

March 22, 2017

The Royal BC Museum signs MOU with the National Museum in Czech Republic

VICTORIA, BC—Monday in Prague, the Royal BC Museum signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the **Czech Republic’s** Národní muzeum (national museum).

The focus of the MOU is to foster and further a mutual understanding of First Nations **materials in both institutions’ collections, a significant step in the Royal BC Museum’s commitment to gain a comprehensive understanding of where First Nations artefacts are held beyond BC’s borders.** This is a landmark agreement for two world-leading museums to help share curatorial expertise and best practices.

“This is the first stage in an ambitious plan to ‘map out’ a **database of cultural treasures from British Columbia held by international museums,**” said **Royal BC Museum CEO Prof. Jack Lohman.** “This partnership with the National Museum in the Czech Republic is a pilot project, the first opportunity for First Nations and Royal BC Museum professionals to work together to study, catalogue, and share knowledge of valuable collections held abroad.”

A recent example of a similar collaboration was struck by the British Museum and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, a relationship that bore significant museological fruit, including a comprehensive cataloguing of the Maori taonga (artistic creations) **in the British Museum’s collections.**

In broad strokes, the MOU between the Royal BC Museum and Národní muzeum reflects a mutual agreement for the institutions to share professional expertise; share knowledge; develop collaborative activities; record the collections; employ digitization as a tool for sharing knowledge, understanding and awareness of the collections; and, focusing on the Pacific North-West Coast collections, facilitate visits by Indigenous peoples, share information about cultural heritage and consider holding exhibitions and producing a joint publication.

The signing of the MOU comes as the Royal BC Museum gears up to co-host, with **the First Peoples’ Cultural Council,** a symposium on First Nations repatriation, in Kelowna March 29-31, 2017.

About the Royal BC Museum

The Royal BC Museum explores the province’s human history and natural history, advances new knowledge and understanding of BC, and provides a dynamic forum for discussion and a place for reflection. The museum and archives celebrate culture and history, telling the stories of BC in ways that enlighten, stimulate and inspire. Looking to the future, the Royal BC Museum will be a refreshed, modern museum, extending its reach far beyond Victoria as a world-class cultural venue and repository of digital treasures.

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