**Press Release**

**Media contact:**

Stephanie Myers, Public Programs Coordinator

Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History

programs@touchstonesnelson.ca

250-505-7410

**For immediate release**

**‘Beneath the Surface’ of the Cold War Bunker**

**Nelson, BC (March 21, 2021)**: As the Cold War Bunker secretly lied in waiting under the streets of Nelson, powerful people wrote lists of names - government officials, doctors, communications staff, and other high-level administrators - the people who would be located, secured and promptly delivered to the Bunker in the event of a nuclear attack in the region. A similar list in the modern era would reflect a diversity of ages, genders, races, religions and cultures; in the 1950s, the lists were compiled almost completely of white, middle-aged men.

The opening of the Bunker in 2020 has allowed fresh air to stir through the stale rooms, and with it the opportunity for the whole community - including *and especially* those who would not have been considered for the lists - to experience the space as it stood when it was sealed, and respond to this living history.

"We were so pleased to be able to work with wonderful local artists Zaynab Mohammed, Xochilt Ramirez, Shayna Jones and Jesse Pineiro, and local filmmaker, Carlo Alcos, to produce an artistic response to the Bunker which specifically considers the social injustices and accompanying emotions evoked by the setting and era, says Touchstones Nelson Museum Executive Director Astrid Heyerdahl. “*Beneath the Surface* beautifully compliments our community audio response pieces which capture intellectual, socio-political, and emotional sentiments from the diverse community of Nelson."

The text, written and performed by Mohammed, touches on inequities and injustices, and with beautiful prose appeals to humanity, optimism and strength:

“Because fractures can be healed,

and broken pieces can be sewn back together.

It doesn’t matter how many times you break, or you’re wrong,

or how many times you make mistakes.

When the sun rises we have a new day.

A fresh start.

if we so choose.”

*Beneath the Surface* is being launched on Facebook Live this Wednesday, March 24 at 7 pm, and afterward will be available through the Touchstones Nelson website ([www.touchstonesnelson.ca](http://www.touchstonesnelson.ca)) and on YouTube and Vimeo.

This project was made possible by the financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Province of British Columbia.

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