



Tsilhqot'in & Museum of Vancouver Work Together in Repatriation

Over 60 Tsilhqot'in ancestral belongings repatriated to Tsilhqot'in territory

For Immediate Release: October 15, 2024 — The **Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG)**, in partnership with the **Museum of Vancouver (MOV)**, have completed the repatriation of over 60 Tsilhqot'in ancestral belongings back to the Tsilhqot'in territory. In February 2024, a delegation of elders, youth, children, Women's Council members and former Tsilhqot'in leaders travelled to Vancouver to bring the belongings home.

The items repatriated include: 29 qats'ay (coiled root baskets), 29 lithics, one birch bark knife sheath (embroidered with dyed porcupine quill), and one pair of snowshoes made from wood, rawhide and sinew. Some of these belongings are currently on display at the TNG Dasiqox office in Williams Lake.

"The objects repatriated have now reconnected with the Tsilhqot'in people and territory after more than a century. Our people, particularly our youth, have taken immense pride in the strength of our people represented in the baskets. Our people held deep knowledge of the environment, using plants, animals, and natural materials for food, shelter, medicine and tools. These objects are an amazing showcase of the strength of the Tsilhqot'in people." — **Nits'il?in (Chief) Joe Alphonse, O.B.C, LL.D. (hon.). Tribal Chair, Tsilhqot'in National Government**

"The MOV is committed to reconciliation, redress and decolonizing the organization. This significant repatriation to the Tsilhqot'in Nation is a valuable step in this important ongoing work." — **Mauro Vescera, CEO, Museum of Vancouver**

"Repatriation is a one of the ways that MOV shows its commitment to respectful engagement with Indigenous communities. Our staff understands that we are only acting as caretakers of the belongings in the collection, that the stories and knowledge that animate them resides with the families and communities from which they originate. Each repatriation is unique, as each community has different teachings and different protocols about how to do this work. It is our job to listen carefully and follow the directions we are given to ensure that the work is done as it needs to be done. Our goal is to build strong relationships with the communities we engage with, and we do that by

recognizing their cultural autonomy.” –**Sharon M. Fortney, Senior Curator of Indigenous Collections, Engagement and Repatriation at the Museum of Vancouver**

The TNG and MOV are continuing their partnership through the development of a collaborative exhibition to honour the MOV’s role in caretaking these objects, as well as to showcase the repatriation as an example of successful collaboration surrounding repatriation of ancestral belongings. **“Celebrating T̓silhqot’in Repatriation” will be part of an exhibition titled, *The Work of Repair: Redress and Repatriation at MOV*, which is scheduled to open in the spring at the Museum of Vancouver.**

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About the T̓silhqot’in National Government: The TNG is the governing body for the T̓silhqot’in people. The T̓silhqot’in Nation is comprised of six communities located throughout the T̓silhqot’in (Chilcotin) territory and is the only Nation in Canada with a court declaration of Aboriginal title (Tsilhqot’in Nation v. British Columbia).

About the Museum of Vancouver: The Museum of Vancouver (MOV) connects Vancouverites to each other and connects Vancouver to the world. The Museum’s programs, exhibitions and collection bring people together and spur conversation about the future. The Museum is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to inspiring a socially connected, civically engaged city. The Museum of Vancouver and the city of Vancouver are located within the shared, unceded, ancestral territories of the x̓w̓məθk̓w̓əy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.