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## CBC comes digging for treasures in Victoria

PEDRO ARRAIS / TIMES COLONIST  
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Jewel Kizuk, a cake maker from Comox, shows her 2,000-year-old native artifact to producer Charlie Smith from the new CBC TV reality show Four Rooms. "We're looking for anything and everything, from rare antiques and pop-culture collections to fine works of art and even wild and wacky objects," producer Katie Cumby says. Photograph by: BRUCE STOTESBURY, Times Colonist

A First Nations carved stone artifact of a seated figure documented to be about 2,000 years old and a ball gown said to have been worn by comedian Lucille Ball were among the items that turned up Wednesday at the Victoria audition for Four Rooms, an upcoming CBC reality show.

In the past month, Richard Fellbaum has seen some interesting items for sale across Canada, including a narwhal tusk, a possible early Lawren Harris painting, a mortician's table and a cat with two heads preserved in formaldehyde.

Fellbaum, an assistant producer and researcher for the show, was in Victoria to see if the region could add to the growing list of antique and collectible one-of-a-kind objects that will be featured on the show, which is scheduled to premiere in January.

"We're always looking for items with a Canadian connection," Fellbaum said. "We have a shopping list of things we want to see — anything connected to Canadian celebrities; people like Louis Riel or the Dionne quintuplets, for example."

The show, which has been described as a cross between Antiques Roadshow and Dragons' Den, isn't about appraising items for the public. It will have four antiques dealers, ready to buy. After they inspect the item, they retire to their rooms. People can choose to enter one or all four rooms to make a deal on their valuables.

People must be on their toes, however, as the dealers will try to buy the items for the lowest possible price.

"The dealers aren't there to help sellers," Fellbaum said.

The four buyers will be a diverse lot. One is interested in the unusual and macabre — hence the two-headed cat — another in Canadian art. The other two dealers have not been selected, but one will likely be an interior designer shopping for clients, Fellbaum said.

Twenty-two Victorians, lured by the prospect of getting some cash for their treasures, crowded into a room at the Victoria Marriott Inner Harbour.

Janice Rurka brought an oil painting with a locomotive in the foreground and the Banff Springs Hotel in the background. The painting is part of a number of items, from toy locomotives to military memorabilia, her late father collected.

"I hope the buyers will find it interesting as Canadiana," she said.

The finalists from the cross-country auditions will be contacted by July 16 and flown to Toronto to record episodes of the show.

parrais@timescolonist.com

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