

Linda S. Thibodeau  
Director  
Division of Libraries, Archives,  
& Museums  
www.eed.state.ak.us



Bruce Kato  
Chief Curator  
Alaska State Museums  
395 Whittier St.  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1718  
907.465.2901

## Press Release

## SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DATE: July 17, 2009

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Rosemary Carlton  
Phone (907) 747-8981 Fax (907) 747-3004  
www.museums.state.ak.us

### **ARTIST DEMONSTRATOR PROGRAM CONTINUES AT THE SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM**

The popular Native Artist Demonstrators program at the Sheldon Jackson Museum continues during August. Four different artists will demonstrate their specialties beginning with Byron Amos on Aug. 3. Sessions are scheduled every weekday throughout the month.

Amos is a Cup'ik artist with roots in southwest Alaska. He began working with ivory as a 9 year-old boy and by 18 was sculpting ivory and carving wood. He recalls selling his "beginning artwork" to a local Sitka Shop when he was a student at Mt. Edgecumbe High School in the 1980s.

Amos also works in whale bone and soapstone with masks and kayaks being two of his specialties. His work is found in private and corporate collections around the state. He currently lives in Anchorage.

Amos will be demonstrating his skills at the museum Aug. 3-7, from 9 a.m. to noon, and from 1 to 5 p.m. each day.

The following week, Mary Beans, a Yup'ik skin sewer and beader, will be at the museum. Beans was born in Bethel, on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, and currently lives in Sitka. She learned skin sewing from her mother and grandmother and has since learned beading from her daughter. She has a BA in education and has taught elementary school. This is her first summer demonstrating at the museum. She will be working Aug. 10, 13 and 14 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.; and Aug. 11 and 12 from 9 a.m.-noon and 1-4 p.m.

Mid-month sees the return of Roy Levine, who also demonstrated in July. Levine is a wood carver of Aleut, Russian and Swedish descent. He will show and discuss his art Aug. 17 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., Aug. 18 - 19 from 9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 4 p.m., and Aug. 20, 21 and 31 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. (Levine will also demonstrate in Sept.)

Levine grew up in Kodiak and came to Sitka while in his teens to attend Mt. Edgecumbe High School. His major interest is Aleut art, particularly open-crown bentwood hats, baidarkas, and masks.

“I use cedar, spruce, yellow cedar and alder, says Levine. “I love working with the soft woods. I find it relaxing and very spiritual. While carving I reflect on the artists who walked along a beach, picked up a piece of driftwood and created the beautiful art that is all over the world. I like to teach and share my experience with others.”

Cass Pook is well-known in Sitka for her traditional Tlingit beadwork and basketry. Pook will show during the final full week of the month, Aug. 24 – 28, from 9 a.m. to noon, and from 1 to 4 p.m. Pook trained with her grandmother, Annie Jacobs, and with Esther Littlefield. She has taught beading to students at the Alaska Native Brotherhood Hall and has demonstrated at the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center. Pook also has demonstrated at the Museum in past summers. She is a member of the Eagle Clan and Killer Whale House.

The Native Artists Demonstrators Program enables Native artists from throughout Alaska to come to Sitka and demonstrate their particular art or craft for visitors to see. Working in the museum also affords these artists time to study the Sheldon Jackson Museum’s extraordinary collection, one of the world’s most comprehensive collections of Alaskan ethnographic art and technology as it was prior to 1930.

The program has been supported for many years by The Friends of the Sheldon Jackson Museum. This year the Friends received a \$20,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for support of the program through 2010. Additional support comes from the Alaska State Museum, Alaska Airlines, Shee Atika Totem Square Inn, the Antique Tribal Arts Association and donations from many individuals.

Participating artists are chosen for their acknowledged skill in tradition-based Native arts. The program helps visitors make a connection with Native art and culture and allows visitors to see that traditional art forms continue to be a part of Alaska Native life. Additional artist demonstrators are scheduled through September 25.

For more on the demonstrators program go to:

[http://www.museums.state.ak.us/sheldon\\_jackson/sjnativedemos.html](http://www.museums.state.ak.us/sheldon_jackson/sjnativedemos.html), or contact the museum at 747-8981 for a complete listing of the 2009 Native Artist Demonstrators Program.

Summer hours at the museum are daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Summer admission is \$4. Visitors 18 and younger, Friends of the Sheldon Jackson Museum, and those with passes are admitted free of charge.

Schedule in brief:

- Byron Amos: Aug. 3 – 7, 9 a.m. – noon and 1 – 5 p.m.
- Mary Beans: Aug. 10, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Aug. 11 – 12, 9 a.m. – noon, 1 – 4 p.m.; Aug. 13 – 14, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Roy Levine: Aug. 17, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Aug. 18 – 19, 9 a.m. – noon, 1 – 4 p.m.; Aug. 20 – 21, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Aug. 31, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Cass Pook: Aug. 24 – 28, 9 a.m. – noon, 1 – 4 p.m.



[return to top](#)

[press releases](#) | [SJ home](#) | [Alaska State Museums](#)