

Research Centre for Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies Circle

May 14, 2004

The Vision

For almost a decade, Anthropology and Fine Arts faculty (joined recently by Indigenous Studies) have put effort into imaging the creation of an OUC Anthropology and Fine Arts Exposition Centre that would promote innovative local, national and international research expertise, educational programming and community partnerships. We have had a number of requests from people in the larger community who have collections and accompanying legacies they would endow on the university, but we have not been able to accept these given the lack of a facility to house, protect and display them properly. There continues to be a need for such a facility as part of the university, the community and the region we serve. Now, with the advent of UBC Okanagan and the growth in research excellence, expansion and development this entails, we feel that an important opportunity exists for us to once again promote this idea. What follows is our vision of *The Research Centre for Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies*.

We envision a new facility on campus, *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* that would be a “signature building” for the new presence of UBC Okanagan as a university and member of the community. As a signature building it would ‘mark’ UBC Okanagan in a recognizable manner both in its creative architecture and in its multi-purpose capacity.

We envision this building as a place of inclusiveness, central to campus and community life and with shared areas for research, teaching, special events, and reflection, with a design and utility always sensitive to and mindful of the principles and values of the Okanagan nations with whom we share this territory. We propose commissioning a Canadian architect of stature, such as Douglas Cardinal, to design the building.

Mandate of The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies

- To create a centre for excellence and innovation in teaching and research in Anthropology, Indigenous Studies, Fine and Visual Arts, and critical theory in Visual Culture;
- To honour and to build capacity for our First Nations partners at En’owkin and throughout the Okanagan Valley region;
- To complement and build information resources for Regional Art Galleries and Museums
- To provide real and virtual access to the world’s great ethnographic and art collections;
- To welcome the community to a facility shared by the academy and the public;
- To support and promote the visual and performing arts in our own community and cross-culturally;
- To bring to the university and to the community Canadian and international researchers in the Anthropology of the Arts, Visual and Creative Arts and the Fine Arts.

Undergraduate and Graduate Training

The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies will be the home of innovative and interdisciplinary undergraduate and graduate student training from the BA to the Masters level and eventually the doctoral level. Graduate training will draw on courses in ethnography, visual anthropology, fine arts, art history, visual literacy, film and film studies (including ethnographic film), cultural and critical theory, and research in visual culture. We intend to provide an interdisciplinary environment that permits students to enjoy the opportunities of research training in a collaborative partnership across university disciplines and within the community. Our Partnership with En'owkin and regional Art Galleries and Museums also provides a unique opportunity for Graduate students to develop community/applied research projects of benefit to the Okanagan. We will be able to design and offer undergraduate programs and degrees warranted by such a space as *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies*. Research facilities and office space will accommodate graduate students and faculty research projects.

In general terms, *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* 'signature' building would encompass the following:

1. Anthropology Museum and Gallery housing and displaying artifacts, archives from indigenous cultures around the world;
2. Fine Arts Exhibition Gallery including project rooms, preparation area (joint use with Anthropology Museum), collections storage;
3. Research Laboratories for Anthropology, Fine Arts and Indigenous Studies faculty and students;
4. Cinema/Performance Stage (theatre, performance art, dance, music);
5. Digital Archive for visual cultural artifacts;
6. Faculty offices and teaching space/laboratories;
7. Graduate student studios, laboratory and office space;
8. Classroom and meeting spaces, events spaces,;
9. Residence for Visiting Elders (First Nations elders, Writers in Residence; Artists in Residence; Visiting Scholars); and
10. Adjacent local plant garden (xeriscape and indigenous plants for teaching and pleasure) and sculpture garden.

The UBCO 'signature' building will be built to industry specifications (Class 'A') thus permitting conservation and display of artwork and artifacts. There will also be several industry standard laboratories for faculty and graduate student research (e.g. anthropology, archaeology, ethnobotany) and conservation processes (e.g. fine arts) and hands on teaching facility in archaeology, museology, conservation and curatorial processes. As importantly, with a Class 'A' designation (humidity and climate control, security), the new facility would also permit UBCO to take advantage of the "traveling" exhibits of the finest museums and art galleries in Canada, the United States and internationally, for the education and pleasure of both the university and local communities. A Class 'A' facility would complement the offerings of regional museums and art galleries by facilitating 'next stage' programming thus growing the exposure and understanding of world visual cultures.

Rationale

As a 'signature' building, *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* will fill many requirements both at UBCO, in the community of Kelowna and in the Okanagan Valley generally.

- We envision this building as UBCO's "presence" in the city (hence a signature building) in that it is a major contribution to campus life and to the cultural life of the city and environs. This facility at UBCO would be a major tourist destination and part of the Cultural Corridor. As the southern valley communities grow north to Kelowna and the northern valley communities grow south to Kelowna, the university will become more and more central to the region's population.
- This building will be multipurpose in design and interdisciplinary in its programming. It will combine the three major disciplines of Anthropology, Fine Arts and Indigenous Studies and it will connect to our First Nations Partner institution at En'owkin Centre in Penticton as well as to the Regional Public Art Galleries and Museums. Through these partners, major programming in Visual Cultural Studies will develop research in Visual literacy through a Visual Anthropology /Fine Arts focus. It will also provide shared or useable facilities for courses and programmes in Anthropology, Fine Arts, English, Indigenous Studies, Modern Languages, Philosophy, Sociology and Women's Studies with an emphasis on Society and Culture and Human Creativity. We see collaboration creating synergies throughout the campus and the community.
- *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* will provide badly needed laboratory space, research space, studio, classroom and office space for faculty and graduate students; as well as storage and gallery space for Fine Arts and Anthropology art and artifact collections. It will house a digital archive, accessible and responsive to the advancement of visual literacy across all disciplines.
- When UBCO is separate from the New College in 2005, the university will have lost access to the small (and very inadequate) stage at KLO campus. The university is in dire need of a centre for performing arts for theatre, dance and music events. This proposal includes a 300-seat cinema/performance stage for film courses, experimental and ethnographic film studies, public film series, and will serve as preliminary staging for rehearsals and performance art activities. Such a facility would be used by a number of departments in the Faculty of Arts and serve as a venue for university and community events with the potential to act as a catalyst for the future realization of a full-scale performing arts center.
- The English Department wishes to extend its offerings in Film, as does Fine Arts, Modern Languages, Anthropology and Sociology to eventually become part of a Department of Film Studies and there is need of a space not only to show films, but also one that can be used for teaching purposes. There is also a great interest in developing theatre and drama courses/BA degrees and these would require the type of space envisioned for *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies*.
- The facilities housed *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* will be capable of generating income to support the building through leasing space for events (conferences, weddings, expositions, summer institutes, and the like), theatre (music, drama and film events) and renting laboratory and office facilities to visiting researchers/scholars. As well, events held at the

facility, be they oriented to research, teaching or community, will provide a source of training and income for students (hired for special events or Student Work/Training Programmes)

- *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* complements the Canada Research Chair in World's Indigenous Peoples mandate and our recently presented MoU with the Wananga (Maori) Tribal University of New Zealand for Cross-Cultural research, exchange and development of Indigenous Studies. By attracting a Canada Research Chair in Visual Culture, we would propel the development of new research into areas of Visual Anthropology /Critical Theory that are coming to the forefront of Cultural Studies, attract graduate students and create innovative interdisciplinary programmes.

Partnerships

The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies is committed to our partnership with the Okanagan Nation, especially our formal partnership with the En'owkin Centre in Penticton. The position of the En'owkin Centre, represented by Ms. Jeannette Armstrong, Executive Director, vis-à-vis this undertaking is quoted below from her April 27, 2004 email to Dr Mike Evans, the Canada Research Chair in World's Indigenous Studies:

Out of necessity we [En'owkin Centre] have had to forge relationships with other public institutions like UVIC, NVIT, and IIG in order to be responsive to the unique cultural, artistic and educational needs of the Okanagan Nation and other Aboriginal communities we serve. It is our hope that our unique needs, as a permanent partner, both now and in the future, will be served by such a facility and the new OUC/UBC. We see the need for resource sharing of our excellent cultural archive and library holdings to the Indigenous Studies and other OUC programs within a respectful relationship of sharing which will enhance our own capacity to serve our own community. ... We see the potential for a model which reverses the trend of large public education institutions, to invent from the inside, how they will serve Aboriginal peoples to one which is founded on a truly respectful model ... by which we collaborate in a courageous and powerful way, in the perpetuating of authentic and endangered culture while enhancing the viability and academic capacity of both institutions to the betterment of all peoples. Perhaps we can be a lead to others for a much better model than currently exists out there.

We envision *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* as the new model Ms Armstrong and the En'owkin Centre imagine. The Chair of the Department of Anthropology has been in touch with the Museum of Anthropology (MoA) at UBC Vancouver, regarding the MoA's Renewal Project (www.moa.ubc.ca/renewal/) entitled "A Partnership of Peoples: A New Infrastructure for Collaborative Research." *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* at UBC-O will be a "sister" institution to the MoA to extend and complement their "Partnership" program into the Southern Okanagan and especially at the En'owkin Centre. The MoA Renewal Project overview states that this project

... will be the first in the world to forge links between academic scholars, originating communities, and research museums through the creation of two innovative new facilities in real and virtual space. A renovated physical

infrastructure, including work, laboratory and storage areas, will support interdisciplinary and collaborative research with originating communities in four interrelated areas: (1) material and visual culture, (2) language and oral history, (3) museology and repatriation, and (4) museums, new technology and intellectual property... The virtual network will consist of highly innovative “Reciprocal Research Network.” It will initially be accessible to the Museum’s First Nations partner communities and will support collaborative research over the web.

The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies will complement the Museum of Anthropology at UBCV to extend their Renewal Project into the Southern Interior of the province through our partnership with En’owkin. This would entail UBCO assisting in building capacity at En’owkin in computer equipment and training. Building capacity at En’owkin Centre will ensure that the Okanagan Nation is in charge of its own intellectual property and material culture but assist in extending its mandate throughout the region, indeed the world, through the virtual infrastructures.

The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies intends to develop, through its proposed MA in Critical Curatorial Studies program, linkages to the four regional Public Art Galleries and Museums in the Okanagan for placement of graduate students within the curatorial structures of these facilities. This creates practicum opportunities that will help to form the basis for ongoing historical/contemporary culture studies with a focus on the Interior of the province and the western region, areas where research at the level envisioned is required. Dennis Oomen, Kelowna Museum Exhibits Curator, notes that

It sounds to me ... that OUC may have a chance to break new ground here in the integration of arts/culture/academics and so on. Almost like a modern-day agora in the sense that this proposal could result in a meeting of separate disciplines and ideas and come up with something entirely new...

Funding

Money for building and on going costs of *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* could be obtained through fund raising, (e.g. OUC’s Give Wisely Campaign), and through application for funds from UBCV, the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the BC Knowledge Development Fund, donors and patrons and other funding agencies.

Canada Research Chair

The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies should attach a Canada Research Chair in Art History or Visual Anthropology (or both) to oversee the development and potential for the Centre and promote various related areas of research, Graduate students and capacity building and programming with the En’owkin Centre and other regional cultural partners.

Faculty and Staff

The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies as an interdisciplinary and multiuse centre will be staffed by many current faculty members presently teaching in Anthropology and Fine Arts and also in Indigenous Studies (First Nations artists and researchers) Modern Languages (film studies, Latin American Film Festival), English (Film Studies, theatre and drama), Philosophy (Human

Creativity), Sociology and Women's Studies. Graduate programmes in Anthropology (Masters programmes in Visual Anthropology; Anthropology and the Arts) and Fine Arts (Master's Programme in Critical Curatorial Studies; Art History; and joint Fine Arts/Anthropology MA Programmes in Visual Culture) require the addition of two cross-appointed (anthropology/fine arts) full-time faculty members in 2005 with an additional 4 FTE faculty members by 2010. In addition there would be a need for full time support staff: two Gallery Technicians (Fine Arts); one Laboratory Technician (Anthropology); a Director of the Centre, an administrative assistant, and one secretary.

Space Requirements

We estimate that the building, at least three to four floors, would encompass from 50,000 to 60,000 square feet. Since *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* is a multipurpose facility we anticipate below some of the space requirements for the three major stake holders; Anthropology, Fine Arts and Indigenous Studies. Many of these spaces (galleries, common rooms, classrooms, cinema and so on) are meant to be shareable and thus utilized by other disciplines/faculty for a variety of purposes.

In general there must be (1) a meeting place (or Gathering Space) wherein students/faculty/public can interact; (2) a "grand hall" and a café; (3) an informal student lounge for study and a graduate student common room which can double as seminar space; (4) major space allocations are required for classrooms, galleries, for teaching/ display/ preparation and storage space for collections/archives, for Anthropology laboratories, and Fine Arts studios.

There must also be (5) a residence in proximity to (or inside) the building to serve as a place for our Visiting Elders, that is, our Visiting Scholars, Writers in Residence; Artists in Residence, First Nations Elders in Residence. This will facilitate Elders in Residence participation in courses, exhibitions, lecture series, training students and the like.

Finally, we envision *The Centre for Research in Cross-Cultural and Visual Studies* as a positive facility for a "greening" of the campus. The building should be innovative in utilizing the latest (or even the experimental) in alternative energy use (perhaps solar, wind, thermal zones) with a shared physical and power plant; it should also be "green" in that it should fit into the ecology of the area in terms of a xeriscape landscape and garden of local flora that would also serve as a teaching ethnobotanical space.

List of Space Requirements: Total 50,000+ square feet

Below are some estimates of footage and furnishing needs which would be refined more accurately with an architectural consultant.

1. Fine Arts Exhibition Gallery

- 3000-4000 sq. ft. total exhibition space (to include main exhibition gallery and 2 project rooms)
- Class A gallery standards (humidity & climate control)
- 14 ft. ceilings; grid lighting, full digital capacity

2. Ethnographic Museum Exhibition Gallery

- 3000 sq. ft. total exhibition space
- Class A gallery standards (humidity & climate control)
- 14 ft. ceilings; grid lighting, full digital capacity

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3. Exhibition Preparation/Storage Area:
 - 3000-4000 sq. ft. joint use with Anthropology, Fine Arts, and Indigenous Studies
 - Archaeology Field School equipment
 - preparation workshop; wood working shop; tools and equipment
 - storage for media equipment, plinths, lights, display cases
4. Collections Archive, Class A Standard:
 - 3000-4000 sq. ft.
 - Artifact and artifact research collections
 - Reference flora and fauna, ethnobotanical collections,
 - slide/digital archive; collections & records management (under VP Records Management, G. Zilm)
 - storage racks, paper drawers to store Permanent Art Collection
5. Anthropology Research Laboratory Space 3000 sq ft
 - Wet and dry labs for archaeology, ethnobotany, zooarchaeology
 - Research Laboratory space for Graduate Students
 - GIS lab
6. Ethnographic Research Space
 - Computers, computer labs and equipment for ethnography
 - Room for transcribing, photography, mapping
7. Cinema (including performance stage area)
 - 300 seats minimum; film projection; full digital capacity; stage with technical equipment dressing rooms, toilettes, storage area.
8. Studio Spaces for Fine Arts graduate students, 8 – 12 (at 400 sq .ft./ student) total of 4800 sq. ft.
 - 12 ft ceilings; appropriate lighting standards; industrial ventilation; full digital capacity
9. Anthropology Graduate Student offices (8-10) and Research space
10. Indigenous Studies research space and Graduate Student offices, 1500 square feet
11. Office/working Spaces: Director/ Curator (Canada Research Chair cross-appointment Fine Arts and Anthropology); Cross-Disciplinary ANTH/FINA faculty; Faculty Offices; classroom space, seminar rooms Technicians; secretary, administrative assistant.
12. Graduate Students Common room, furnished (share with Fine Arts, Indigenous Studies).

University Circle Members

Naomi M. McPherson (Anthropology)
Bryan J. Ryley, (Fine Arts)