Madam Chancellor, I present to you Dr. Bill Reid that we may recognize the vitality of his life's work and the richness his mastery brings to Canadian Art. In Bill Reid's images we are introduced to Haida culture and reminded of its exquisite beauty and fragile continuity. It is ironic that the reconstruction of this dying heritage waited for the efforts of one who was raised to know nothing of his Haida lineage. It was not until early adulthood that Bill Reid came to know his grandparents and the work of Haida silversmiths, chief among them a great-uncle, Charles Edenshaw, whose legacy provided inspiration in his early life as an artist. Perhaps it is as Nietzsche suggested: "Our destiny exercises its influence over us even when, as yet, we have not learned its nature."

Bill Reid is the agent of the Raven, the supernatural transformer. Under his carving tools, spirits sensed in wood and stone are transformed into legendary Haida creatures - Bear Mother, the Killer Whale, and Hunter. His mastery over cedar, pen, brush and bronze makes visible the cultural substance of British Columbia's First Nations. This is his great gift: artistic healer on the pathway to his peoples' history.

Recognized as one of North America's greatest living artists, Bill Reid is the recipient of five honorary degrees. Among the fine examples of his work, The Raven and the First Men, at The University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology has earned international esteem. His latest major project, The Spirit of Haida Gwaii, six years in the making, is to be placed in the chancery courtyard of the Canadian Embassy in Washington.

In Bill Reid's life and art the Haida revival is made manifest. With elegance of line and perfection of shape, the Raven has once more transformed meaning out of meaning and given us his teaching through light and shadow, texture and contrast. In tribute to a remarkable man, it is my privilege, Madam Chancellor, on behalf of the Senate of this University, to present Bill Reid for the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.