website.</p>

Reading Material Suggestions:

- Manson, G., & Gabriola Museum, host institution. (2022). *Snuneymuxw history written in places and spaces : ancestors' voices—an echo in time / Geraldine Manson, C'tasi:a*. New Society Publishers.
- Sinclair, S., Ballenger, G., & ICRC Collection. (2020). *How we go home : voices from Indigenous North America / edited by Sara Sinclair ; [illustrations by Greg Ballenger]*. Haymarket Books.

Additional Online Educational Resources:

- <https://snuneymuxw.ca/>
- <https://braidingknowledgescanada.ca/en/>
- <https://gabriolamuseum.org/indigenous/snuneymuxw-first-nation/>
- <https://www.firstvoices.com/hulquminum>
- [RBCM Indigenous Repatriation Handbook](#)