

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NANITCH: Early Photographs of British Columbia from the Langmann Collection

March 30 – June 26, 2016

Exhibition Reception: Saturday, April 16, 7pm

NANITCH: Early Photographs of British Columbia from the Langmann Collection offers the first look into the Uno Langmann Family Collection of BC Photographs, an important archive of over 18,000, rarely seen photographs recently donated to UBC Library by Vancouver's Uno and Dianne Langmann and Uno Langmann Ltd. Spanning a sixty-year period from the 1860s to the early 1920s, this groundbreaking exhibition reveals dramatic changes in the province, as well as in how and why photographs were made.

The dynamic display of photographic material shows how the official activities of nineteenth-century working photographers using large-format cameras evolved with the introduction of amateur cameras and mass distribution of promotional photography. The eclectic material includes hand-coloured albumen prints, stereocards, cartes de visite, postcards and glass negatives.

NANITCH brings to light new interpretations of the early history of British Columbia. The significant role of the camera in colonization is suggested by the exhibition title, *NANITCH*, meaning "to look" in Chinook jargon—the lingua franca trade language of the Pacific Northwest at that time. Questioning colonialist narratives of progress, the exhibition emphasizes the contradictions of settlement. Early photographs of official land surveys, family portraits, industrial ventures, commerce, political events, indigenous peoples and their displacement are brought into dialogue with dystopian conditions of failure.

The exhibition features rare albums of photographs, ranging from the first nineteenth-century government expeditions in the province to the turn-of-the-century, utopic community of Wallachin, which promoted land to entice settlers. Key photographers working in British Columbia at that time are highlighted, including Frederick Dally, Charles Horetzky, Charles McMunn, Hannah and Richard Maynard, Ben Leeson and Edward Curtis.

A co-production of Presentation House Gallery and the University of British Columbia Library. The exhibition and publication are part of UBC Library's Centennial programme. An illustrated publication and public programs will be produced in conjunction with *NANITCH*.

Presentation House Gallery is open to the public Wednesday to Sunday, 12pm to 5pm. Admission is by donation.

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