

***Wolves: The Art of Dempsey Bob* final presentation in Kelowna**

Wolves: The Art of Dempsey Bob
October 14, 2023 to February 18, 2024

October 12, 2023 – Kelowna, BC: The life and work of one of the most gifted carvers in British Columbia will soon be on view in Kelowna.

Wolves: The Art of Dempsey Bob charts the progression of Dempsey Bob, from his early days starting out as a young carver from the Tahltan-Tlingit First Nations in the early 1970s, until today. The exhibition opens at the Kelowna Art Gallery this weekend.

“We’re thrilled to be one of only five cities across Canada to host this history-making exhibition,” says **Nataley Nagy**, Executive Director. “This presentation is such a triumph for Dempsey Bob, who has waited a lifetime for a major retrospective of his career, and we’re positive Okanagan audiences will not leave disappointed.”

Viewers will have the rare opportunity to see a collection of Bob’s beautiful masks, wall sculptures, vessels, and regalia, which have been brought together for the first time from the walls of private collectors as well as from the vaults of public art museums.

“It is good to once again be surrounded by my work. These are my friends,” says **Dempsey Bob**, “I’ve spent hundreds of hours with each of them, finding the faces in the wood, and many of them I haven’t seen in decades. It’s powerful when you get them all together.”

Dempsey Bob was born into an artistic family in Telegraph Creek, on the Stikine River in the northwest corner of BC. His mother was from the Wolf clan, which means in the matriarchal lineage, he is as well. As a young man, he studied with the legendary Haida artist Freda Diesing (1925–2002), who is one of the few women to carve totem poles.

Through his training in the mainland Indigenous practices of mask and pole carving, Bob developed his own exquisite sense of line, which invests his works with an almost uncanny vitality. His subjects – such as wolves, eagles, bears, ravens, and killer whales – seem to peer right out of his sculptures.

Dempsey Bob has been one of the most important teachers of his generation and is a founder of the Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art in Terrace, BC, where he lives and teaches today. For his contributions, he has been invested as an Officer of the Order of Canada (2013), received the Artistic Achievement Award at the Governor General’s Awards in Visual and Media Arts (2021), and has been awarded three honorary doctorates.

Wolves: The Art of Dempsey Bob, presented with support from Rogers Communications, runs from October 14, 2023 to February 18, 2024. It was co-curated by Sarah Milroy, McMichael Canadian Art Collection, and Curtis Collins, Audain Art Museum.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated hard cover book featuring the artist's life stories and legends entitled *Dempsey Bob: In His Own Voice*.

The Kelowna Art Gallery is located at 1315 Water Street, in downtown Kelowna, B.C.

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