



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: February 2, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum Annual Meeting, Silent Auction, and Opening of “Aggravated Organisms Exhibition”

The opening reception for “Aggravated Organisms” for the general public will take place at the Sheldon Jackson Museum the night of the Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum Annual Meeting on Saturday, February 6th at 5pm. At the Friends’ Annual Meeting, Inupiaq/ Yupik artist Drew Michael will give a presentation and talk about his work and the exhibition of large masks. Light fare will be served and a silent auction to raise funds for the Friends will also take place. The silent auction is the biggest fundraiser of the year for the Friends and raises money for the Native Artist Residency Program. This is a free event.

The exhibition and Drew Michael’s travel to Sitka is made possible by a Harper Arts Touring Fund Grant, a grant from the Rasmuson Foundation administered by the Alaska State Council on the Arts. The grant award along with a gift from Mount Edgecumbe High School and SEARHC make it possible for the museum to travel and exhibit the collection of masks and bring artist Drew Michael to Sitka.

“Aggravated Organisms” is a group of ten 3 feet x 5 feet masks carved by Drew Michael and painted by Elizabeth Ellis. Inspired by magnified cells, the masks represent the top ten diseases effecting Alaska communities. While merging science and art they encourage thought and discourse about environmental influences, diet, cultural pressures, lifestyle choices, and many other factors that influence health and promote dialogue around creative effective ways to address health needs and challenges.

While here, Drew Michael will work with students from Mount Edgecumbe High School in the museum gallery as they paint their own ceramic plaques inspired by the exhibition and the topics it touches upon. Drew will also give the students a talk about the masks and his artwork. For

more information about the Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum Annual Meeting, Silent Auction of Native art and the opening reception for “Aggravated Organisms,” please call 747-8981.

XXXX