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MILLION DOLLAR MILE – MEDIA SUBMISSION
(work in progress)

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Million Dollar Mile refers to the strip of land where the Canadian gold rush started in 1858 – Barkerville B.C., Canada. This particular piece of land lured thousands of Chinese to the Americas in search of gold and to seek their fortune. Many Chinese came via the "old Gold Mountain" – San Francisco, as well as directly from Guangzhou in Southern China. The well-known legend at that time stated that if you went to Canada, with one shovel of dirt, one would reap one shovel of gold, and return to China a rich man.

Million Dollar Mile is a 6-channel video installation, which reflects the Chinese community whose existence and history in Canada mirrors the effects of colonization and racism, which began over 150 years ago. It combines documentary footage and fictionalized re-creations to interpret history, blurring the line between non-fiction and fiction.

The use of images and text/language are interspersed throughout the installation. Chinese, English, and Chinook Jargon depicts the culture of communication before English became the dominant language in western Canada. Chinook Jargon was an intercultural trade language used extensively throughout the Pacific Coast until the early 1900s, derived from Chinookan, Nuu-chah-nulth, English, French, Chinese and Polynesian languages.

The status of Chinese gold-miners from 1858 to today reflects significant changes. Million Dollar Mile follows a Chinese geologist who has been hired by a Canadian company to track and find large deposits of gold which starkly contrasts the discriminatory laws which disallowed Chinese to stake new claims for placer gold-mining in Barkerville.

By retelling the story of the Chinese in Barkerville, combining it with a contemporary commentary, and the use of Chinook Jargon to equalize the power of communication; all these forms combine to blur the message and the story itself, and it will ask the audience to consider multiple watching/reading/interpretation of the installation.