

# *A Walk in Our Past*, 2017

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As an artist my ultimate goal is to capture human experience – its beauty, vitality, darkness and fragility and to progressively explore different materials and methods of rendering and presenting these portrayals. My work documents pivotal moments or seemingly insignificant snapshots of the ordinary, both revealing profound narratives of life both present and past.

Two large rusted and distressed metal panels mimic obsolete roofing tiles that speak of the late industrial buildings of Fraser Mills. The vertically placed wooden slats – found railway pieces – symbolize the railroad supporting the mill's industry and passenger transport. On these rustic substrates, historical photographs of Maillardville and its people tell stories of the past.

The image on the left is a Stó:lō basket maker, skillfully weaving a beautiful basket from natural materials. The second panel represents the Honeymoon Special – the first train to bring approximately 100 French Canadian pioneers from the east to Fraser Mills in 1909. Many couples were married the night before they left on their journey west, and the nickname was born.

The images on the discarded wooden slats demonstrate a variety of characters, buildings and times throughout the development and existence of the mill and early Maillardville.

## Image credits:

Stó:lō Basket Maker: Image PN00996 courtesy of the Royal BC Museum and Archives

Train: Image courtesy of Library and Archives Canada/PA-149059

Alva Lehoux 1919, Albert Pett with Chicken, Fraser Mills Workers, Fraser Mills Burner, Police Station 1914, Rev. F.E. Maillard, Thrift Meat Market: Images courtesy of Coquitlam Heritage Society Collection, City of Coquitlam Archives

Bus in Flooded Street 1948: Image courtesy of New Westminster Archives