



COLLECTIONS HIGHLIGHTS

Sisiyutl Plank Returns Home

In 1997 U'mista was offered a beautiful Sisiyutl Plank, collected by George Hunt for the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. Unfortunately, shipping the plank home proved cost prohibitive. The Newberry Library graciously agreed to display the plank above their card catalogue until a solution could be found.

While renewing the loan forms we put out a call for an appraiser to assist us with the valuation, K'odi Nelson (always thinking of U'mista) forwarded our newsletter to Donald Ellis, who very generously offered to appraise the plank. When he learned the reason for it being located at the Newberry Library he immediately asked if he could assist with not only the shipping but to make all the arrangements as well. Gilakas'la Donald! We appreciate

Gilakas'la Vance Conway and Vance (2.0) Conway Jr. who ALWAYS go above and beyond for U'mista!

your generosity and are beyond thrilled to have this beautiful piece returned to our territory!

The Sisiyutl is a fabulous double-headed sea serpent, which has one head at each end, a human head in the middle, one horn on each terminal head, and two on the central human head. Sisiyutl has the power to assume the shape of a fish. To eat it and even to touch or see it is sure death, as all the joints of the unfortunate one become dislocated, the head being turned backward. But to those who enjoy supernatural help it may bring power; its blood, wherever it touches the skin, makes it as hard as stone; its skin used as a belt enables the owner to perform wonderful feats; it may become a canoe which moves by the motions of the Sisiyutl fins; its eyes, when used as sling stones, kill even whales. It is essentially the helper of warriors (Secret Societies pp.371-372).

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The focus of our efforts during this pandemic was to move our programs online. We chose to cancel all in-person programs in order to keep everyone safe and healthy, especially after the cluster of cases in Alert Bay during the Spring. We began to offer our ever popular, "Kwak'wala with Elders" via Zoom. Once the elders were comfortable with the format, they branched out and hosted an evening of "Christmas Carols in Kwak'wala". We love their spirit and enthusiasm.

We began the year with Ali Lopez as our Arts Program Assistant and ended the year with Kimberly Willie returning from maternity leave. We are sad to see Ali leave but are so pleased to have had the chance to work with her and ex-

tremely grateful for the smooth transition. Kimberly has been very busy working on some new programs that we can offer virtually as well as revisiting our more popular programs from previous years.

Once the 40th anniversary exhibition, "U'mista" opened Kim focused her efforts on the "Resilience" exhibit, which is scheduled to open in the new year. An added bonus for Team U'mista is the occasional visits from Kim's family.

TO READ MORE ABOUT
THESE PROGRAMS
VISIT

www.umista.ca



Congratulations to our logo contest winners! Thank you to everyone who entered, we will be featuring a different winning artist over the next few days. We will also keep everyone posted on what our winning designs will turn into. Keep your eyes peeled!

Pictured above are both our Kids category winners: Kostas Peterson and Jason Speck. One of our Youth category winners: Brennan Sawyer and one of our Adult category winners: Aubrey Johnston Sr.