



The Story of the Hope Center Mural

Concept

The theme of our mural is Coming Home: a process of reconnecting with one's Coast Salish traditions, culture, stories, and family, combined with a deep sense of place connected to the land. In turbulent times, a sense of place is an essential part of cultivating hope and meaningful purpose.

The flow of the mural design from left to right provides the “coming home” narrative through illustrating a shift from some of the disjointed elements of contemporary society to a journey home to culture and heritage.

This is a process of reconnection, reclaiming, and immersion in culture.

Design Elements

We chose the stickleback and heron to frame the entirety of the design because they represent the T'Sou-ke nation.

On the left, abstract, geometric colourful designs represent our modern society that is often filled with over-stimulating imagery and colour which often fails to appreciate the flow of the natural world. The angular shapes are symbolic of buildings in cities or towns. The floating masks above the faces symbolize the inner Coast Salish spirit that accompanies the youth on this journey home. The sunrise symbolizes hope, light and revitalization.

Each design element carries its own significant meaning. The salmon begin as natural looking salmon and as they swim into the bay they transform into traditional Coast Salish salmon designs. This illustrates the salmon's connection to the Coast Salish people and the importance of salmon as a major form of sustenance and purpose in everyday life. Salmon is particularly significant to Beecher Bay.

Natural geographic features common to T'Sou-ke territory inspire the landscape design. The wolves symbolize the spirituality and traditions of T'Sou-ke, Beecher Bay, and Pacheedaht—the wolf people. The bear is the guide and protector of the youth on their journey home. The clams and various types of vegetation—huckleberry, salal, thimbleberries, blackberries, and fiddleheads—all refer to the practice and way of life of harvesting from the land and sea for sustenance.

The drummer on the basalt outcropping is singing the canoers in to shore, guiding and welcoming them home. On the right side there are people telling stories around the fire, sharing knowledge and teachings. The children playing on the beach symbolize innocence, laughter, and happiness.

We depict the Big House as the home of ceremony, spirituality, community, and cultural traditions that are sacred to Coast Salish people. The tall figures amongst the trees, dressed in cedar, are symbolic of the ancestors and spirits that help guide and watch over people in everyday life.

The trees are blended because they are a part of all that is around us. The emphasis on flow and balance throughout our composition reiterates Coast Salish harmony with the land and people and the interconnections that reverberate throughout our natural world.