

Sitelines



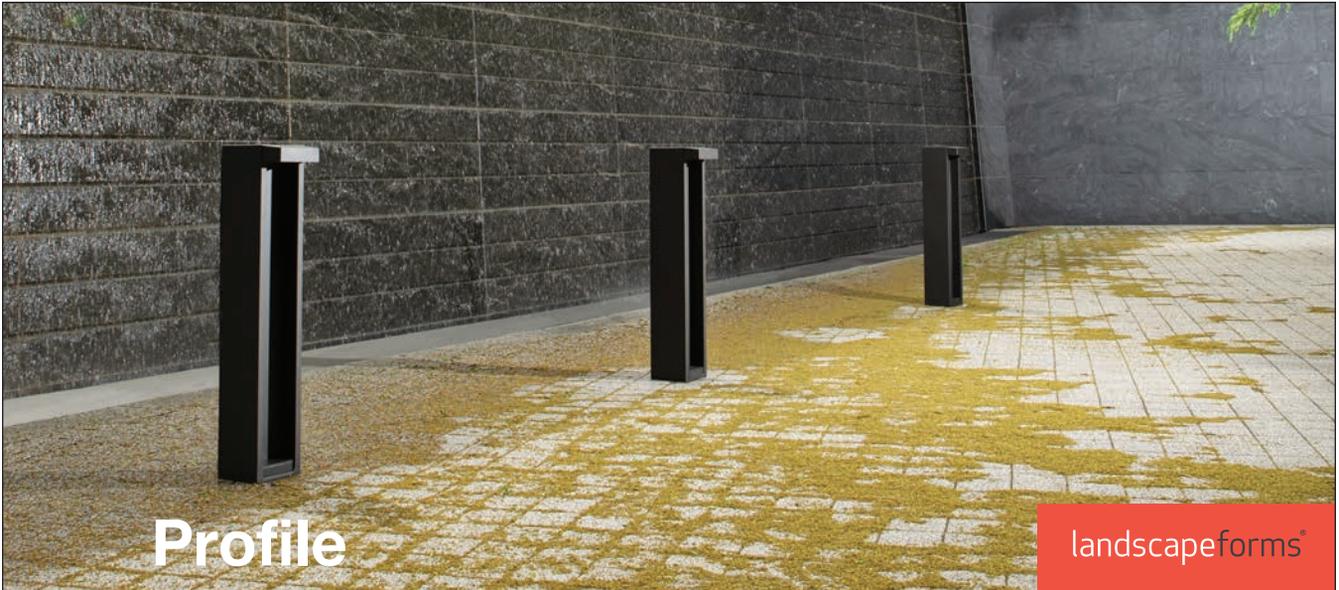


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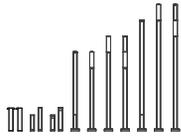


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BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS MAGAZINE FALL 2021

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450-355 Burrard St. Vancouver, BC V6C 2G8
T 604.682.5610 TF 855.682.5610
E office@bcsla.org | admin@bcsla.org
www.bcsla.org

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Advertising inquiries should be directed to Angela McDougall, Project Manager amcdougall@naylor.com | 204.975.3625



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Editor: Andrea Németh

Project Manager: Angela McDougall

Marketing: Lisa Codner

Book Leader: Amanda Rowluk

Sales Representatives: Maria Antonation, Ralph Herzberg

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Artist's statement

Photography and description by Chelsey Schmidtke, BDes, MLA

The photos feature magnificent surrounds of Nk'mip desert cultural centre and Spirit Ridge, a resort and residential development of the Osoyoos Indian Band (OIB). The lands surrounding Osoyoos and Spirit Ridge are among the northernmost lands of the Senora Desert, Canada's only desert.

The plants, animals and people of this place have evolved to not just withstand but thrive in this unique environment, and Spirit Ridge offers opportunities to experience and enjoy this place while learning about the desert and its people. The economic success of OIB's Spirit Ridge also represents the success of a community's ability to make the most of opportunities available and to prosper.

The impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly pronounced in our country, and the Nk'Mip Creek wildfire of 2021 will have radically changed this landscape, serving as a dire reminder of continual change and of the need to respond to it.

Designer: Spirit Ridge Landscape Architect of Record George Harris, M.L.Arch., AALA, CSLA



Welcome to the Reflection issue

re·flec·tion
/rəˈflekSH(ə)n/

noun

1. something produced by reflecting; such as: effect produced by an influence

A lot has happened since the reimagining of *Sitelines*, which started in 2018. The issues since the relaunch have discussed massive topics in social, environmental and cultural realms and will continue to do so as we look in new ways at topics we thought we already knew. As a profession, we have a collective role in influencing social and environmental justice through design. As 2021 draws to a close, we reflect on transformation, resiliency, happiness and how to move forward.

This issue includes memories from Susan Herrington to mark Cornelia's passing and Sophie MacNeill's call to action on the climate crises. Historians Dr. John Milloy and Dr. Amber Johnson delve into the history of appropriation of the Smiling Buffalo ribstone and Jessica Werb relates the history of interned Japanese Canadians and the quiet joy expressed through the recently completed Nikkei memorial in Steveston. A SALA student researches Granville Island pre-settlement to development; we learn the hidden history of Robson Square from architect Nick Milkovich and we hear a Jewish response to "The Black Landscape," published in our Spring 2021 issue.

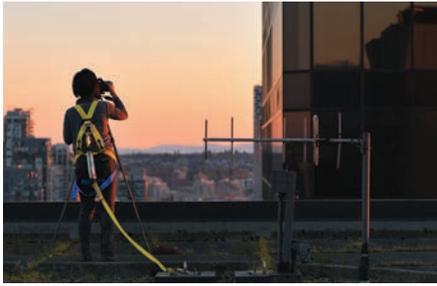
These articles form the multifaceted pastiche that is our industry – from keyboards clicked to shovels in the ground, from plan views to transects, we are indelibly linked to rigour and how it translates to the built environment. To reflect critically and compassionately on our collective and individual histories and share those experiences honestly is vital to designing future landscapes.

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Photographing architecture

Photo by Brett Hitchins

Jamie Poh (pictured): My job brings me to some pretty cool places. I've worked in collaboration with Brett Hitchins (Brett Ryan Studios) over the last few years and we've photographed gorgeous homes, beautiful interiors and some pretty rad people doing what they love.

We often see the end result of a project, but what goes on behind capturing the image, the process, is what makes our hearts sing. We're not the only creators of this photograph. There are so many people behind it: landscape architects, architects, designers, builders and even the back-end roles such as finance and project management. We see the passion and drive in their work of art and it's our job to capture it in the best way possible.

For this project, we were on the roof of 701 West Georgia. It was the first time I'd ever shot from a rooftop. This image of me on the roof captures a moment as we got close to the end of our shoot day. But getting to this point meant completing my fall arrest certification, picking up a harness and leash for the first time, walking through safety protocols to ensure that we both felt safe as we conducted our work.

At the top of the building at midday, the sun beamed down on us. We could hear the bustle of busy Vancouver construction, traffic, seagulls calling in the distance. By evening, we enjoyed the sunset, boats sitting still on the water. We saw the iconic Granville Street neon lights from a different perspective.

A few years ago, when working an event, I was told by our coordinator to work hard, get our shots, but to also make sure we took five minutes to take it all in and enjoy what was in front of us. Since then, I've always kept this in mind in everything I do. This photograph was my five minutes. – Jamie Poh

IN MEMORIAM



Eppich house, with Arthur Erickson in blue

1921–2021

Cornelia Hahn Oberlander

Cornelia Hahn Oberlander was undoubtedly the most important landscape architect in Canada. Decades after establishing her own office in Vancouver in 1953, she emerged not only as a forceful proponent of landscape architecture, but also as a persistent advocate for the creation of ecologically sensitive landscapes in the age of the Anthropocene.

Oberlander's almost 70-year history of planting in British Columbia provided her with great insights, as she was often invited back to restore landscapes and gardens that she had designed earlier in her career. Revisiting these projects, she was highly aware of the fact that plants she had installed earlier may have thrived during that period but were not an appropriate selection today. Coupled with the extreme weather patterns that come with the climate change, simply reinstating an original planting plan was not possible, nor was it wise.

In 2014, she returned to a project she had designed in 1953 and in 1966. Oberlander replaced many of the 1950s and '60s plant species with plants she knew, from years of experience, would survive and thrive with climate extremes. Oberlander noted, "Now that we know that we are living in the age of the Anthropocene, we must structure our landscapes to survive. No storms will kill my plants, no unexpected frost will kill my plants, and no drought will kill my plants." When the Landscape Cultural Foundation toured this landscape in 2017, Vancouver was experiencing a five-month-long drought and the city had banned landscape irrigation. In contrast to neighbouring landscapes, Oberlander's landscape was green.

– Professor Susan Herrington, BCSLA

Burning down and burning out

Professional responsibility and the climate crisis

By Sophie MacNeill, MLA, MBCSLA

Enhanced image of Great Sandy Desert, Telfer WA, Australia (January 30, 2020). The yellow sand dunes cover the upper right portion of the image. Red splotches indicate burned areas from grass and forest fires, and the colours in the rest of the image depict different types of surface geology.



Like many landscape architects, I am deeply preoccupied by the concept of time. My workdays are measured by billable segments, the pulse of deadlines is constant and indifferent to the nature of creativity, there is rarely enough time.

Meanwhile, my projects are not just subject to scales of time, they're expressions of it. On any project, one element may be eroding, rusting, cracking, wilting, while another patinas, blooms and stretches towards the sun. We say that we design processes, not just places – a well-intentioned refrain that reflects our devotion to nature's persistent transformation. More than most, landscape architects understand what can be done, and undone, as time ticks along.

However, recent years have demonstrated the inadequacy of how our profession measures and understands time. Amid a global pandemic, racial injustices and a drastically changing climate, designers of the built environment have prided ourselves on continuing "business as usual." We have demonstrated expertise in the response to climate change – an uncomfortable boon for our industry that has fought to prove the ecological, economic, and social value of our work. And yet, there is a paradoxical denial of both the urgency for radical transformation

and the psychological impacts of myopically operating at full tilt in troubling times. We are convenient leaders not because of any united action in response to crisis but because of the nature of our work.

I believe landscape architecture is an intrinsically optimistic and forward-looking profession. At its best, it is fulfilling work, balancing technical challenges with creative expression to design living systems. But at its worst, it supports growth for growth's sake and demands our professionals carry that burden while working long hours with unsustainable resolve and productivity.

As the COVID pandemic perseveres, pushing more people into the open air of public spaces, as wildfires burn uncontrollably, and the discovery of hundreds of graves of Indigenous children reminds us of our landscape's complex and unreckoned legacy, our work as landscape architects has never felt more important. The urgency is certain, but the path forward is yet to be determined.

When I'm in the adrenaline-fueled fog of a deadline, I remind myself to slow down in order to speed up; mistakes occur when my focus shifts to the clock. There's a greater lesson there: that as a profession of individuals who are duty-bound not only to "conserve and

improve the quality of environments...for a more sustainable, livable and imaginative future" but also "to be honest and fair in assessing [our] own strengths, and to take time for family and friends," we need to slow down so we can reflect, prioritize and face the crisis with the urgency it deserves. We must count our time and energy with nuanced measure and be more intentional about how we work.

As Annie Dillard so poignantly reminds us, "How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives." How should landscape architects spend our days to balance saving the world with saving ourselves? Now that we have demonstrated our productivity amid global crises, we must acknowledge the cost to our morale, mental-health, and ability to respond to disasters. If we want to reconcile the past and redesign the future, we need to find time to tend our own gardens, nurture relationships with our communities, and reacquaint ourselves with the natural world. We need to slow down to speed up. Just as we design our landscapes with the appreciation that time is a crucial, yet capricious, driver, we should design our days, our work, and our impact with that same reverence.

Sophie MacNeill is a senior landscape architect at PWL Partnership and a Sustainable SITES Accredited Professional.

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Kevin Connery leading students through a park walk

Kevin Connery | Landscape Architect, MBCSLA

Tell us a little bit about yourself!

My name is Kevin Connery. I was born in Duncan, BC and, over the years, have lived in numerous places in BC, the USA, as well as New Zealand and Singapore. I recently joined Vancouver's Board of Parks and Recreation, in the Park Development group. For the last 25 years, I have been interested in the semiotics of sustainability, with a particular interest in exploring how public landscapes can help us better understand cultural and biophysical context.

Why did you choose to work abroad?

I had a unique opportunity to develop a sustainable design curriculum for a landscape architecture program that took place in New Zealand and Singapore.

How would you describe working abroad compared to Canada?

My experience is that working abroad reveals our innate biases, challenges our assumptions, and rewards with experiences that one would be hard pressed to imagine otherwise. As an academic, my overseas experience was filled with longer work days than I had experienced working in the private sector in Vancouver, in part because I was developing a new curriculum and in part because I was enjoying the immersion into different and diverse cultural contexts.

What is most challenging about working abroad in landscape architecture?

Realising that many of the "truths" that inform our approach to design, and that we think are unassailable, can in fact be more colloquial than we realise. Consequently, we need to be willing to learn and adapt to the new place, rather than expect it to adapt to us.

What do you find most satisfying, enjoyable, and fun about your current work?

Being fortunate to work with an enthusiastic group of professionals in helping to shape Vancouver's public landscape in response to a changing climate, the need to restore ecosystem function across the city and, most importantly, focusing our efforts on reconciliation and the decolonization of Vancouver's public landscapes.

Reflections abroad: Conversations in the profession

Our aim is to create a better understanding of the diversity of opportunities and challenges working as a landscape architect abroad. By elevating the practice of landscape architecture as an instrument of academic, public, and professional services, we are raising the awareness locally of globally contributing landscape architects. This issue we dig a little deeper and explore the profession and practice with Kevin Connery and his experiences teaching in New Zealand.

The search for the stone

A journey through historians' lenses to locate the Smiling Buffalo

By John S. Milloy, DPhil, and Amber DVA Johnson, PhD

The Iron Stone (also known as the Manitou Stone, *pahpamiyhaw asiniy* or “flying rock” and *piwapiskowiw* or “it is of iron” in Cree)¹ was a sacred meteorite that was removed from a location near Iron Creek, Alberta that marked a boundary between traditional Cree and Blackfoot territory in 1866 on the eve of Confederation.² It was officially repatriated in 2002 and is currently housed at the Royal Alberta Museum. A series of ribstones is said to be connected to the Iron Stone, and the “Smiling Buffalo” is one of many that were located on different hilltops across Alberta. Known as the Buffalo Ribstones (*assinikospikeganit* in Cree), it is thought that they comprised a network of carved quartzite glacial erratics (boulders) that were placed on hills throughout the region and were connected through sight lines. Sacred landmarks, found throughout the landscape of the place colonially called Canada, were regularly taken and relocated – in the name of cultural preservation – to museums and private collections during settlement (confederation, treaty negotiations and enduring land-based alienation).

As a historical research team, we often investigate and search for lost sacred Indigenous items with a hope of aiding in research and repatriation negotiations. Furthermore, we work to support Indigenous claims to ancestral lands through testimony and evidence in legal cases over treaty disputes between various Nations and the Government of Canada. In 2020, our work led us to investigate the missing Buffalo stone: while researching the history of the Treaty 4 monument, we



The “Smiling Stone” is one of a series of carved boulders named *assinikospikeganit* in Cree. Historian John Milloy pictured in background.

came across a reference to a sacred stone that was removed from its original site near Sunnynook, Alberta. Having previous knowledge concerning the removal of sacred Indigenous objects by settler communities, we began to delve into the story of the stone with the aim of finding a way to repatriate it back to the Indigenous nations from whose lands it was taken. We looked for clues on the trail of the Smiling Buffalo stone and traced its movement over 100 years until it became apparent that it was located in the collection of the Canadian Museum of History at Gatineau, over 3,000 km away from its point of origin.

Who took it?

Our research into this ribstone began while researching the history of the Treaty 4 monument at Fort Qu’Appelle, Saskatchewan. A reference to Edmund Morris mentioned a connection. Edmund was the son of colonialist Alexander Morris who negotiated Treaties 3, 4, 5 and 6, agreements that effectively ceded land and resources from a number of Indigenous nations to the Crown. The younger Morris trained as a fine artist in Europe and returned to Canada in 1900 to begin a portrait series of Indigenous Chiefs whom his father had known. In 1905, this series attracted the interest of Duncan Campbell Scott³ who was then acting as a negotiator for Treaty 9. Scott invited the artist to create portraits of Indigenous Chiefs he would be meeting during the negotiation process.

Indigenous cultures at the time were rapidly eroding due to many factors, including settler dominance over the land, fragmentation of

Indigenous territories and reduced or severed access to ancestral lands and sacred places. Scott and Morris, oblivious to their role in the process, realized that these cultures were being eradicated and felt it was their duty to attempt preservation through the appropriation of Indigenous artefacts, photographic and audio documentation of Indigenous stories and legends, portraiture, and commemoration of (government-approved) Indigenous heroes. It was this last point that connected Morris to the stone, as he became involved in planning processes to build memorials at Treaty sites in western Canada, including Fort Qu'Appelle (Treaty 4), Fort Carlton (Treaty 6) and Fort Pitt (Treaty 6). The first known written account of the stone was found in Morris' diary entry from 1909; he states that he had discovered a "large rock, crudely shaped like a head, large mouth from ear to ear and eyes, hollow in the rock where the Crees placed offerings. It was their custom & is still, I believe, to make journeys to this spot about July."⁴

What does it represent?

Through our research, it came to light that this ancient ribstone, also referred to in documents as the "Smiling Buffalo stone," "the Lizard," "the Berry Creek ribstone" and the "Morris stone" was removed from its original site on Ribstone Hill, near Berry Creek (Sunnynook) by Morris sometime between 1909 and 1911. Archaeological reports published from 1959 to 1965 concerning the Smiling Buffalo and other sacred stones from the region stated that the Smiling Buffalo stone was a part of a larger arrangement of stones "consisting of a face-like figure pecked into a large boulder at the head of a sinuous arrangement of rocks, suggestive of a snake."⁵ Known as a Ribstone Complex, the Smiling Buffalo was one piece of a larger complex of stones that was approximately 40 feet long. It was further indicated that this particular complex was one of many (approximately 11) that were placed on surrounding hills in the region.

In historian and curator Hugh Dempsey's work *Big Bear: The End of Freedom*, he states that the stones were often visited by Indigenous hunters. If they happened to be close to a stone, they would make a "pilgrimage" to the site to pray and leave offerings. If one stood on the hill that held the Iron Stone, one could see the surrounding hills that held other sacred stones including the Smiling Buffalo stone and the Viking stones. Dempsey writes, "These monuments, though many miles apart, were on high hills, usually within sight of each other, so that a man standing beside the Iron Stone near the Battle River could see the hill holding the Rib Stone far to the southeast. These monuments were like sentinels on the prairie, each one a tribute to Old Man Buffalo, guardian of the herds."⁶

How did it get to a museum in Gatineau?

We do not know yet how it ended up in Gatineau, but we have some idea of its journey. Dempsey reported that Morris had the "Smiling Buffalo" stone "shipped to Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan where it

was to form part of a cairn to the Cree Indians, to commemorate the Signing of Treaty No. 6... it was not used in the cairn and eventually was discovered in the National Museum in Ottawa".⁷ Interestingly, it was accompanied on its journey from the Gleichen Train Station to Fort Qu'Appelle by an Indigenous Blackfoot man known as Tom Two Horns.⁸ The Smiling Buffalo is mentioned in a newspaper article from 1912, which stated that "the stone itself was one of great historical interest, being a sacred stone held in great reverence by the Indian tribes and used as their meeting place for many generations. It had been purchased from them by the family of the late Governor Morris of the N.W.T."⁹ In 1913, another article mentions the stone was in the possession of J.A. McDonald, the son of Archibald McDonald (the last chief factor in the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Qu'Appelle).¹⁰

The stone was never incorporated into a Treaty monument at Fort Qu'Appelle. There are several reasons, including the sudden death of Morris in a drowning accident as well as disagreement between Morris and the Western Art Association over Morris's design. After his death, the Western Art Association created the monument that still stands today at Fort Qu'Appelle. The stone was still an object of great interest, and we believe that it stayed in the McDonald collection until it was shipped to Ottawa. The stone disappears from the record until 1968 when a photo was taken of Lois (McDowell) Buckley with the stone at the Public Archives of Ontario. Buckley claimed that the stone was found on the property of her parents by Morris.¹¹

In early 2021, we contacted several museums in Ottawa and Gatineau. Through the assistance of John Moses (Manager of Treatment and Collections at the Canadian Conservation Institute), Perry Bellegarde (Canadian First Nations advocate and politician and former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations) and Valerie Bellegarde (Policy analyst, researcher and writer), it was discovered that the stone was at the Canadian Museum of History at Gatineau. Our story will continue in the next issue of *Sitelines*.

Dr. John Milloy completed foundational historical investigation in the area of Indigenous-Settler relations. He is author of A National Crime: The Canadian Government, and the Residential School System 1879 to 1986, out of research conducted for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People. An adviser to the working group of church, Indigenous and federal government representatives that laid the foundation for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, he served as Director of Research at TRC.

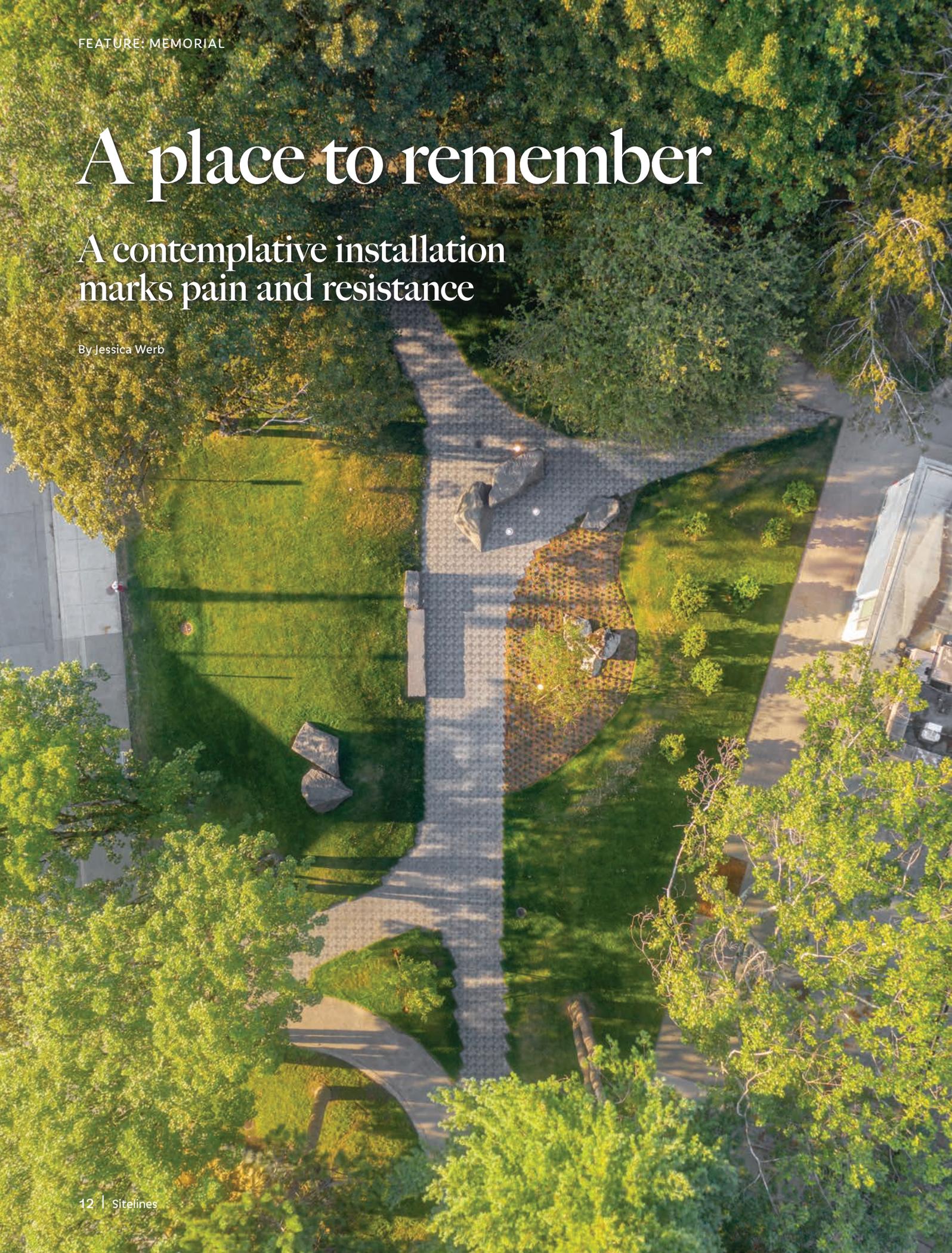
Dr. Amber Johnson is a researcher, educator, and practicing fine artist. She completed her PhD thesis "The Darkest Tapestry": Indian Residential School Memorialization at the Keeping Place at Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan at Trent University. Dr. Johnson has worked as an instructional designer, researcher, curriculum developer, subject matter expert and a college professor.

⁴Kenneth Favrholt, "The iron stone." *Alberta History*, 64, 3, (2016): 1-10, 1. ⁵The "iron stone" was removed from its original site near the town of Hardisty, Alberta. Favrholt, "The iron stone," 1. ⁶Duncan Campbell Scott was a Canadian poet, writer, and civil servant. Scott is also known for his career as Deputy Superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs where he oversaw the assimilationist Indian Residential School system, stating his goal was "to get rid of the Indian problem." Robert L. McDougall, "Duncan Campbell Scott" in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Historica Canada. Article published August 11, 2008; Last Edited January 18, 2018. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/duncan-campbell-scott>. ⁷Edmund Morris, *The Diaries of Edmund Montague Morris: Western Journeys, 1907-1910*. (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1985), 121. ⁸Gloria J. Fedirchuk, and Edward J. McCullough, "Prehistoric Art and Spiritualism: A Perspective from Pine Coulee, Alberta." *Alberta Archaeological Review* 22 (1991): 11-19. ⁹Hugh A. Dempsey, *Big Bear: The end of freedom*. Vol. 12. (Regina: University of Regina Press), 2006, 34. ¹⁰Note that Treaty 6 was mentioned but the actual intention for the stone was to be placed in the Treaty 4 monument. Fedirchuk and McCullough, "Prehistoric Art," 12. ¹¹Fedirchuk and McCullough, "Prehistoric Art," 13. ¹²Jean McGill, "Edmund Morris among the Saskatchewan Indians and the Fort Qu'Appelle Monument," *Saskatchewan History* 35, 3 (1982): 101-108, 105. ¹³"Relics of Early Days" *The Morning Leader*, July 17, 1913, bit.ly/RelicsOfEarlyDays. Accessed September 24, 2021. ¹⁴Glenbow Museum, Lois (McDowell) Buckley posing with Stone God of Stone Hill at Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, 1968, ww2.glenbow.org/search/archivesPhotosResults.aspx

A place to remember

A contemplative installation marks pain and resistance

By Jessica Werb





At the southwest corner of Steveston Community Park, in the seaside village of Steveston, is a quiet, slightly sunken garden space that inspires contemplation. Pathways guide you to a bench carved from stone, and towards a large boulder, cleaved in two, embedded with round bronze markers and place names of locations across the province and beyond. Japanese plum trees beckon you with blossoms in the springtime, and fruit in the summer. It's a serene and welcoming oasis of calm, despite its roots in one of the darkest chapters of Canadian history.

This landscaped public art installation was commissioned in 2017 by the City of Richmond and the Steveston Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre Advisory Committee to mark the 75th anniversary of the forced removal of more than 2,500 Japanese Canadians (Nikkei) from Steveston in 1942, during World War II. But, as explained by Joseph Fry, BCSLA, founding principal of Hapa Collaborative, who was chosen to design the installation, it also honours and celebrates their return home seven years later.

"It's one of the few communities where, after the war, Japanese were allowed to return back, in 1949," he notes. "This was, in part, because the people who had taken over the fishing industry didn't know how to fish. They wanted these great fishermen to come back and help. So, it's one of the few Nikkei communities that, post-war, still has some semblance of community."

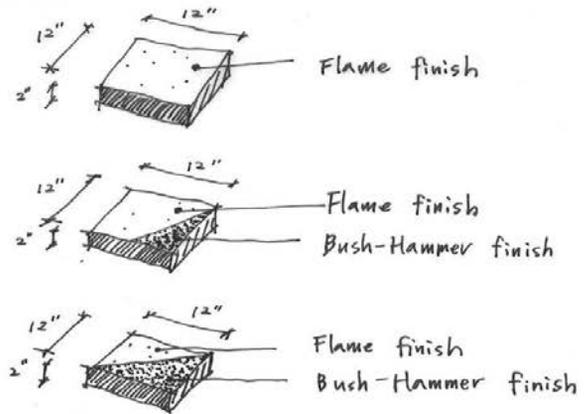
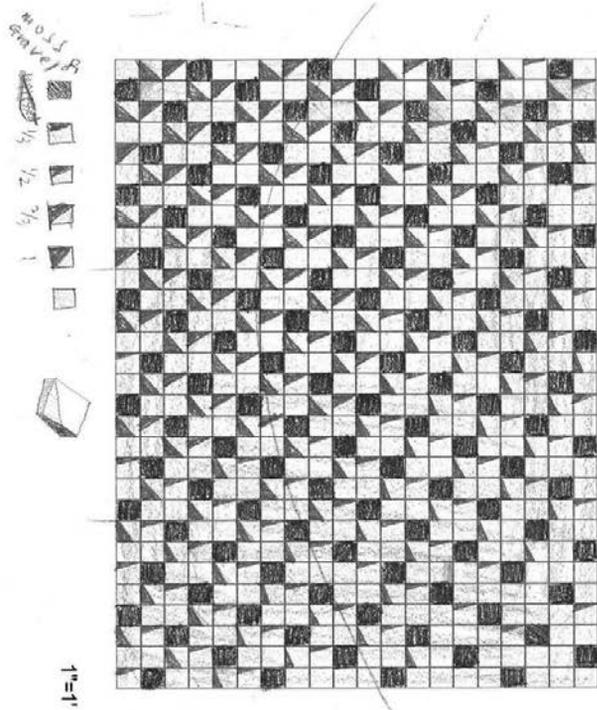


There's a subtlety to the memorial; there is no large placard or overt signage to be found here. To understand its history and meaning, visitors must engage with the installation to discover the words carved into the back of the large boulder; on its opposite side, which faces the walkway, they can read the names of internment and POW camps to which Steveston residents were forced to move during the war.

"The subtlety is deliberate," explains Fry. "I've always felt that public art should do two things. It should create a sense of curiosity, and then intrigue and entice you to come in and satisfy that curiosity. I don't want it to be too didactic or make it really obvious. I want people see it unfold."

Councillor Harold Steves, Chair of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee of Council for the City of Richmond (which includes Steveston), says the site reflects the peacefulness that was interrupted by the war. He still remembers the day he lost his childhood playmate, Fumiko, and how he and his parents watched her family board the train out of Steveston.

"I was a little kid when the evacuations happened, and my earliest memory is going down to the trains when Fumiko's family had to leave," he recalls. "Our two families went together, and as Fumiko went up on the steps of the train, she suddenly handed me her teddy bear and said goodbye. I've just never forgotten that."

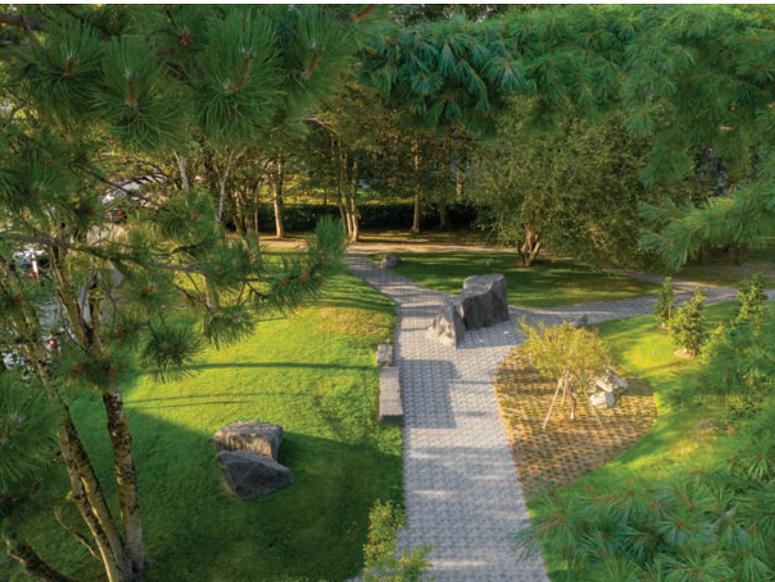


The memorial reflects not just what was taken from the Japanese Canadians, but what was taken from the whole Steveston community, he says: "It exemplifies the peaceful community that we had before World War II. We used to say, when I was a kid, that you could walk away from your house and leave all the doors unlocked, and if you were away and forgot, one of the neighbors would come over and feed your cat. That's the kind of a community it was. Very peaceful, very friendly. And that was all destroyed."

The memorial project was spearheaded by Nikkei community advocate Kelvin Higo, former chair of the Steveston Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre advisory committee, whose parents were forced out of Steveston and given a choice between internment or farm work. For the duration of the war, Higo says, his father worked on a sugar beet farm in Alberta, until it was safe to return to their home.



Questionnaire cards written by hand at engagement session, asking questions such as "What do you wish for?" and "What do you worry about?" in both English and Japanese languages.



“He described it like a scene out of the movie *Roots*, where all the families come out and get off the train and they line up on the platform, and the farmers would come and look over them to see how many able-bodied family members you had,” he recalls. His parents were part of the approximately 800 Nikkei who returned in 1949, out of the 2,000 who had been forcibly removed.

“I really felt strongly that we should honour the perseverance and the resilience of the first and second generations of Japanese Canadians for suffering through all this injustice and racism, and be able to come back,” he says. But he confesses that he originally had quite a different memorial in mind. “I had this vision of a statue or a sculpture, using maybe a 100-square-foot area of undeveloped green area that was surplus to the Steveston park,” he says. “But Hapa Collaborative looked at the whole site in its totality, which I thought was brilliant. I have to admit that my thinking was changed 180 degrees.”

The memorial isn’t just another project for Fry – it’s also deeply personal. A resident of Steveston, his maternal grandparents were forced from their home in Vancouver’s Powell Street neighbourhood and interned at a camp in Slocan. “I’ve always had this interest in commemorative acts related to that event,” he explains. “When this opportunity came up, I was really excited about its potential. We made the pitch to do something a little bit more landscape-based and experiential and use the site’s relationship to the Steveston Tram building.”

The Tram Building, just behind the memorial, houses a historic tram car – one which would have carted the Japanese Steveston residents away during the war. “They left their community by the interurban that sits here,” Fry says, gesturing towards it. “There are lots of images during the internment of people waiting for the train. So, we had this idea of making the connections of coming and going, [with paths going] right up to the corner and back into the park.”

In developing the memorial, the Hapa Collaborative team, including Hanako Amaya, BCCLA, and Pengfei Du, BCCLA Intern, also engaged with community members, including seniors, to hear their stories and ideas.

Paradoxically, one of the most important elements of the piece was inspired by a group of women who were reluctant to get involved.

“This group of women were 70, 90, and even 100 years old,” recalls Fry. “They were in the craft room [of the cultural centre], making these amazing woven placemats out of salmon can labels. During war time, they would take all the paper off the cans, fold them into origami patterns, and make coasters, placements, and baskets out of it. So, they were busy working away and didn’t really want to talk about the internment.”

The origami pattern they were weaving is today reflected in the basalt paving stones of the site, which were locally sourced and finished three different ways. For Fry, this element adds a special tribute to the strength and resilience of the women who were interned.

“All the men were put on the work camps out in Jasper and Banff, and the women were left in the internment camps with the kids,” he points out. “They could only take as much as they could carry with them, and yet they still were able to use little bits of paper and create beauty in tough situations. We felt that this was a kind of act of resistance and thought, what if we introduced it into the site? This, to me, is one of the most important aspects of the commemoration – building something that ties the site together, just as these women had done at the time of war during internment, to hold the community together.”

Higo and Fry stress that the installation is about more than just what happened to the Japanese Canadian community. “What we heard from older generation who experienced the internment is they want this to be a recognition of racial injustice in a global sense, not just the Japanese experience,” says Fry, noting the rise of anti-Asian, anti-Muslim, and anti-Semitic rhetoric and hate. “They want to make sure that it acts as a marker for future generations, so that their young kids, kids like mine, are aware of the story.”

Jessica Werb is a writer, editor, and communications consultant based in Vancouver, BC.



Nick Milkovich and the human experience

Blurring the lines between the architectural and landscape environments, Nick Milkovich has built a career focusing upon the human experience within his buildings. Here Nick recounts how Vancouver has evolved since his youth, his time working with Arthur Erickson, and his evolving interest in the public realm.

On growing up in Vancouver

Born in Strathcona and living there through early childhood, the world was small. The immediate neighbourhood, Strathcona Elementary School, and the Croatian Hall were places of interaction. Beyond that, Main Street and Hastings were broadening the civic experience. There was very little automobile traffic, but great street cars. The library at Main and Hastings and the theatres – the Lux, Rex, and Beacon (later Pantages) – were places that broadened the urban experience. Hotels where many workers stayed at when in town, and Woodward's Department store, gave a sense of urbanity at my youthful age. We walked a lot, soaking in the atmosphere.

In 1947, our family moved to what was then called Yugoslavia, settling in Croatia. The town we lived in was situated in an area with rolling hills, many of which had vineyards. The town had a central space on one end, opening to a river that was the boundary between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. A school, some hotels, and other buildings formed the space. The cafés and restaurants at the base of the buildings animated the space. Festivals and bike races around the long space known as the *korzo* (promenade) became the place to meet. The country was decimated in the war, people did not have much other than each other. Harvest season prompted a celebration where the *korzo* would be decorated with freshly picked grapes laid out over gazebo-like trellises. Music played, and at times the lights would be turned off when people could pick grapes, but if you got caught when the lights were turned on, you would pay a small fine. It was another form of urbanism and community that became a permanent sensual memory.

Our family returned to Vancouver in 1951, settling in the Mount Pleasant neighbourhood. I gained new experiences and activities from school to sports, and just socializing with new friends. It was a localized pattern of activity, until we attended King Edward High School at 12th and Oak. That broadened our experience of Vancouver from the intimacy of Strathcona to the small-town socializing urbanism, to that of a growing city exploring what it wants to be. That included Granville Street – where theatres were strung along and high school kids met, some showing off their new hot rods with extravagant paint jobs, which married well with the multitude of neon lights advertising the businesses. A different form of publicness.

Although there have been efforts to make Granville Street in the Downtown into a public pedestrian space, it seems fraught with issues. Maybe it's too long and linear. Maybe it's the commercial ventures lining the street. Or maybe we just don't know how to use public space. We used Granville and other areas of downtown during the Olympics, but that is at best a once-in-a-generation experience or, more likely, a lifetime. One hopes that experience will embolden us to be attuned to vigorous urban environment and what can make it flourish.

On school & Arthur Erickson

At the UBC School of Architecture, we first encountered Arthur Erickson in our second-year design studio. We started with simple exercises: a bus shelter along Marine Drive for the Nitobe Japanese Gardens. Initially, it seemed a simple exercise of shelter, until we realized how symbolic it was. The problems grew more complex, but always seemed to have a landscape implication. Once the problem was stated, Arthur would visit each drawing board to review our work. The review consisted of asking us questions, not giving directives. I started to wonder when this guy was going to teach us something. But he wanted us to explore for ourselves to contribute to the discourse. It was a Socratic way of educating.

After graduation, I started working in Erickson/Massey Architects, to work on a house which had a preliminary design. I soon learned Arthur's approach was the same that I experienced at school, and it continued through my 40-year working relationship with him. This method was an enticement for us to be in design dialogue with him and with each other. We were not there to just carry out his ideas, but to contribute to his conceptual designs, especially to the development of complex projects.

Arthur's work as an architect was closely aligned with landscape architecture. This was evident in his approach to understanding sites and their context as prior requisites to any building planning exercises. The planning talks to the site which influences the planning evolution. The most important drawings of a project were the plans and sections, where the essence of architecture rested. He also wanted early dialogue with key consultants, which to him included landscape. To formulate ideas within a "collective intuition" – an approach wonderfully articulated by the Norwegian firm Snøhetta.

Currently, our firm, Nick Milkovich Architects Inc. (NMA), has the task of a seismic upgrade of the Great Hall at the Museum of Anthropology at UBC. It's a sensitive task of seismic design of a recognized work of architecture and a heritage designation, situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded land of the Musqueam people. The building design was influenced by the site and the exhibition requirements of the exhibit of Pacific Northwest Indigenous history reflected in their crafts. As a young graduate, first working with Arthur Erickson, I was asked to build models – first of the building plans set into the site contours, followed by study models of the Great Hall structure. It is only 50 years later that I witnessed the essence of Arthur's approach to building and landscape. During an inaugural meeting with the construction managers, which was held at the building entry under the introductory structure to the building, I was positioned between the first and second structural frames, looking up at the massive beams, which cantilevered beyond the robust columns. The beams seemed to be reaching out to the surrounding trees and a slender vine maple was bending towards the reaching beams. They were

communicating, revealing the essence of Arthur's work. We as architects must be considerate beyond just form creation and exterior aesthetic. Our attention should be directed beyond our stated commission for a client, to contribute to the broader realm.

On Robson Square

The early plans for Robson Square (which is not what it was called in the late '60s, early '70s), included a 50-storey government office building with lawcourts at its base. An election in late 1972 brought an NDP government. They were very inclined to urban issues and the public realm. At the same time, Vancouver City Council was headed by Art Phillips with councillors also interested in city planning. The tower plans were discontinued, and the direction changed to a civic square which was on Vancouver's wish list from the 1960s. Arthur Erickson was asked to put forward a design proposal, based on requirements for provincial government offices which interfaced with the public and lawcourts. Arthur viewed the project within the public realm that mixed the law, government, and arts with public gathering space. The process was very interactive with government, the judiciary, as well as the public. Initially, Robson Street was to be closed, but later, accepted transit. The original courthouse was reconfigured to become the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG), a great location at the centre of downtown with heavy pedestrian traffic along Robson Street. Although labelled Robson Square, the square was not evident in that the street interrupted the continuity of the pedestrian precinct. The project had all the hallmarks of Erickson's work in that it was connecting and reaching out. The Howe Street face of the lawcourts ended up being much heavier than was intended, due to its high security requirements and access to underground parking.

Forty years later, our office in collaboration with Hapa Collaborative, architect Matthew Soules, and planner Lance Berelowitz, was commissioned by the city to complete the three-block precinct by designing the VAG's north plaza on Georgia Street. Conceptual ideas were wide-ranging and very stimulating. Again, we looked beyond the designated plaza, exploring how to expand and integrate the urban location. We studied the variety of users and event sizes to form the space.



1 Nick Milkovich 2 Creekside Community Centre, Glotman Simpson 3 Triangle Park, Olympic Village

Photos courtesy of: (top) Isi Majfiana, (centre) Bob Matheson, (bottom) Jack Tupper

Landscapes in time: Granville Island

By Tyler Adam, BCSLA Student



"Draft Map of the Vancouver area before the Whiteman came" – 1932

Snaug was more than a sandbar – more than a landscape of gathered silt and sand. Snaug was a place for the gathering of Nations and the gathering of food; a place for ceremony, reverence and reciprocity for Nature. Through Snaug's appropriation, it became a gathering place for industrialists and industrial materials for their transformation to goods and services, until it was transmuted into what is today: Granville Island.

This is a study of three distinct landscapes, not separated through distance but temporally and a study of the duplicity of a landscape's meaning as a function of the culture that exerts claim. Landscapes are a reflection of our values: what we create, where we choose to live, whether we protect it, restore it or exploit it. Land is something we imbue with intent, meaning and value. Examining how culture interacts with land is a means to derive insight into the beliefs and values that bind that culture.

Just as Granville Island was once Snaug, Vancouver was once Xwayxway ("whoi whoi"). Home to the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tseilil-Waututh (MST) peoples, it was one of the most densely populated Indigenous regions in the world and, as testament to this landscape's generosity, the only of those regions to subsist without agriculture.¹ While Snaug itself was on Musqueam land, the Southern shore of False Creek, the Squamish were the only peoples

to establish a permanent settlement there upon invitation from the 13 remaining Tseilil-Waututh, in response to the epidemic that nearly erased them.²

The MST peoples revered the tidal flats as a gift. The Tseilil-Waututh say that "when the tide was out, the table was set."³ The shore was rich with wild cabbage, mushroom, camas, and berries, while the tidal floor provided kelp, oyster, clam and mussel; the creeks that supplied False Creek were abundant in salmon.⁴ The harvest was so plentiful the landscape was shared, and frequently hosted multinational ceremony.

After many millennia of dense habitation, Snaug remained pristine. MST peoples understand the concept of the honourable harvest: to take only what is offered, never the first, never the last and always to give something in return.⁵ This is a central tenet to Indigenous land relations. Ceremonies were, and still are, held in the honour of the cycle of life and in honour of *Xwayxway* and Snaug's generosity.

The MST peoples did not define land ownership the way we do in the modern era. For the neighbouring coastal communities, access to claimed space was afforded through the demonstration of respect towards the land (Vancouver), these shared attitudes were emblematic of the cultural ethea that afforded those millennia. Snaug didn't survive, however, and in stark contrast with the dominant

culture that preceded it, colonialists would leave an indelible mark on the landscape.

In 1890, with the intent to boost the West's industrial appeal, the federal government initiated the infill of Snaug. For the next 48 years, the reclaimed land would be aptly dubbed "Industrial Island" until Granville Island, for its position under the Granville Street bridge, would become its colloquial eponym.⁶

After 1899, with the forced displacement of the MST to the Capilano Indian Reserve, "Industrial Island" was contested land. The federal government, the Canadian Pacific Railroad, and local businesses each staked claim until 1916 when the federal government asserted control.⁷ Industrial Island would, for the remainder of this period, epitomize colonialism's extractive ethos. The site would be characterized, until the mid-1960s, by dense industrial activity.

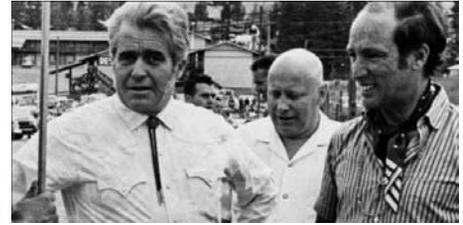
In 1916, under the purview of The Harbour Commission (today, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation), Snaug was sold off parcel by parcel. Knowing the Squamish couldn't compete with deep-pocketed industrialists with a thirst for waterfront property, the Squamish were "wilfully separated from their means of subsistence and culture and stripped of their sovereignty," bound by the capitalistic new world order and forced into a relationship of commodification with their land and water.⁸



Khatsahlano, Swanamia and their child. Snauq in the background – 1910



Granville Island infill – 1916



Pierre Trudeau (right) at Granville Island with local MP Ron Basford before the Federal acquisition – 1973

In the 1950s, Granville Island would be the site of frequent fires: aging logging and industrial infrastructure providing ideal kindling. Instead of restoring destroyed property, shop keeps abandoned their worksites for the mainland and Granville Island fell deeper into disrepair.⁹

In response to the deteriorating water quality and waning industrial productivity, Granville Island was the subject of a grand urban renewal project that sought to improve public perception of the waterfront and the city by extension.¹⁰ Vancouver was in the midst of a global marketing campaign that sought to put the city on the world stage, with efforts culminating in the 1986 World Exposition.

With emphasis on Granville Island's industrial program falling out of political favour, then MP Ron Basford made the redevelopment of Granville Island his political platform. In 1973, ownership of the island was transferred to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and four years later redevelopment began.¹¹ Joost Bakker and Norman Hotson (founders of what would become DIALOG) led the design of Granville Island's transmutation to public space. The emphasis would be placed on maintaining its maritime industrial aesthetic, and in 1978, Granville Island Public Market – the flagship

public-facing operation – opened for business.

Granville Island was, and to some extent still is, Vancouver's Art's District. Accompanying the Public Market are theatres, studios, arts workshops and after 1980, Emily Carr University of Art and Design, the confluence of which would usher in Granville Island's heyday of expression.¹¹

As is often the case in the ecology of urban succession, what followed dense artistry was gentrification and loss of authenticity. Granville Island today maintains vestiges of this character and with the relocation of Emily Carr University in 2017, and like the corrugated industrial edifices before them, the empty university grounds, today, stand as monument to yet another bygone era.

Granville Island, today, is Vancouver's global touchpoint as a tourist destination, its display case of cultural importance. While the husks of industry remain, gone are the smokestacks and log booms and in their place, murals, fruit stands and theatre marquees. Prominent among Granville Island's merchandise is a preponderance of maple syrup and Indigenous art: totems, masks, statuettes, lanyards. What becomes clear as you walk its streets is that it's still just as extractive as it was. Now, however,

instead of softwood, Granville Island hawks culture. Granville Island's economy today and its focus on Indigenous art is as socially extractive as Industrial Island's was resource extractive: value is placed on the product instead of people or culture.

The story is still being written, deep within the infill, beneath the dredge, under the cataclysm of imposition and hecatomb of culture and ecology lies the seed of how we as a people – and indeed, as landscape architects – can change the narrative. Snauq is not entirely lost, as it exists, today, as a Landscape in time.

⁴ Matthews, J. S. *Conversations with Khatsahlano, 1932-1954: Conversations with August Jack Khatsahlano, born at Snauq, False Creek Indian Reserve, circa 1877, son of Khaytulk and grandson of Chief Khatsahlanagh*. P. 149. 1967. Vancouver: City Archives.



Granville Island, today

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⁸ Muckle, Robert J., *Indigenous Peoples of North America: A Concise Anthropological Overview*. University of Toronto Press, 2012. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/j.ctt2ttk0. Accessed 9 Dec. 2020.

⁹ Fazel, Yasaman. The Hidden Heritage Gem of B.C.: The Economic and Architectural History of the Granville Island Public Market. Vancouver Heritage Foundation, 2016. Retrieved 2020, from <https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/undergraduate-research/52966/items/1.0304647> ¹⁰ Vancouver Heritage Foundation, Granville Island. 24 July 2019, Retrieved 2020, from www.vancouverheritagefoundation.org/place-that-matters/granville-island-public-market/. ¹¹ *Ibid.* ¹² *Ibid.*

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Figure 1. Group in front of the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver, Oak Street at 11th Avenue, Vancouver, BC ca. 1945.

What is the Jewish Landscape?

By Geoffrey Katz MBCSLA (inactive)

What is the Jewish landscape and where might it be found?

In the Spring 2021 issue of *Sitelines*, the article “What is landscape architecture anyway? – The Black landscape – part 2” explored, “some of the diverse intentions behind Black landscapes.”¹ Following this approach to Black landscape, and in the spirit of reflection and conversation, this article explores “cultural expression and formation, community orientation in, and reciprocal relations between people and the landscape”² in Jewish landscape.

Ndemeye and Karim describe “one layer of the landscape is physical... Another sits above: the network of relationships, interactions, expressions, and experiences that are constantly building within and around the physical landscape. Holistically, one might describe the landscape as a living medium that

mediates social exchange and, through time, not only bears witness to but plays an important role in cultural production and reproduction.”³ As an example, they consider the setting and action in an American film, in “what seems like only a couple blocks in Brooklyn.”⁴

In British Columbia, the Jewish community began in Victoria in 1859. With the rise of Vancouver, a Jewish community was established in Strathcona, an immigrant neighbourhood that also included people from Italy and Ukraine, adjacent the neighbourhoods of Japantown and Chinatown, and the Black neighbourhood of Hogan’s Alley. Later, as immigrant communities dispersed across Metro Vancouver, the Jewish community became established to the south. (Fig.1) Today there is a concentration of Jewish community centres, social services, religious institutions, and schools in the neighbourhood of Oakridge.

In the film, “the audience is exposed to the reciprocal relationship between culture and the landscape... The physical landscape that is the city block was not originally designed by Black people, but their cultural impact is itself an act of design that has made the physical space their own.”⁵

The physical layout of Vancouver was not designed by Jewish people, but the concentration of Jewish institutions and services results in a geographic area of social activity that generally becomes known by many people, Jewish and non-Jewish, who might participate actively or marginally, as a Jewish area. And the impact of Jewish activities and buildings and outdoor spaces created by Jews or for the Jewish community results in a transformation of the physical city toward a culturally characterized landscape.

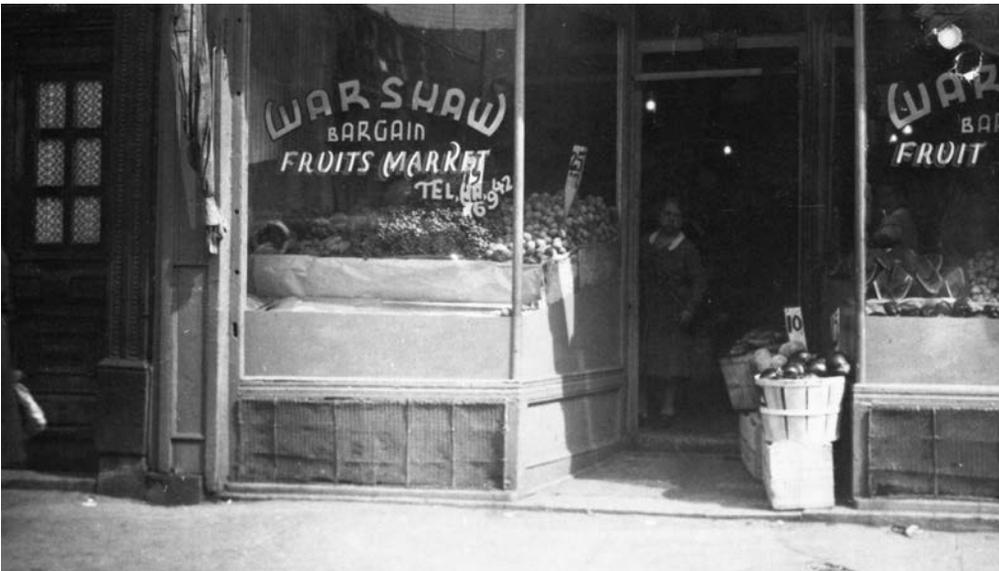


Figure 2. Warsaw Bargain Fruits Market on St. Laurent Boulevard, 1944, typical of storefronts on the Main. The store was founded by Leah Florkevitch, Jewish immigrant from Poland.

Elsewhere in Canada, the early Jewish community became established in Montreal beginning in 1763. There, the Jewish community concentrated in what was then called "The Main," today called "Le Plateau." This neighbourhood continues today as a key immigration neighbourhood in Montreal (and all of Québec).

In the late 1930s Montreal's population had doubled over the previous 20 years, and Montreal had the largest Jewish population in Canada. As a Jewish landscape what was The Main at that time?

- A street environment in common with French-Canadians, Anglo-Canadians, and other immigrants
- The languages of people in the street: Yiddish and the languages of the European countries that Jews left behind, against the background of French and English
- Jewish stores and businesses (Fig. 2)
- Jewish institutional buildings (Fig. 3)
- Jewish residential streets – entire Jewish blocks. In this part of Montreal, three-storey walk-up row housing, with outdoor stairs to the second and even third floors were (and are still) typical; they are constructed with Montreal grey limestone or red brick, grey-painted wood steps, and black-painted ironwork
- Street signage – multi-language (Fig. 3)

- Small enclosed gardens street-side, and small yards on back alleys (residential and institutional buildings)
- Cleanliness of the streets – swept in summer, snow piled in winter
- And the street activity – for Jews, this followed the pattern of business from Sunday to Friday, Friday morning market day in preparation for the Sabbath, Friday evening quiet as people welcomed the Sabbath at home (the Jewish day begins

with evening), then Saturday morning people hurrying to synagogue, and Saturday afternoon (weather-dependent!) strolling with family on the streets and in parks.⁶

In Montreal as in Vancouver, the Jewish landscape is rooted in the distinctiveness of the physical context and the social and cultural milieu of its people. Taken together, the urban cultural landscapes of all of a city's residents shape the character of the city, a combined work of people, place, and time.

As landscape architects, we are tasked to create place. If place – designed place – is specific to a location and time and aims to reflect or embody the built character of its context and materialize social forms and practices of the people who live there, how do we work with local communities in the creation of place? As landscape architects, we create opportunity for all parties to make informed decisions that align with their principles, values, and ways of being (and a project's goals) where we seek to comprehend and recognize the landscapes of the groups for whom we are designing – both the client proponents of a project and the future user groups, and also voices that may not otherwise be heard.



Figure 3. Jewish Immigrant Aid Society, Montreal 1930s. Note the building's characteristic dressed grey limestone, wood steps, black-painted ironwork, small fenced forecourt with shrub and tree, and signage in three languages – English, Yiddish, and French.

¹⁻⁵ Ndemeje, Divine and Shaheed H. Karim. "What is landscape architecture anyway? – The Black landscape – part 2." *Sitelines*, Spring 2021, p. 8. ⁶Gottlieb Katz, Ruth, age 93, personal communication. Gottlieb Katz, a refugee from Nazism, speaking neither English nor French, arrived in Montreal at the age of 7 and grew up in this neighbourhood.

Try to remember, when the noise is too great and the demands endless – find a place where the birds are singing, where the rising sun will touch your face, where the dirt of the earth will stick between your toes. Maintaining a connection to the land, the waters, and the sky is vital to nurture yourself and your work.

— Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, honorary doctorate acceptance address, Concordia University, 2018.

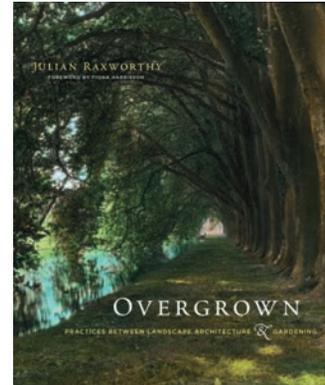


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—Celia Winters



Book review: Overgrown: Practices between Landscape Architecture and Gardening

Julian Raxworthy

Overgrown by Julian Raxworthy is a persuasive call for landscape architects to reflect on our collective discomfort with our gardening roots, and by doing so, to realign our work with the humble act of planting and nurturing our landscapes. The first and last chapters of the book are the most compelling and provocative, with ideas for how and why we should re-examine our relationship with planting that concludes with “A Manifesto for the Viridic.” This final chapter offers design “guidelines” that are obvious, provocative, and sometimes impractical, in the way they challenge the daily conventions of our profession in practice. How would we illustrate our planting plans if their graphics were not represented as static objects but material in constant growth? And how do we span the gulf being “designing” and “doing” and between “maintaining” and “nurturing”? The book doesn’t provide all the answers, but it asks essential questions for any landscape architect who designs with plants that change through time.

—Sophie MacNeill



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Submission deadline for Spring issue: January 7, 2022



Altered Lake Edge 1

By Chris Sterry
Landscape Painter and Urban Sketcher
Landscape Architect BCSLA (retired)
www.chrissterryart.com
Media: Acrylic on Canvas
Original Size: 12" x 16" x 1.5"

As the water level in the lake rose and the margins of the wetland expanded, the fringe of trees around the shoreline paid the price. In this case, beavers were the cause of the change and nature has its own resilient way of adapting. When I visited, the dead and dying trees, mostly without branches, leant in all directions waiting for the inevitable. Visually, the dying cedars stand like an installation of crooked spires set against the forested slopes beyond.

BICYCLE PARKING SYSTEMS

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