

Aularnirlita – Let's get started

Suupet, Sulrupet—Our people

The Alutiiq are an Alaska Native people and Kodiak's first settlers. They came to the islands more than 7,500 years ago with boats and tools for harvesting from the sea. They hunted sea mammals and birds, fished for salmon and cod, and collected shellfish, berries, vegetables, and eggs. People lived in coastal villages, in warm houses built from wood and grass. Here they prepared food, made tools, raised children, and held festivals.

The pictures in this book show Alutiiq clothing beside the animals and the tools people used to create parkas, rain coats, hats, bags, boots, and jewelry.

Guangkata Piliyapet—Our Art

Alutiiq people made their tools from natural materials—slate, wood, antler, ivory, bird skins, animal hide, shell, grass, and clay. Young people learned to carve, sew, and weave by working with adults and practicing. Art was part of daily life in Alutiiq communities.

Decoration was an important part of every object. By adding carved designs, embroidery, or paint, artists made their creations beautiful and showed respect for the plants and animals that fed their families. Clothes, baskets, spears, and many other tools were works of art.

Alutiit Kraas'kait—Our Colors

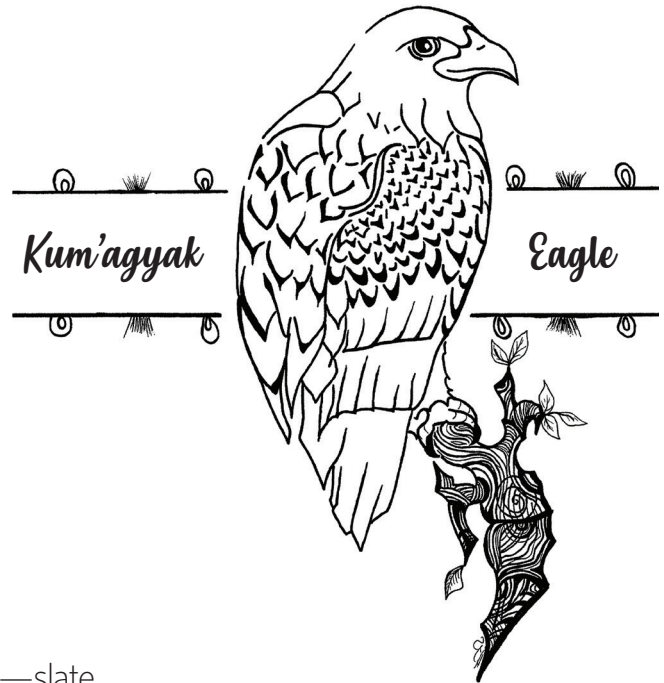
There are four main colors in Alutiiq art—black, white, red, and blue/green. The Alutiiq language has specific words for these colors, but not for others. Alutiiq people recognized other colors, but they describe them by making comparisons—the color of fireweed flowers (bright pink), or the color of seal oil (yellow).

Red—*Kawirtuq* (it is red)

Black—*Tan'ertuq/Tamlertuq* (it is black)

White—*Qatertuq* (it is white)

Blue/Green—*Cungartuq* (it is blue)



Nunapeṭ—Our Lands

The Kodiak Archipelago is a large set of islands with steep mountains, deep bays, and wet, windy weather. This land is rich with plants, fish, and animals. To the north, there are spruce forests filled with moss and blueberries. To the south salmon streams wind through grassy meadows. In both regions, the ocean and its many resources are always close. No place is more than 15 miles from the water.

Today about 1,800 Alutiiq people live in Kodiak communities, where they continue to harvest wild foods, practice Alutiiq arts, dance, and speak in the Alutiiq language. There are no roads between the villages. People fly or take a boat to reach them.

