



For Immediate Release

Phase III of Ogden Point Breakwater Mural Announced

Victoria BC (June 3, 2011): On Saturday, June 4, the second phase of the Land and Sea Mural on the Ogden Point Breakwater will be blessed by First Nations Elders in a public ceremony. The occasion will also mark the announcement of the fundraising initiative for the continuation of the mural.

When complete, the mural will span the entire length of the breakwater, 762 metres on either side. It will be comprised of 2,000 panels, each designed by established First Nations artists and hand-painted by youth teams they will mentor. It will be the world's longest mural, an immense, original public art piece that extends to the sea as a bridge between cultures.

Cultural understanding and unity is a central tenet of the mural project and phase II contains a prayer written in the Lekwungen language, an endorsement which is historically significant.

Mural artist Darlene Gait explains, "The Blessing on the wall, is exactly that, 'A Blessing.' Many will come to understand the power of these words years from now. Some of us are able to see the beauty in these simple words, the honor it bestows on our people, on our city, land and sea. Others it may take some time. I am grateful to have the courage to allow my ancestors to guide my hands and my spirit."

Throughout the process of creating the first phases of the mural, the sense of being involved in something exceptional has overtaken the young painters. Dubbed the Unity Wall by a touring school group, the mural allows First Nations youth an opportunity to work with Elders and learn how traditional teaching are conveyed and passed down through artistic endeavours.

Sponsored to date by the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority, the Unity Wall compels people to stop, reflect and understand and as it extends to the sea. Organizers of the campaign to continue the mural hope that it will also compel people and companies to donate towards its completion. As stated by artist, Butch Dick: "The vision will be perpetuated by individuals who are advocates of understanding."

Donations to the Unity Wall will be accepted by the Ogden Point Enhancement Society, 2814 Arbutus Road, Victoria BC. V8N 5X3. For more information please visit www.unitywall.ca or call 250.383.8300 ext 225.

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