Works by Two Artists Added to Museum Collection

With a $4,800 grant from Museums Alaska, the Alutiiq Museum has purchased two works of art for its permanent collection. The pieces are the creations of Alaska Native artists Okalena Patricia Lekanoff Gregory and Danielle Larsen. Both artists are new to the museum’s collections.

*Aleut Hunting Visor* is an 18” x 10” piece by Unangan artist Patty Gregory. Gregory is a master hat bender, mentored by the late Andrew Gronholdt. *Aleut Hunting Visor* is instantly recognizable as a piece of traditional hunting gear, but its painted decorations combine contemporary and customary designs. The visor is blue, the powerful color worn by hunters and associated with the spirit world. On this background, Gregory added floral designs in contemporary yellow and orange with a bold, free-flowing style. The negative space around these designs hints at an animal’s face, as does a red band with tooth-like zigzags along the bottom edge of the hat. These elements remind viewers that the visor is a hunting mask.

From Larsen, the museum purchased *Reflections of the Seasons*. This 41.5’ x 41” oil on canvas painting is a study of canned salmon. Larsen shows familiar Kerr canning jars packed with salmon, using a Western medium to share her heritage. She says, “after my father passed away, looking at pictures of his kippered smoked salmon made me happy. I found comfort in painting the salmon. It brought me closer to my heritage as a fishing family and being Alaska Native.” An Anchorage resident, Larsen earned a Bachelor’s degree in Fine Art at the University of Alaska Anchorage. She was mentored by many Native artists, including Alutiiq masters Alvin Amason and Perry Eaton. Larsen is of Aleut, Koyukon Athabascan, Iñupiaq, and European ancestry.

Support for these purchases comes from the Art Acquisition Fund. Established by Rasmuson Foundation in 2003, the fund promotes the development of contemporary art collections in Alaska museums. Each year, the fund invites proposals to purchase recent works by living Alaskan artists.

Since the fund’s 2003 inception, the Alutiiq Museum has received $203,953.50 in grants to purchase 133 works by 41 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](https://alutiiqmuseum.org/explore/collections/types-of-collections/contemporary-art). The latest acquisitions will be incorporated into museum displays over the coming year to share them with the public.

“The Art Acquisition Fund has had a powerful influence on our collections and community,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Counceller. “It has helped us document Native experiences in the modern day. And by collecting the works of contemporary artists, we are able to show the connections between past and present, demonstrate how traditions continue, and help artists live their culture. This is as much a gift as the artwork.”

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.