



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 9, 2020

**Bill Reid Gallery Re-opens and Commemorates 100th Anniversary  
of One of Canada's Most Renowned Indigenous Artists in  
– To Speak With a Golden Voice –**

***Exhibition brings fresh perspective to Bill Reid's legacy with rarely seen artworks  
and new commissions by Northwest Coast artists inspired by his life and practice***

**VANCOUVER, BC** — **Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art** re-opens the gallery and celebrates the milestone centennial birthday of Bill Reid (1920–1998) with an exhibition about his extraordinary life and legacy, ***To Speak With a Golden Voice***, from **July 16, 2020 to April 11, 2021**. Guest curated by **Gwaai Edenshaw** — considered to be Reid's last apprentice — the group exhibition includes rarely seen treasures by Reid and works from artists such as **Robert Davidson** and **Beau Dick**. Tracing the iconic Haida artist's lasting influence, two new artworks by contemporary artist **Cori Savard** (Haida) and singer-songwriter **Kinnie Starr** (Mohawk/Dutch/German/Irish) will be created for this highly anticipated exhibition.

"Bill Reid was a master goldsmith, sculptor, community activist, and mentor whose lasting legacy and influence has been cemented by his fusion of Haida traditions with his own modernist aesthetic," says Edenshaw. "Just about every Northwest Coast artist working today has a connection or link to Reid. Before he became renowned for his artwork, he was a CBC radio announcer recognized for his memorable voice — in fact, one of Reid's many Haida names was Kihlguulins, or 'golden voice.' His role as a public figure helped him become a pivotal force in the resurgence of Northwest Coast art, introducing the world to its importance and empowering generations of artists."

Reid was born in Victoria, BC, to a Haida mother and an American father with Scottish-German roots. He began exploring his Haida heritage at the age of 23, starting a journey of discovery that would last a lifetime. He studied jewelry making while working at CBC in Toronto, but it wasn't until a trip to Haida Gwaii in 1954 that his creative trajectory shifted irreversibly. His time on the island introduced him to the work of his great-great-uncle Charles Edenshaw (no relation to Gwaai Edenshaw), inspiring him to create new works out of his ancestor's sketches. Reid became known for making exquisitely detailed pieces, which were eventually translated into larger formats as he moved into monumental carvings. Some of his most iconic works today include *Chief of the Undersea World*, *The Spirit of Haida Gwaii*, and *Raven and the First Men*.

*To Speak With a Golden Voice* will provide new insights into the nuanced facets and creative complexities of Reid's life and legacy. The exhibition will follow four thematic threads, beginning with **Voice**, a look at Reid's career at CBC and his prolific writings, including archival recordings of his thoughts on Northwest Coast art. Voice will be central to the exhibition, including audio narratives, literary excerpts, and a commissioned sound-based artwork by Kinnie Starr that incorporates Reid's voice.

The second thread will be an examination of Reid's creative journey, or **Process**, which was affected by the many colonial policies still in place during the 1950s when he began exploring his heritage. The exhibition will

/more...

include rarely seen sketchbooks, drawings, paper maquettes, casting molds, and works in progress from private and public collections.

The third thread will be a study of **Lineage**, with works by Reid's contemporaries and the successors who considered him an influence. Artists will include Robert Davidson, Beau Dick and Joe David, as well as others who never met Reid but found inspiration in his life and career. Haida artist Cori Savard will create a new work based on Reid's deep-rooted impact on Indigenous and Haida art.

In the final thread of **Legacy**, Reid's multi-faceted and occasionally controversial life will be given fresh perspective. Departing from the public persona and staid portrait of the artist, the exhibition will provide new insights through the voices and stories of those who personally knew him. Short films featuring interviews with **George Rammell, Don Yeomans, Rick Adkins, Chief 7idansuu James Hart**, and more will be on display.

The gallery will publish a new exhibition catalogue in the fall of 2020 with essays by curator Edenshaw, Nika Collison, Martine Reid, and more.

In honour of Bill Reid's centennial, a weekend of special events will ensue on August 15 & 16, 2020. **Bill's Birthday Bash** will include artist demonstrations, artist interviews, and exhibition tours via livestream. A limited number of free admission tickets for entry to the gallery will be available. Pre-book early to reserve your birthday bash entry tickets by visiting [billreidgallery.ca](http://billreidgallery.ca)

Due to the pandemic, the Bill Reid Gallery is following the recommended provincial health and safety guidelines and will limit the number of visitors to ensure 2-metre social distancing.

Other measures will include:

- No touch payment and online ticket sales
- Sanitizer stations throughout the gallery
- Temporary removal of interactive objects
- Recommendation for wearing masks
- Frequent cleaning of high touch surfaces

### **About Bill Reid Gallery ([billreidgallery.ca](http://billreidgallery.ca))**

The Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art is a public gallery nestled in the heart of downtown Vancouver. It was named after acclaimed Haida artist Bill Reid (1920–1998), a master goldsmith, carver, sculptor, writer, broadcaster, and spokesman.

Since opening in May 2008, the Bill Reid Gallery has remained the only public gallery in Canada devoted to contemporary Indigenous art of the Northwest Coast, and is home to the Simon Fraser University Bill Reid Art Collection, as well as special exhibitions of contemporary Indigenous art of the Northwest Coast of North America. Through his art, Bill Reid continues to inspire emerging and established contemporary Indigenous artists. His legacies include infusing the art traditions of the Haida with modern forms of expression, influencing the next generation of artists, and building lasting bridges between First Nations and other peoples.

The Bill Reid Gallery offers public programs including artist talks and artist-led workshops which provide a greater awareness and appreciation of Indigenous values and cultures. Find public programs at [billreidgallery.ca](http://billreidgallery.ca).

The Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art is an initiative of the Bill Reid Foundation. Established in 1999 as a non-profit charitable organization, the Foundation's mission is to preserve the art and perpetuate the legacies of Bill Reid.

**LISTING INFORMATION**

**Bill Reid Gallery presents**  
***To Speak With a Golden Voice***

Dates: July 16, 2020 – April 11, 2021

Hours: Wednesdays through Sundays from 11am to 5pm

Address: Bill Reid Gallery  
639 Hornby St  
Vancouver, BC

Website: [billreidgallery.ca](http://billreidgallery.ca)

-30-

---

**For further media information, contact**

Laura Murray | C. 604.418.2998

[lmurray@mpmgarts.com](mailto:lmurray@mpmgarts.com)

**MURRAY PATERSON**  
MARKETING GROUP