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## **Bill Reid Gallery Re-Opens Its Doors to Celebrate 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Following Completion of \$1.8 Million Renovation**

***Re-opening weekend features free admission, performances,  
inaugural artist residencies, and a new community-centred exhibition space***

**VANCOUVER, BC** — **Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art** celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary on **Saturday, June 16 and Sunday, June 17, 2018** with free admission, performances, tea and bannock, and a recently completed \$1.8 million renovation that features a new mezzanine gallery, an educational and social gathering place, and a new covered pavilion which will be revealed at a later date. The renewal enriches the visitor experience and expands the available programmable space, while also reflecting the gallery's dedication to contemporary Indigenous artists and preservation of the legacy of its renowned namesake, Haida master Bill Reid. One highlight is the stunning new design of Raven's Trove, where Reid's exquisite jewellery is on permanent display. The gallery officially re-opens to the public on June 8, 2018. A formal 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala will be held on June 14, 2018.

"We have transformed the Bill Reid Gallery by creating new programming space to achieve the capacity required to better represent the diverse Indigenous cultures of the Northwest Coast, and showcase Reid's extraordinary work in the round," said Alexandra Montgomery, Director and CEO of the Bill Reid Gallery. "Our new light-filled, open space is both human in scale and majestic — it is a beautiful platform that allows us to honour Reid by bringing Indigenous and other peoples together through art."

The renovations by Merrick Architecture — the building's original architects — included special attention to Raven's Trove. Custom vitrines by award-winning Sholto Design Studio were cut from eight 40-foot cedar logs, fitted with locally made curved glass cases that enable a 360-degree view, and hand-finished by carvers led by Haida artist and Bill Reid Foundation Board Member Corey Bulpitt.

"As the people of the Pacific Northwest have used sacred red cedar for centuries, we were inspired to use trees sourced from Vancouver Island," said Bulpitt. "I adze textured the fluted surfaces of the cedar in order to create the look of our traditional longhouse posts and beams that sparked Sholto's design concept. Cedar is used for our poles, carvings, and housing; it is central to our culture. We found it very appropriate to use in a gallery dedicated to Reid, as he continues to inspire numerous generations of artists."

The two-day weekend anniversary celebration unfolds across the new 650-square-foot gathering space, where Allison Burns-Joseph (Squamish) will hold an open studio as artist-in-residence on June 16 from 11am–3pm, and Samuel McKay (Nisga'a) on June 17. A children's corner will be replete with colouring sheets designed by Shoshannah Greene (Haida), and Northwest Coast authors will perform

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readings for storytelling sessions at 10am on both days. A new commission by Kelsey Sparrow (Musqueam) will invite visitors to interact with the sculpture.

The 640-square-foot Bryan and Audrey Williams Gallery in the mezzanine spotlights community artists coupled with concentrated thematic displays. The inaugural exhibition, *Home Away From Home*, is a collaboration between guest curator Samantha Nock (Cree Métis), Nicole Bird (Haida), and members of the Carnegie Centre Cultural Sharing program, an ongoing series of workshops that bring together low-income Indigenous people from the Downtown Eastside. Featured artists will provide a tour on Sunday, June 17 at 1pm.

Planning for the gallery's makeover has been in the works since 2014, and was made possible by the support of the Department of Canadian Heritage's Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, the City of Vancouver's Cultural Infrastructure Program, and the British Columbia Arts Council. The project is also supported by the Province of British Columbia through the *Canada 150: Celebrating BC Communities and their Contributions to Canada* grant program and the support of many generous private donors.

"Institutions like the Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art play an essential role in celebrating and preserving Indigenous arts and heritage," said the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage. "The transformation of the gallery will help further the public's awareness and appreciation of the rich tapestry of Northwest Coast Indigenous cultures and stories. My thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to make this expansion a reality. Congratulations on this highly anticipated reopening and on 10 years of excellence."

"The Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art has played a vital role in broadening public understanding and appreciation of the art, culture and history of BC's coastal First Nations," says Simon Fraser University President Andrew Petter. "SFU is proud to be a partner in the gallery, and is deeply appreciative of the work done by Alexandra Montgomery and her team with the Bill Reid Foundation's support to complete this wonderful renovation in time for the gallery's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration."

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**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 is named after acclaimed Haida artist Bill Reid (1920 – 1998), a master goldsmith, carver, sculptor, writer, broadcaster and spokesman.

Since opening its doors 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 of the Northwest Coast. 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 numerous educational programs for students of all ages, providing greater awareness and appreciation of Indigenous values and cultures, coupled with an understanding of how ancient knowledge can inform and impact their lives today.

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.

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