

Spirit of Yuquot



In 2017 Canadian landscape photographer Ron Smid visited Nootka Island to meet with the Williams family and discuss a collaborative project involving the skills of their son Sanford, a master carver. Elders Ray and Terry Williams were the last of the Mowachaht to live year round at Nootka acting as guardians of their ancestral lands. Ray, whose indigenous name *Choo-Noom-Tuuk-Tomlth* means Spirit of the Wolf, wished to share the history of the Mowachaht people, and named the project the **Spirit of Yuquot**.

The work involved the creation of a traditional cedar bentwood box carved by Sanford and transformed into a pinhole camera to allow Smid to capture the light on their land. The carvings depict the history of the Mowachaht and their encounters with the first Europeans. The camera, on display in this exhibition, is accompanied by the first series of remarkable prints produced by Smid from the rare perspective and intensity that the box provides as an eye on the land.

Smid is renowned for his extensive body of work in analog photography. He is a committed purist recording through the lens of a large format wooden camera and black and white film. With meticulous detail and cultivated sensitivity Smid waits for the light and the energy of a place to coalesce, a moment in which his perception captures a spirit. This creative force, the artists vision, is shared through Sanford William's bentwood box camera to express the **Spirit of Yuquot**.