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## Press Release

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DATE: October 29, 2007

### **EARTH, FIRE AND FIBRE EXHIBIT OPENS AT THE STATE MUSEUM**

The work of Alaska's top craft artists goes on exhibition at the Alaska State Museum in Juneau beginning Friday, November 2. *Earth, Fire and Fibre XXVI*, the biennial juried exhibition featuring works in clay, fabric, wood, metal and other materials, will open to the public with a First Friday reception from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. sponsored by The Friends of the Alaska State Museum.

*Earth, Fire and Fibre* is organized every two years by the Anchorage Museum at the Rasmuson Center as a competitive showcase for Alaska artists who work in traditional craft genres such as jewelry making, ceramics, quilting and wood carving. However, the selected artworks often challenge the usual categories, and may incorporate unusual and unlikely materials, such as a necklace made from salmon vertebrae included in this exhibit. Others may use materials associated with Alaska Native traditions, such as fish skins baskets.

Anne Lingener-Reese of Anchorage took the Juror's Choice Award for a group of works in silver, including jewelry, candlesticks and a bowl and spoon. Other artists receiving monetary and honorable mention awards included: Linda Beach, Melissa Bixby, Don Decker, Nelson Gingerich, Denise Heimel, Mitsuko Ikeno, Richard Kacsur, Lila Ann Krohn, Rick Potter, Ann Ramsburgh, Rika Mouw, Anda Frances Saylor, Maya Swinford, Mark Wedekind and D. Lowell Zercher.

Michael W. Monroe, Director and Chief Curator for the Bellevue Art Museum in Washington, was the juror for the exhibit. Monroe has been involved with American crafts for more than 30 years. He served as executive director of the American Craft Council and also had a long career at the Smithsonian Institution's Renwick Gallery. In 1993 Monroe was invited by President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton to organize an exhibition of American craft for the White House.

In his juror's statement, Monroe said, "Despite our increasing reliance on technology, the intimate and physical qualities of the handmade object have never had more appeal. It is my hope that visitors viewing *Earth, Fire, and Fibre* will discover dynamic new visual experiences that are educational, provocative and pleasurable while simultaneously expanding their appreciation and understanding of the contemporary studio craft movement."

One hundred and twelve artists from across Alaska submitted 297 works for the exhibition. From these, Monroe selected 98 pieces by 57 artists for the showing in Anchorage. The exhibition in Juneau features the work of one southeast Alaska artist, Chris Hanson of Ketchikan. The exhibit will be on display until January 15.

"Earth, Fire and Fibre" is funded in part by a grant from the Alaska State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, with matching funds from BP.

Winter hours at the Alaska State Museum are 10 a.m. to 4:00 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. For assistance, or further information, please contact Visitor Services at 465-2901.

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