

Research Day | March 15, 2017

Title: The Centre of Arrivals Project at the Royal BC Museum: Re-envisioning Canadian and Trans-Pacific History

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Abstract:

The Centre of Arrivals: The Royal BC Museum's Multicultural and Intercultural Initiatives (COA) is our institution's long-term project on exploring, preserving and sharing diverse BC cultural history through community engagement and collections-based research.

This project distinguishes BC through its regional, national, and global connections. The trans-Pacific and transnational context helps us re-envision Canadian and trans-Pacific history. It challenges the binary English and French origins in Canada's traditional national narratives, and broadens the understanding of the intercultural and historical complexities.

This presentation covers the work progress and plan for three major initiatives under the COA project:

1. The Multicultural and Intercultural BC History – The five-year plan
2. The Punjabi Canadian Legacy Project, and
3. Feeding the Family II: Immigrants' Transnational Food Practices in British Columbia.

The five-year plan builds on the first stage of trans-Pacific immigrant history to pursue the ongoing work on BC's diverse communities in preparation for celebrating BC 150 in 2021. The phase one work of the Punjabi Canadian Legacy Project is completed with collections of both 92 oral histories and considerable data from eight province-wide community consultations. The partnership and community feedback shape the three-year plan in phase two on province-wide engagement and legacy building. The third project builds on the existing strength of the Modern History collection of food packaging, and continues tracing diverse food traditions and ingenuity in BC as a result of immigrants' mobilization of transnational networks.

The research under this project to day has informed collections development, online and onsite educational programming, online feature collections, gallery rescription, travelling and feature exhibitions, provincial outreach, as well as academic and other publications.

