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Press Release

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATE MUSEUM HOSTS TWO NEW ART EXHIBITS

Two artists whose creations are rooted in very different aspects of American culture will each have solo exhibitions at the Alaska State Museum beginning Friday, March 6. Stron Softi is a Ketchikan-based artist who is blurring the distinctions between traditional Northwest Coast art and fine art in general, while Jeremy Kane, from Juneau, comments on folksy, blue-collar Americana through his colorful ceramic creations. The Friends of the Alaska State Museum will host an opening reception for the artists from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. The artists will be in attendance. The Kane exhibition is on display through April 11, the Softi show until April 18.

Kane teaches ceramics at the University of Alaska Southeast. The Auke Bay artist incorporates found objects and graphics into his porcelain works, often in a humorous fashion. Softi is the adapted art-name of Stephen Jackson, a Tlingit artist known for his totemic carvings, who has branched out in surprising new directions.

Softi started carving with his well-known father, Nathan Jackson, when he was 14. He quickly gained recognition for his skills and insight into traditional form. In recent years he has expanded the scope of his endeavors, working with cast resin materials, paintings and digital photography and prints, and posing questions about many of our artistic and cultural assumptions. He was awarded top prize in the biennial All Alaska Juried Art Exhibition last year for a photographic print that questioned issues of Native art versus non-Native, art versus craft and corporate and governmental support. By coincidence, the Juried Art Exhibition, including Softi's piece, is also on exhibition at the museum through March 25.

Kane's exhibition is his first major show in Juneau. It will be about Alaska and his experiences here over the past twelve years. Kane decorates his highly crafted porcelain objects with decals that reference aspects of American life such as heavy equipment, advertising logos, comics, cafes, cars and humor. He says his work walks the line between art and craft and high-brow and low-brow art.

Kane received an MFA in ceramics from Ohio University in 2003. He also served as a resident at the prestigious Archie Bray Foundation in Montana. His work has been included in exhibitions in more than twenty states, from Alaska to Maine. In addition to his ceramics, he is also a bluegrass musician.

Winter hours at the museum are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Admission is \$3. Visitors 18 and under are admitted free of charge. An annual pass that allows unlimited visits to the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka is available for \$15. Assistance is available for visitors with special needs. Please contact Visitor Services at 465-2901 before the visit.

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