Haida Monumental Art: Villages of the Queen Charlotte Islands

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The Haida of the Queen Charlotte Islands in British Columbia constructed some of the most magnificent houses and erected some of the most beautifully carved totem poles on the Northwest Coast. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, images of the Haida's immense cedar houses and soaring totem poles were captured by photographers who travelled to then-remote villages such as Masset and Skidegate to marvel at, and record, what they saw there.

Haida Monumental Art, initially published as a limited edition hardcover and now available in paperback, includes a large number of these remarkable photographs. They depict the Haida villages at the height of their glory and records their tragic deterioration only a few decades later. As well, this edition contains the complete text from the first edition, including site plans and detailed descriptions of fifteen major villages and several smaller sites, which are catalogued by house and pole. By combining archeology and ethnohistory, George MacDonald presents an integrated framework for understanding the physical structure of a Haida village. He explains how the houses and poles are part of a fascinating web of myth, family history and Haida cosmology, which provides a unique insight into Haida culture.

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