



DOUGLAS REYNOLDS GALLERY



**ARTIST UNKNOWN (HAIDA)
HISTORIC ARGILLITE PIPE**

\$7,500 CAD

Length	8"
Height	4.25
Depth	2"
Medium	Argillite

The history and tradition of argillite carving can be seen through the individual reflection of each piece. The Haida word for argillite is Kwawhlhal. Argillite is a type of rock that is transitional between slate and shale. The quarry for Haida argillite is found on the Islands of Haida Gwaii at the Slatechuck site, located near Skidegate Inlet.

Following contact with European traders, argillite carving evolved into a major trade activity. Depending upon the preference of the artist, argillite carvings may be left in the natural, dull grey state or polished with oils to produce a high, black shine. Argillite will become black and shiny if handled often enough. During the contact period, traders typically wanted the stone to be as glossy and black as possible. In an effort to please the trader's artist would polish the stone with black shoe polish.

In 1941, the Skidegate band obtained 43.81 acres of land surrounding and containing the Slatechuck quarry site for the sole use of the Skidegate people. Anyone wanting to visit the quarry site must obtain permission from the Skidegate band council prior to their visit. The lithic material that the carvings are made out of is a unique and fragile substance. When



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quarried the material contains a high concentration of water. The material is often kept wrapped in towels saturated with water to keep the material "soft" and easy to carve.