

Music, Drum — Cautyaq

CAUYAT PINGAQTAANKA, ASQIGNASQAT. – I LIKE MUSIC THAT HAS A GOOD BEAT.



Photo: Puffinbeak rattle. Etholén Collection, National Museum of Finland.

Music is a cultural universal. Every human society has a musical tradition. Although these traditions vary greatly, with unique styles, sounds, and ways of performing, music is an essential part of the artistic expression of all people.

Despite the universal presence of music in human life, many societies don't have a unique word for music. This is true of the Alutiiq people. In the Alutiiq language, the word for drum and music are the same: *cauyaq*. This situation probably reflects the fact that drums were the primary type of musical instrument in traditional performance. Alutiiq people also used rattles and whistles in musical presentations.

Like other forms of art, music encodes information on language, social practices, cultural values, and history. A recent compilation of Alutiiq music illustrates the evolution of Alutiiq music.

Generations, a professionally-produced anthology of Alutiiq language songs, includes traditional stories used to preserve and share history, church hymns that reflect the adoption and practice of

Christianity, translations of contemporary songs, and new compositions that illustrate efforts to preserve and reawaken Alutiiq traditions.