

FOUR SEASONS

CHUCK BAILEY RECREATION CENTRE, 13458 107A AVENUE

Summer: Time of the Sockeye (South)
Fall: Time of the leaves falling (West)
Winter: Time of the Winter Dance (North)
Spring: Time of the murky water (East)

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BRANDON GABRIEL INTERVIEW EXTRAS

Artist discussion of the four drums and their significance

Transcript of audio recording:

One of the things we were really focused on with these drums was how they are a traditional vehicle for telling our narratives about the changing of the seasons. They are also an educational vehicle for talking about the sustainability of our ecology and looking at seasonal changes not only in the past but also the current changes in the environment that are having an impact on the world around us. We're not only looking from an ecological perspective but also how it affects us socially. How human impact plays a role in the world around us is important to think about.

Summer: Time of the Sockeye

For instance, look at the drum called *Summer: The Time of the Sockeye*. Historically, Indigenous people of this land managed this wild resource and were able to sustain themselves non-agriculturally for at least 10,000 years. Consider the growth of the humanity of this place and how it expanded. They were reliant on this resource for this length of time and there was no need to grow crops because it was all coming from one source – the water. When the seasons changed and the salmon came back, this was really important in the shift of the energy output of the community and so forth. What we've seen in this length of time is that when summer begins and when summer ends is changing and it's affecting the ability of this valuable resource to find its way home at the end of its lifecycle.

Fall: Time of the Leaves Falling

For the fall, we did the drum called *The Time of the Leaves Falling*. Historically, we watched the season change at this time of the year—we can see now that these changes are also happening during different months. There are the animals that traditionally gather and feast at this time of year that are now gathering at different times of year. Our local black bear population is one example of a creature being impacted by this. That's all part of the narrative too – the larger global narrative that's taking place.

Winter: Time of the Winter Dance

The drum that we did for winter is called *Time of the Winter Dance*. Every year, our people go into our longhouses and they go and they heal. There's a lot of spiritual and cultural healing that takes place. The darker days and the colder days mean that people are spending more time inside but they are also gathering to energize themselves. So, this is another important time of year for our families that remains consistent. There is a consistent time of year that we're doing this kind of work and taking the time to be with each other.

Spring: Time of the Murky Water

In the spring, how big of a snow pack we get plays a role in determining when salmon runs come back. If there's a big snow pack, there's a lot of water that fills the tributaries in the Fraser River. That means there's a good possibility that a strong salmon run will come back because there's enough water coming off the mountains to sustain them, allowing them to make the long journeys all the way back to the homes where they were first born. In times of low snow pack when the weather is quite warm, it's a dangerous time for the salmon to return to the rivers. What we've seen is that in some cases they don't return and that's a big loss, not only for our humanity, but it's also a big loss for this entire ecosystem that is very highly dependent upon salmon to return to their waters every year.

I think that when we look at all of these drums and we put them all together, we talk about sustainability, environmental stewardship, and our relationships to the land and the water. I think that there's a lot for us as a community to really look at and also appreciate. We can look at the much longer arc in time where Indigenous people were recognizing the importance of being good stewards to this place but also how that message really needs to be sent to the people who now call this place home. I think this is what we're trying to say here.