

November 3, 2021

Royal BC Museum Announces Upcoming Changes to Core Galleries

VICTORIA, BC — The Royal BC Museum announced today that it will begin closing sections of the third floor to start the process of decolonization in these galleries, in response to the call to action from Indigenous leaders to increase cultural safety and ensure the museum is a welcome place for everyone. Minor closures will begin in November, leading up to a full closure of the third floor as of January 2, 2022.

The Royal BC Museum third floor comprises the First Peoples gallery, *Our Living Languages: First Peoples' Voices in BC* exhibition, and *Becoming BC* gallery. A phased approach to closure allows British Columbians to plan a visit (on or before December 31, 2021) to exhibits as they were originally built.

“Decolonization of the museum’s galleries is important and long overdue,” says acting CEO Daniel Muzyka. “As part of our work to implement modernized museum practices, in particular our efforts around decolonization, we will be closing the third-floor so we can decant our galleries. This is necessary to begin the long-term work of creating new narratives that include under-represented voices and reflect the lived experiences and contemporary stories of the people in BC.”

The phased closure of the third floor will begin with the mezzanines in the *Becoming BC* gallery, which have largely focused on promoting the story of the European settlement of BC. Every effort will be made to mitigate the impact to visitors through to the end of the year.

During the third-floor closure, the Royal BC Museum staff will continue to offer opportunities for community engagement with visitors and tourists through webinars, online learning and virtual tours. The museum will also expand its provincial travelling exhibition and pop-up exhibit programs, including installations across Greater Victoria.

“Our government’s commitment to truth and reconciliation demands that we diversify and decolonize the way we share the history of B.C.,” says Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, Hon. Melanie Mark. “For too long, museums have been colonial institutions that exclude others from telling their own stories. We have an opportunity to turn the museum inside out, and it starts here, now, on the museum’s third floor.”

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About the Royal BC Museum: The Royal BC Museum explores the province's human history and natural history, advances new knowledge and understanding of B.C., and provides a dynamic forum for discussion and a place for reflection. The museum and archives celebrate culture and history, telling the stories of B.C. in ways that enlighten, stimulate and inspire. Located in Victoria on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen (Songhees and Xwsepsum Nations), we are a hub of community connections in B.C.—onsite, offsite and online—taking pride in our collective histories.

Photos of third-floor galleries: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/36463010@N05/r6MUg9>

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