Artwork Purchased for Museum Collection

With a $4,075 grant the Alutiiq Museum will purchase five works of art for its permanent collection. The pieces are the creations of four Kodiak artists, Alf Pryor, Genevieve Opheim, and Jonathan and Hanna Sholl.

From Kodiak photographer Alf Pryor, the museum will purchase three fine art photographs, each showing a view of the former Akalura cannery. Pryor is known for his images of Kodiak canneries and wildlife. He spends his summers fishing with his family at a set net site in remote Olga Bay, where many of his pictures are taken. Two of the images, Fallen and Akalura Window, are multi-media prints. Each is mounted on a weathered piece of corrugated siding salvaged after the cannery was torn down. The third image, Cannery Walkway, is a giclée print on canvas that shows a detail of the aging facilities. These photographs are the first works by Pryor to be added to the museum’s collections.

Ing’iq (Barometer Mountain) is a four-foot long oil on canvas painting by Genevieve Opheim. The incredibly realistic work shows Kodiak Island’s Barometer Mountain in winter, looking inland. Opheim, an Inupiaq artist, is originally from Anchorage. She has lived on Kodiak for fifteen years painting portraits of the island’s people, plants, and scenery. Ing’iq is the first of her works to be added to the Alutiiq Museum’s collections.

From Jonathan and Hanna Sholl the museum will purchase Alutiiq Cultural Value Paddle. This full-sized, single-bladed, kayak paddle is hand carved from red cedar. It is painted in a traditional style with bands of black design that suggest the layers of the Alutiiq universe, and a mask with a stylized face that suggests both the vision needed for hunting and the humanness in all things. The museum
owns other pieces by Hanna Sholl, but this is the first collections addition reflecting the work of her husband Jonathan.

Support for these purchases comes from the Art Acquisition Fund. Established by Rasmuson Foundation in 2003, and administered by Museums Alaska, the fund promotes the development of contemporary art collections in Alaska museums. Each year, the fund invites proposals to purchase the work of living Alaskan artists, made within the past five years.

Since the fund’s inception in 2003, the Alutiiq Museum has received $199,153.50 in grants to purchase 131 works by 39 artists. These pieces can be enjoyed in the contemporary art gallery on the Alutiiq Museum’s website at https://alutiiqmuseum.org/explore/collections/types-of-collections/contemporary-art. The new acquisitions will be incorporated into both the gallery and upcoming museum displays to share them with the public.

“The Art Acquisition Fund opens for proposals regularly and we expect the next application period to be next fall,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Counceller. “I encourage artists to watch for this opportunity and propose pieces for the museum’s collections. This program not only allows the museum to collect works that reflect Alutiiq culture and history, it helps our artists live their culture. When artists can make a living from their work, they can keep creating.”

The Alutiiq Museum is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing the history and culture of the Alutiiq, an Alaska Native tribal people. Representatives of Kodiak Alutiiq organizations govern the museum with funding from charitable contributions, memberships, grants, contracts, and sales.

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