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Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections

Cultural Conservation Narrative Stage: Balladry continued: Conserving American Indian Culture

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WEBVTT

00:17:46.000 --> 00:17:58.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: *[[background music]]* It's -- You can gain so much by that. As far as teaching others, I've -- it's down to --

00:17:58.000 --> 00:18:05.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: *[[background music]]* The technicalities of carving are something that you learn, and once you've learned it, it's,

00:18:05.000 --> 00:18:12.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: ah -- and you see others who are dealing with a technical problem that you've gone through --

00:18:12.000 --> 00:18:23.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: I work with a lot of guys that way, and I got to a lot of other carvers to learn techniques also. But yeah.

00:18:23.000 --> 00:18:29.000

<i>Speaker 2</i>: *[[background music]]* Greg, would you talk a little bit about this piece here? Uh, would you hold that up?

00:18:29.000 --> 00:18:38.000

<i>Speaker 2</i>: *[[background music]]* Just to give an example of some of the kinds of things that happening at like Neah Bay, Washington.

00:18:38.000 --> 00:18:48.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: *[[background music]]* Well, as an example of how carvers on the west coast have -- uh --

00:18:48.000 --> 00:18:53.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: *[[background noise]]* how we study is that we look at photos, and these are pretty much our blueprints.

00:18:53.000 --> 00:19:02.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: This comes out of uh -- just out of the Museum of Natural History in New York, and its called a *[[??]]*.

00:19:02.000 --> 00:19:09.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: And the actual story of the piece is of another world, but this is how we study.

00:19:09.000 --> 00:19:18.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: We take pictures like this, and put them up on a wall, and then, this is how it -- some of the work I do.

00:19:18.000 --> 00:19:23.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: There -- I divide this into two ways.

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<i>Greg Colfax</i>: There is a traditional way of doing these, in which I am hired by a family who has a right to use it, and then the piece comes alive when it used.

00:19:35.000 --> 00:19:45.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: This piece is for art collectors, it is for the wall. And my mind started, in the beginning, that that was what it was for.

00:19:45.000 --> 00:19:54.000

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: So in a sense, its not alive. I look forward to the times when I am hired to make pieces for the potlatch,

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<i>Greg Colfax</i>: [[background music]] and when that happens, it's a great honor. But I separate in my mind how I start a piece.

00:20:04.000 --> 00:20:14.280

<i>Greg Colfax</i>: I think that is awfully important when dealing with masks, and you're in the company of other people from other villages, and other tribes who



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