



University of Alaska

Museum of the North

SPECIAL EXHIBITS GALLERY
May 12-September 30, 2007

On the Edge:

Forging New Directions in
Contemporary Alaska Native Art

As participants in Alaska Native cultural traditions and the information-based culture of 21st century life, the artists in this exhibition approach their work armed with both a solid foundation in the legacy of Alaska Native art and considerable knowledge of the history and theories of formal art.

Though the experiences of life and work in two worlds – Native and non-Native; inside and outside of Alaska, several artists in this exhibition explore cultural identity and question the standards of recognition that have been imposed on many Alaska Natives, such as the registration of blood quantum with the U.S. government. Retention of cultural identity as Alaska Natives is part of the process of developing an art form that relates to the experience of participating in contemporary culture, politics, and the international marketplace.

A striking feature of this assemblage of contemporary Alaska Native expressions is resistance to two-dimensionality. Many works here are sculpture – both hard and soft. The paintings have relief elements. Photographs, flat by nature, incorporate layers of time or meaning. In all cases, the art exhibited here shares an allegiance to the idea that art can communicate human values, personal dignity, and faith in one's ability to affect change.

Image: *Double-headed Dagger*, 2007 by Da-Ka-Xeen Mehner
Photograph by Barry McWayne

Featured Artists

Jack Abraham ■ Larry Ahvakana ■ Alvin Amason ■ Lena Amason
Earl Atchak ■ Sylvester Ayek ■ Paula Rasmus Dede ■ Nicholas Galanin ■ John Hoover ■ Rose Kanrilak ■ Sonya Kelliher-Combs
Kathleen Carlo Kendall ■ Larry McNeil ■ Da-Ka-Xeen Mehner
Bobby Nashookpuk ■ Tanis Maria S'eiltin ■ James Schoppert
Joseph Senungetuk ■ Ronald Senungetuk ■ Susie Silook
Glen Simpson ■ Preston Singletary ■ Denise Wallace

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www.uaf.edu/museum

Contemporary Alaska Native Art in the Rose Berry Alaska Art Gallery (Upper Level)

Entry

Ronald W. Senungetuk
Reindeer Herd I, II, III, 2003
Carved and stained maple
23 ¾ x 35 ¾ inches each

Earl Auralia Atchak
The Next Generation Berry Pickers, 1999
The Great Hunter, 1999
Whale bone, rabbit, wood, seal skin

Highlights

James Schoppert
Raven: In the Pink, 1984
Carved wood panel, paint
65 x 40 x 4 ¼ inches

Alaska Art

Larry Ahvakana
Walrus Mask, 1983
Alder wood, walrus whiskers
19 ½ x 9 inches

Alvin Amason
Oscar Scared Him with His Icon, 1977
Oil on canvas, wire, masonite, plastic
76 x 58 inches

Lena Amason
Seal Baby, 2003
Wood, paint, beads, seal whiskers, walrus whiskers
25 x 12 x 6 inches

Larry Beck
Tunghak Inua, 1982
Mirror, aluminum, copper, brass, feathers
13 x 13 x 4 inches

Tanis Hinsley-S'eiltin
Self Portrait, 1986
Hand-made paper, mixed media
30 ¾ x 41 ½ inches

Larry McNeil
Real Indians, 1980
Gelatin silver print
16 x 20 inches

Alaska Art (continued)

James Schoppert
Speckled Bird, 1984
Wood, walrus gut, feathers, paint
35 x 23 x 10 inches

Joseph E. Senungetuk
All American Picassoan Inupiaq Shaman Hero, 1991
Woodcut on paper
26 x 19 inches

Susie Silook
Yup'ik Angel, 2003
Walrus ivory, cottonwood, brass, turquoise, alabaster
15 ½ x 13 ¾ x 7 inches

Sense of Place

James L. Grant, Sr.
Shaman, 1984
Mahogany, black bear fur, artist's hair, black walnut
29 x 19 x 11 inches

Our Own Perspectives

John Hoover
Spirit Raven, 1996
Red cedar, paint, beads, wire
78 x 47 x 17 inches

Sonya Kelliher-Combs
Three Pairs of Caramel Secrets, 2004
Acrylic polymer, yarn
36 x 36 x 2 ½ inches

Ronald W. Senungetuk
Two Spirits, 1994
Wood, paint, aluminum
31 x 27 x 2 inches

In the Museum

Living Room

Melvin Olanna
Eskimo Drummer, nd
Carved Carrara marble, wood
35 x 27 x 9 inches

Gallery of Alaska - Interior

Kathleen Carlo Kendall
Masks and sculpture

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