

PRESS RELEASE

Alaska State Museum

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: through March 3

Statewide Photography Exhibition Opens at State Museum

“Alaska Positive 2006,” the statewide photography-as-art exhibition organized every two years by the Alaska State Museum, goes on display at the museum Friday, March 3. An opening reception, hosted by The Friends of the Alaska State Museum, will take place from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Admission to the museum is free from 4:30 until 7 p.m. The museum is located at 395 Whittier Street.

The juror for Alaska Positive was Patrick Nagatani, an internationally known photographer from Albuquerque, who is on the faculty of the University of New Mexico. He selected 49 photographs by 35 photographers for the exhibit. Overall, 65 Alaska photographers submitted 231 photographs for the competition.

The top award, the Juror’s Choice, went to Da-ka-xeen Mehner of Fairbanks for the photograph titled “Seven-sixteenth.” Awards of Recognition went to Aleda Yourdon from Homer, and Beverly Cover of Anchorage. George Provost of Kotzebue and William Heath of Kenai were singled out for Special Honorable Mentions.

In addition, nine other photographers were given Honorable Mentions. They are: Jay Barrett, Kodiak; Carl Battreall, Anchorage; Greg Bledsoe, Juneau; Jane Cloe, Anchorage; Buddy Ferguson, Juneau; Shar Fox, Juneau; Jayne M. Jones, Soldotna; Barry McWayne, Fairbanks; and Richard J. Murphy, Anchorage.

“Alaska Positive 2006” will remain on exhibit in Juneau through March 25. It then begins a one year tour of other museums in Alaska.

After selecting the exhibition, juror Nagatani reflected on the experience in a juror’s statement. “I enjoyed submissions that had a vision or style woven through the group of entries. I looked at every image entered with respect and careful analysis,” he said. “The work was mostly traditional and romantic. Very good traditional and romantic images. ...Much of the work is poetic.”

However Nagatani also felt the submissions reflected a narrow view of the photographic landscape. “Older processes were hardly present,” he wrote. “Mixed media work that combined with photography was missing. Still under-represented was the post-modern esthetic and appropriation, and work dealing with major social and political issues. ...The work was mostly descriptive and explanatory. No camera-less images. Hardly any play with scale and challenging viewing distances. Most (were) taken in the hunter mode of finding and recording a precious moment.”