

For Immediate Release
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Celebrating Canada's Diverse Heritage through Art & Culture

The Greater Vernon Museum & Archives Society and Vernon artist Michelle Loughery are pleased to announce the support of the Government of Canada for the Canada 150 - Diversity Mural Bead Project.

Vernon, BC – On June 27, Vernon will celebrate Canada’s multicultural strengths with a temporary public art installation and the rededication of Vernon’s multicultural mural. Part of a signature [Michelle Loughery Route Blue Wayfinder](#), the community-based engagement project combines youth skills building and celebrates water stewardship through heritage story telling.

The idea is to have the buoys, painted by youth, elders, artists and other community members, strung on posts that will be erected along a cross-Canada route

“Each installation will create unique storytelling exchanges, of where we come from and celebrate Canadian diversity,” said Michelle Loughery, a Vernon, BC-based and internationally renowned mural artist.

Loughery has spearheaded the project with the help of the [Greater Vernon Museum and Archives](#), with financial help from the Government of Canada and support from the City of Vernon and the Vernon School District (SD 22). The Canada 150 Diversity Mural Bead Project features art painted on flotation buoys, which have been provided by the [Ocean Legacy Foundation](#), a Canadian-based non-profit which conducts clean-up expeditions to mitigate ocean plastic pollution.

“Art and heritage inspires and engages in artistic storytelling and conversation,” said Loughery. “The Canada 150 – Diversity Mural Beads’ [Route Blue™](#) Highway Buoy program will celebrate and connect our multicultural strengths. As buoys have origin stories, so do our First Peoples and new Canadians. Collectively, their stories are connected and interwoven in the roots and routes of this great nation of Canada.”

Inspired by ancient hand-to-land art skills across all cultures, the Canada 150 Diversity Mural Bead Project is rooted in the award winning multicultural mural created by Loughery and a team of youth from Loughery’s Wayfinder Project. Painted on Vernon’s post office in 2000, the multicultural mural is part of a 26-mural collection started by the City of Vernon, the Greater Vernon Museum and the Downtown Vernon Association and Loughery in 1999.

“The multicultural mural was created in response to a letter from a group of students requesting a multicultural mural be created, and also honours Pierre Elliott Trudeau and his contributions to multiculturalism in Canada,” said Loughery.

The City of Vernon is supporting this project by funding the re-glazing of the mural for the event.

“The Vernon Mural project was an innovative program that many communities have emulated. The murals have created a signature tourism draw to our downtown and the stories of the people who have worked to create this great city are a heritage legacy. The project was and is a testimony to the power of

youth and community working together. The multicultural mural especially tells the importance of people and education in the community plan,” said Vernon Mayor Akbal Mund.

The public is invited to participate in the launch of the Canada 150 Diversity Mural Beads and the rededication of the multicultural mural in the Civic Plaza, located in front of the Greater Vernon Museum, June 27 at 5:00 p.m.

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or connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) #Canada150 #Canada150DiversityMuralBeads #routeblue #vernonmuseum #artistmichelleloughery #SD22learns #oceanlegacy www.vernonmuseum.ca www.diversitymuralbeads.ca on www.routeblue.ca

Additional Quotes:

*"Connecting youth to their community through hand-to-land learning and public art exemplifies the place-based learning environment essential to building strong communities. The innovative idea of transforming reclaimed marine debris into Diversity Mural Beads - Wayfinder Art-Buoys, heightens awareness of water stewardship and connecting us as a nation as we celebrate Canada's 150th ." **Mel Arnold MP, North Okanagan - Shuswap***

*"The history and heritage of the North Okanagan is invaluable and significantly important to area citizen. Vernon's multicultural roots have a strong foundation in the building of Vernon that we have today. The Canada 150 – Diversity Mural Beads public engagement art project, has a significant place, not only in highlighting local history but also to engage citizens in cross-generational and cross-culture conversations." - **Eric Foster, MLA, Vernon-Monashee***

*"The Greater Vernon Museum and Archives has made a commitment to connect, in a meaningful and significant way, to all members of the community and to expand our programming to combine arts and heritage initiatives, as they apply to our mandate. Bringing research and learning to the forefront, in a fun and interactive way, through Canada 150 Diversity Mural Beads, we are able to engage a wide-ranging audience, step outside of the conventional museum box and highlight the connection we all have to culture and our community." - **Tracy Satin, Greater Vernon Museum & Archives Society***

"Over the span of my career, including the Vernon Mural Project, the support of the Government of Canada, has given me the opportunity to lead thousands of youth through community Wayfinder art based projects, that have helped youth gain employment, learn trade, and employment foundation skills that have led these youth to strong life paths. Community art is the thread that ties us all together, bringing people, place and planet to a common ground and path. The youth of today are the

future, and the artful thinking they share with us, will be the bright path of a diverse and strong Canada for the next 150 years.” - **Michelle Loughery, Master Muralist and Art Educator**

“The Ocean Legacy Foundation is pleased to support the Canada 150 Diversity Mural Beads by merging transformative artistic education with action-based ocean stewardship. The environmental stewardship of our shorelines and ocean are in-need of more attention as well as innovative solutions for their sustainable disposal. By merging both these ground-breaking programs we can connect communities from across the province around the crucial works being completed to conserve our pristine wilderness. The stories found in the diversity of these buoys are not only a reflection of the rich diversity found within our own communities but act as a catalyst for all to share our stories our heritage, diversity and unity.” – **Chloé Dubois, President & Co-Founder of The Ocean Legacy Foundation**

“Our beaded path, "Paved with Purpose" by all the people passing through (before, now & after) of many cultures, faiths & creeds. One path reveals many branches and serves as a conduit for communities to come together, play & stay together as a blended & diverse society. Gateways open and welcome a sense of place to all who enter. The Mother Road has no ethnicity, she is a sacred guardian reaching out to all travelers & modes of transport. Finding new junctures along life's crossroads.” – **Lorrie Fleming, Founder of Canadian Route 66 Association**

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