Artwork Purchased for Museum Collection

With a $8,800 grant the Alutiiq Museum will purchase two works of art for its permanent collection. They are *Past and Present*, a bead embroidery picture by Cheryl Lacy of Wasilla, and *Nacaq*, a beaded headdress by Kayla Christensen of Old Harbor. Both women are Alutiiq artists and their beadings are inspired by Alutiiq history and tradition.

*Past and Present* is a three-dimensional beaded picture that depicts elements of Alutiiq spirituality—petroglyphs, the Alutiiq hero Raven, the natural world, and the Orthodox Church. This picture was inspired by family stories and a photograph Lacy took looking down Kodiak’s Mission Road. *Past and Present* is hand crafted from glass beads sewn to a pellon base with an ultrasuede backing.

*Nacaq* is an Alutiiq woman’s headdress made from glass beads, metal charms, leather, and synthetic sinew. It is currently on display in Sitka with “Voices of Change: Perspectives on the Transfer of Alaska from Russia to the United States,” an exhibit developed by the Sitka National Historic Park and the University of Alaska Museum of the North to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Alaska purchase. The exhibit explores Native perspectives on the purchase. Christiansen’s headdress mirrors Alutiiq history with beadings in Alutiiq, Russian, and American colors, including an American flag design. *Nacaq* will be shipped to the Alutiiq Museum in December, at the conclusion of the exhibit.

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. Twice a year, the fund invites proposals to purchase the work of living Alaskan artists, made within the past five years.
Since the fund’s inception, the Alutiiq Museum has received $195,078.50 in grants to purchase 126 works by 36 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. Past and Present and Nacaq will also be incorporated into upcoming museum displays to share them with the public.

Artists who would like the Alutiiq Museum to consider purchasing their work will have another opportunity beginning in June. A second round of applications to the fund will be accepted this summer, in preparation for an October filing deadline.

“We encourage artists to propose pieces for the museum’s collections,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Counceller. “This program not only allows the museum to collect works that reflect Alutiiq culture in today’s world, 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.