

Guide to the Owen Luck, Photographs of Alaska and British Columbia

WA Photos Folio 154



by Matthew Daniel Mason

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
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CALL NUMBER: WA Photos Folio 154

CREATOR: Luck, Owen Craig, 1947- , photographer

TITLE: Photographs of Alaska and British Columbia

DATES: 2012-2013

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 8.0 linear feet (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English (Latin script)

SUMMARY: Photographs at Klawock, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska, as well as West Cracroft Island and Haida Gwaii (formerly known as the Queen Charlotte Islands), British Columbia created during the summers of 2012 and 2013, and printed as 91 inkjet color and black-and-white prints that document Tlingit, Haida, and other indigenous people and cultures. The collection consists of six groups of images related to discrete events. Events include a memorial service for Dian Darlene White, the ceremonial destruction of a wooden panel, the repatriation of a house screen, an installation of totem poles, ravens, and murals created by Corey Bulpitt.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.luckowenwpcf154>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.luckowenwpcf154>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Owen Luck on the Walter McClintock Memorial Fund, 2014.

Conditions Governing Access

The Owen Luck, Photographs of Alaska and British Columbia are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Owen Luck, Photographs of Alaska and British Columbia. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Notes

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit. These materials have been arranged and described according to national and local standards. For more information, please refer to the Beinecke Manuscript Unit Processing Manual.

Titles and image descriptions as well as arrangement provided by the photographer.

Each folder in the collection contains a single inkjet print.

Owen Luck (born 1947)

Owen Luck is an American photographer known for his photography of Native American and First Nation Canadian life and history. In 1973, after serving two tours as a combat medic in Vietnam, Luck travelled to Pine Ridge, South Dakota to provide medical support during the occupation of Wounded Knee by the American Indian Movement (AIM). He also carried a camera and created an extensive record of the confrontation between AIM and the United States Marshals Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation agents, and other law enforcement agencies. His account of that experience, "A Witness at Wounded Knee 1973," was published in *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* in 2006. In 1975 Luck documented the Menominee Warrior Society's occupation of the abandoned Alexian Brothers Novitiate in Gresham, Wisconsin, near the Menominee Indian Reservation. Since 2004 he has worked among indigenous communities of the Pacific Northwest. Luck has donated photographs to Ogallala Lakota College in Pine Ridge, to the Haida Gwaii Museum in Skidegate, and to the Makah Museum in Neah Bay. Significant collections of his work are held by Princeton University Library and the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

Description of Photographs

Photographs at Klawock, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska, as well as West Cracroft Island and Haida Gwaii (formerly known as the Queen Charlotte Islands), British Columbia created during the summers of 2012 and 2013, and printed as 91 inkjet color and black-and-white prints that document Tlingit, Haida, and other indigenous people and cultures. The collection consists of six groups of images related to discrete events. Events include a memorial service for Dian Darlene White, the ceremonial destruction of a wooden panel, the repatriation of a house screen, an installation of totem poles, ravens, and murals created by Corey Bulpitt.

A group of color photographs documents a memorial service for Dian Darlene White at Masset, Haida Gwaii, British Columbia, in June 2012 that includes images of the service as well as attendees including Mary Swanson, Christian White, and Lisa White.

A group of black-and-white photographs documents the transportation and ceremonial destruction of a wooden plaque at Bones Bay on the north side of West Cracroft Island, British Columbia, Canada, during the summer of 2012. Images document the ceremony as well as participants that included Haida wood carvers Corey Bulpitt and Christian White.

A group of color photographs documents the repatriation of a wooden screen that decorated the front of the traditional home of the Tuxekan L'eeneidi Clan (Dog Salmon Clan) at the Tlingit village of Tuxekan, Alaska, from the Smithsonian Institution in August 2013. Images include unpacking the screen from crates and assembling it at Klawock High School, which includes detail photographs of the screen, as well as portraits at a celebratory event that included Tlingit members of the Tuxekan L'eeneidi Clan, including Barbara Bean, as well as Haida individuals including Leslie Isaacs.

A group of color photographs documents totem poles installed at the Klawock Totem Park and associated potlaches during the three-day event that included Inupiat, Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian people in August 2013. Poles installed include contributions from Alaskan Tlingit communities including the Brown Bear Peoples Clan from Kake, the Dowhiteidi Clan from Tuxekan, the North Country from Karluk, and the Shankweidi Peoples Clan from Tuxekan. Portraits of identified Tlingit individuals include wood carvers Nathan Jackson and Jonathan Rowan as well as the wife and daughter of the latter, Patricia Rowan and Eva Rowan, in addition to military veteran Alva "Dubsy" Pradavich. Portraits of identified Haida individuals include furrier Sherman Roger Alexander, attorney Lisa M. Lang, and mayor of Hydaburg, Alaska, Anthony Christianson, as well as a portrait of Tsimshian military veteran Ruth F. Buxton Snook.

A group of black-and-white photographs documents ravens (called Yaahl in Haida) in the Pacific Northwest during the summer of 2013, which relates to the Haida name of the photographer, Yaahl Huun Guuaaas (White Raven Traveling).

A group of color photographs documents murals by Haida artist Corey Bulpitt during the summer of 2013 and includes portraits of him with the works as well as with his son Koyas Bulpitt.

Individual prints are 28.5 x 43 cm. Signed and dated by the photographer on versos of prints. Titles in this guide created by the photographer.

Arrangement

Arranged by the photographer.

Collection Contents

Tuxekan L'eeneidi House, Dog Salmon House Front Repatriation

"This is the first of the Klawock Village Tlingit artifact repatriated from the Smithsonian Institution. The community appreciation of this act far outweighs the individual, and even the Tuxekan L'eeneidi Clan importance in its spritual significance. It goes beyond words." --John Rowan, Master Tlingit Carver

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 1	1. After a brief private prayer and song, I was requested not to photograph, the crate was unloaded from the transport truck and is opened under the supervision of this group of Tlingit men	
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 2	2. Detail of packing crate object	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 3	3. Members of the Tuxekan L'eeneidi Clan (Dog Salmon Clan) with flats containing House Front panels	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 4	4. Jon Rowan guides a panel into place	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 5	5. Detail of panels being assembled	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 6	6. Detail House Front Painting	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 7	7. Family members of the Tuxekan L'eeneidi Clan (Dog Salmon Clan) gather before the assembled House Front	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 8	8. Revered Tlingit matriarch, Barbara Bean, before the fest begins	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 9	9. Jackson family, Raven Clan, Three generations	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 10	10. Tlingit Dog Salmon Dancer	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 11	11. Revered Dog Salmon Clan Elders	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 12	12. A great day for the generations	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 13	13. The cultural significance of repatriation spans the generations in celebration of the continued renaissance of the Coastal Pacific Northwest Nations	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 14	14. Cultural pride in the youth is a great combatant in keeping indigenous youth away from drugs and alcohol	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 15	15. Les Isaacs giving thanks with song and dance	2013
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 16	16. A young Haida man wearing a Shaman head dress dances in support of the neighboring Tlingit repatriation	2013

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 17	17. Respect	2013
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Haa leelk tlatgi kaaw at uoow, "Belongings From Our Grandparents Land"
"This is the second totem pole raising and potlach in Klawock, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska."

Day One

Hefted from its frame in front of the new carving shed, this magnificent totem pole will be carried two miles to its final destination in the village Totem Pole Park overlooking Klawock Harbor. It will be a long hard slog through the rain. But no one seems to care.

The Bear Hunter Totem Pole Kaats. The Tceikweide, Brown Bear Peoples Clan from Kake, Alaska

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 18	18. "Kaats" Bear Hunter Totem Pole	2013
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b. 1 (Oversize), f. 19	19. Bear Hunter Totem Pole	2013
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b. 1 (Oversize), f. 20	20. Bear Hunter Totem Pole	2013
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b. 1 (Oversize), f. 21	21. Bear Hunter Totem Pole	2013
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b. 1 (Oversize), f. 22	22. Bear Hunter Totem Pole	2013
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Potlatch

The grand entry is led by a procession of Veterans. As a Veteran, I am expected to march representing my Clan, and do not get to photograph that part of the ceremony.

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 23	23. A rare moment when Tlingit Master Carver Jon Rowan is available at the start of the Grand Procession	2013
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b. 1 (Oversize), f. 24	24. I was able to capture this portrait of Tlingit Master Carver Nathan Jackson from Ketchikan, Alaska in his regalia just before the start of the grand entry	2013
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b. 1 (Oversize), f. 25	25. And then again as Tlingit Master Carver Nathan Jackson danced in his Chilkat Robe, and Chief's ermine headdress	2013
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b. 1 (Oversize), f. 26	26. Lisa Lang, Kaigani Haida Native Rights Attorney, leads the Haida Women's Paddle Dance during entry protocols	2013
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 27	27. Iñupiaq women dancers, Iñupiaq, which translates into the "real people"	2013
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 28	28. Tony Christianson, Kaigani Haida, Mayor of Hydaburg, Alaska. Warrior Dance	2013
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Day Two

Sun Chief Totem Pole

Day Two > Sun Chief Totem Pole (continued)

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 29	29. Sun Chief Totem Pole (Dowhiteidi Clan from Tuxekan, Alaska, Winter Village) is positioned and raised	2013
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 30	30. Sun Chief Totem Pole (Dowhiteidi Clan from Tuxekan, Alaska, Winter Village) is positioned and raised	2013
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Mountain Bird Totem Pole

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 31	31. Mountain Bird Totem Pole, the oldest pole, is an anomaly from the North Country, Karluk, Alaska	2013
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Plaques

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 32	32. Master Carver, Jon Rowan, and his Apprentice Carvers with a Plaque commemorating their work	2013
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 33	33. Detail of plaque	2013
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Potlatch

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 34	34. Proud Tlingit woman dancing with eagle feathers	2013
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 35	35. Tlingit women	2013
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 36	36. Tlingit Bear Dancer, Roger Alexander	2013
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 37	37. Unidentified Tlingit / Kaigani Haida mask	2013
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Day Three

Dog Eater Spirit Totem Pole

The history of this Totem Pole goes back around three hundred years to a cultural exchange between the Tlingit and the Kwakawaka'wk People from Alert Bay, when the Kwakawaka'wk People gave the right to the Hamatsa (Cannibal Secret Society) to the Tlingit People.

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 38	38. Dog Eater Spirit Totem Pole, Shankweidi Peoples Clan from Tuxekan, Alaska	2013
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 39	39. Dog Eater Spirit Totem Pole, Shankweidi Peoples Clan from Tuxekan, Alaska	2013
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Brown Bear Woman Totem Pole

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 40	40. Brown Bear woman with Killer Whale Hat Totem Pole, of the Shankweidi Peoples Clan from Tuxekan, Alaska	2013
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 41	41. Brown Bear woman with Killer Whale Hat Totem Pole, of the Shankweidi Peoples Clan from Tuxekan, Alaska	2013
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b. 2 (Oversize), f. 42	42. Brown Bear woman with Killer Whale Hat Totem Pole, of the Shankweidi Peoples Clan from Tuxekan, Alaska	2013
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Day Three (continued)

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 43	43. Young Tlingit Woman	2013
	Potlach	
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 44	44. Eva Rowan (left) daughter of Master Carver Jon Rowan helps her mother Patricia Rowan (right) Wife of Jon Rowan	2013
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 45	45. Last night of Potlatch entrance	2013
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 46	46. Painted faces	2013
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 47	47. Tlingit Woman's Dance	2013
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 48	48. Tlingit matriarch	2013
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 49	49. Wolf Helmet from Saxman I have included two images of this very old Wolf Clan Mask. The first in detail and the other as it is danced.	2013
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 50	50. Wolf Helmet from Saxman I have included two images of this very old Wolf Clan Mask. The first in detail and the other as it is danced.	2013
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 51	51. Tlingit Men's Paddle Dance	2013
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 52	52. Esteemed Tlingit Veterans, Tsimshian Ruth Snook, Tlingit Alva "Dubsy" Pradavich	2013
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 53	53. Tlingit "Dubsy" leads veterans with flags during the Grand Exit Procession I was begrudgingly allowed to photograph the last protocol of the potlatch.	2013

Bones Bay

The smallpox epidemic of 1862 ravaged the entire Northwest Coast, nearly annihilating the Haida people, reducing the Haida population, estimated at that time to be around thirty thousand, to less than six hundred survivors on Haida Gwaii.

Haida canoes fleeing Mak Yoli, Victoria left a trail of dead and dying along the Inside Passage. The Kwakwaka'wakw people heard the canoes of dead and dying were traveling in their direction. They sent out to prepare a place isolated from Alert Bay that could accommodate the sick. Bones Bay had good water, fire wood, and food. Three hundred Haida fell to the epidemic there and it is their story that has brought us back to Bones Bay.

"What our ancestors must have experienced during his time is more than one can bear to imagine. Of our people, and the accompanying loss of unfathomable amounts of knowledge, history and tradition."

In the spring of 2009, Beau Dick, Kwakwaka'wakw Artist and Hereditary leader invited the Haida People to gather in Alert Bay and to return to Bones Bay for a healing ceremony and that is where the story begins for me, though I was not invited to travel with my new Haida family.

My involvement began in the summer of 2012 when I was traveling west on my way to Haida Gwaii. I heard a news broadcast that a wooden plaque had been found floating in the waters around Knights Inlet and had been taken to the home of the folks who had found the piece. It was described as being a Pacific Northwest Cultural design and within days of its inclusion in their home odd things began occurring. Strange noises and a general sense of unrest was reported. It was Kwakwaka'wakw Hereditary Leader and Artist, Beau Dick, who recognized by the description what was involved and the plaque was brought to Alert Bay.

b. 3 (oversize), f. 54	1. Christian White at the helm. Corey Bulpitt in the left foreground, and Chief ___ frame right. As we approached Bones Bay	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 55	2. Bringing in food for offering	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 56	3. Preparing food offering	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 57	4. For the continued journey in the next world	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 58	5. A song of longing	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 59	6. After long conversation ...	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 60	7. Deep sadness ...	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 61	8. Song of farewell	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 62	9. Contemplating the ancestors and the loss to the Haida People	2012

The Memorial for Dian Darlene White October 1, 1937 - June 2, 2012

They gathered, slowly at first. Gradually they were a small crowd, some beneath umbrellas in the fine mist. After a while some family gathered outside and made a fire and prepared food and made an offering.

The head stones were cleansed by women from the Eagle Clan and loaded into a pick up truck. Then the memorial procession ventured along the coast road passing where there used to be boat building sheds, once productive and vital; where proud, strong Haida boat builders the descendants of great canoe carvers, plied their trade.

Once at the burial grounds Christian began to drum and sing his lament. The headstone was brought to the final place of rest. The day before I had with Christian and a few others, helped level out a small place to rest the marble base to support the head stone. Now, in the silence and the rain, Christian's family looked on as the head stone was cleansed the final time. Prayers and murmurs of sorrow, and the sky wept.

b. 3 (oversize), f. 63	1. Memorial	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 64	2. Memorial	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 65	3. Memorial	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 66	4. Memorial	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 67	5. Memorial	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 68	6. Memorial	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 69	7. Still, Christian White's Long House waits for the Memorial Tea and final farewells	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 70	8. Now, full of friends and family, stories sad and happy are shared	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 71	9. Nonnie Mary Swanson, matriarch of the Haida People leads us in a Haida Prayer	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 72	10. Lisa White, one of Christian's sisters, listens to the stories	2012
b. 3 (oversize), f. 73	11. After all have left, I found Christian dancing a farewell to his mother	2012

Raven, A Portrait of the Mythological Icon Yaahl

The mythology of the Raven is long and rich since the dawn of man. Pictured in the Neolithic caves of Lascaux, France. Sent forth by Noah to find land, and Coronis, daughter of Atlas, of the Homeric Hymns, Roman Legions birds of war, and Odin the Raven King with his pair Huginn and Muginn his favored thought and memory and the dreary Edgar Allen Poe tapping, tapping Never More...

Yet it is the mythological Icon Yaahl. Of the Archipelago Haida Gwaii, and the Haida People that I have become acquainted. It is a Portrait of this trickster, creator god I have availed myself with this beginning.

When I was adopted into the Yahgu Laanaas Clan and named Yaahl Huun Guuaaas, White Raven Traveling, I began a unique, though distant, relationship with Yaahl. They captured my curiosity with their sublime antics, and marvelous aerobatic displays of sheer joy often punctuated with outbursts of aerial warfare.

Yet, this past summer, when I finally began to photograph Yaahl, did I discover exactly how difficult a task it would become. This is my offering.

b. 4 (Oversize), f. 74	1. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 75	2. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 76	3. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 77	4. Yaahl <i>2 Folders</i> 2 distinct images share the same number	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 78	4. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 79	5. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 80	6. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 81	7. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 82	8. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 83	9. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 84	10. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 85	11. Yaahl	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 86	12. Yaahl	2013

Corey Bulpitt, Haida Artist

With this brief portfolio of images of Haida Artist, Corey Bulpitt, I explored the resonance between the diverse sides of a single Haida Artist as he represents both a contemporary "hip hop" side juxtaposed to his deeply rooted traditional, spiritual essence; where he grows simultaneously fed by two worlds.

b. 4 (Oversize), f. 87	1. Corey memorialized a friend with this mural. Here, he appears in Haida Regalia	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 88	2. With his son Koyas	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 89	3. Corey with a traditional Haida design mural commissioned by the City of Vancouver	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 90	4. Corey with another city commissioned mural, at the Central Park Reservoir	2013
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 91	Untitled Detail photograph of a bumper sticker distributed by the Highliner Coffee Company, Sitka, Alaska, that reads: "Friends don't let friends eat farmed fish, support Alaska's wild fisheries"	2013

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Haida Indians -- Pictorial works
Indians of North America -- Pictorial works
Indians of North America -- Portraits
Inupiat -- Pictorial works
Ravens -- Pictorial works
Tlingit Indians -- Pictorial works
Totem poles -- Alaska -- Klawock -- Pictorial works
Tsimshian Indians -- Pictorial works

Geographic Names

Alaska -- Pictorial works
British Columbia -- Pictorial works
Haida Gwaii (B.C.) -- Pictorial works
Klawock (Alaska) -- Pictorial works
Prince of Wales Island (Alaska) -- Pictorial works
West Cracroft Island (B.C.) -- Pictorial works

Genres / Formats

Inkjet prints
Photographic prints
Photographs

Names

Rowan, Jonathan O., Jr. -- Portraits
Swanson, Mary -- Portraits
White, Christian, 1962- -- Portraits

Acquired From

Owen Luck Photographs , bookseller