



# Bill Holm Center for the Study of Northwest Coast Art Newsletter – December 2010, Vol. 1, no. 2



## Boas Film Project

Kathryn Bunn-Marcuse, Bill Holm Center managing editor, is working with Coreen and Kaleb Child of Fort Rupert on a project focusing on film and sound recordings made by Franz Boas in 1930 in the Kwakwaka'wakw village of Fort Rupert. Her intent is to republish and recontextualize these little-known but unique cultural documents as a book and DVD through University of Washington Press.

In the last year, this project has received funding from The Quest for Truth Foundation, the Canadian Faculty Research Awards, the Phillips Fund for Native American Research from the American Philosophical Society, a Native American Language Grant and several private donors. The focus of the research in 2010 has been the songs that Boas recorded. An unpublished manuscript by Franziska Boas (Boas' daughter) was located in the Burke Museum archives and sheds light on Boas' textual research on songs and dances. The wax cylinder song recordings that Boas made while filming dances during his 1930 trip to Fort Rupert were an early attempt to have a dynamic record of movement, rhythm, and sound. During a trip to the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University, Kathryn, Kaleb, and Coreen located the original wax cylinders and identified the ones that accompanied certain scenes of dancing in the film. In addition to the cylinders that can be seen on the phonograph that appears in Boas' film, they listened to copies of many other recordings made by Boas at the time. In March, a dozen cylinders were singled out for a new type of scanning and sound retrieval being developed by the IRENE project at the University of California at Berkeley and the Library of Congress.

Having the Boas recordings as part of the testing of this new technology is immensely exciting. The IRENE project uses laboratory methods derived from work on instrumentation for particle physics and addresses the problem of audio reconstruction from mechanical recordings like early wax photographs. The scanners make digital maps of the surface of the media and then image analysis methods are used to recover the audio data and reduce noise that is symptomatic of wax cylinder recordings (<http://irene.lbl.gov/>).

The analysis of the first dozen cylinders was successful and so a second batch of cylinders was sent to the IRENE lab in September of this year. In 2011, we are hoping to bring in other technical experts who can help to make possible what Boas never could - an actual synchronization of the original film and audio recordings. At that point, another trip to Fort Rupert will be scheduled to share this material with the Kwakiutl community. This is an exciting project and we are looking forward to continued progress in 2011.

Thanks to the donors who are helping the Bill Holm Center to realize this project!



Coreen and Kaleb Child listening to (upper left) and examining the wax cylinders recorded by Franz Boas, now located at the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music, photograph by Kathryn Bunn-Marcuse, March 2009.

# Gwaii Haanas on the Island Roamer



Fin whale in Hecate Strait, Gwaii Haanas, photo by Darlene Rainbow, June 2010



Robin K. Wright led a trip to Gwaii Haanas, Haida Gwaii aboard the *Island Roamer* from June 26-July 4, 2010. Fin whales, humpback and killer whales, puffins, eagles and ravens welcomed us to this remote place of wonder. We were hosted by Haida Watchmen at the old village sites of Tanu, Sgaang Gwaii (below), Windy Bay, and Skedans.



Next June, Wright will be joined by Evelyn Vanderhoop whose work is featured in the current exhibition, *Weaving Heritage: Textile Masterpieces from the Burke Collection*. Evelyn is an expert weaver of *Naaxiin* and Ravenstail robes. She comes from a renowned family of Haida weavers. She has worked as a Haida Watchman at Sgaang Gwaii and this will be her second Burke Museum trip aboard the *Island Roamer*.



The trip cost is \$4,355 per person. This includes one overnight stay and breakfast at the Sandspit Inn, a visit to the Haida Gwaii Museum, and a welcoming Haida feast. It also includes nine days' accommodations on the *Island Roamer* and all on-board meals. Each person will be sharing a cabin on the ship. If you do not have a traveling companion, Bluewater Adventures will endeavor to match you with another participant.

A deposit of \$500 per person is required to reserve a spot. The balance of \$3,855 per person is due April 11, 2011. As trips fill up quickly, please register early to avoid disappointment. The Burke Museum reserves the right to cancel this program prior to departure, upon the refund of all payments received.

**NOT INCLUDED IN TRIP FEE:** Transportation to and from Sandspit, BC, dinner on June 25, accommodations or meals after leaving the *Island Roamer*, fishing licenses, travel or cancellation insurance, optional purchases, and gratuities for the crew.

If you are interested in joining us next June 25-July 3, 2011, find out more about the trip by going to the Bill Holm Center Trip web site to download the brochure: <http://www.washington.edu/burkemuseum/bhc/trips.html>

## UW Graduate Students Receive Fellowships in 2010

**Nadia Jackinsky-Horrell** received a Bill Holm Center Fellowship during winter quarter 2010 to continue work on her dissertation, "Alaska Native Artistic Revitalization." Nadia's research examines factors that have encouraged artistic revival in Alaska including influences from the public school system, the art market, governmental funding for art programs, and the Alaska Native Corporations. During the winter quarter Nadia traveled to Alaska to work at the Anchorage Museum library and archives, visit the collections at the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka, and read a paper at the Alaska Anthropological Association meeting. She is currently working on her final chapter which examines new trends in contemporary Alaska Native art from her home in Anchorage, Alaska. Nadia anticipates completing her dissertation during the spring quarter 2011.



**Morgan Bell** was awarded a one summer quarter fellowship in 2010 to complete her master's practicum entitled: The Indigenous Photographers Project: Increasing the Representation of Indigenous North American Photographers in the School of Art's implementation of the Madison Digital Image Database (soaMDID) at the University of Washington. This project resulted in the addition of 359 new photographic works by 39 Native American photographers to the UW School of Art digital image library, expanding the numbers from 28 to 387.



Apply for Bill Holm Center Research Grants and UW Graduate Student Fellowships  
by downloading the application forms at:  
<http://www.washington.edu/burkemuseum/bhc/grants.html>  
The application deadline for 2011-12 grants is May 1, 2011

### Research Resumes after Storage Renovation Completion



**Melanie Ancheta, Bellingham artist and researcher,** is studying the materials Northwest Coast indigenous artists used to make paintbrushes, pigments and binders, and other implements in relation to distinct regions prior to the availability of commercially manufactured materials. We are pleased that she was able to research the Burke collection this fall. Melanie received a Bill Holm Center research grant last year, but was unable to come until October 2010, after the completion of the installation of a new compact storage system.

### Coast Salish Workshop for Teachers

The Bill Holm Center together with the Burke Museum Education Department sponsored an all-day K-12 teacher workshop on Coast Salish art with Puyallup/Tulalip artist, Qwalsius - Shaun Peterson, together with Drs. Robin K Wright and Kathryn Bunn-Marcuse. Margaret Hartley, a Bill Holm Center research grant recipient, also attended to share her curriculum materials on Coast Salish art developed after studying the Burke's Coast Salish silk screen print collection in July 2009 (see 2009 Bill Holm Center newsletter). Based on input received from the participants, we will be developing new curriculum materials that will be made available to teachers through our web site.

A set of puzzles was designed by Bill Holm in 1983 in conjunction with the Willie Seaweed exhibit at the Pacific Science Center. The puzzles teach the differences in tribal as well as individual artists' styles of 2-dimensional design. Shaun Peterson recently designed this Nuuchah-nulth-style bird to be added to the set of puzzles that include Kwakwa'kawakw and Haida-style birds. A Coast Salish-style bird puzzle is still to come!



## From Robin K. Wright

I was awarded a nine month sabbatical leave during the 2010-11 academic year to work on several projects related to my research on Haida art history. Kathryn Bunn-Marcuse is teaching the Northwest Coast art survey at the University and handling public inquiries about the Bill Holm Center and Northwest Coast art while I am on leave. Together we have been working to complete the publication of *In the Spirit of the Ancestors: Reflections on Contemporary Northwest Coast Art*.

My research also continues with the the Skidegate House Model project (see the web site at: [http://www.washington.edu/burkemuseum/bhc/haida\\_models/](http://www.washington.edu/burkemuseum/bhc/haida_models/)). I hope to have that book manuscript finished in the coming year.

This year I have also begun work on a new project as a Guest Curator for the Vancouver Art Gallery on a major exhibition on the work of Haida artist Charles Edenshaw, scheduled to open in Vancouver in the fall of 2012.



The Burke Museum's Charles Edenshaw carving (cat. no. 25.0/277) of a bear attacking a human figure from the lid of an argillite chest now at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution (cat. no. E274593 ).

Skidegate House models at the World's Columbian Exposition, 1893, Chicago Public Library, #CDA108



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\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Bill Holm Center Research Endowment:** To fund researchers and artists doing research on Burke Museum collections and Northwest Coast art, public programs, publications, and Web site development.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Bill Holm Center Graduate Fellowship Endowment:** To fund University of Washington graduate students doing research on Northwest Coast Native art.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Bill Holm Center Professorship Endowment:** To fund University of Washington faculty and visiting faculty to teach courses and research Northwest Coast Native art. Dr. Wright currently holds the Bill Holm Center Endowed Professorship, which supports her research).

*Thank you for your support!*

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