

PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release



The Sooke Fine Arts Society had a plan to mark its 30th anniversary in 2016 with a gift of public art to thank the many volunteers, sponsors, donors and artists who contributed to the show since 1986, as well as arts patrons who have attended the Sooke Fine Arts Show each year.

The Society's Legacy Public Art Project was originally envisioned as a plan to complete a public art piece each year for five years. The original vision may not be accomplished within five years due to budgetary constraints, planning and administrative burdens, however, the first in the series is in the process of being installed and will be unveiled on July 20 at the main entrance to SEAPARC Leisure Centre in Sooke.

The unveiling ceremony on July 20 will be the culmination of two years of efforts that started with a vision, Call to Artists, fund and awareness raising, working with various entities and contractors. The accepted Coast Salish artist, Chris Paul, created *The Gift of Salmon* sculpture in steel.

This first sculpture pays tribute to a local Coast Salish legend that explains how our local waters became so bountiful with salmon and other fish. The original story, *The Transformer and the Blind Old Man*, resonates with people young and old. The sculpture is a celebration of place, people, and the power of art to connect across all boundaries. It highlights the region's dynamic arts and culture sector.

Performers from the T'Sou-ke Nation will be dancing and drumming at the unveiling ceremony and there will be a reading of the original story. The Artist, Chris Paul will be available to respond to questions about his rendering of the legend, and his processes. The Society is very excited about this undertaking and hopes it opens the door to many such collaborations with the T'Sou-ke Nation and others for art projects throughout our community.

The sculpture was funded by the Victoria Foundation; the Juan de Fuca Planning Area/CRD; the Province of BC, via a Multiculturalism grant; and by donations from Sooke Fine Arts Society members and community friends. The community is welcome to attend the unveiling and to help celebrate this milestone event and community beautification project.

Sooke Fine Arts Society

July 20, 1–2:00pm

SEAPARC Leisure Centre
2168 Phillips Rd, Sooke, BC

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