

Guidelines for Evaluating Contemporary Works of Art



Strategy

The collection of contemporary objects is a central objective of the Alutiiq Museum’s collections plan. Works of art, ethnographic items, and objects reflecting the modern era help to tell the continuing story of the Alutiiq people and to illustrate the ties between the museum’s historic and prehistoric collections and the present. They promote the recognition and perpetuation of Alutiiq culture. Within this category of objects, the museum seeks to add original works of contemporary art to its permanent collection.

Each year many art pieces are offered to the museum. Unfortunately, the museum does not have the funds to purchase all these objects or the resources to care for them in perpetuity. As such, we developed this set of guidelines to assist our board, staff, and volunteer collections advisory committee in considering potential purchases, donations, and loans. These guidelines are designed to encourage artistic excellence, promote the recognition and perpetuation of Alutiiq traditions, foster professionalism, and ensure impartiality in the selection process. These guidelines may also be helpful to artists who would like their work considered for addition to the museum’s collections.

Guidelines

The following guidelines are not an exhaustive list of considerations, and they do not supersede the museum’s collections policy, the document that governs all museum acquisitions. Artists may refer to this policy for a full discussion of the ways objects are added to the museum’s holdings. A copy of this policy is available from the museum, online or by request.

1. **Artistic Expertise** — as demonstrated by one or more of the following:

- The artist has a demonstrated knowledge of their medium — a history of producing art in that medium and/or of teaching others to work in that medium.
- The artist’s work has been recognized by others — the artist has sold similar works, or shared similar works in exhibits, shows, demonstrations, or publications.
- The artist devotes a significant amount of time to creating art, either professionally or privately.

2. **Craftsmanship** — as demonstrated by both of the following:

- The work of art demonstrates exemplary craftsmanship. The piece is well designed, complete, and neatly manufactured with appropriate tools, attention to detail, and original ideas.
- The work of art is made of high-quality materials appropriate to the composition.

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3. Expression — as demonstrated by one or more of the following:

- The object represents the perpetuation and/or evolution of Alutiiq traditions.
- The object is significant to the overall history and ongoing development of Alutiiq art.
- The object tells or possesses a unique story.
- The object has educational value—it will help to educate future generations about the Alutiiq world.

4. Museum Considerations — as demonstrated by both of the following:

- The object can be appropriately cared for by the Alutiiq Museum (i.e., size, materials, condition, staff time, resources, and effect on other collections)
- The object can be effectively used in museum interpretation projects (exhibitions, public outreach projects, publications, research projects).

Contact Us

To discuss a donation, loan, or purchase please contact us.

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