

*Iconic Objects: Totem Poles*  
**Chester Moore & Rod Robinson, Nisga'a Elders**  
**Royal Ontario Museum**

*[Podcast begins with music and animated title reads: Iconic: The Must-see Treasures of the ROM]*

*[Cut to still low-angle view of the totem pole as seen from the Level 1 of the Royal Ontario Museum, title reads: Totem Poles.]*

*[Cut to animation of a globe with topographical map; map spins and zooms in on western Canada; animated white text and a red marker slides down the screen to indicate the location of Gingoux on the map; voice begins singing]*

*[Cut to panning view of a waterway; title reads: Here's My Grandfather's Chest (Nisga'a Carving Song)]*

*[Cut to panning view of a rocky shoreline of a coniferous forest]*

*[Cut to split screen: panning view of a forest at the foot of a rocky outcropping on the left-hand screen; view of Chester Moore, Nisga'a Elder, holding a carved staff and singing on the right-hand screen; Music cuts out]*

*[Cut to full-screen shot of Chester Moore]* **Chester Moore:** Totem pole is the source of history in our culture. Whatever our forefathers encountered and the animals and supernatural, in order to preserve the history, they carved it on the totem pole.

*[Sound of a man whistling; cut to panning low-angle shot of the totem pole at the ROM as seen from Level 1]*

*[Cut to close-up of a man in a blue shirt, whistling as he carves a totem pole]*

*[Whistling stops; Cut to split screen: Close-up of man carving on the left-hand screen; close-up shot of Rod Robinson, Nisga'a Elder speaking on the right-hand screen]* **Rod Robinson:** History that's going to become a symbol, it's going to embody the...the mythology, the culture and the spirituality of the Nisga'a nation...

*[Cut to full-screen shot of Rod]* **Rod:** it's going to be proclaiming the history to the world of who we are *[Cut to triple split screen, from left-hand screen: Archival photograph of totem poles in a winter landscape; contemporary view of body of waterway surrounded by forest; archival photograph of totem poles in the forest]* why we are this way, where did we come from and why it's very important that it become perpetuated into the future.

*[Background music fades in; cut to panning shot of the totem pole installed in the stairwell of the ROM]*

*[Cut to close-up shot of a carved figure on the totem pole in the ROM]* **Chester:** The carver went to the bush and look for a good tree.

*[Cut to close-up shot of a bird-like figure on the upper portion of the totem pole in the ROM]* **Chester:** When they found the tree, they praise the tree *[cut to extreme close-up of carved figure]* saying how beautiful this tree is *[cut to close-up shot of face carved into the totem pole]* they tell the tree it will be so beautiful *[cut to high-angle view of the totem pole in the ROM stairwell; panning shot down the length of the totem pole]* that the whole world will admire it.

*[Cut to sweeping panning shot of the totem pole; music cuts in]* **Chester:** And if you see the human faces *[cut to split screen: On the left-hand screen a panning shot of the totem pole at the ROM; on the right-hand screen a view of Chester in front of a winter landscape]* in the eyes of the figure, that's supernatural *[cut to close-up of a human face carved into the totem pole]* that is turning into *[cut to close-up of totem pole with shadows passing across it]* grizzly or frog or beaver. *[Cut to view of Chester speaking]* And the carver should know the story of every figure *[cut to close-up of a bird near the base of the totem pole]* they put on the pole in order to carve it right.

*[Music cuts in; shot of a flock of birds taking off from a body of water]*

*[Cut to shot of a white bird perched in a coniferous tree]*

*[Cut to view of a waterway with rocky hills in the background]* **Rod:** These totem poles, their dimension *[cut to close-up of Rod speaking; music fades out]* it's almost life-like and it's gotta be grotesque.

*[Cut to panning low-angle view of the totem pole at the ROM]* **Rod:** And if you look at the totem pole, every figure is going to be looking at you and it's going to follow you where you go.

*[Cut to split screen: left-hand screen with panning view of the totem pole; on the right a close-up shot of Rod speaking]* **Rod:** It's very important that we preserve all of this, because without it, the younger people lose who they are.

*[Cut to close-up shot of Rod speaking]* **Rod:** Without the knowledge of the past, their past, they will not understand their future.

*[Cut to shot of a black and white archival photo of a group of totem poles along the edge of a beach; camera zooms out; sound of a voice singing]*

*[Music ends and screen fades to white]*

*[Podcast ends with animated ROM logo and sound sting]*