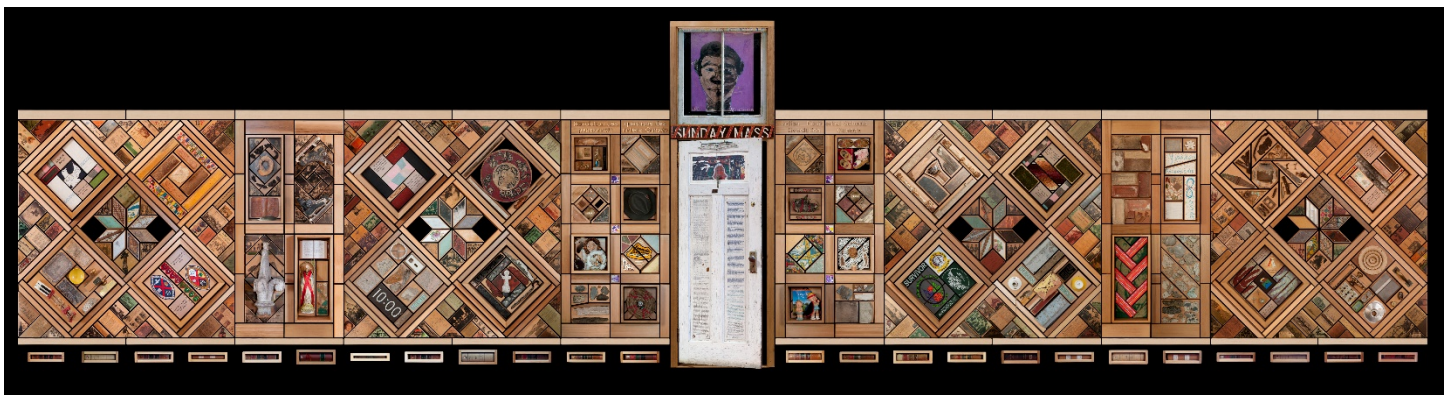


Witness Blanket National Tour

Call for Expressions of Interest



www.witnessblanket.ca

THE PROJECT

The blanket is a universal symbol of protection.

For many of us, it identifies who we are and where we're from – we wear them in ceremony and give them as gifts. Blankets protect our young and comfort our elders.

Inspired by a woven blanket, we have created a large scale art installation, made out of hundreds of items reclaimed from Residential Schools, churches, government buildings and traditional and cultural structures including Friendship Centres, band offices, treatment centres and universities, from across Canada. The Witness Blanket stands as a national monument to recognise the atrocities of the Indian Residential School era, honour the children, and symbolise ongoing reconciliation.

Over the past 18 months our project team has traveled all over the country collecting pieces from every province and territory. These "Gathering Trips" have allowed us to meet thousands of Canadians from every walk of life and gather 894 Pieces of History along the way.

NATIONAL TOUR

The historic significance of this work will resonate for generations to come. With the broad national participation in the creation of the Witness Blanket, it is important for it to travel around the whole country, offering all Canadians an opportunity to view this important work of art.

In releasing this *Call for Expressions of Interest*, we are seeking organizations (universities, museums, galleries, etc.) and communities who are interested in displaying the Witness Blanket. This is only an initial call - tour dates, logistics and costs will be determined as Expressions of Interest are received.

NATIONAL TOUR SCHEDULE

Our hope is the final destination for this historic piece will be at the National Research Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in Winnipeg, and we have now had a number of exciting conversations with them. The Centre's national focus, unique partnership agreements and its role as the permanent home for all documents, statements and other artifacts collected by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission make it a great fit for the piece. Part of achieving our vision is to ensure the Blanket has the opportunity to travel the country, a goal that is shared with the NRCTR.

We would like to see the Blanket tour the country for the next seven years. Ideally, each tour stop would be a minimum of 3 months to ensure maximized public viewing, with 4-5 tour stops per year. Following our Calls for Expressions of Interest in November of 2014 and February of 2015, we have confirmed the below tour stops*. All other dates not listed below are open and available to interested venues.

University of Regina, Regina, SK: January 1 – Mid-April, 2015

Calgary Public Library, Calgary, AB: April 13th – May 9th, 2015

Ottawa City Hall, Ottawa, ON: May 18- July 10th, 2015

Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, ON: July 13 – August 29, 2015

Nova Scotia: September, October, November 2015

Canadian Museum of Human Rights, Winnipeg, MB: January – June 2016

Peace River Museum, Peace River, AB: July and August, 2016

Vancouver Island University, Nanaimo, BC: September, October and November, 2016

New Westminster Museum and Archives, New Westminster, BC: December 2016 – April 2017

Tentative Bookings – May - August 2017**

University of the Fraser Valley, Chilliwack, BC: September, October, November 2017

First Nations University, Regina, SK: January, February, March 2018

Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Inuvik: NWT – April and May, 2018

Musee Heritage Museum, St. Albert, AB – April and May, 2018

Tentative Booking - June - December 2018**

Kelowna Art Gallery, Kelowna, BC – January, February and March 2019
Red Deer Museum and Art Gallery, Red Deer, AB – April, May, June 2019
Neil John Maclean Health Sciences Library, Winnipeg, MB – July, August, September 2019
Tentative Bookings – October 2019 – December 2020
Woodland Cultural Centre, Brantford, ON – January, February and March 2020
Tentative Booking – April, May 2020
Tatamagouche Centre, Tatamagouche, NS – June, July, August 2020
Tentative Bookings – September 2020 – May 2021

** Note: all of the above listed tour stops are contingent upon locating adequate funding to support touring costs*
*** Note: these dates are not currently available to interested venues*

DOCUMENTING THE STORIES

From the inception of the project, through the planning, Gathering Trips and finally the creation of the Witness Blanket itself, a team from Media One Multimedia has followed along, gathering video footage, audio and photographs of the process and the very human stories behind the artifacts—stories of pain, reflection, discovery and healing. Building from the collected footage, we are creating a feature length documentary that will tell these important and compelling stories that make up the meaning within the Witness Blanket. Whether it is shown at independent film festivals, broadcast nationally or distributed as curriculum, this documentary will form an important part of our collective history.



We are also creating a Legacy Website and Mobile App. The interactive online version will be a virtual replica of the physical Witness Blanket that can be explored via computers and apps for tablets and smart phones. This will bring all the video, audio, photos and stories from the gathering process into the home/classroom/handheld of anyone with Internet access. Users will be able to stand in front of the monument and interact with art, history and culture on an unprecedented scale. Filters will be included to edit the content for various age levels making an ideal platform to be woven into curriculum for all ages. The Witness Blanket App is now available for download in the App Store. The Android App will be available to download in the Google Play Store in the summer of 2015.

THE ARTIST

Being of British, Kwagiulth and Salish descent, West Coast Master Carver Carey Newman has been able to draw upon each of these cultures for his inspiration. While this adds a contemporary flare to his work, he is very careful to adhere to traditional rules and values. Mastering as many techniques and mediums as possible is one of the keys to his continual inspiration. Wood, stone, gold, silver, gems, glass, painting and more recently steel and bronze are all mediums that Carey works with. In 2008, Carey was selected as the master carver of the Cowichan 2008 Spirit Pole, a journey that saw him travel the province of BC sharing the carving experience of carving a 20' totem with over 11,000 people. His large installation piece entitled "Dancing Wind", created for the 2010 Olympic Games, consisted of 4 large panels, made from stainless steel, cedar and glass. Community work is important to him. Acting as a mentor he worked with over 80 youth participants in the Victoria Native Friendships Center's EAGLE Project to create two monumental totems. He has done work for corporations, government agencies and museums around the world and is continually thankful for the opportunity to try new mediums and share new ideas.

Finding ways to innovate without disregarding history is extremely important to Carey. It was this creative instinct, combined with knowing and feeling the pain that Residential School caused for his own father that motivated him to create the Witness Blanket.

"As I neared the completion of this project, I became more and more aware of the impacts that it can have. I have seen the healing it has created within my own family. I have also seen how people of various faiths, ethnicities and generations have been inspired to take part. My wish for this piece is that it will affect others the way that the process of making it has affected me. From the beginning, I have had the belief that this work is bigger than any one person and the collective power of these "Pieces of History" confirms that. I am proud and honoured that this idea has been so well supported, not only here in British Columbia, but all across Canada. Individuals, organisations and governments have made the Witness Blanket what it is – a testament to the human ability to find something worthwhile, even beautiful, amidst the tragedies, memories and ruins of the Residential School Era."

- Carey Newman, Witness Blanket artist and project founder

REQUIREMENTS FOR DISPLAYING THE WITNESS BLANKET

- Enough space to allow individuals to walk fully around the entire blanket and walk through the door at the centre (a minimum of 32 feet long x 25 feet wide x 10.5ft high) if displaying the full blanket)
- An accessible space that is open to the public and does not involve an entry fee
- A secure space with full time supervision. The exhibit space must be secured during non-visitation hours.
- An indoor space – the Witness Blanket contains artifacts which must be protected
- A space where specific temperature, humidity and light may be maintained
- An electrical outlet to plug in a projector mounted to the Witness Blanket that displays images and documents
- An open internet connection so individuals can access the Witness Blanket App on their smart phone or tablet (preferred but not required).



WITNESS BLANKET SPECIFICATIONS

- **Length:** Full Display – 40ft. Smaller configurations are also possible, with the smallest configuration being 12 feet in length and 10.5 feet in height
- **Height:** 10.5ft
- **Weight:** Approximately 3500lbs

Please see page 6 for a scaled graphic of the Witness Blanket

TRANSPORTATION OF THE WITNESS BLANKET

The Witness Blanket separates into individual panels to travel and each panel has its own traveling crate. We will send a Witness Blanket team member to oversee the installation and take-down of the piece at each tour stop. Secure sheltered storage space will be required for the crates while the blanket is on display.

- **Number of crates:** 13*
- **Dimensions of each crate:** 8 feet long x 4 feet wide x 2 feet deep
- **Weight when full:** 300lbs
- **Weight when empty:** 80lbs

**There are 6 smaller additional crates that can be stacked on top of one of the 13 crates while in storage*

FUNDRAISER CAMPAIGN

We are currently seeking funds to support the cost of the National Tour and the Feature Documentary. Please visit our website www.witnessblanket.ca to support our campaign financially.

MEDIA COVERAGE

[The Witness Blanket Project](#) // Aug. 7, 2013 – CBC’s “All Points West”

[Artist creates epic monument to Canada’s Residential Schools](#) // May 17, 2014 – The Globe and Mail

[Carey Newman’s Witness Blanket weaves healing and history](#) // Dec. 10, 2014 – CBC’s “the Q”

[Acknowledging aboriginal history through art](#) // January 9, 2015 – Regina Leaders Post

SUBMITTING AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

If your community or organization is interested in displaying the Witness Blanket we encourage you to submit an Expression of Interest to us. Please include in your submission:

- An overview of your organization including, if applicable, previous experience in displaying large scale installations (maximum 1 page in length)
- An overview of the space where the blanket will be exhibited including total space dimensions, elevations and floor plans
- An overview of the route from the loading bay or exterior doors closest to the exhibit space, to the exhibit space itself
- An overview of where the crates will be stored while the blanket is on display
- Photos of the proposed exhibition space
- The lead contact for your community or organization that the Witness Blanket team would work with to arrange the exhibit
- The preferred dates (year, month) for the Witness Blanket to be displayed in your community or venue. Reminder: the ideal timeframe for hosting the Blanket is 3 months.
- Please also identify any funds that your community or organization may be able to contribute to transportation and installation costs. We are currently pursuing several funding avenues with the intention of supporting these costs

Please email all submissions to rosy@witnessblanket.ca

For more information or for support in submitting an Expression of Interest, please contact:

Rosy Hartman, Project Coordinator

rosy@witnessblanket.ca or 1 (250)-893-9449

The Witness Blanket

