



1100 Chestnut St.  
Vancouver, BC V6J 3J9  
Phone (604) 738-7827  
Fax (604) 736-5665

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**ATTENTION: News/Science/Education/Family Section Reporters**

**SKY STORIES DEPICT FIRST NATIONS CONTRIBUTION TO ASTRONOMY**

***Vancouver, BC, Sept. 19, 2007*** – Long before explorers, modern-day astronomers and NASA took an interest in the stars, First Nations people were making their own contribution to astronomy, having established a significant relationship with the night sky. Sky Stories, a multi-media presentation featuring the work of First Nations storytellers, academics, dancers, singers, and actors, tell that story.

Opening this weekend at the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre, Sky Stories take the audience on a journey of the First Nations' experience of sky and earth starting with the Wsanec First Nations people of Saanich who developed complex moon calendars that guided them in their times for hunting, gathering, fishing, traveling, ceremony and stories. The journey moves on to the mythologies of the Gitksan people of the Skeena River and later to the north and the meaning of the Northern Lights.

Space Centre executive director Donna Livingstone believes that Sky Stories is an important achievement, fulfilling the Space Centre's mandate to deliver unique educational programs to students about our environment, including space and sky and Earth.

"The research for Sky Stories is groundbreaking in that curriculum connections have been made between First Nations traditional ways of knowing about the world and science studies," said Livingstone. "There are many ways of understanding our place in the universe. Working with First Nations artists and educators made us realize that space science is only part of the story."

The program was researched and developed by the Space Centre's aboriginal liaison and educational coordinator Margaret Grenier. Grenier is of Gitksan and Cree ancestry and has focused her work as a cultural instructor, choreographer and dancer on inclusion and recognition of Indigenous knowledge in education.

For more information about Sky Stories – an ongoing program at the Space Centre – call 604-738-7827.

The H.R. MacMillan Space Centre is a non-profit community resource that brings the wonders of space to Earth, while providing a personal sense of ongoing discovery. Through innovative programming, exhibits and activities, our goal is to inspire sustained interest in the fields of Earth science, space science and astronomy from a Canadian perspective.

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**Media Contacts:**

Michele Penz, Calico Communications for the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre  
Tel: 778-888-2249