

*Citation read on the occasion of the granting of the degree of  
Honorary Doctor of Science to*

***Christina Munck***

*by the Senate of the University of Victoria*

*June 15, 2017*

Madam Chancellor, I'm honoured to introduce Christina Munck, accomplished artist and educator, and co-founder and Vice-president of the Tula Foundation and the Hakai Institute, organizations devoted to supporting community-based conservation research on British Columbia's central coast.

Together with her husband, Dr. Eric Peterson, this remarkable woman, through her commitment, hard work, brilliance and resourcefulness, has made an immense contribution to the world at large as well as to British Columbia. Here at UVic, they have inspired and supported graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and faculty researchers in geography, anthropology, environmental studies, environmental law and biology.

Christina Munck was born in Croydon, England, and came to Canada in 1982. Even as a child she had an abiding interest in and love of the natural world. She was studying biology at the University of Sussex in Brighton, in the 1970s, when she met her life partner, Eric Peterson, who, soon after, acquired a faculty position at McGill. In 1985, with Christina's support, he left academia and in 1990, he co-founded Mitra Imaging, an extremely successful X-ray imaging company.

In 2001 the couple sold Eric's shares in Mitra and used the resulting endowment to create the Tula Foundation in 2009. They also moved to Eric's home province of British Columbia. For Christina, with her deep love of plants, wildlife, and landscapes, Canada's West Coast presented stunning opportunities for learning and creativity. She felt at home on Quadra Island which, in many subtle ways, resonated with her memories of England. It was, however, the views, the majestic coast mountains, the constant changes in light, the ever-transforming colours and patterns in the water, the way the landscape is lit that gave inspiration to her as an artist, and are reflected in her magnificent paintings.

Christina and Eric initiated an award-winning program, TulaSalud, in Guatemala, to support training in primary healthcare and nursing for rural and indigenous regions of the country. This was followed by the purchase of the Hakai Beach Resort fishing lodge on Calvert Island on the BC Central Coast, which they converted into a unique interdisciplinary field research station, the Hakai Institute. The Institute soon grew to include a second field station on their Quadra Island property.

Both of these world-class facilities have served as catalysts for a whole range of studies and monitoring programs, many of which are integrated and interdisciplinary. Christina

Munck, with her husband, has invested not only financially but intellectually, in helping to design and shape this research. Her extraordinary achievements in a broad range of activities contribute to the understanding of the human and environmental history and future of British Columbia. Christina's and her husband's support of important scientific research is combined with hosting formal and informal educational programs, enhancing food security, promoting wildlife conservation and environmental protection, and adopting green energy systems.

Christina has thus had a strong positive influence on the well-being of local BC communities that have benefitted from respectful approaches to their joint work on the coast, fostering trust and appreciation. The result has been the development of mutually supportive and meaningful relationships with key research partners, including First Nations communities and schools, government agencies and students and researchers from post secondary educational institutions. Within the period of just a few years, through her vision, creativity, generosity and humanity, Christina has given us a better overall understanding of our province's social, cultural and environmental history.

In the words of one of our UVic Hakai supported researchers: *"Christina is a prime architect of the Hakai vision, but she also leads the personal and public aspect of it in a way that is warm, welcoming, supportive and creative, but yet strives for the excellence that we all know she wants. She is the heart behind what happens at Hakai."*

Madam Chancellor, it is a very great privilege to present to you and to this convocation, Christina Munck, for the Degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*.

Written and presented by  
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