



VANCOUVER BC | 2013

## Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson Biography



“Learning the Haida language through Haida songs led to an interest in ceremonies, medicines, and other cultural knowledge. I learned that the songs come from the land, and are a reflection for the land. From this basis, I was inspired to become a lawyer to protect the land. All are connected.” - Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson

Along with being a well-known lawyer representing the Haida Nation in the area of aboriginal-environmental law, Terri-Lynn’s life’s work and passion has been to preserve the Haida songs of her culture.

Born in Haida Gwaii off the west coast of Canada, Terri-Lynn has been a promoter of Haida music since the age of 13. She began singing Haida songs at a time when there were few Haida singers practicing this musical tradition. As a young girl, she was drawn to the songs her centurion great-grandmother and grandmother sang and sought out more of the music which she subsequently helped rescue from obscurity. For her work, which has spanned over 30 years and has helped bring renewal to Haida songs, she received a ‘Keeper of Traditions’ Canadian Aboriginal Music Award in 2008.

Terri-Lynn founded the Haida Gwaii Singers Society with other veteran Haida singers including her husband, artist Robert Davidson in 2000. The two CD collections, ‘Songs of Haida Gwaii: Haida Gwaii Singers Anthology’ (contemporary recordings) and ‘Songs of Haida Gwaii: Archival Anthology’ are now part of museum and school collections and preserve songs that might otherwise have been lost.

One of the CD’s from the Contemporary box set featuring Terri-Lynn as a solo singer: ‘Lalaxaaygans: Beautiful Sound’, received the Best Female Traditional/Cultural Roots award at the 2009 Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards (CAMA).

In 2011 Terri-Lynn released her first solo CD with original compositions - ‘New Journeys’. She was awarded ‘Best Female Artist’ at the 2011 Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards for the release which was a collaboration with

renowned classical composer Bruce Ruddell. Adding instrumentation to songs sung in the Haida language represented a new and ground-breaking concept intended to build a bridge for a wider audience to appreciate the beauty of the Haida language and musical traditions.

The CD has also received nominations for two Aboriginal Peoples Choice Awards, three Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards, two Canadian Folk Music Awards and a Western Canadian Music Award. Most recently, Terri-Lynn was nominated as ‘Best Female Artist’ at the Native American Music Awards, and the CD was nominated for ‘Best Historical/Linguistic’ Recording.

The CD was cited as one of the top 10 Most Influential Indigenous Albums of 2011 by RPM Indigenous Music Culture. In 2012, ‘Have a Light Heart on Your New Journey’ reached No 2 on the National Aboriginal Music Countdown, and was on this chart for almost 40 weeks.

Terri-Lynn has also recorded for film and television, and she has performed throughout the world including Indonesia, Italy, Amsterdam and New York.

“Learning the Haida language through Haida songs led to an interest in ceremonies, medicines, and other cultural knowledge. I learned that the songs come from the land, and are a reflection of the land. From this basis, I was inspired to become a lawyer to protect the land. All are connected.” - Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson

Read the profile by Professor of Law Michael Jackson, Q.C. about his former student Terri-Lynn in the Advocate Magazine located in the articles section of the Raven Calling Productions website. [www.ravencallingproductions.com](http://www.ravencallingproductions.com).

Terri-Lynn is a partner of Raven Calling Productions, an entertainment company which shares and showcases Haida musical and oral traditions “to help guide us in our collective path forward.”