

Bill Reid Gallery Celebrates the Aesthetic and Cultural Richness of Coast and Interior Salish Art with World Premiere of – Every River Has a Mouth –

Exhibition explores identity and evolving cultural practices of those living along the Fraser River, positioning Salish art as both vital and visionary

VANCOUVER, BC — Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art presents the world premiere of ***Every River Has a Mouth***, guest curated by Snuneymuxw artist **Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun**, from **February 14, 2026 – February 14, 2027**. Guided by the concept of the river as a physical and symbolic connector, ***Every River Has a Mouth*** highlights the deep cultural, linguistic, and artistic relationships between the Interior and Coast Salish peoples. The exhibition brings together 13 artists working in sculpture, printmaking, textiles, painting, and mixed media, featuring leading Salish artists **Susan Point** and **Angela George**, alongside established and emerging artists.

“*Every River Has a Mouth* brings to focus the peoples and cultures of the territories on which the gallery is situated,” says **Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun**, Snuneymuxw artist and Guest Curator. “By creating this platform for Salish artists and sharing these stories, we are able to contribute to the cultural resurgence and renaissance of Salish art and storytelling that is taking place at this very moment.”

Historically, Salish art has been marginalized and overlooked, when compared to Northern Indigenous art styles such as Haida and Tlingit, known for their intricate carvings and totem poles that many people continue to associate with Indigenous art today. Salish art was specifically mischaracterized in Franz Boas’ 1897 text “The Decorative Art of the Indians of the North Pacific Coast”, which classified the cultural practice as underdeveloped and primitive. It was only in the 1960s and 1970s that traditional Coast Salish art began to receive its due recognition, through the work of seminal Salish artists, including Susan Point, Stan Greene, Simon Charlie, Charles Elliott, and the Salish Weavers Guild.

The exhibition title references many sources. The word “qun” in the Hul’q’umi’num’ language (White-Hill’s ancestral language) is used as a suffix to mean “language” – evidenced in the curator’s own Snuneymuxw dialect of Hul’q’umi’num known as Snuneymuxwqun. At the same time, the word “qun” on its own means throat. The title also refers to the fact that the end of every river – where it feeds into a larger body of water – is known as its mouth. For Coastal and Interior peoples, it’s the Fraser River – the “throat” – that connects the territories through shared art, culture, and language.

“I always try to push back against oversimplification of our Interior and Coastal cultures, and instead revel in the complexities. What is apparent to me through my teachings and what I know about our traditional art and language is that we share so much, and I want to honour and celebrate what we share as well as our differences,” adds White-Hill, Kwulasultun. “I hope that in seeing this exhibition, young Salish artists are shown that their stories are meaningful and worth telling, and that whatever medium speaks to them is the way their stories are meant to be told.”

Some exhibition highlights include jackets with original designs as well as a maple monoprint by **Susan Point** and an installation piece from **Sydney Pascal**, featuring a wall of tanned fish skins titled

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tiq i stšúqwaoža | *the salmon have arrived*, a reference to the importance of salmon as a food source and how her ancestors can remember the rivers overflowing with salmon when they would return to spawn.

Participating artists include: **Angela George, Chase Gray, Danielle Morsette, Grace Edwards, James Harry, Luke and Ryza Marston, Manuel Axel Strain, Ocean Hyland, Paige Pettibon, Susan Point, Sydney Pascal, and Taylor Baptiste.**

Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun is an artist and storyteller from the Snuneymuxw First Nation. Kwulasultun is his Coast Salish name and Kwaayas is his Nuu-Chah-Nulth name. He is descended from the White family of Snuneymuxw, the Hamilton family of Hupacasath, and the Rice family of Penelakut, with roots branching out far in the Pacific Northwest. Through his practice, White-Hill, Kwulasultun works to tell the stories that have been passed down by his people from generation to generation, to preserve the knowledge that they carry and the profound significance of the way his ancestors saw the world through both written and visual narrative. He also works to tell new stories, finding ways to interweave the teachings that he has with his experience and understanding of the modern context.

This exhibition marks the gallery's first Salish-focused presentation since 2017 and its first collaboration with White-Hill, Kwulasultun the role of guest curator, having previously worked with him as an artist featured in the gallery's 2022 exhibition *True to Place*, and as a collaborator on various public programs.

Bill Reid Gallery will host a series of public programs to support *Every River Has a Mouth*, as well as produce an exhibition publication available in spring/summer 2026. A full list of events will be made available at a later date at billreidgallery.ca

Every River Has a Mouth is brought to you by the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, proudly representing the Port of Vancouver.

About Bill Reid Gallery (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.

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 of Northwest Coast Art presents
*Every River Has a Mouth***

Dates: **February 14, 2026 – February 14, 2027**

Winter Hours: Tues to Sat, 10am to 5pm

Address: Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art
639 Hornby St
Vancouver, BC

Website: billreidgallery.ca

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For further media information, contact
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