



DOUGLAS REYNOLDS GALLERY



**ARTIST UNKNOWN
RAVEN AND THE LIGHT PADDLE**

\$700 CAD

Length 36"
Width 7"

Raven is one of the most important figures in the oral traditions of the Northwest Coast. As a cultural hero, a transformer, and a trickster, his adventures at the beginning of time brought the world as we know it now into existence. It was Raven who placed the sun, moon and stars in the sky after stealing them from a supernatural chief. Raven also discovered the first humans and released them into the world.

The story of how Raven brought light to the world is perhaps the most universal story told on the Northwest Coast. It takes place in a time when the world was in darkness, and begins with a powerful chief who owned a box containing a large, luminous ball. Raven wanted this ball and so he made a plan to procure it.

Raven knew that this chief had a daughter who would fetch water everyday at the river. One day, when she was at the river, Raven transformed himself into a pine needle, and floated into her water vessel. Before the chief's daughter reached home, however, she drank some of the water and accidentally swallowed the pine needle. She soon became pregnant and gave birth to a boy, who was actually Raven in human form.

From time to time, the Raven Child would cry and have a tantrum, which would cause the chief to allow him to play with the shiny ball from the box. However, he was never allowed to play with it alone. As the boy grew, he was more and more



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trusted with the ball, until, one day, he was left alone with it. Raven then seized this opportunity to transform himself back into a raven and fly out through the smoke-hole of the longhouse with the ball.

When Raven emerged over the longhouse he was so pleased with himself that he smiled and bit down on the ball, which broke in half, creating the Sun and the Moon. In this way, Raven brought light to the world.