




# THE RING

MARCH 2020

The University of Victoria's  
community newspaper

ring.uvic.ca



University of Victoria

## SPEED READ

**PREPAREDNESS**

### University coronavirus response

UVic is closely monitoring the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) situation and taking appropriate precautions to limit the impact on our campus community. We are working closely with public health officials and following their lead and direction. For updates, hygiene tips and FAQs, please continue to visit the website: [uvic.ca/coronavirus](http://uvic.ca/coronavirus)

**CONVOCATION**

### Nominate an honorary degree candidate

Do you know someone who deserves to be recognized and honoured—someone who has achieved great things that reflect UVic's values? The Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees and Other Forms of Recognition welcomes your suggestions of worthy candidates to receive an honorary degree from UVic. Deadline for nominations is March 13. [bit.ly/usec-hdr](http://bit.ly/usec-hdr)



Edösdi—Judy Thompson and Brent Mainprize. PHOTOS: UNBC AND UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

## 14

NUMBER OF UVIC FACULTY NAMED 3M NATIONAL TEACHING FELLOWS SINCE THE AWARDS WERE ESTABLISHED IN 1986

## Entrepreneurship and Indigenous education professors win prestigious teaching award

A professor of entrepreneurship who has helped boost the number of Indigenous-owned businesses across BC and a professor of Indigenous education who has made significant advancements in the indigenization of curriculum for BC students are the most recent UVic scholars recognized with Canada's most prestigious award for excellence in leadership and teaching. Both are also UVic grads.

Gustavson School of Business professor Brent Mainprize and professor of Indigenous education Edösdi—Judy Thompson were announced last month as 2020 3M National Teaching Fellows.

Only 10 3M teaching fellowships are awarded each year, and UVic instructors are well represented in their ranks. Five UVic instructors have been recognized with this honour in the last six years.

The newest accolade puts Mainprize in a class of his own: he is the only person to have received three of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education's (STLHE) top awards for outstanding educators. In 2016, Mainprize received STLHE's Alan Blizzard Award for his role in a collaborative teaching team honoured for their work on the Aboriginal Canadian Entrepreneurs (ACE) program. And in 2014, Mainprize won STLHE's D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning.

"Entrepreneurship is a powerful concept because it's about nurturing a student's discovery of their own unique abilities and passions and supporting their development as they share them with the world," Mainprize says. "To be recognized for my role in helping students starting their businesses is a tremendous honour."

**A leader in Indigenous language curricula**

For more than 25 years as a student, educator and researcher, Edösdi has built relationships with Indigenous

**SEE 3M TEACHING AWARDS P.2**

# Inaugural UVic President's Chair

BY CARLOS CHICAS BERTI

The first University of Victoria President's Chair has been awarded to Simon Pek of the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business. The President's Chair is the highest academic honour UVic can bestow on a faculty member, replacing Distinguished Professorships. The new President's Chairs were established to recognize faculty who have achieved great distinction in research and research-inspired teaching; made substantial contributions to UVic and the wider community; and are capable of championing excellence in research, teaching and community-university engagement.

Pek's research seems an intuitive fit for recognition by a President's Chair, at a time in which democracy itself seems

to be in crisis and debates around the concept have reignited worldwide. Pek's research looks into how workplaces can be democratized to give workers more of a voice and what democracy can look like in our governments, educational institutions, businesses and community organizations.

While businesses might not be the first application that comes to mind when thinking about democracies, Pek draws attention to organizations like labour unions and worker-owned firms that have democracy at their core, but tend to see that very democracy threatened as they grow.

"The nature of work is changing really quickly; it's becoming more precarious in a lot of ways, with stagnant real wages for many, growing levels of inequality, and the increasing prevalence of 'gig

jobs," Pek says, "And some of the most common forms of representation such as labour unions are in decline in many countries, or facing immense challenges regarding their efficacy," he adds. "It has become increasingly clear that we have to focus attention on identifying newer and more effective ways of representing workers' interests in organizations given the changing landscape."

Pek has long had an interest in learning about various democratic innovations and exploring their relevance to management. "Over the years I realized that elections have come to be seen as the default way of practicing representative democracy, whether in our unions, our community associations, or our governments," says Pek. Yet alternative methods of selecting leaders



SEE SIMON PEK P.3

Pek. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES



# around the ring

## Digital signage survey

Since its implementation in 2015, the Digicaster digital signage network has provided the university community with an extensive, connected network of public-area signage to strengthen university-wide efforts to enhance campus communications. Now, we want to hear your views on digital signage communications and engagement at UVic. Complete the survey by March 31 at 4:30 p.m. and be entered to win one of three \$100 MasterCard gift cards. The research gathered in the survey will help guide future UVic efforts to provide engaging, strategically relevant information to students, faculty, staff and visitors campus-wide. Take the survey at [bit.ly/20-digi](http://bit.ly/20-digi) or learn more about the network at [uvic.ca/digicaster](http://uvic.ca/digicaster)

## Labour relations update

Following three months of negotiations, a tentative collective agreement has been reached between the University of Victoria and Components 1 & 2 of CUPE Local 4163 under the BC government's Sustainable Services Negotiating Mandate. The tentative agreement is subject to ratification by the union membership and the university's Board of Governors. More info: [uvic.ca/bargaining](http://uvic.ca/bargaining)

## Moving Trans History Forward

Join community activists, academics, artists and allies from around the globe for the fourth Moving Trans History Forward conference, April 2–5 at the Victoria Conference Centre. The annual international and interdisciplinary conference is presented by the Chair in Transgender Studies. More info: [uvic.ca/mthf2020](http://uvic.ca/mthf2020)



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President Jamie Cassels gathers with nominees for this year's President's Extraordinary Service Awards. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

# President's Extraordinary Service Awards highlight contributions of staff and faculty

The President's Extraordinary Service Awards celebrate the outstanding contributions of UVic employees. 16 nominations from across campus—representing 100 employees in total—were submitted for the 2020 awards. The submissions included eight team and eight individual nominations across eight employee types. Congratulations to all of the nominees.

Support your colleagues by attending the Cause for Applause award celebration ceremony, April 23 from 3 to 4:30 p.m. in the University Club. Register online at [events.eply.com/PESA2020](http://events.eply.com/PESA2020).

"I offer my sincere congratulations and thanks to each of the nominees for their extraordinary service," says President Jamie Cassels. "It's always a highlight for me to celebrate the talent and commitment of our staff and faculty, who contribute so much to making our university a place where people want to learn, work, engage and discover."

## 3M TEACHING AWARDS

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

communities, developed courses and programs to indigenize curriculum, decolonize teaching and provide supports for Indigenous learners.

Edōsdi, whose name means "someone who is a teacher" in the Tahltan language, has been at UVic since July 2019 from UNBC, where she was nominated for this award.

Central to her teaching style is the importance she places on identity and empowerment, or what she simply calls "voice." She works to provide a safe learning environment that fosters self-reflection and the active participation of students in class activities such as discussions, group work, talking circles and oral presentations—ways for students to have their voices heard.

"I'm looking at the connection between Indigenous language revitalization/reclamation and health and healing," she explains. "From the work I've done over the years, I've observed that revitalizing and reclaiming our languages can be very healing to many Indigenous peoples. However, due to trauma and intergenerational trauma (due to the effects of colonization and assimilation—such as residential schools), many people are unable to or do not want to speak their languages. I want to delve into this more deeply and look at ways we can support people who are silent speakers of their language to become speakers again."

Edōsdi completed her PhD at UVic, where she also did an MSc in environmental studies. Her doctoral dissertation used a Tahltan research paradigm and explored ways in which the voices of her people can gain strength and healing through the revitalization of her language. That research led to the development of a Tahltan Language Reclamation Framework, which focuses on governance, programming, documentation, training and professional development, and health and healing. From 2012 to 2019, she was the Tahltan language reclamation director for her Nation in northern BC.

Jean-Paul Restoule, UVic's chair of Indigenous education, says he was struck by the selflessness of Edōsdi's teaching. "She is driven by supporting students, ensuring viable language survival, lifting up community and is guided by her Tahltan ancestors and community respecting the four Rs of Indigenous education: respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility," he says. "As a teacher, she is guided by very high principles and values and this makes a difference to her students, her classes and her peers."

Edōsdi herself feels that the biggest impact she

is making in the revitalization and reclamation of Indigenous languages is at the personal level.

"It is crucial for all Canadians to know the history of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, to be educated about why Indigenous self-determination is key to reconciliation, and to know that reconciliation must be practiced every day on a personal level, but also in communities, governments, schools and workplaces," she says. "All of this is crucial in order to deal with the larger systemic and cultural challenges inherent in our K-12 and post-secondary educational systems."

### Curiosity and transformation

Entrepreneurship professor Brent Mainprize keeps a quote pinned to the bulletin board in his office: "Create the conditions to awaken curiosity and enhance the potential of a student to experience transformation."

Not only does that quote sum up his teaching philosophy, it also highlights his approach to classroom instruction. Mainprize focuses on creating the optimal conditions for nurturing his students' potential, and helping them realize their entrepreneurial goals. This approach often means that Mainprize's students learn by trying out business ideas for themselves—which could mean starting a company or creating a Kiskstarter idea to test their creativity, or finalizing a start-up company's business plan in advance of teaching students about theory. Mainprize's aim is to get his students to experience business theory, not just listen to it in a lecture-style setting.

"I love entrepreneurship. I love that—at its best—it's accessible to everyone. Anyone can have a good idea and turn it into something. In theory, it's the great leveler," Mainprize says. "Of course, in practice, it is not so simple; barriers of access to education and financial resources are a reality for many. I have sought over the course of my career to find ways to make business education more accessible, to reach those who share my passion for business and entrepreneurship but for whom the traditional channels of education are not an option."

### Entrepreneurial mentorship in Indigenous communities

Mainprize is program director and co-founder of Tribal Resources Investment Corporation's (TRICORP) ACE program, which provides Indigenous entrepreneurs hands-on teaching, coaching and mentorship in their home community. Mainprize co-created the ACE program's content with TRICORP CEO, Frank Parnell, who invited Mainprize in 2013 to collaborate on a business

education program that would provide Indigenous communities with the skills they need to succeed as business owners in their community without foregoing their traditional values. As co-designers of the program, Parnell and Mainprize sought to incorporate new ways of teaching that would promote Indigenous student engagement and include elements of Indigenous culture. The result is a seven-step process students embark on to earn their "entrepreneurial wings"—using the image of the eagle and the salmon to represent the seven key stages of developing a business in the Indigenous context.

ACE represents only part of Mainprize's work with Indigenous communities. Over his career, Mainprize has been invited to more than 40 Indigenous communities in BC to co-facilitate and co-design programs under the community's leadership that focus on Indigenous-led economies through economic development and entrepreneurship. He continues to collaborate with the Nisga'a Nation, exploring opportunities for sustainable economic prosperity while preserving heritage and culture. Haida Owned and Operated (HO2), an entrepreneurship training program specific to Haida citizens, is an outcome of this partnership. Mainprize is also a business faculty champion for UVic's National Consortium for Indigenous Economic Development.

### Hands-on lessons change perspectives

On the UVic campus, Mainprize also ignites the spark of entrepreneurship in Gustavson School of Business students, where he is part of the entrepreneurship faculty team that teaches at the graduate and undergraduate level.

"Dr. Mainprize opened my eyes, ears and my heart to entrepreneurship," recalls Gustavson alumna Gaëlle Madevon. "His classes—which were undeniably the pinnacle of my undergraduate degree—exposed the many faces of entrepreneurship in such a way that I not only changed my perception on how businesses can best thrive, but also on how I myself can best thrive in business."

Although Mainprize devotes his focus to developing curriculum that resonates deeply with his students, he knows his work runs much deeper than that. "Teaching and learning is an emotional endeavor," Mainprize says. "As a business professor I know that that students need to be emotionally invested above all else to be good entrepreneurs; to lead with heart and hands first. A student may forget every slide of every lesson you taught them, but they won't forget the way you made them feel. Or how their view of themselves and the world around them changed."



# Flight 752: a loss for the Canadian academic community

## UVic establishes an Iranian Student Memorial Scholarship to honour those whose lives were lost

BY SARAH TARNOPOLSKY

On January 8, 2020, Ukraine International Airlines flight 752 was shot out of the sky by an Iranian missile minutes after leaving Tehran. Of the 176 people on board, at least 61 were directly affiliated with Canadian universities, including first-year University of Victoria student Roja Omidbakhsh. The feeling across Canada was that this was not just a loss for each university, but for the entire Canadian academic community.

That day, Saeed Rezvani, president of the UVic Iranian Students Association, unknowingly opened his laptop to check the latest news and messages from his home country.

“It was an unsettling time for everyone here, so we were following news from Iran very closely. Then all of a sudden this happened,” Rezvani says, referring to the immediate shock and grief felt by the Iranian community. “It was a moment of breakdown for a lot of people. We didn’t have any other choice except for getting together and helping each other out of this tragedy.”

The following day, at a vigil held at the Graduate Students’ Centre, attendees talked about creating a scholarship in memory of those whose lives were lost. Rezvani

took the proposal to the university administration, who supported the idea and pledged \$25,000 in matching funds.

After weeks of fundraising, the fund is now well on its way to becoming endowed. It will support two annual scholarships: one each for an academically outstanding undergraduate and graduate student who are Iranian citizens, or Canadian citizens or permanent residents with Iranian ancestry. It will also ensure the tragedy remains part of the university’s collective memory.

“Ten years from now the whole generation of students will have changed, but the scholarship will still be in place,” says Rezvani. “It will be a reason for students to go back and learn what happened. And it will remind Iranian students that they are part of a community that cares.”

In the weeks following the crash, Rezvani says he received emails and phone calls from all sorts of people expressing their grief and solidarity, including community members, students, professors, the Chancellor and the President.

“I’d like to thank the people who helped us during this difficult time,” says Rezvani, “Iranian and non-Iranian community members who reached out, and of course the university and all the individuals who have donated to the scholarship.”

Anyone wishing to donate to the Iranian Student Memorial Scholarship can do so online at [bit.ly/752-give](http://bit.ly/752-give), or through the Development Office.

All donations will be matched by the University of Victoria, up to a maximum of \$25,000.



Rezvani. PHOTO: SARAH TARNOPOLSKY

# 2020 QS Subject Rankings

## Global subject rankings show UVic strength spans academic fields

The 2020 QS World University Rankings by Subject, released on March 4, show that UVic continues to perform among the world’s top universities across a wide range of disciplines.

The nine fields where UVic is currently ranked in the world’s top 300 are:

- Earth and marine sciences
- Education
- English language & literature
- Environmental sciences
- Law
- Mathematics
- Philosophy
- Physics and astronomy
- Psychology

Historically, Earth and marine sciences has been one of UVic’s most recognized fields, and this year it remains in the 100-150 band in the QS rankings. English language and literature and philosophy are each at 150-200.

QS scored the university for world-class performance in 43 of the 48 fields it considers. (Most of the rest—including agriculture, dentistry, and veterinary sciences—are fields in

which UVic doesn’t have established programs.)

Although different university rankings are designed to measure slightly different features of a university’s performance—in citation impact, research output or campus composition—rankings play an important role in how universities are regarded internationally, and help support major objectives including research grant applications and student recruitment.

The QS World University Rankings, like most other ranking systems, are influenced significantly by citations and a university’s score in reputation surveys. Depending on the field, academic reputation and employer reputation can account for as little as 40 per cent or as much as 100 per cent of a university’s score. H-index (a rolling measure of research productivity) and citations per paper round out the field-specific QS methodology.

In 2018, UVic began a multi-year institutional campaign to ensure our strengths are accurately reflected in reputational surveys, which otherwise tend to favour larger, historically prominent schools. Similar practices at other universities have shown to be effective in raising profile, reputation and rankings. Since fall 2019, UVic’s initiative has been led by Vice-President Research Lisa Kalynchuk.

## SIMON PEK CONTINUED FROM P. 1

exist, including ‘sortition,’ the idea of using random selection to select representatives. Pek’s work delves into this in two papers published in 2019, bridging work from political scientists, sociologists and industrial relations scholars to explore sortition as a way of improving democracy in worker-owned firms and labour unions.

“One of the streams I’m excited to explore as a President’s Chair is to develop a research program in which I work with organizations to experiment with democratic innovations including sortition and deliberative mini-publics like citizens’ assemblies,” Pek adds. Among his top goals? “I would love to see universities becoming pioneers in democratic innovation.”

“The President’s Chair award is the university’s highest internal honour, which celebrates our extraordinary faculty,” says President Jamie Cassels, “I am excited to recognize the amazing achievements of inspiring teachers and researchers like Dr. Simon Pek, who are contributing to a better future for our students and the planet.”

Pek’s work has also been highlighted for driving forward the goals of the UVic Strategic Framework.

In the classroom, Pek strives to create an atmosphere in which students can gain exposure to knowledge about a wide range of challenges including climate change, inequality and precarious work. He sees it as crucial not to stop there, but to equip his students with tools and concepts they can use in their jobs to help tackle these challenges.

“If we’re going to be managers, or business leaders, or members of society, we have to be aware of the issues we’re going to face and equip ourselves with conceptual and practical tools that we can use to solve these pressing issues in our professional careers.”

Pek enjoys learning and applying new dynamic learning practices such as deliberative forums and live simulations, and seeks to integrate his research and teaching when possible. “In a perfect world, research, teaching, and community engagement would all synergize,” he says, citing an example of how he incorporated his interest in cultural sustainability into one of his courses, with students’ questions ultimately giving him insights into important areas for future research he is now pursuing.

# United Way campaign wraps up

Thanks to generous donations from individuals and well-attended campus events, the fundraising tally for the 2019 UVic United Way campaign as of Feb. 28 was more than \$211,000.

“I would like to offer my sincere thanks to our UVic community members, whose generosity and strong support has allowed us to contribute almost \$5 million to United Way Greater Victoria since 1994,” says Honorary Campaign Chair President Jamie Cassels. “I am very proud of our university’s role as a major workplace supporter of United Way.”

United Way Greater Victoria funds 109 programs across 86 service agencies, impacting the lives of 80,500 people in our region.

“Our UVic campaign succeeds because of the commitment of our leadership donors, staff, faculty and retirees who give through payroll and one-time donations, and the many people who organize and come out to support campaign events,” says Campaign Co-Chair Michele Parkin. “When United Way helps us to build a strong, safe, supportive and sustainable community, we all win.”

Campaign Co-Chair Catherine McGregor points to the importance of volunteerism on campus. “Our United Way committee is vital to our success, with every individual devoting considerable time and energy to campaign activities,” she says. “This year we began a new initiative that invited faculty and staff to become United Way Champions—we are so grateful for their enthusiastic engagement and support in the campaign.”

Campus events included a samosa sale, organized by Co-op and Career Services, a Vikes-sponsored 50/50 draw, our famous Plasma Car Race and the first-ever Words and Wears book and clothing swap.

Many units and student groups across campus, including the Engineering Students’ Society, engineering and computer sciences departments, VPFO and Office of Research Services, also organized their own fundraising efforts. Combined, these initiatives added almost \$6,000 to the 2019 campaign, while UVic Retirees Association members generously contributed \$38,500.

[uvic.ca/unitedway](http://uvic.ca/unitedway)

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# Tracing planetary movement in dust and gas

BY DOROTHY EGGENBERGER

Where do we come from? University of Victoria astrophysicist Ruobing Dong is revolutionizing the field of observational planet formation to find out. He delves into the birth of planets to potentially uncover the origin of Earth.

Dong studies how planets form by examining the protoplanetary disk, made of dust and gas, surrounding a newborn star. His team then uses cutting-edge computer models and photographs from the world’s most powerful telescopes—ALMA, GEMINI and HUBBLE—to examine the signatures in the protoplanetary disk potentially produced by new planets.

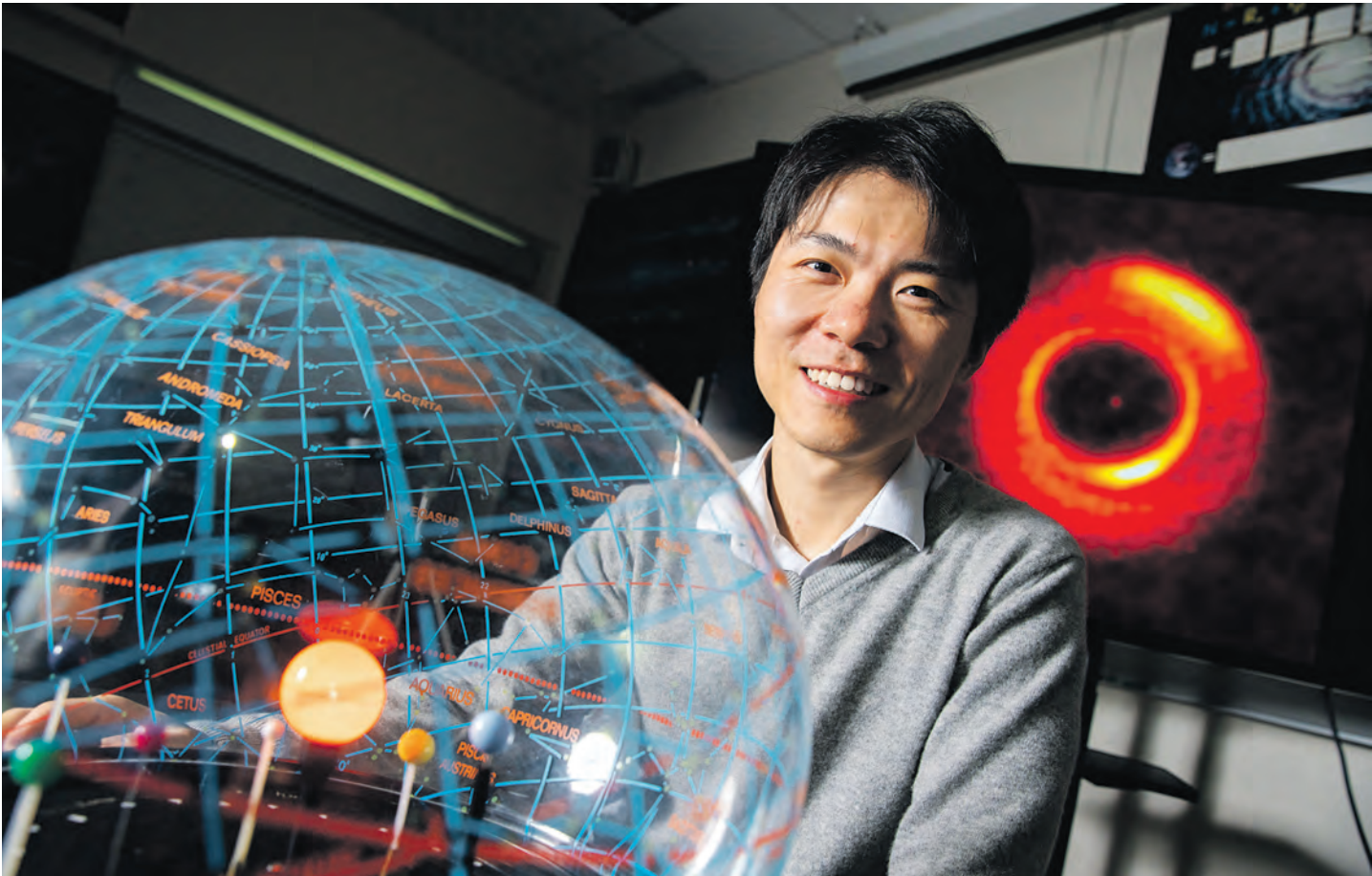
Access to these new technologies and powerful instruments are what make Dong’s research possible. It’s a field that couldn’t have existed 10 years ago, and his team are among the few selected to direct the gaze of these multi-billion-dollar telescopes. He is already identifying research targets for NASA’s Webb Telescope, which launches in 2021.

For his outstanding research, Dong has earned a 2020 Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Research Fellowship. The fellowship, which comes with US\$75,000, is given to early-career scientists and scholars of outstanding promise.

If Dong is looking for humanity’s origins in planets, why is he studying signatures in disks? Young planets are usually too faint to see, even with our most powerful telescopes. However, when a young planet interacts with the disk they sometimes produce gaps, vortices, or spiral arms that are much larger in size and easier to detect.

Dong compares these new planets to airborne planes: “It is hard to see a plane cruising at 10 kilometers during daytime, but you can usually see the contrail behind the plane. By looking at the contrail we know the plane’s location, speed, heading—even its number of engines. Similarly, protoplanetary disk features can become prominent signposts of planet formation.”

For example, in the past scientists have seen spiral arms extending from protoplanetary disks



Dong in front of an image of MWC758 taken by the Atacama Large Millimeter Array. Uvic PHOTO SERVICES

and hypothesized that the formation of planets caused this behaviour. But previous models were not able to give a sufficient explanation. In 2015, Dong led a team to demonstrate that these spirals can be excited by a Jupiter-like planet at the outer tip of one of the arms with his new model.

“In the picture you can see the disk’s spiral arms, but no planet,” says Dong, “However, by comparing the photo with our simulation, we can say there is likely a planet at the tip of the arm.”

Rather than shooting in the dark, Dong’s

research can tell you where to look for the planet. Very recently, they used the Large Binocular Telescope, one of the world’s most advanced optical telescopes, to tentatively discover the planet MWC 758b using such predictions. This discovery represents a milestone in the field of observational planet formation.

What’s next for this planet pioneer? Dong plans to build a library of protoplanetary models to maximize researcher hours and propel the emerging field forward. “It took a few researchers working for about six months, approximately

one million CPU hours, to build the 2015 model. Our goal is to automate this process,” says Dong.

He also plans to formally establish Feature-Based Planet Detection (FBPD) as a new planet detection technique, and apply it to the expected large disk sample.

With each new discovery of planet-induced structures in disks, Dong comes closer to explaining how habitable Earth-like planets form—moving forward with one tiny element in humanity’s big quest for knowledge about our place in the cosmos.

## Co-op Employers of the Year

BY JOY POLIQUIN

Each year, UVic co-operative education (co-op) students complete more than 4,250 co-op work terms in Victoria, across Canada and around the world. The dynamic, hands-on learning that students gain through these experiences is often transformative thanks to the mentorship and opportunity provided by our 1,350 partner employers.

Many employers go above and beyond to support students’ professional experiences—and each year, we recognize employers who have provided extraordinary learning opportunities to UVic co-op students. The 2019 recipients for UVic Co-op Employers of the Year are:

### RebalanceMD

**2019 Employer of the Year – More than 50 employees**

At RebalanceMD, dynamic immersive learning is a key ingredient for success. The patient-centric, musculoskeletal care centre brings together physicians, kinesiologists, physical therapists, pedorthists and orthopaedic surgeons under one roof to simplify and enrich the patient experience. For co-op students, this means connecting with a diverse group of health professionals and gaining a multidisciplinary understanding of patient care.

RebalanceMD is a rare employer—clinical placements in recreation and kinesiology positions are often unpaid, but RebalanceMD is committed to nurturing the next generation of health professionals and has hired 21 co-op students into paid positions over the past seven years. It has also welcomed students from diverse

academic backgrounds, ranging from kinesiology and recreation and health education to visual arts, commerce and English. Each year, RebalanceMD also hosts more than 60 medical students and residents for their orthopaedic and family practice placements through UVic and UBC.

Students regularly provide glowing feedback about their time at RebalanceMD and the opportunity to work directly with clients and diverse practitioners. This holistic approach, combined with mentorship and career development support, gives students the chance to think critically and deepen their knowledge of musculoskeletal issues and rehabilitation techniques.

RebalanceMD has established itself as an employer of choice for UVic co-op students, as well as for alumni—many of whom return to the company for their first professional career position after graduation.

### Benevity

**2019 Employer of the Year – new company (hiring co-op students for five years and less)**

As the global leader in corporate social responsibility and employee engagement software, Benevity is an employer to watch. The Canadian company develops programs and technology that help businesses incorporate online giving and community investment initiatives into their operations.

Last year alone, this led to their clients processing nearly \$3 billion in online charitable donations and more than 17 million hours of volunteer time facilitated through 200,000 charities worldwide.



UVic alum Harrison Kettyls (right) and current kinesiology student Ronak Sheiki work with a patient. PHOTO: REBALANCE MD

This passion for giving back extends into Benevity’s own workplace culture—a focus that makes the company a sought-after co-op employer for UVic students. Since hiring its first UVic co-op student in 2017, Benevity has welcomed 10 software engineering and computer science students onto the team, and counting.

Students are trusted to manage projects that matter, contributing their skills to software development and design while benefiting from

extraordinary mentorship support. Benevity believes in the power of positivity and assigns each co-op student a “Benevi-buddy” from a different department as a way to enrich students’ understanding of the company structure.

Students also connect regularly with senior-level staff who provide guidance about career development within the industry, and are encouraged to access online courses to supplement their learning.

Benevity’s approach to mentorship is a recipe for success—students regularly return for a second work term or find full-time career opportunities with the company.

Beyond hiring co-op students, Benevity also regularly participates in the UVic Hi-Tech Fair, hosts regular on-campus information sessions for students, and participates in mock interview clinics for engineering students who are preparing to apply for their first co-op positions.





Deckha. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

# The legal case against anthropocentrism

## Animal law raises questions about the legal status of animals and conflicted role in agriculture.

Canada’s agriculture sector raises over 700 million animals for human consumption every year, and a growing body of legal scholarship is examining a dissonance that sits at the heart of those practices. The animal-based agriculture industry—meat, egg and dairy farming—largely governs itself in terms of how farmed animals are raised, operating according to non-enforceable industry codes for animal welfare.

In contrast, “an increasing number of those involved in legal education are rethinking the law’s species-based hierarchy that places humans at the apex,” explains UVic law professor and Lansdowne Chair in Law, Maneesha Deckha.

For nearly 15 years, Deckha has taught courses in animal law—scholarship that has been recognized by two recent grants that will help extend her research. Deckha was awarded a SSHRC Insight Grant for a four-year research program to examine the legal issues around farmed animals’ vulnerability, and the conditions of confinement and natural behaviour deprivation at work in agribusiness.

Deckha’s work has also paved the way for the Brooks Institute for Animal Rights Law and Policy, a US-based independent think tank, to select UVic as one of two inaugural Canadian member

institutions in The Brooks Animal Studies Academic Network (BASAN). BASAN brings together top animal law scholars from across North America, including law schools such as Yale and Harvard, to support advances in animal law, animal policy-making and related animal studies.

Such support comes at a critical time, with animal law and policy addressing global issues such as climate change, threats to species populations and extinction, roll-backs to wildlife protections, the global trade in wildlife and commercial exploitation of animals deemed livestock. The Brooks Institute engages additional projects such as the sentence and cognition of non-human animals, and stages annual summits in animal law, animal policy, and animal studies across multiple disciplines.

At UVic, Deckha also leads the Animals and Society Research Initiative (ASRI), an interdisciplinary working group promoting critical thinking on interspecies relations. ASRI brings together faculty, student and community scholars across multiple disciplines, including law, sociology, geography, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and art history and visual studies.

ASRI’s highlight event for 2020 takes place on March 10: an inaugural lecture in animal rights, law and policy by Kristen A. Stilt, the director of Harvard’s Animal Law and Policy Program, at 12:30 p.m. in Fraser 157. The initiative also hosts an annual Emerging Scholars Workshop for law students, graduate students and early career scholars, which will take place in Kelowna this May.

[onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/asri](https://onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/asri)

## PROVOST’S ENGAGED SCHOLARS AWARD

# Scholars celebrated for commitment to justice

One UVic researcher looks forward, the other back. But a commitment to justice unites two scholars being honoured for their respective efforts to strengthen Indigenous and Japanese Canadian communities in BC.

Conservationist Chris Darimont and his team conduct applied research with Indigenous communities who are working to protect their lands, waters and wildlife in coastal British Columbia. And historian Jordan Stanger-Ross has been working with his team to redress historical wrongs inflicted on Japanese Canadians during the 1940s.

Both researchers work hand-in-hand with communities: Darimont with Indigenous nations grappling with issues around fisheries, forest and wildlife management, and Stanger-Ross with Japanese Canadian cultural institutions and the families of internment survivors.

Darimont and Stanger-Ross received the Provost’s Award in Engaged Scholarship at an Ideafest celebration. The award honours tenured faculty members who have demonstrated outstanding scholarship in their field, as well as inspired teaching and community engagement. The 2020 recipients will hold the title of Engaged Scholar for a minimum of five years and will receive a one-time award of \$10,000 to support their community-engaged research and teaching.

“UVic’s Engaged Scholars are unparalleled in their commitment to community-engaged scholarship,” says Valerie Kuehne, UVic vice-president academic and provost. “Chris and Jordan are two incredibly inspiring scholars. Through their research, teaching and partnerships, they are able to bring about and shape meaningful change locally and nationally, and they engage students in their work to further strengthen community connections and foster lifelong learning.”

## Offering science to support coastal environments and Indigenous communities

Driven by curiosity, sustainability and justice for people and nature, conservation scientist Chris Darimont is an advocate for evidence-based natural resource management and a champion of community-engaged scholarship.

As the Raincoast Chair of Applied Conservation Science, Darimont’s research has real-world impact through long-term engagement with the science-based NGO Raincoast Conservation Foundation and with Indigenous governments making decisions about their wildlife, fisheries

and forest management.

The lab’s applied research informs policies to provide habitat, foods and security for culturally, economically and ecologically important animals including bears, goats, salmon and, more recently, plants.

The interdisciplinary work of Darimont and his lab is shaped by the values of coastal First Nations—the Heiltsuk, Kitasoo/Xais’xais, Nuxalk, Wuikinuxv and Gitga’at. Outreach activities include youth training and internships, participation at science and culture camps, as well as engagement in environmental assessment processes.

Through this award funding, Darimont hopes to deepen the ties between his lab and Indigenous villages along BC’s coast.

## Transforming how we redress historical wrongs

Jordan Stanger-Ross has made community-engaged scholarship the hallmark of his research, teaching and public service.

As the founder of Landscapes of Injustice—a seven-year, multi-partner research project that explores the

forced dispossession of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War—Stanger-Ross has fostered transformative relationships with local schools, museums, community members and Japanese Canadian cultural institutions.

Now in its sixth year, the project has received a total of \$2.5 million in SSHRC grants and \$3 million from partnering institutions to support initiatives such as the development of teaching materials for elementary and secondary school teachers across Canada, bus tours of former internment camps within the province, and a museum exhibit that will begin its national tour in August of this year.

Over a decade ago Stanger-Ross co-founded The City Talks, an ongoing series at the Legacy Gallery that unites public audiences with university scholars in thought-provoking discussions about the challenges and opportunities of urban life.

Throughout his work, Stanger-Ross has remained committed to serving the public interest as he breaks boundaries and strengthens communities in BC.



Darimont at a field school in the Great Bear Rainforest. PHOTO: MIKE MORASH



Sherri Kajiwar, director and curator of Nikkei National Museum, and Stanger-Ross with letters from the Landscapes of Injustice project. PHOTO: CHORONG KIM

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# Indigenous knowledge and environmental assessments

The federal government is failing to meaningfully engage with Indigenous knowledge in environmental decision-making, setting the stage for more conflict over issues such as the Coastal GasLink and Trans Mountain pipelines, according to a team of UVic researchers.

In a paper published last month in the journal *FACETS*, Lauren Eckert and Nick XEMFOLTW Claxton argue that a fundamental shift is needed in how government treats Indigenous rights and knowledge.

The researchers propose that Canada should move toward environmental assessment processes that are Indigenous-led and co-managed.

Eckert is a UVic PhD candidate, Raincoast Conservation Foundation fellow and Vanier Scholar. Claxton is an assistant professor from UVic's Faculty of Human and Social Development and elected chief of Tsawout Nation. Three other UVic-based researchers—marine conservation scientist Natalie Ban and geographers Cameron Owens and Chris Darimont—also contributed to the study, along with colleagues at the University of Guelph and West Coast Environmental Law.

### Why does it matter that environmental assessments include Indigenous knowledge?

Environmental assessment processes have the potential to generate environmentally sound, socially equitable decisions across Canada. But without fundamental shifts in the way current policy relates to, engages with and recognizes the rights of Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge, outcomes may continue to generate conflict between federal and Indigenous governments.

Indigenous knowledge refers to the complex systems of knowledge, belief and practice that have informed Indigenous environmental stewardship and decision-making for millennia.

### What can you tell us about your research?

A team of interdisciplinary colleagues analyzed 19 peer-reviewed papers (published over the last four decades) to understand what obstacles exist between harmonizing Indigenous knowledge and federal environmental assessment processes in Canada.

We identified six categories of obstacles, including historical, legal, political, procedural and resource limitations, that prevent the equitable and authentic engagement of Indigenous knowledge. For instance, there is an unsupported assumption that scientific knowledge is superior to Indigenous knowledges.

We then considered the federal government's new 2019 Impact Assessment Act in this context to understand how—if any—of the identified obstacles have been overcome in the recently passed legislation.

### What gaps did you find?

The new act mandates the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in environmental assessment at the federal level, and also mandates that applicants explain how Indigenous knowledge was collected and used in decision-making.

Our analysis found that the act is a step in the direction towards better relationships between Indigenous knowledge and environmental assessment processes. However, many deep-rooted obstacles still exist.

These include the ongoing impacts of colonization and the exclusion of Indigenous peoples from decision-making processes, along with the reality that environmental decision-making power is ultimately in the hands of the government.

### What are your key recommendations for improving how the government treats Indigenous knowledge?

Environmental assessment processes are an opportunity for Canada to fulfill their reconciliation agenda while likewise engaging in



Eckert pictured in Tofino, BC, on Tla-o-qui-aht Nation territories.

well-informed environmental decision-making.

We recommend co-creating research and monitoring programs with Indigenous Nations and providing appropriate funding for the sharing of Indigenous knowledge and adherence to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Ultimately, we recommend that Canada's legislative and federal structures recognize Indigenous-led environmental assessments. A number of examples of these processes exist, and it is through these approaches—led by

Indigenous Nations, for Indigenous Nations—that there can be opportunity for equitable knowledge and power-sharing.

For instance, the Squamish Nation partnered with project proponents in a Squamish-led assessment of the Wood Fibre LNG project in 2015. In the same year, the Tsleil-Waututh Nation completed an independently led environmental assessment of the Trans Mountain Expansion project based on Tsleil-Waututh values and law.



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Testa. PHOTO: LAUREN FROST.



Price. PHOTO: LAUREN FROST.



Coralejo. PHOTO: LAUREN FROST.

CO-OP STUDENTS OF THE YEAR

Contributing to community

BY LAUREN FROST

From building a cost-effective, low-impact way of tracking pedestrian traffic to championing co-op student hiring within the information and communications technology sector, UVic co-op students make an impact wherever they go. Each year, we recognize the extraordinary ways that co-op students contribute to their workplaces and communities—we're pleased to announce that our 2019 Co-op Student of the Year recipients are:

Siena Testa (commerce)

BUSINESS CO-OP PROGRAM AWARD

To some, moving across the country to work in a completely new industry would seem like a risky decision. To third-year business student Siena Testa, it was the decision that took her career, academics and professional confidence to the next level.

For her first co-op work term, Testa accepted a job offer from the Centre of Excellence in Next Generation Networks (CENGN) in Ottawa. CENGN's members and partners work together to drive innovation and talent development in Canada's information and communications technology sector. As a human resources specialist position, Testa was tasked with screening applications for the highly coveted CENGN Internship Program, which receives close to 800 applications for at total of 12 co-op positions each term.

When Testa brought an idea to expand the internship program to her supervisor, she was given the freedom to follow through. This independent project, combined with her extraordinary ability to forge meaningful relationships with hiring managers, won her the CEO WOW award, an honour given to a CENGN employee who makes an extraordinary impact on the organization. "The impact of Siena's departure at the end of the work term has not gone unnoticed," says Testa's supervisor Nathalie Guthrie. "She has raised the bar for CENGN's standard

of excellence."

Jumping outside of her comfort zone opened the door to a life-changing experience. "I am seriously considering a career in human resources now and Nathalie and I have talked about me returning for a second co-op term," says Testa. "Deciding to accept a job with CENGN was one of the best decisions I have ever made."

Lena Price (political science)

OPTIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS AWARD

Lena Price has always had a community-oriented attitude. The third-year student's desire to help people brought her to UVic to pursue a unique degree—a major in political science with a minor in public administration, combined with a human dimensions of climate change certification. Her passion for making a difference fuels her various campaigning efforts with the university's student society and led her to accept a co-op work term with the BC Public Service Agency.

During her co-op, Price worked as an employment programs assistant in the Employment Programs Resources Office, which facilitates a variety of special hiring programs within the provincial government. Price was tasked with planning and implementing the corporate co-op program, which supports all co-op employers and students in the BC Public Service. She also led the creation of an initiative called Online Orientation Day, which allowed co-op students working for the BC Public Service across the province to attend orientation in a way that was previously only available to those working in Victoria.

"My favourite part of the job was being able to support other co-op students during their work terms," says Price. "Through all the events I hosted and attended, I saw how each cohort of co-op students benefited and grew from their co-op experiences."

Price is confident that the connections she made during her work term will help her launch a career in any direction she chooses.

"The people I worked with helped me realize how much I love project management and event planning, and how valuable those skills are to promoting advocacy and affecting change."

Kyle Coralejo (computer science)

ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE CO-OP PROGRAMS

When Kyle Coralejo came to UVic to pursue a degree in computer science, he knew that hands-on learning would be a part of his experience. He'd already completed a chemical engineering degree at the University of Alberta, but it hadn't included experiential learning, so he was eager to take part in the co-op program at UVic. Now, with three work terms under his belt, the fourth-year student has gained the hands-on experience he was hoping for.

Coralejo recently completed his second and third work terms with the City of Edmonton, where he was in charge of prototyping devices to support municipal initiatives and enhance the lives of Edmonton residents. This included designing products that exceeded the expectations of his supervisors, such as a device that counts pedestrian traffic using thermal cameras and computer vision algorithms.

"Kyle was able to find a solution to a problem that other experienced analysts had been unable to solve," says Coralejo's supervisor Norman Mendoza. "His work prevented larger scale projects from being delayed, saving the City of Edmonton hundreds of thousands of dollars."

Coralejo made such a positive impression on his employers that he was asked to act as a mentor to other co-op students who were new to the team. "I delegated tasks, answered questions, and offered my assistance any time something unexpected happened," says Coralejo. "I felt like my co-op experience had come full circle—I was able to watch the other co-op students gain the same confidence under my mentorship that I gained in my first work term."

Coming soon: the UVic Student Wellness Centre

BY STEPHANIE INMAN

An integrated, holistic, centre dedicated to student well-being—that's the vision for UVic's Student Wellness Centre (SWC), opening in May. UVic students will access Counselling and Health in one convenient location: the Health and Wellness Building (formerly the Technology Enterprise Facility).

Over the past year, the building has been undergoing a major renovation to bring it up to the highest standards for privacy protection and infection control, and to create an attractive environment that supports student wellness.

"I am very excited to launch our integrated services in a brand new space, built to the highest technical standards," says Director of Health Rob Crisp. "However, it's just as important that we create a beautiful, comfortable and calm space that feels welcoming to students. We have kept that in the foreground in designing the centre."

The Multifaith team will remain in the current location in the Multifaith Centre. Recognizing that student wellness is about community, connection and spiritual health, as well as mental and physical wellness, the centre's programming will be integrated across both SWC locations—including meditation sessions and time for students to meet with Multifaith representatives of diverse faiths and traditions at the Health and Wellness Building.

Director of Counselling and Multifaith Dr. Rita Knodel and Director of Health Rob Crisp are co-leading the integration project and recognize the vital importance of offering wellness resources that recognize the whole person.

"We are moving away from a model of well-being that puts everything in separate columns: emotional, physical, spiritual," says Knodel. "We know that all these kinds of wellness are highly interconnected and we want to recognize that in the Student Wellness Centre."

This type of integrated model is at the leading edge of internationally recognized best practices. The World Health Organization endorses collaborative, interprofessional care as a solution to strengthen health care systems and improve outcomes.

The centre will also aid UVic staff and faculty who are looking for resources and wayfinding to help support students. Ultimately, the focus of the work at the SWC is to support students' achievement in their academic pursuits and give them wellness tools to carry with them throughout their lives.

For more information, email SHWCComm@uvic.ca.





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# A look behind the scenes

## Mainstage shows at the Phoenix Theatre push students’ backstage work into the spotlight

BY LOUEY SUMNERS

As a second-year theatre student, I’m excited, nervous, and sometimes even terrified to be performing in my first Phoenix play this month. In addition to preparing myself to perform, I’ve also assisted with the play’s marketing, as part of a course that puts students in leadership roles for our mainstage productions.

That work will all come together for audiences from March 12–21, when the Phoenix presents Lillian Hellman’s *The Children’s Hour*—a 1930s drama about the power of words set in an all-girls boarding school.

Our behind-the-scenes marketing preparations began in the fall, months prior to rehearsals, and gave me a new perspective on my stage role in the spring. I started by researching *The Children’s Hour* and its place in history. The play has often been controversial, beginning in 1934 when it was slighted by the Pulitzer Prize committee and later banned in many cities for its inclusion of a then-taboo same-sex relationship.

I also studied how a resurgent 1950s Broadway also brought scandals for Hellman, who was embroiled in anti-communist hearings—discord that reminded me of current political events. Many audiences, if they’re familiar with *The Children’s Hour* at all, only know the 1961 Oscar-winning movie. Nevertheless, the play continues to be regularly produced—including in London’s West End in 2011—and remains controversial to this day.

Next, I interviewed the director, theatre professor Peter McGuire, about his vision and intentions for staging *The Children’s Hour*. This is when I first learned more about my character as one of the school girls, what my costume might look like, and how close-knit friendships were at the heart of this play. Completing this research for class way before beginning to investigate my

character’s background for the role helped me enter into my first rehearsal process with more confidence and a strong understanding of what the play was about—what it stood for, and why it was important.

While researching previous productions, I had formed an idea about what the set would look like and how it might feel to work in the space. However, when we were introduced to fourth-year student Emily Friesen’s bright and homey set design, it changed my ideas about this boarding school being a home versus a traditional classroom. It made me reflect on headmistress Martha Dobie’s line from the play: “This is their home and things shouldn’t be said in it that they can’t hear.”

Our production is set in 1937 in an old converted farmhouse with cheery flowered wallpaper, comfy period furniture, and spectacular nine-foot-tall windows that are nearly twice my height. As an actor on stage, Friesen’s set makes the space feel huge, in turn making me feel shrunk down, like a doll in an out-of-scale room. This made it easier for me to feel like a child again, and with this came the childhood perspective where everything seems possible and limitless.

As the cast prepares to transition from rehearsal to performance, my work on the marketing team is also coming to a close. This production has opened up opportunities to explore new marketing skills and put into practice the communications concepts that we learned in class; from audience research to media relations and—particularly enjoyable for me—the design the play’s advertisements. Learning about how much thought goes into each part of the show’s promotion gave me a new appreciation for the work that is needed to put an audience in front of all of us actors.

This journey and the work of setting the stage from start to finish is shared by all theatre students at UVic and honestly, this story could have been written by anyone at the Phoenix. We all appreciate not only the different skills we’ve gained, but also the importance of collaborating and bringing these skills together for the opportunity to make great theatre.



Second-year theatre student Louey Sumners (left) shares her experiences working behind the scenes as well as acting in the play. She credits the dramatic set designed by fourth-year student Emily Friesen as helping her find her inner school girl character. PHOTO: ADRIENNE HOLIERHOEK

KNOWLEDGE

# Engaging the head and heart

## Visual arts connects art, science and the environment

BY JOHN THRELFALL

From Emily Carr’s paintings to the materials used by Indigenous artists for centuries, Vancouver Island’s old-growth forests have a long history of artistic representation. Now, they’re getting a 21st-century treatment through the digital media creations of University of Victoria visual arts professor Kelly Richardson. Beyond creating art reflecting our changing world, Richardson is raising awareness around the plight to protect these ancient ecosystems.

Richardson was one of five Canadian artists recently commissioned for a national project to celebrate the IMAX camera’s 50th anniversary. Her 2019 piece, *Embers and the Giants*, was filmed in Port Renfrew’s Avatar Grove / T’loqwxwat with the cooperation of the Ancient Forest Alliance, Pacheedaht First Nation and a team of UVic visual arts faculty and staff, including undergraduate student Jordan Hill of the T’Sou-ke Nation.

Richardson fuses 19th century painting, 20th century cinema and 21st century scientific inquiry to create works with strong environmental themes, asking viewers to consider what the future might look like if our current trajectory continues. The



Behind the scenes in the filming of *Embers and the Giants*. PHOTO: HOLLIS ROBERTS

resulting combination of hyper-real digital films offer rich and complex landscapes manipulated using CGI, animation and sound.

Whether presenting a despoiled Martian landscape in her 2012 *Mariner 9* project (which combined NASA data with scenery-generation software used by film and gaming industries) or speculating on the future of forests in *Embers and the Giants*, Richardson uses science-fiction concepts to visualize the risks of our global environmental crisis.

“That perception allows us to view ourselves in our current situation with some measure of hindsight and

clarity—and hopefully realize what we’re doing, where we’re headed and why,” she says.

But it wasn’t until her first visit to Vancouver Island in 2016 that she realized such ancient forests still existed. “I was overwhelmed by my experience, which was a huge influence in my decision to apply at UVic,” says Richardson, then a lecturer at England’s Newcastle University.

At first glance, Richardson’s film seems to document a group of fireflies—known as a sparkle—thriving in an old-growth ecosystem. Later, it becomes evident they are actually a swarm of high-tech drones,

programmed to simulate a sparkle. Inspired by her visit to Avatar Grove—and dismayed by the surrounding clear-cuts—Richardson became intrigued by how spectacle is used to convince the public of an area’s natural worth. Her research led to an article about an old-growth grove in Mexico saved through a population of fireflies.

“It was only because fireflies are on the verge of global extinction that the public came on board—it wasn’t the old growth itself,” says Richardson. “And here, it was the idea of the big trees that captured imaginations. I found that really interesting: two

charismatic species convincing the public to save two areas of old-growth.”

Funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council and Arts Council England, Richardson is internationally recognized as a leading representative of a new generation of artists working with digital technologies.

“Scientists now realize the way to get people to change is to get them to invest emotionally,” she explains. “That’s what I try to do in all of my work: engage the head and the heart. People act when their emotions are triggered.”

By working with organizations like NASA and Arizona State University’s Centre for Science and Imagination, Richardson’s creative work bridges the gap between data, art and environmentalism. Her Mars piece, *Mariner 9*, was created using unreleased NASA data and consultations with the High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment (HiRISE) at the University of Arizona and the head of NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

*Embers and the Giants* was co-produced by Christian Kroitor—grandson of Canadian IMAX inventor Roman Kroitor—and debuted at Toronto’s Cinesphere, the world’s first permanent IMAX cinema.

There are only seven IMAX cameras in the world; immediately after filming *Embers and the Giants*, the two cameras Richardson used were rushed off to film *Avengers: Endgame*.