

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **City of Nanaimo Unveils Temporary Public Art by Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun**

*Siwul tu Tumuxw (Notice the Land) invites the public to listen for the voices of the land*

#### **Summary**

The City of Nanaimo is pleased to announce *Siwul tu Tumuxw (Notice the Land)*, a new temporary public art installation by Snuneymuxw artist Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun. Unveiled in time to complement National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21, the project introduces a subtle sound-based artwork into the urban landscape, inviting residents and visitors to reflect on the ecosystems, teachings and stories connected to the land.

The installation consists of a series of discreet outdoor speakers placed at four strategic locations along Wesley Street in the Old City Quarter. At irregular intervals, the speakers play recordings of birds Indigenous to Snuneymuxw territory. The locations of the speakers are intentionally undisclosed, creating moments where passersby may question whether the sounds they hear come from the natural world or from the artwork itself.

By bringing these sounds back into the city environment, *Siwul tu Tumuxw* encourages people to consider the histories of the land before urban development and to reflect on the knowledge and teachings carried by the beings who live here. The project draws on Snuneymuxw stories and oral histories, raising awareness about traditional ecological knowledge and the impacts of colonization on local ecosystems.

Interpretive signage accompanying the project at the corner of Wesley Street and Fitzwilliam Street introduces several birds connected to Snuneymuxw teachings, including the Glaucous-winged Gull, American Crow, Pacific Wren and Ruffed Grouse. These species appear in stories that share teachings about relationships, resilience and coexistence with the natural world.

The artwork also connects with *Birds of Nanaimo: A Hul'q'umi'num' Field Guide (2024)* by Cory Landels and Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun, which highlights local birds using their hul'q'umi'num names and pronunciation guides, further reinforcing connections between language, land and place. This book is available at the site of the interpretive signage.

White-Hill is a Snuneymuxw artist whose multidisciplinary practice spans painting, public art, digital media and storytelling. His work often engages Snuneymuxw teachings and visual language to explore relationships between land, culture and contemporary life.

*Siwul tu Tumuxw (Notice the Land)* is presented as part of the City of Nanaimo's Temporary Public Art Program and will remain on display for five years. More information about the project can be found on the [City's website](#).

**Strategic Link:** The Temporary Public Art Program aligns with the goals of the City of Nanaimo's City Plan by facilitating public art that is accessible and freely available to everyone throughout the community to experience and enjoy.

## Key Points

- The City of Nanaimo is pleased to announce the unveiling of Siwul tu Tumuxw (Notice the Land), a new temporary public art installation by Snuneymuxw artist Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun.
- The installation consists of a series of discreet outdoor speakers placed at four strategic locations along Wesley Street in the Old City Quarter. At irregular intervals, the speakers play recordings of birds Indigenous to Snuneymuxw territory.
- By bringing these sounds back into the city environment, Siwul tu Tumuxw encourages people to consider the histories of the land before urban development and to reflect on the knowledge and teachings carried by the beings who live here.
- Siwul tu Tumuxw (Notice the Land) is presented as part of the City of Nanaimo's Temporary Public Art Program and will remain on display for five years.

## Quotes

"Public art can deepen our understanding of the place we live and the histories that shape it. This unique artwork invites residents and visitors to listen more closely to the land and to reflect on the stories and knowledge that have long existed here."

Leonard Krog  
Mayor  
City of Nanaimo

"Siwul tu Tumuxw" is an artistic intervention on the land here in Snuneymuxw in the Old City Quarter, the neighbourhood in which I used to live. This conceptual artwork brings to the surface stories and teachings from Snuneymuxw and the ecosystems and beings of the land who have lived and who continue to live here in this place. It invites the audience to be present as we navigate these spaces. I am grateful for the support of the City staff in this project and my collaborators, Cory Landels and Liam Seward-Ragan."

Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun  
Artist

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