



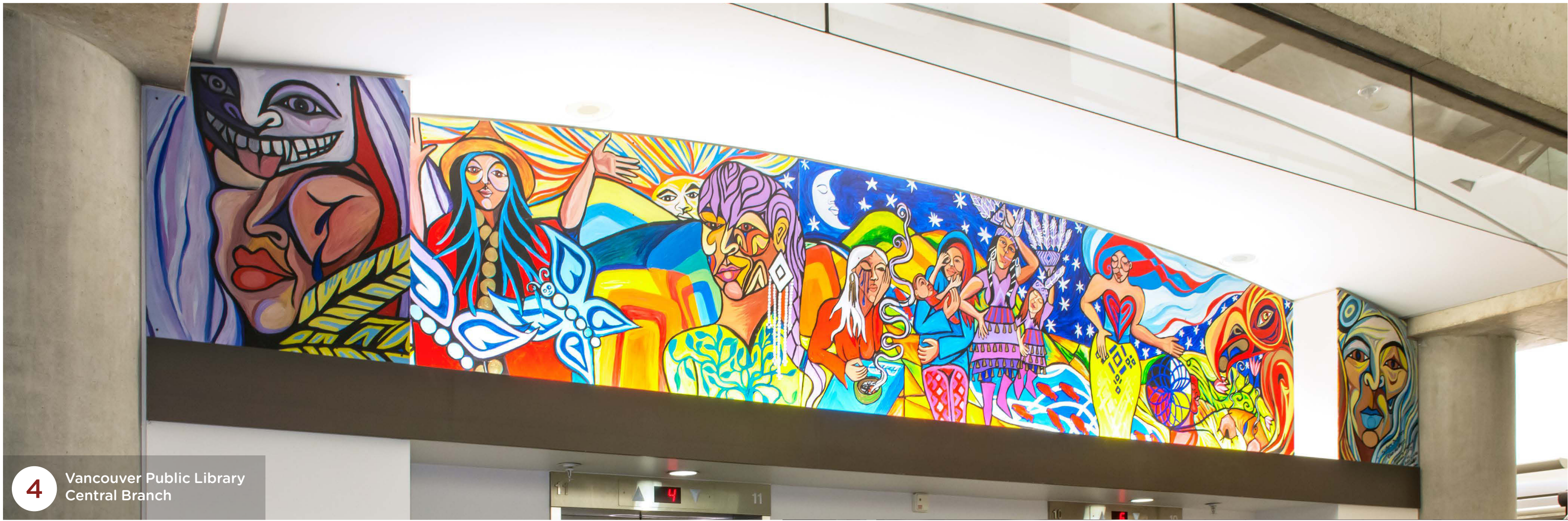
1 Vancouver Public Library Central Branch



2 Granville Bridge Facing W 4th Ave



3 Oakridge - 41st Avenue Canada Line Station



4 Vancouver Public Library Central Branch



5 ʔsxw̓l̓exən Xwtl'a7shn Plaza Lightbox

# Indigenous Artist Call 2019

## for murals and printed artwork

Vancouver is located on the unceded and ancestral homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

To contribute to a stimulating public realm and celebrate the creativity of Indigenous peoples in Vancouver, the

City of Vancouver invited proposals for a series of murals and printed artwork from Indigenous artists who have a connection to Vancouver. The featured artists and their installed work were recommended by a panel of Indigenous artists.

### 1 The Seven Fires Prophecies Joshua Mangeshig Pawis-Steckley (Wasauksing First Nation)

**ARTIST STATEMENT:** The Seven Fires Prophecies relay the different eras of Anishinaabeg history. The first three fires tell the story of the great migration from the mouth of the St. Laurent River, to the Western shores of Lake Superior. The later fires tell of the coming of the Europeans and their poisoning of the Indigenous spirit and our lands. The seventh fire -- the fire we are currently living in -- speaks of the Oshkimaadizig (New People) whose responsibility it is to decolonize, rebuild our nations, and return to original Anishinaabe visions of peace and justice.

will bring in a new era of peace and brotherhood. The Seven Fires Prophecies are a traditional Anishinaabeg story passed down through the generations through oral storytelling and they predate the arrival of the Europeans. Since our culture was transferred orally from generation to generation there were no recorded sources of the prophecies besides the Seven Fires Wampum Belt which was last held by the late Chief William Commanda of the Kitigan Zibi First Nation.

Miigwech,

**ARTIST BIO:** These banners are designed by Joshua Mangeshig Pawis-Steckley, an Anishinaabe/Settler who is a member of Wasauksing First Nation, ON. He studied graphic design in Nova Scotia and now lives in Vancouver, BC as an artist-in-residence at Skwachays Lodge. Joshua has been working professionally as an artist since 2015 specializing in acrylic paintings, graphic design and illustrations.

The seventh fire is a call to action to change the future for the better. According to the prophecies, if the Oshkimaadizig complete their goals, the eighth and final fire will be lit. This is a fire of everlasting peace. It's existence also depends on settler societies decisions to change their ways. If they choose to decolonize their relationship with the land and Indigenous nations, and join with us in building a sustainable future built upon mutual respect and justice we

### 2 The Waters Are Rising Sky Spirit Studio (Squamish Nation)

**ARTIST STATEMENT:** "The Waters Are Rising" shares the legend of "The Great Flood" into the public realm. This is presenting an Indigenous story from the cultural knowledge keepers in my extended family along the West Coast. The rope marks from where the canoes were pulled up can still be seen on Mount Garibaldi and Mount Baker.

earth by warning them of oncoming events, usually of storms, but now he speaks of climate change. He is telling the people that the waters will keep rising until the people take full stewardship of precious Mother Earth. The Tyee Salmon are the knowledge keepers, and the Eulachon fish represent the learners.

This Coast Salish version shows a Thunderbird warning the people that the waters are rising. The Thunderbird resides in the sun. He is the Creator's messenger. He helps the people on

The theme was chosen due to Indigenous concerns about stewardship of the land and waters, and the climate change crisis that is upon us.

### 3 Rewilding Whess Harman (Carrier Wit'at Nation)

**ARTIST STATEMENT:** The text in this work is presented with the intention of at first not appearing to be readable to emphasize the difficulty of translating between cultural identities. At first glance the work might appear as an Indigenous design or as graffiti, or like it hasn't been written in English. In making the work stubborn and difficult to people with, it is my hope that I've been able to prompt questions: why is this so difficult, where is my place in viewing this, should I laugh once I've deciphered the text?

this short text work looks at is the assumption that the places we are in are places that want us; and "place" not exclusively where the Nations and their ancestors have lived for time immemorial, but considering the land itself as holding its own spirit and will for or against those who occupy its borders.

Vancouver is a city that prides itself in being "close to nature." We are of course close to it: built on top of it, encased in the shores and with a good sightline to the mountain peaks. But this is not the nature that is implicated in the phrase "close to nature." What

**ARTIST BIO:** Whess Harman is a trans, Indigenous artist and poet from the Carrier Wit'at Nation, and an uninvited guest on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh peoples. They are profoundly grateful for the way this land has held and shaped them and their relationships with others in this last decade, and seek in their practice to conduct themselves accordingly in respect to these territories.

### 4 Sisters, Daughters, Clan Mothers: Honouring Indigenous Women and Girls Haisla Collins

**ARTIST STATEMENT:** "Sisters, Daughters, Clan mothers: Honouring Indigenous Women and Girls" is a work honouring Indigenous women and girls, their contribution to the arts, their connection to the land, their resilience and their contribution to the community. I chose the library as the location because to me it connects Indigenous peoples' voices and understandings to the public realm of knowledge, understanding, and education. I took special care to include many traditional elements of north-west coast and prairie cultures, and represent many kind of faces of Indigenous women.

**ARTIST BIO:** Haisla Collins is an artists, musician, teacher, and project organizer connected to Indigenous peoples of the North West Coast (Tsimshian, Nisga'a Gitsan). Haisla is interested in bringing to life northwest coast Indigenous narratives, myths, ideologies. Her work is cosmic, magical and speaks about the interconnections of everything and everyone. She is currently a community leader in Indigenous Women Artists (IWA, an artist collective), and recently completed a residency at Eagle Harbour Montessori, teaching art and culture. Indigenous women.

### 5 Tabay Nghuni Nzoo (Beautiful Story) Damian John (Tl'az'ten Nation)

**ARTIST STATEMENT:** Tabay Nghuni Nzoo translates to "Beautiful Story" or "your stories are very good." My experience of Vancouver is that of a beautiful story. The history, the present, the future. Of course the world is full of contrast, good and bad, great and tragic. Vancouver as a space is not exempt to these things.

cedar), old meeting the new (the cherry blossoms versus the cedar). I focused on iconic landscapes within the geography that is Vancouver. I depicted animals that we share space with everyday and perhaps do not see. If you look close, you can identify them. I wanted to explore our connections with ancestors and spirit and life.

In my art though, I wanted to highlight the beautiful, the mythological, the fantastic. I used big colours that match dusk and dawn, I brought in highlights of the old meeting the new (the cherry blossoms versus the

I love the wind. All these aspects show up in the art. It was a very fun project from start to finish and I hope that it invokes this idea of a beautiful story.

Photographs by Rachel Topham, Scott Massey, City

vancouver.ca/artistcalls

**CITY OF VANCOUVER**

The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples