



## ***Learning with Syeyutsus*, the successful speaker's series, kicks off its third season with author Joshua Whitehead and a new collaborator, the Vancouver Island Regional Library**

**(Vancouver, December 6, 2022)** The **Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (NLPS)** and **UBC Press** are proud to announce its collaboration with the **Vancouver Island Regional Library** on Series 3 of the successful **Learning with Syeyutsus Speaker Series**. The series was initiated by the NLPS in response to its goal to fulfill the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action #57**. This Call to Action asks all levels of government to provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous peoples.

"I have a responsibility to ensure the next generation of children are told the truth about Canada's ugly history with Indigenous peoples. Learning about and acknowledging the sad truth of our past is the first step in reconciling our relationship with indigenous people so we can move forward together. The TRC57 learning series helps to promote a deeper conversation towards rebuilding our relationship with Indigenous peoples and the land for a stronger Canada," **Scott Saywell**, Superintendent, NLPS District 68

Vancouver Island Regional Library will advance the reach of the TRC57 talks by making print and digital copies of the featured works available in its collections, and by working with its 39 library branches to develop public screenings and discussion groups based on the series, to further the education of its staff and the public about Indigenous history.

"We are honoured to be included in this partnership and raise our hands to School District 68 and UBC Press for initiating this forum for education, truth, and reconciliation," says **Ben Hyman**, Executive Director at Vancouver Island Regional Library. "The TRC57 Speaker Series holds space for Indigenous voices, perspectives, and experiences, and the phenomenal speakers challenge and motivate us, individually and collectively, to become stronger allies and partners on our journey to a more promising and inclusive future."

The speakers in the series comprise UBC Press authors, with a few exceptions, and have included Jody Wilson-Raybould, Jerry Fontaine, Harold Johnson, Duncan McCue, and Pamela Palmater.

The new season begins on January 4 with best-selling author **Joshua Whitehead**, a two-spirit Oji-nêhiyaw poet and novelist from Peguis First Nation, in conversation with his good friend and award-winning author **Angie Abdou**, who will discuss their forthcoming book *Indigiqueerness: A Conversation about Storytelling* (Athabasca University Press). **Sa'ke'j Henderson**, a key strategist and member of the drafting team for the creation of UNDRIP, returns this season to share the critical importance of protecting Indigenous Knowledge and the need for a global legal framework for its protection.

Other notable speakers this season are: Susan Dion, Phillip and April Vannini, Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez, Helen Raptis, Darwin Hanna, Allan Downey, Solen Roth, Adam Barker, Carol Lynne D'Arcangelis, Sigrid Lien and Hilde Wallem Nielssen. Their thought-provoking works range from the brilliance of Indigenous languages and storytelling, art as activism, Indigenous identity and nationhood building, through to the game of Lacrosse, and the profound and spiritual connection that human beings have to the land.

"Knowledge is an essential component of reconciliation, and as a publisher, UBC Press is honoured that our authors and their books are part of this vital Call to Action. The knowledge, expertise, and experience being shared by all of the speakers, and offered for free to the public, is a gift and we are grateful to the NLPS for recognizing that the inherent value of the series goes beyond the boundaries of its institution," **Darcy Cullen**, Assistant Director and Acquisitions Editor, UBC Press

The *Learning with Syeyutsus Speakers Series*, January 4 – June 21, 2023, is a free online series that runs over the lunch hour. Each talk opens with a ceremony led by Lawrence Mitchell, a Snaw-Naw-As First Nations member, and is hosted by Ted Cadwallader, former Director of Indigenous Education, BC Ministry of Education and Director of Instruction, Indigenous Learning, Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools.

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