

## ***BILL REID AND THE HAIDA CANOE***

### **Book Launch**

### **Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art**

**Thursday, December 8, 2011, 5:00 - 7:00pm**

**FREE admission**

Dr. Martine Reid, principal author and editor of *Bill Reid and the Haida Canoe* will be at the Bill Reid Gallery, Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 – 7:00pm for the launch of this new book, published by Harbour Publishing.

5:15pm Remarks by Dr. Martine Reid

5:30pm General discussion and book signing by Dr. Reid

*Bill Reid and the Haida Canoe* tells the story of the pivotal role of the canoe in Northwest Coast art, cultures and communities. It traces its zenith in pre-contact times, through its decline in the late nineteenth century, to its revival in *Lootaas (Wave Eater)* which Bill Reid and his team carved for Expo '86, to its culmination in tribal canoe journeys of the twenty-first century and *The Spirit of Haida Gwaii* sculptures. Bill Reid expressed awe for the traditional Haida canoe and what it represents visually, symbolically, and culturally. In his words, "Western art starts with the figure—West Coast Indian art starts with the canoe."

"Too often, the Northwest canoe has been portrayed primarily as a utilitarian object. We see the canoe as a complex, multi-faceted symbol, an essential carrier of culture, and as art. Through the telling of Haida artist Bill Reid's intellectual and physical involvement with canoes, we discover new insights into his creative journey, the place of the canoe within it and within the larger spectrum of his artistic development and practice. Reid's understanding of the symbolic power of the canoe to connect people to each other, to the land and the sea, to their past and future, and to a renewed sense of themselves guided his journey to the end," says Dr. Martine Reid.

The story is told through writings and artworks by Bill Reid, consummate photographs by Phillip Hersee, Ulli Steltzer, Robert Semeniuk and others, texts by Dr. James Raffan, Dr. Martine Reid, and Mike Robinson, and first-hand accounts by First Nations paddlers and canoe makers.

*Bill Reid and the Haida Canoe* is a companion book to the eponymous exhibition mounted by the Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art that runs until January 8, 2012 and will subsequently tour to the Canadian Canoe Museum in Peterborough, Ontario. The Bill Reid Gallery acknowledges the generous support of TELUS on this project.

Author and editor **Dr. Martine Reid** is Director of Content and Research at the Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art in Vancouver, BC.

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