

*Out of the Vaults: Chief Sitting Bull's Headdress*  
Royal Ontario Museum

*[Animated Out of the Vaults followed by animated ROM Logo with sound sting]*

*[Lakota warrior singing the song he sang when going into the Battle of Little Big Horn. Recorded c. 1908. Camera zooms on a Lakota drawing of Sitting Bull performing a war deed.]*

*[Cut to black and white photograph of Sitting Bull and his family. Title reads, Sitting Bull 1831 – 1890.]*

*[Camera cuts to shot of ROM storage with moving shelves] Ken Goodwill, Elder Lakota/Dakota - My maternal grandmother was born about 1865. [Person turns a lever, cut to shot of metal shelves moving apart] She was about 12 years old at the Custer Battle. [Hand opens a cupboard and reveals a feather headdress] She was there, she travelled with Sitting Bull to Canada and she tells all sorts of horror stories about the things that they had to do. [Tracey Forster rolls the shelf out from the cupboard] They travelled at night, holed up during the daytime. [Staff, wearing latex gloves begin lifting the artifacts out of the storage shelf] Out of that she gave me a name, the name is *Being Chased by the Enemy* and she told me never to forget the kinds of things that they went through. [The headdress is shown on a cart being pushed down a hall by staff]*

*[Close-up shot of the eagle feathers in the headdress pans to the beadwork at the head band] Arni Brownstone, ROM Curator – Here we have a group of artifacts that we believe [Arni stands in front of a table with the headdress, drum and shirt displayed] belonged to Sitting Bull and [photograph of Sitting Bull's headdress displayed in a glass case at the ROM. Caption reads: ROM 1977] they've been in storage for over 30 years and [cuts back to Arni Brownstone with objects speaking] now we have a great opportunity to bring the artifacts into public view once more.*

*[Julia Fenn appears with latex gloves on standing behind a table with objects covered in transparent plastic] Julia Fenn, Ethnographic Conservator – This is Sitting Bull's shirt and I'll just take the plastic off so you can see it. [Julia pulls back plastic covering] This was to protect it during the move from storage. [Gloved finger points to detailed decoration on shirt with damage] There's been insect attack, you can see the quill work which is extremely edible.*

*[Arni pushes cart holding the headdress down a hallway, through a door and onto large elevator]* AB – The journey out of the vaults is a rather long one. We put into play a whole set of people with different expertise.

JF – It's very important for us to ask either the curators or the designers, how do they want it to look? *[Drawing or draft of the ROM installation plan for the Sitting Bull display]* Is it going to be displayed as an artwork? In this particular case they want a t-bar. *[Shot of Julia sanding before a table with Sitting Bull's artifacts displayed]* That way you get the full benefit of all the different types of work.

*[Arni pushes the cart with the headdress out of the elevator. Screen caption reads: voice of Ken Goodwill, Standing Buffalo First Nation]* KG – All of these items represent someone who has gone to a different world. *[Arni pushes the cart with the headdress down a hallway]* The people who have gone to the spirit world before us still care about us. *[Arni moves the headdress to a work table]* So any kind of artifact that was worn by somebody before us is sacred in its own right.

*[Colour photo of a hilled landscape, image captions reads: Cypruss Hills, Saskatchewan]* AB – Sitting Bull and his people in Canada is a universal story. *[Cuts to Arni in front of metal shelves speaking to camera]* It's a story about one people dominating one another and pushing them off their land, and a story of exile.

*[Black and White photograph of a group of people. At the bottom of the photograph is written, Sitting Bull and Sioux Indians and Fr. Walsh, 1877]* KG – Sitting Bull stood up for what he considered to be the rightful place of Lakota/Dakota people. *[The camera begins to pan a close-up of the group photograph]* He fulfilled all of the things Lakota or Dakota people say a man should be. *[Black and white photograph of Chief Sitting Bull wearing a feather headdress]* He was brave, he was generous, he was kind, he lived in relation to the spirit world and he is somebody to be emulated.

*[Map of Canada with an arrow pointing to the location Sitting Bull and his people lived in Canada]* AB – The Canadian government reluctantly gave the Dakota and Lakota refuge. About 5,000 Lakota remained in Canada for a period of about four years.

*[Black and white photograph of round white teepees standing before hills]* KG – On this side of the border was Major Walsh who was with the North West Mounted Police *[Black and white photograph of group of men dressed in uniform]* and he said that we would protect you so long as you obey our laws. *[Black and white photograph of a Major Walsh dressed in uniform with a mustache]* I don't know if they liked him, but they appreciated what he did.

*[Screen shows Sitting Bull's shirt with detailed beadwork] JF – Our first aim is to get rid of the invisible light which is particularly harmful. [Julia holds a digital hand-held tool in front of the headdress which is covered with plastic] And what you want to remove is just Museum dirt and dust, [Julia searches in metal drawer] but not the actual signs of use. [Gloved hands display some of the objects and conservation tools for the camera] It's going to get its own little reinforcement covering [Gloved hands add fabric to the neckline of the leather shirt] and it will be good for the next 30 years. [Julia speaking to camera] Minimal intervention is our popular buzz phrase.*

*[Camera pans a black and white photograph of Sitting Bull wearing a feather headdress] AB – There is one thought that when Sitting Bull asked Walsh to lobby on behalf of the Sioux people [cuts to Arni speaking to camera] he gave to Major Walsh regalia that Major Walsh could hold in his hands as he spoke to the leaders of the governments of Canada and the United States. [Cuts between a series of close-up shots of the quiver, moccasins, and shirt.] So these objects are a real touchstone to the plight of the Lakota in Canada.*

*[Shot of the entrance to the Canada: First People's Galleries at the ROM] KG – To us even a painting contains the essence of that person and [camera pull back to reveal Karen Poce pushing a cart with the feather headdress through glass doors and into the Gallery] that is to be respected [Headdress moves through gallery on cart with Paul Kane paintings displayed in background] because it also helps living people because that spirit is with us. One of the things that the elders tell us sometimes is be nice to the people who have passed to the spirit world because you are going to meet them someday.*

*[Credits roll up the screen reading:  
still images courtesy  
the glenbow museum, calgary  
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*Music courtesy  
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