



## For Immediate Release

Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository  
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### Contemporary *Atkuk*—Parka Added to Museum Collection

KODIAK, Alaska—The Alutiiq Museum has added a contemporary *atkuk*—parka to its collections. Made by Alutiiq Elder and artist Susan Malutin, the garment is inspired by the traditional black, red, and white snow-falling parka worn in the Kodiak region. The museum commissioned the parka to fill a significant gap in its collections. Executive Director April Laktonen Counciller explained.

“The snow-falling parka is an iconic piece of Kodiak Alutiiq clothing and the inspiration for many of the *atkuk* worn by our people today. In the past, women crafted these dramatic, hoodless robes from cormorant throat skins. Snow-falling parkas are well represented in Alutiiq collections around the world, but the Alutiiq Museum didn’t have one. Susan agreed to create one for us, with contemporary materials and styling. Her piece represents both our ancestral traditions and their expression today. It is emblematic of our living culture.”

The museum selected Malutin for the project because of her decades of experience studying and making Alutiiq clothing. Her travels to museums in the U.S. and Europe have allowed her to study the design and decoration of Alutiiq garments. Malutin constructed the parka from a heavy, black, crushed velvet material, accented with red ribbon, ermine tails, and hand-sewn beading. It is 47” long and Malutin’s daughter, granddaughters, and great-granddaughters all contributed to its intricate beaded details.

Malutin named the parka *Threads of Remembrance*. While working she thought of the women who came before her, how they collected all the materials for each garment, and how they transformed them into incredible works of art without modern conveniences like electricity. She also remembered her mother, Nona Morrison, a seamstress who filled Malutin with her love of sewing.

*Threads of Remembrance* will be a focal point in the exhibits the museum is planning for its new gallery, an element of a larger museum renovation currently underway. Until the gallery opens in May of 2025, the parka can be viewed in the contemporary art gallery on the museum’s website at [alutiiqmuseum.org/explore/collections/types-of-collections/contemporary-art](http://alutiiqmuseum.org/explore/collections/types-of-collections/contemporary-art).

Support for the parka’s commission came from the Alaska Art Fund. Established by Rasmuson Foundation in 2003, the fund promotes the development of contemporary art collections in Alaska museums. It is administered by Museums Alaska, a statewide professional association. Since the fund’s inception, the Alutiiq Museum has received \$294,078.50 in grants to purchase 152 works by 46 artists.

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.