

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE: June 5, 2015**

**Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum Receives Rasmuson Foundation Art Acquisition Fund Award for Purchasing Contemporary Art**



Sitka – Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum is pleased to announce it was recently awarded \$14,300 to purchase contemporary works by Alaska Native artists. Among the works purchased is a mask entitled, *Let Us Have a Story*, by Kathleen Carlo Kendall (Athabascan); a painting entitled, *Separation in Time* by Gretchen Sagan (Inupiaq); *For a Hunter's Wife*, a beaded headdress by June Pardue (Alutiiq); and a traditional style chief's necklace by Charlie Pardue (Athabascan.)

The Sheldon Jackson Museum and contemporary Alaska Native artists have benefitted substantially as a result of the Rasmuson Foundation Art Acquisition Fund. Since the museum began collecting contemporary Alaska Native art in 2012, it has been able to acquire works by many contemporary artists with Rasmuson Art Acquisition funding. In addition to the four aforementioned pieces purchased in June 2015, the museum has used Rasmuson Art Acquisition Funds to acquire artwork by Drew Michael (Yup'ik & Inupiaq), Art Othniel Oomittuk, Jr. (Inupiaq), Holly Nordlum (Inupiaq), Joel Isaak (Athabascan), Tommy Joseph (Tlingit), Sonya Kelliher Combs (Athabascan), Perry Eaton (Alutiiq), and Phillip Charette (Yup'ik).

Initiated in 2003, the Art Acquisition Fund provides grants for Alaska museums to purchase current work by practicing Alaskan artists. It arose out of Rasmuson Foundation interest in encouraging museums to support Alaskan artists, and Museums Alaska's interest in supporting professional practices among the state's museums. The project is intended to (1) support living, practicing Alaskan artists through museum purchases, (2) enhance the permanent art collections of Alaskan museums, and (3) encourage Alaskan museums to develop formal collections policies. The Foundation also hopes to enhance exposure of Alaskan artists by providing a regular venue for contemporary Alaskan art in the Foundation office in Anchorage. Alaska museums that have formal collections policies can apply for grants to purchase works by living, accomplished Alaskan artists for their permanent collections. The Fund is administered by Museums Alaska on behalf of the Foundation.

Through Museums Alaska, museums or cultural centers can apply for up to \$35,000 to purchase contemporary, original art in all media by living Alaska artists. Museums can purchase art through galleries, dealers and the individual artists.

Summer hours at the Sheldon Jackson Museum are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Summer admission is \$5 for adults and \$4 for seniors. Visitors 18 and under are admitted free of charge. Assistance is available for visitors with special needs. Please contact the museum for more information at 907.747.8981.

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