



WESTBANK  
FIRST NATION

*Guide to*

# *PUBLIC ART*



*Community. Leadership. Pride.*

2021

# Westbank F



# First Nation



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## Public Art Program

Westbank First Nation's ("WFN") Public Art Program, established in 2014 by the WFN Public Art Committee, is a collaborative, collective, creative process between WFN, practicing artists, and community members.

Public art creatively addresses the needs and aspirations of the WFN community and acknowledges WFN and syilx/Okanagan heritage.

The Public Art Committee works to promote syilx culture through the arts; provide advice and support activities that advance public art; and administer a selection process for commissioning and purchasing public art.

## Heritage

Westbank First Nation features other programs, celebrations, events, and art not necessarily classified as "public art." For example, aspects of syilx culture have been woven into the design of many buildings, structures, and signs throughout the community.

The *siya?* celebration, held annually on the first Friday in June, is an opportunity for the community to celebrate and honour our school children and the role of women in our community, as well as give thanks for the past year and blessings for a fruitful year ahead. This celebration, similar to a powwow, features drumming, dancing, singing, and the sale of local Indigenous art, jewelry, and crafts.



# 1 Seven Generations

Smoker Marchand, 2013

WFN Elders Hall, 3255D Shannon Lake Road



Seven Generations honours residential school survivors, their families, and those who have passed on. The Elder symbolizes the passing of knowledge, and the drum symbolizes resiliency and the heartbeat of our lives.

# 2 Medicine Bear

Smoker Marchand, 2011

3604 Carrington Road (snyatan Shopping Centre)

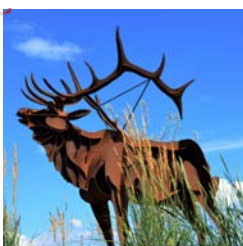


Artist statement: "The bear was strong medicine because he was the strongest and most powerful of the animal people and known for his courage and protectiveness. There is nothing more dangerous than a bear protecting its family, which I believe is a symbol of First Nation efforts to bring life and a healthy environment to our community."

# 3 Elk

Smoker Marchand, 2013

2180 Elk Road



For centuries, those who successfully hunted elk were recognized as important leaders of traditional practices. Quite often, the best hunters, or those whose families were great hunters, have been recognized as those fortunate enough to adorn the porcelain teeth of the elk.

# 4 Community Reader Board

Clint George, 2013

1902 Pheasant Lane



The digital reader board, framed by public art, contains rotating notices that help share information about community events and initiatives.

The sculpture depicts Chief siya?, one of the Four Food Chiefs.



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## Veterans Memorial

Smoker Marchand, 2014  
1900 Quail Lane

Approximately 7,000 Indigenous people served in the Canadian Armed Forces during the First and Second World Wars. This monument honours both Westbank First Nation veterans and all who have served, and continue to serve, in the Canadian and American Armed Forces.

Artist statement: "I wanted to show a strong Indian man. I wanted to show a strong Indian woman. And I wanted to show a soldier who could be any soldier—he could be Native, he could be any soldier—because I think it's important to represent all our people. My uncle said that when they got into the trenches, they were a band of brothers. There was no colour. There was no difference in who they were. They fought together, and I think that's really important."



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## Four Food Chiefs Medallions

Janine Lott, 2010

1900 Quail Lane



The Four Food Chiefs, Chief siya? (saskatoon berry), Chief sp'iłłəm (bitterroot), Chief ntityix (spring salmon), and Chief skəmxist (black bear), represent various protocols, social order and life lessons that traditionally guided the way of life of the syilx people prior to outside contact.

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## 3-D WFN Logo Monument

Clint George, 2010

1900 Quail Lane



This sculpture features elements of the WFN logo, which captures the essence of syilx teachings, culture, and history: sen'klip, the trickster and teacher; kiláwna?; n̄xaʔǰ ʔitkʷ; and Okanagan Lake.

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## qʷači? (Pit House)

1900 Quail Lane



qʷači? were traditionally used during the winter months, utilizing geothermal energy, the warmth of the mother earth, to keep the people safe. They were well kept, as they were more than a resting place; they were also a space to share stories and celebrate. When spring arrived, the syilx people would travel with portable summer tule mat dwellings / tukʷtānilx.

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## Turtle Island, Four Food Chiefs

Clint George, 2011

1920 Quail Lane



This monument depicts Turtle Island, the Four Food Chiefs, and the four elements of water, earth, wind, and fire. Turtle represents a peaceful, liberated society, providing compassion for all, and brings vision, knowledge, and peace to the people.

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## n̓xaʔǰ ʔitkʷ

Smoker Marchand, 2013

525 Hwy 97 (Okanagan Lake Shopping Centre)



The sacred spirit of the lake, n̓xaʔǰ ʔitkʷ, lives in the water but can also move to the land and air.

n̓xaʔǰ ʔitkʷ reminds us to be mindful of our resources; if n̓xaʔǰ ʔitkʷ disappears due to pollution and misuse of the water, so do the plants, medicines, trees, and foods that sustain us.

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## Harmonizing Mother Earth

Graham Pettman, 2004

515 Hwy 97 South (WFN Government Office)



Graham Pettman is known for intertwining nature and spirit in his artwork.

This piece intertwines the Creator with Mother, Child, Bear, Eagle, Coyote, Mouse, n̓xaʔǰ ʔitkʷ, and Drum.

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## Four Food Chiefs Wall Mural

Smoker Marchand, 2013

515 Hwy 97 South (WFN Government Office)



This mural depicts the Four Food Chiefs, which are the foundation from which Okanagan culture has grown and developed.

For this reason, the Four Food Chiefs form the cornerstone of WFN's governance structure and strategic plan.





## Chief swk'cut

**13** Crystal Przybille, 2019  
238 Queensway Avenue

Prior to 1876, before colonization and the imposition of the Indian Act, the syilx were a self sufficient, self-governing people.

Charlie swk'cut was the Village Chief of the Mission Creek area when the Okanagan faced both an influx of settlers and the imposition of the Indian Act.

He was a modest individual with a high regard for peacekeeping and community balance, playing a vital role in maintaining communication that was vital to the syilx lifestyle. His Chieftainship correlates with the arrival of Father Pandosy, who came to the Okanagan in poor health, fleeing American Mercenaries and was nursed back to health by the syilx people.

During his time as Chief, swk'cut maintained the central idea of peace between syilx people and settlers while balancing all aspects of community to his people.



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## For the People

Smoker Marchand, 2015  
Big White Ski Resort Ltd

This sculpture was created by Okanagan Nation member, Smoker Marchand, and is a reflection of the Westbank First Nation (WFN) logo. It is a gift from WFN to Big White Ski Resort Ltd. in acknowledgment of the positive relationship that has been embraced and

continues to benefit people of all walks of life.

“For the People” symbolizes the history, culture and *cərcəptikʷəł* (legends) that are the foundation of the Okanagan/syilx peoples’ ways of being. The inclusion of *skəmxist* (bear), *senkʷlip* (coyote) and *n̄xaʔx̄ʔitkʷ* (Spirit of the Lake, Ogopogo) acknowledges that the Okanagan peoples’ history began during a time when only the plant and animal people walked this earth. It was the world before this world.

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## sənsisyustən House of Learning

Janine Lott, 2019  
1900 Quail Lane

The artwork is inspired by the *captikʷł* and *sqilxʷcawt* (ways of being). We celebrate this gift as we continue to work towards creating a more respectful and inclusive society for all people. The syilx/Okanagan people have been placed here by *kʷl̄ncut̄n* (creator) to care for the *t̄mxʷúlaʔxʷ* *uł* *siw̄tkʷ* (land and water) and all that is connected to it. *captikʷł* (creation stories) are passed down from one generation to the next and contain sacred laws and teachings about living as a part of *t̄mxʷúlaʔxʷ*.





## 16 sen'klip (Coyote)

Smoker Marchand, 2013

Campbell Road roundabouts

These two monuments, found on either side of William R. Bennett Bridge entrance, showcase a coyote and grizzly bear paw. sen'k'lip (coyote) was sent by k'wuləncútn (Creator) to help our people survive on this land.

A plaque at the site states:

"The Okanagan people are observers of the beauty of nature, and active participants in the protection of this area. The Okanagan people used this place as a village and lake crossing for thousands of years."





## 17 sncəwips Heritage Museum

525 Highway 97 South

To learn more about Indigenous and syilx history and culture, drop in for a tour at the sncəwips Heritage Museum.

The museum, operated by Westbank First Nation, features the living culture and history of the syilx/Okanagan people. Friendly staff offer a wealth of information and are happy to share their knowledge with visitors.

sncəwips Heritage Museum also hosts the annual síya? celebration, which is open to the public and held annually on the first Friday in June.



# Cultural Artisans

Dinah Littlechief	Culture textile . . . . .	250.768.2581
Dorothy Clough	Crafts/textile . . . . .	250.768.7961
Ernie Michele	Carvings . . . . .	778.373.5685
George Fosbery	Leather crafts . . . . .	250.768.0597
George Michele	Artist . . . . .	250.490.6373
Janine Lott	Gourd Art . . . . .	250 768 0414
J & N Catering	Catering . . . . .	250 707 1765
Little Miss Chief	First Nations Food & Beverage (wholesale) 128-2440 Old Ok Hwy .	250 768 6977
Marion Radawetz	Jeweller . . . . .	250.768.3762
Pam & Wilfred Barnes	Culture . . . . .	250.768.7051
Rick Sagayadan	SAGAcorn Production .	250.862.1368
Rose Lube	Raven Arts . . . . .	250.768.3025
Sylix Creations	Dancing/Drumming/Crafts	778.215.4991
sncəwips		
Heritage Museum	Art/Artifacts Exhibits .	778.755.ARTS 201-1979 Old Okanagan Hwy
Willie Swite	Art / Videographer . .	778.754.1179



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