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BC FERRIES AND THE FIRST PEOPLES' CULTURAL COUNCIL ANNOUNCE NAME OF ARTIST FOR NEW SALISH CLASS VESSEL ARTWORK

VICTORIA – BC Ferries, in partnership with the First Peoples' Cultural Council, has selected Coast Salish artist Maynard Johnny Jr. from Chemainus, B.C., to create the design for BC Ferries' newest Salish Class vessel, Salish Heron. The vessels are named to honour and recognize the Coast Salish as the original mariners of the Salish Sea. Mr. Johnny is Coast Salish from Penelakut on his father's side and is connected to Cape Mudge Kwakwaka'wakw on his mother's side. For 27 years he has focused his art practice on Coast Salish style.

The First Peoples' Cultural Council issued a call for artists in March and invited Coast Salish artists to submit their portfolios for consideration. From 36 expressions of interest, a jury of artist peers and BC Ferries representatives identified a shortlist of six artists. Criteria for selection included artistic excellence, Coast Salish artistic style, and ability to express the vessel name through artwork while effectively using the available vessel surface.

Johnny's signature use of bold, bright colours and graceful line work embodies the beauty and energy of contemporary Coast Salish art while drawing upon the rich history of Coast Salish two-dimensional design. He has been inspired by many North West Coast artists and for the past 27 years has focused on Coast Salish style and iconography in his work. Although Johnny is known primarily for his prints, he also works with wood carvings and engraving precious metals.

Johnny was featured in the Changing Hands: Art Without Reservation 2 exhibit at the Museum of Art and Design, New York, in 2005. In 2009, Johnny's work adorned the cedar gift boxes that were given to special guests at the Canadian Juno Music Awards. His works can also be seen in film (*Say it Ain't So*) and television series (*Grey's Anatomy*).

The vessel Johnny's artwork will adorn, Salish Heron, is currently under construction. It will be the fourth Salish Class vessel to join BC Ferries' fleet and will sail in the Southern Gulf Islands starting in 2022. It will share routes with Salish Orca, Salish Eagle, and Salish Raven which entered service in 2017, sailing between Comox and Powell River and in the Southern Gulf Islands. BC Ferries held a public naming contest for the Salish Class ferries in 2015. Salish Heron was among the shortlisted names because it reflects both the land and culture of British Columbia, and the West Coast travel experience.

Working in partnership with the First Peoples' Cultural Council to facilitate artwork commissioning for the first three Salish Class vessels, BC Ferries selected Darlene Gait from Esquimalt Nation to design the artwork for the Salish Orca, John Marston from the Stz'uminus

First Nation designed the artwork for the Salish Eagle, and the Salish Raven is adorned with a design by Thomas Cannell from Musqueam.

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Quotes and photos attached.

“I’m proud to be part of the Coast Salish Renaissance and to perpetuate the Salish style with colour and design on a BC Ferries vessel,” said Maynard Johnny Jr. “To share my vibrant style and colour on the Salish Heron vessel with the surrounding areas of the Salish Sea and visitors from around the world is an honour for me.”

“We received many worthy submissions from very talented Coast Salish artists and we thank them all for their interest in designing artwork for our newest Salish Class vessel,” said Brian Anderson, BC Ferries’ Vice President, Strategy & Community Engagement. “These vessels will sail in the Salish Sea for years to come and the work of the gifted Coast Salish artists truly represent the rich culture and heritage of our coast.”

“The First Peoples’ Cultural Council has been honoured to work with BC Ferries on the artist selection process and for inviting Coast Salish artists to be considered for this opportunity. We raise our hands to each artist who submitted their work, and it was a privilege for those who reviewed the submissions to be involved in this process,” said Tracey Herbert, CEO, the First Peoples’ Cultural Council. “We congratulate Maynard Johnny Jr. for having his artistic vision for the Salish Heron selected to adorn this newest vessel. His work will travel the Salish Sea, expressing Indigenous strength and brilliance to all who see it.”



Granddaughter Orca - I created this steering paddle orca design using a playful colour palette and as I was painting these fun colours it reminded me of how playful and happy my granddaughter is, therefore becoming granddaughter orca. I'm proud to be a part of the Coast Salish Renaissance and perpetuating the style to the forefront of the West Coast Native Art world – Maynard Johnny Jr.



Salish Orca with artwork designed by Darlene Gait from Esquimalt Nation.



Salish Eagle with artwork designed by John Marston from Stz'uminus First Nation.



Salish Raven with artwork designed by Thomas Cannell from Musqueam.