

## **JAALEN EDENSHAW**

### **Haida Artist, Eagle Clan**

Jaalen Edenshaw is a member of the Tsaahl – Eagle clan of the Haida Nation. He was born in 1980 and raised in the Village of Masset on Haida Gwaii. At 16, Jaalen moved from the islands for schooling, and has since returned after completing his B.A. in Political Science at the University of Victoria.

Jaalen has apprenticed under, and received guidance from his father, Haida artist Guujaaw; as well as many different artists who willingly share their knowledge. His apprenticeship has included: working on several totem poles with Jim Hart and the smithing of Copper Shields. Other artistic accomplishments include having a collaborated blanket displayed in an art show entitled “Under Ravens Wing,” at the Two Rivers Gallery in Prince George in 2001, and a mixed media art piece in “Territory,” an art show devoted to bears, held in Masset and Skidegate in 2003. He also contributed a painted paddle to the “Raven Travelling” exhibition.

Jaalen is excited about trying new mediums for his art, recently working with silver, bone and two-dimensional design. Jaalen is currently apprenticing with Guujaaw on a 36ft. canoe for the Village of Skidegate.

#### **The Chase**

A sea otter hunter was out in his canoe when he saw a pure white otter. He shot it straight through the tail and into its body, so as not to damage the fur. When he brought it back to his wife she skinned it, and went to the ocean to clean the fur. As she sat by the shore a killer whale came and stole her away. Her husband pursued the killer whale and was able to rescue his wife...

This print depicts 3 characters in this story. The hunter is in the dorsal fin of the killer whale, while his wife is represented in its tail. The husband and wife share arms and legs, which sit in the body of the whale.

#### **Box of Treasures**

“The print is a rendition of a bent wood box frontal design. The box design represents the under-sea chief of wealth. He is said to represent himself as a house coming out of the ocean. When someone is lucky enough to witness his surfacing they will be bestowed with good luck. The bent wood storage boxes were used to store a variety of objects from fishing gear, dried foods, and oulachen grease to the most valuable and prized objects owned by the families. Because the boxes would be traded amongst the Haida and to other trading nations the design is not owned by any particular clan or family. The owner of the box would use it for the appropriate goods depending on the intricacies and beauty of the box. If the box was of the highest quality it could even be named at a potlatch. Some boxes that were particularly designed and used to store the most valuable of objects would be passed down from generation to generation as heirlooms.

The traditional box design, in its many forms, represent some of the more technically challenging and visually beautiful examples of Haida art. I designed this print to test and gauge my own technical skills as an artist and to share with the viewer. I called it ‘Box of Treasures’ because of the

intangible treasures that one generation stores away in order to pass it on to future generations.”  
J.E.