

EXHIBITION, FILM, AND NEW MEDIA REVIEWS

The Transect Podcast

Kody Huard,
Sean Connaughton,
and Ian Sellers

The Transect Podcast, 2021. [http://
www.allbudsnoduds.com/
the-transect](http://www.allbudsnoduds.com/the-transect)

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THE WORLD OF BC archaeology is, to most, unknown and inaccessible. This is a shame, particularly in a province whose settler population has such a poor grasp of its long human history. Archaeology is not only an intriguing way of exploring British Columbia's deep past, it is a powerful way of understanding some of the most important contemporary social issues facing our province, particularly those involving Indigenous sovereignty.

Archaeology, here, is a complicated affair. All BC archaeologists operate with the knowledge that the results of their work could end up in court, used in ways never intended. Most archaeologists in this province are employed in private consulting and know that their work, while rigorously documenting and

contributing to the protection of material cultural heritage, is also funded by and facilitates development and resource extraction, and, too often, the destruction of irreplaceable cultural landscapes. Archaeology in British Columbia is serious business, a study of the past with often immediate impact on the present and future of some of the province's most vulnerable communities and contested lands.

Given this, what to make of a podcast that describes itself casually as "Three archaeologists talk shop, host guests, get serious, get silly, and record it all!" Since 2016, *The Transect* hosts, Kody Huard, Sean Connaughton, and Ian Sellers, have produced fourteen episodes, predominantly in the mode of a kitchen table conversation with a single guest. Their self-description is not inaccurate but undersells the show. Its tone is by turns jocular, irreverent, and earnest; its charisma is in the pleasure taken by archaeologists sharing stories. But *The Transect* is more than shop talk and reminisces, and it has much to offer to those outside of BC archaeology.

While the three hosts share similar backgrounds, their archaeologist guests are various – young and old, Indigenous and settler, academic and consulting. Conversations are convivial but routinely

delve into challenging territory. They examine the social and political landscapes of this province through a uniquely archaeological lens, posing and probing questions such as: “Who initiates and benefits from archaeological research?” “How can archaeological knowledge be made meaningful and relevant to living peoples?” “Who are the archaeologists of BC (and why does it matter)?”

This last question is particularly well explored. Episode by episode, a portrait develops of the diverse archaeological community in British Columbia. Hosts and guests examine, through individual experiences, how identity shapes the production and implications of archaeological knowledge, including: working in a discipline wherein women, though increasingly represented, face interpersonal and systemic challenges; the radically different stakes for Indigenous archaeologists working with their own histories; and the contrasting work-cultures, opportunities, and challenges of conducting archaeology in the employ of academia, consulting archaeology, or for First Nations bands.

The intended audience appears to be fellow archaeologists in the region, but I imagine other potential listeners too: those intrigued by the romance of the discipline but unaware that it is practised daily throughout British Columbia. Or those who marvel at the incredible richness of a human history in this corner of the continent that stretches back more than twenty-thousand years to time immemorial. Or those interested in how British Columbia’s historical landscapes are being marshalled to support but also to contest Indigenous sovereignty.

The Transect has been on extended hiatus, releasing only one episode in the past two years, but the hosts intend to resume production once the pandemic abates. In the meantime, their back

catalogue provides listeners the kind of conversations that have been acutely scarce during this past year of social distancing – informal, discursive, convivial – offering an entrée into the world of BC archaeology not found in other mediums.

The Nameless Collective Podcast

Naveen Girn, Milan Singh,
and Paneet Singh

Jungistyle.com, 2021. [https://
jungistyle.com/thenameless/](https://jungistyle.com/thenameless/)

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SEASON 1 of *The Nameless Collective*, which is produced by Manjot Bains of Jugni Style and hosted by intrepid researchers, historians, and archival explorers Naveen Girn, Milan Singh, and Paneet Singh, evokes past South Asian Canadian history with the care and attention it deserves. This history, as they so rightly suggest, is “untold,” and they have researched, recorded, shared, and beautifully curated it as a podcast and then further as an online exhibit at <https://jungistyle.com/thenameless/>.

Meticulously and painstakingly researched, analyzed, and speculated upon (since the archive is filled with gaps and holes), the podcast takes the listener on an intriguing journey that entertains, informs, and fascinates. Obvious in the work of the trio is the excitement of archival discovery, surprises of nuggets they find and happily share, the exploration of times and circumstances in past historical records, and thoughtful speculations regarding what might have been and what might have transpired. All this provided in an easily accessible and

wonderfully enlightening hook to the listener as the podcast brings forward and looks backward at the poignant and often untold history of South Asian Canadian migration to Canada in the early 1900s. The time was rich and replete with legal intrigue, personally challenging transnational travels, gendered experiences, political strife, and much discrimination against newly arriving South Asian immigrants in a newly colonized nation. The podcasts seek to uncover and unravel those histories that Stanley, in *Whose Public? Whose Memory? Racisms, Grand Narratives and Canadian History* suggests are shaped by systemic practices of exclusion and taken-for-granted systems of representation.

In Season 1, the podcast aims to name as much as possible the nameless people, the nameless stories, the nameless street addresses, and the nameless events that unfolded at the turn of the last century. In that naming, the Nameless Collective challenges the scattered and disjointed South Asian Canadian record and reaffirms Somani's point that, although "fragments might appear to be insignificant when read in isolation from one another, collectively they can be understood as a sign that the once obscured stories of South Asian Canadians and their exclusions are increasingly emerging in the public sphere and national consciousness" (2018, 291).

This podcast and archival exhibit in the public sphere is presented with eager joy and much bantering among the researchers, making the online experience enjoyable, memorable, and easily accessible. The exuberant and joyfully responsible narration of the history unfolds as one chain link to the past, allowing the listener to stay engaged and make connections with history as it unfolded at the time. The richness of exploration by the three researchers is a

much-needed thirst-quencher for South Asian Canadians who have long sought an accurate and well-detailed account of Canadian history that is inclusive of all its people.

By highlighting the lived experiences of those South Asian men and women who have remained nameless in the Canadian record, the podcast will significantly affect future work on such inclusive histories. The Nameless Collective's work has fuelled the curiosity of those who seek to pass history down to future generations in a way that humanizes the lived experiences of early settlers who fought against much adversity to make Canada their home, too. The engagement of young scholars in this work is both heartening and encouraging as history comes alive in their voices and their excitement at unearthing a record or finally linking a story to one that happened in a previous episode. Episodes in the series are historically linked and take listeners on a journey that they might have only heard about in hushed tones at home but never in the public sphere. This is the beauty of the Nameless Collective podcast and archive.

REFERENCES

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