



Brad Starr

Born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, Brad Starr is of the fish clan of the Haisla nation. He claims ancestry in Kitamaat, Kitasoo, and Heiltsuk. Raised by a Tsimpsshian father and a Haisla mother he takes pride in his ancestry. He claims his inheritance as a Haisla descended from his mother's lineage according to the clan system. Major influences in his life have been the culture, the lifestyle and the values of his people. Being raised with the influences of three cultures helped to shape his unique world view, values and beliefs.

His uncle Sam Robinson, master carver of the Haisla nation made a great impression on him during his childhood. As well his mother's side were renowned canoe builders who were known up and down the coast. His grandfather, Solomon McKay was a master canoe builder who had the craft handed down to him in the traditional way.

Brad is a carpenter by trade. During the time he was a carpenter Brad spent a great deal of time teaching himself to draw in the style of the Northwest Coast. It was during this part of his life that he gained a new respect and admiration for his ancestors. They were master builders and architects whose creations were done without aid of modern equipment. In 1994 Brad began to seriously consider carving as a lifestyle. Joe Bolton of the Haisla nation taught him the basics of carving masks and plaques and he has been on his own ever since. From the beginning when he first held the tools in his hands, Brad has been captivated by this way of life. When he picked up those carving tools and transformed a piece of wood from an idea into a solid form. Brad knew he had found his true calling. Since then he has been driven to create, translate and interpret the world around him.

Brad spends time with master carvers from throughout the Pacific Northwest getting ideas and advice on craftsmanship. Much of his inspiration comes from those magical moments in everyday life such as watching a blue heron in Stanley Park, seeing the innocent beauty of his children, feeling the powerful spirit of the ocean as he watches the sun set at the Spanish Banks. Each piece of work has to be finished in his mind before he picks up his tools to bring it to life.

Carving is not a career or hobby for Brad, it is a way of life. He is dedicated to sharing the beauty and strength of his heritage with the world. Through his carving he hopes to create an awareness and respect for the first nation of the Northwest.