Guidelines for Evaluating Contemporary Works of Alutiiq Art

The collection of contemporary objects is a central objective of the Alutiiq Museum’s collections plan. Works of art, ethnographic items, and objects reflecting current history help to tell the continuing story of the Alutiiq people and to illustrate the ties between the museum’s historic and prehistoric collections and the present. They promote the recognition and perpetuation of Alutiiq culture. Within this category of objects, the Alutiiq Museum seeks to add original works of contemporary Alutiiq art to its permanent collection.

Each year many Alutiiq art pieces are offered to the museum. Unfortunately, the museum has neither the funds to purchase all of these objects or the resources to care for them in perpetuity. As such, we have developed a set of guidelines to assist our board, staff and volunteer collections advisory committee in considering potential purchases, donations, and loans. These guidelines are designed to encourage artistic excellence, promote the recognition and perpetuation of Alutiiq traditions, foster professionalism and insure impartiality in the selection process.

These guidelines may also be helpful to artists who would like their work considered for addition to the museum’s permanent collection. Artists are encouraged to submit a written statement about themselves and their work, to help the museum evaluate their proposed contribution.

These guidelines are not exhaustive and they do not supersede the Museum’s collections policy, the document that governs all museum acquisitions. Artists may refer to this policy for a full discussion of the way objects are added to the museum’s holdings. A copy of this policy is available from the Alutiiq Museum’s curator or may be downloaded from the collection’s page of the museum’s web site at www.alutiiqmuseum.org.

Guidelines

1. **Artistic Expertise** – as demonstrated by one or more of the following:
   - The artist has a demonstrated knowledge of his or her medium - a history of producing art in that medium and / or of teaching others to work in that medium.
   - The artist’s work has been recognized by others – has sold similar works of art, or shared similar works in exhibits, shows, demonstrations or publications.
   - The artist devotes a significant amount of time to creating art- either professionally or privately.

2. **Craftsmanship** – as demonstrated by both of the following:
   - The work of art demonstrates exemplary craftsmanship.
   - The work of art is made of high quality materials appropriate for the composition.

3. **Expression** – as demonstrated by all of the following:
   - The object represents the perpetuation and/or evolution of Alutiiq traditions.
   - The object is significant to the overall history and on-going development of Alutiiq art.
   - The object tells or possesses a unique story.
   - The object has educational value – it will help to educate future generations about Alutiiq heritage in the 21st century.

4. **Museum Considerations** – as demonstrated by all of the following:
   - The object can be appropriately cared for by the Alutiiq Museum (i.e., size, materials, condition, staff time, resources, effect on other collections)
   - The object can be effectively used in museum interpretation projects (exhibitions, public outreach projects, publications, research projects).