

NEWS RELEASE

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City unveils new utility covers designed by Snuneymuxw Artists

Joel Good and The Sisters at Ay Lelum integrate traditional Snuneymuxw art into urban landscape

Summary

Some Nanaimo streets will soon be adorned with new, uniquely-designed utility covers. Produced through a project by Ay Lelum – The Good House of Design with artwork by Joel Good, these captivating designs will be produced and used for the next decade. These new designs will be used for new installations and when old covers need to be replaced. The City anticipates that 20-40 will be installed on Nanaimo's streets each year.

The City of Nanaimo's collaboration with Ay Lelum and Joel Good honours the land and Snuneymuxw culture. These utility covers serve as a unique canvas for Snuneymuxw art within Snuneymuxw territory.

The storm cover design showcases two supernatural Eagles, representing strength, resilience and protection. The City of Nanaimo commits to safeguarding the community during storms and ensuring a safe environment for its residents.

The sanitary cover design features a Frog. Just as the frog purifies water sources in nature, the City is dedicated to maintaining a clean and sustainable sanitary system for the well-being of its citizens.

Lastly, the water cover design highlights the Orca, symbolizing power and strength in hul'q'umi'num' culture. This City is committed to preserving and protecting its marine environment, acknowledging the importance of water conservation and responsible usage.

Ay Lelum and Joel Good honour Snuneymuxw knowledge through traditional Coast Salish art, as taught by their father, Dr. William Good. They have gifted the people of Nanaimo with this powerful hul'q'umi'num' artform.

These captivating utility covers will be installed across the City of Nanaimo over the coming months and years, providing residents and visitors with the opportunity to experience Snuneymuxw art throughout our neighbourhoods.

Ay Lelum – the Good House of Design and their designs can be found on www.aylelum.com and @aylelum. Joel Good can be found online @JoelGoodArtist.

Strategic Link: Capital Projects, An Empowered Nanaimo

Key Points

- The new utility covers for maintenance holes are a project by Ay Lelum with artwork by Joel Good.
- These captivating designs, featuring an Eagle for storm covers, a Frog for sanitary covers, and an Orca for water covers, will be produced and used for the next decade on new installations and as old covers need replacing.
- The City anticipates that these designs will not only enhance the visual appeal of our streets, but will also provide an opportunity for dialogue and appreciation of Snuneymuxw art and culture.

Quotes

"From an Ancestral lens, art holds important knowledge and reminds us of our connection and responsibilities to the natural world. We extend our gratitude to our Snuneymuxw artists who generously share their gifts with the community."

Michael Wyse
Chief, Snuneymuxw First Nation

"There are few things that add as much character to a city as art does, and when that art can honour both culture and history, we grow stronger as a community. Ay Lelum and Joel Good bring Snuneymuxw tradition and hul'q'umi'num culture to each of our streets with these beautiful designs, reminding us that we are all connected in this incredible city."

Leonard Krog
Mayor, City of Nanaimo

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