

# *Joe H. Seymour, Jr. (wahalatsu?)*

## *Squaxin Island/Acoma Artist*

Joe (wahalatsu?) Seymour, Jr. is the son of Joe, Sr. and Faye Seymour. He was formally trained as a commercial diver and the Diver's Institute of Technology in Seattle, Washington in 2002. Joe's ancestral name, wahalatsu?, was given to him by his family in 2003. "wahalatsu? was the name of my great grandfather William Bagley."

Joe started his artistic career by carving his first paddle, with the help of Steve and Andrea Sigo, for the 2003 Tribal Journey to Tulalip. Also with the help of Steve and Andrea, he carved his first bentwood box. After the Tulalip journey, he then learned how to stretch and make drums. In 2004, Joe attended the Woodcarvers Gathering at the Longhouse at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. There he was introduced to the staff and other artists that the Longhouse worked with. "I'll always be grateful to everybody at the Longhouse, because if it weren't for them, I never would have many of the opportunities given to me."

In October 2005, Joe had the opportunity to attend the Preston Singletary residence at the Longhouse. "It was a very exciting experience for me to be a part of that residence. There were so many wonderful artists that exchanged and helped develop a lot of great ideas. The creativity and spirit associated in that time was absolutely amazing. It wasn't until that time I decided to dedicate my life to creating art."

Joe recently participated in the international gathering of Indigenous Artists, PIKO 2007, in Hawaii. There he had the opportunity to help Preston and Joe Benvenuto in creating blown glass pieces. In the summer of 2007, Joe became an assistant to Preston.

"In my career I've worked with glass, photography, Salish wool weaving, prints, wood, and rawhide drums. I've been very fortunate to have a community of artists that I'm able to work with and that are very supportive of my career. If it were not for their caring and sharing of ideas, I would not be the artist that I am today."

"I hope that as I continue in my artistic career, I can pass on the teachings and nurturing spirit that have been shown to me."

Joe's work can be seen in the Squaxin Museum, Learning and Resource Center in Shelton, Washington and the Hilo Art Museum in Hilo, Hawaii.

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