

A L A S K A

Governor's Arts & Humanities Awards

The Governor's Arts & Humanities Awards
is a partnership event of the
Office of the Governor
Alaska Humanities Forum
Alaska State Council on the Arts
Alaska Arts and Culture Foundation

akgovawards.org

2020

PROGRAM



WELCOME

Kameron Perez-Verdia
President & CEO, Alaska Humanities Forum

Andrea Noble

Executive Director, Alaska State Council on the Arts



ALASKA FLAG SONG

Anchorage Symphony Orchestra

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Melissa Shaginoff



OPENING REMARKS

Benjamin Brown

Chair, Board of Trustees, Alaska State Council on the Arts

Moira K. Smith

Chair, Board of Directors, Alaska Humanities Forum

PERFORMANCE

"White Chapel Woman", Annie Bartholomew

ARTS AWARDS

Dale DeArmond (posthumous award)
Individual Artist Award

Juneau Radio Center
Arts Business Leadership Award

Markle Pete (posthumous award)
Margaret Nick Cooke Award for Native Arts and Languages

City and Borough of Juneau
Government Leadership in the Arts Award



PERFORMANCES

"Sugar and Salt", Kat Moore and Momentum Dance Collective

"The Climbing Project", Karrie Pavish Anderson and Friends



HUMANITIES AWARDS

Rachel Epstein
Distinguished Service to the Humanities | Education

Bill Legere
Distinguished Service to the Humanities | Leadership

Kodiak History Museum
Distinguished Service to the Humanities | Community

Kathy Kolkhorst Ruddy (posthumous award)
Lifetime Achievement in the Humanities



DALE DEARMOND

INDIVIDUAL ARTIST

The Individual Artist Award is based on artistic leadership, distinction, and merit; recognition of artistic contribution to the state or community through previous honors and awards, reviews or articles; and longevity of impact to state or community.

Dale DeArmond was a well-known Alaska author, artist, and printmaker who moved to Alaska with her husband, Robert DeArmond, a native of Sitka, in 1938. DeArmond, who came from a long line of artists and craftsmen, was renowned for her intricate wood block prints incorporating local legends and lore. Her work demonstrates a great reverence for the rich oral traditions and legends of Alaska's First People.

DeArmond began concentrating on pen and ink drawings which were published in Ketchikan and Sitka. In 1952 she moved to Juneau where she served as head librarian for the Juneau-Douglas Library for over a decade while continuing her education in the creative and technical aspects of a variety of art mediums.

DeArmond began printing in 1960, using rigorous, labor intensive carvings of large basswood and white pine blocks. She published a number of stone lithograph prints and dabbled in other

mediums, including silkscreens, etchings, and illustrating and publishing books.

After experiencing difficulties with carving the blocks for her woodcut prints, she took a wood engraving class in 1978. This was her preferred medium until she retired from printmaking in 1999.

In a career that spanned nearly 50 years, DeArmond mentored many artists, both in Sitka and Juneau, and traveled to rural communities across Alaska to lead classes in art techniques. She was sponsored by the State of Alaska and was often accompanied by her fellow artists. Collections of her work are held widely in Alaska and the lower 48.

Photo by Juan Muñoz



JUNEAU RADIO CENTER

ARTS BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

Awarded to a business whose fiscal generosity and participation has made a substantial impact on the arts in Alaska; a business that has used the arts to propel its success; programs that engage employees with creativity and other community activities that support arts and business partnerships; a business dedicated to promoting the arts through administrative and professional efforts.

The Juneau Radio Center houses Juneau's five commercial radio stations - KINY, Mix 106, Taku 105, KJNO, and KXJ - and is owned by Richard and Sharon Burns. The Center has provided coverage and advertising time for arts and cultural activities of all kinds for many years, guided by the Burns' belief that the arts enrich the community in so many ways.

Artists and arts promoters are invited on air to discuss upcoming projects and the stations regularly keep the public informed of stories from the arts sector. In addition to this commitment to coverage that validates art and cultural activities in Southeast Alaska, as well as throughout the state, the stations have donated many thousands of dollars in complementary and reduced rate advertising time to promote events and sell tickets to support arts and culture organizations, individual artists, and events.



MARKLE PETE

MARGARET NICK COOKE AWARD FOR NATIVE ARTS AND LANGUAGES

The Margaret Nick Cooke Award honors and recognizes individuals and organizations whose work furthers traditional Alaska Native language and culture.

Markle Pete, a lifelong Alaskan and Ahtna Elder, was born in 1928 in Copper Center to Tahoe Carl and Mentasta Pete. Throughout his life he was instrumental in the perpetuation of the Ahtna Athabascan language. He touched the hearts and minds of many children and community members with his amazing sense of humor, patience, wisdom, and willingness to share his ancestral language and cultural values.

Pete traveled great distances to educate students at the Ya Ne Dah Ah School from 1998-2013, and also taught language lessons to tribal citizens at Chickaloon Native Village and in his home community of Tazlina. He was an ESL fluent Athabascan speaker with no formal education, but plenty of traditional life skills and stories to pass on.

In addition to teaching, Pete played a critical role in documenting and recording the Ahtna Athabascan language for educational purposes and to preserve the language into the future.

Pete worked with the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the Yukon Native Language Center in Canada, and the Ahtna Heritage Foundation. He was an active participant in curriculum development and language documentation projects, and was always willing to give of his time for any projects or programs that promoted the preservation and regeneration of the Ahtna language.

Pete never asked to be paid for his teaching – he did it out of his love for the Athabascan people. When asked what he would like to impress upon young people, Pete answered, “Listen. Learn from your elders. You never know when they will be gone and then you will miss out of getting answers you need for life.”

He encouraged young people to finish what they start, know where they come from, respect themselves, and always be prepared for the future.



CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU

GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP IN THE ARTS

The City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) views arts and culture as essential assets, increasing the livability of the community in many ways for both residents and also visitors from across Alaska and the world.

The CBJ has supported arts and culture in Juneau for many years, including:

- Partnering with Juneau Arts and Humanities Council to oversee grant awards of CBJ funds to Juneau arts organizations.
- Supporting capital projects through sales tax income for major undertakings such as Sealaska Heritage Institute's Walter Soboleff Building, an arts and cultural center in downtown Juneau that has become an educational hub for educators, students, and visitors worldwide.
- Engaging in project partnerships with local arts organizations. CBJ's commitment increases cultural, civic, and economic opportunities to underserved populations such as low-income housing residents and inmates at the Lemon Creek Correctional Center.

- Supporting artist residencies for youth through Youth Activities Grants that have funded school assemblies, classroom visits, band, orchestra, choir clinics, and youth scholarships.

Almost all cultural activity in Juneau directly or indirectly benefits from a CBJ grant program or service. This sustained funding provides critical support for Juneau's thriving arts community of theater companies, concert series, a symphony, thriving visual arts scene, folk festival, film festivals, dance companies, choirs, Alaska heritage and cultural programs, and many youth arts organizations.



RACHEL EPSTEIN

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO THE HUMANITIES | EDUCATION

This award recognizes an Alaska individual or organization that has helped strengthen communities by contributing to a better understanding of the world, one another, and the human experience.

During a tenure that spanned nearly 20 years, Rachel Epstein organized and hosted over 900 events as the Special Events Coordinator of the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) campus, turning the campus bookstore into a forum for inquiry, conversation, and expression. The events - all free and open to the public - covered every imaginable and important topic in Alaska's history and culture; inclusivity and diversity were hallmarks of the presentations, readings, and panels.

Epstein's career at UAA began with a temporary job conducting surveys for the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER). She then took on work in the textbook department at the campus bookstore before moving to a staff position there and then, five years later, becoming the Special Events Coordinator. This past year, her position was eliminated and the bookstore closed as part of severe budget cuts within the University.

“Rachel Epstein is the perfect model of someone who fosters the notion of literary citizenship—a call for artists to share in the making of community and sharing stories to build stronger communities,” Sandra L. Kleven, founder of Cirque Press and co-publisher of Cirque, wrote in her nomination. “She personifies the highest qualities defined by this award: enriching minds, deepening the understanding of the cultural importance of the humanities in general, and building bridges to strengthen our dynamic communities.”

“For two decades, the University of Alaska Anchorage Bookstore under Special Events Coordinator Rachel Epstein has been an institution for higher learning in itself,” writes Lael Morgan, co-founder of Epicenter Press. “A knowledgeable advocate for fine literature, Epstein used her venue, not only to promote a highly diversified number of heavyweights, but to showcase engaging newcomers and worthy but neglected veterans. Her panels often provoked discussion and debate to a point that her participating audiences refused to go home until the store closed.”

“Rachel created and fostered a safe space,” adds Darrel Hess, Anchorage’s Municipal Ombudsman. “A creative and inspiring learning environment, where diversity and inclusion were the norm, and where Alaskans from all walks of life were able to share stories, scholarship, and fellowship.”

Kathleen McCoy concludes a profile she wrote on Epstein in 2012 with a phrase that seems to capture Epstein’s ethos: “According to Rachel, a lot of the work is just about finding out who’s here. And then figuring out how we can all learn from each other.”



BILL LEGERE

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO THE HUMANITIES | LEADERSHIP

This award recognizes an Alaska individual or organization that has helped strengthen communities through their commitment to improve Alaska's social, economic, and civic life.

In his 40 year career in Alaska, most of it at the helm of KTOO in Juneau, Bill Legere has devoted himself to improving the civic, intellectual, and cultural life of Alaska. His hard work and quiet leadership have touched almost every Alaskan.

Legere transformed KTOO from a conventional public broadcasting station to a statewide leader in news. He has nurtured the careers of dozens of talented reporters, producers, editors, and media makers.

Serving as President and General Manager of KTOO since 1991, Legere has been guiding and nurturing the work of a talented team of creatives for decades. From history, nature, and science documentaries on television, to live coverage of Alaska's major cultural and civic events, to ongoing news and public affairs series on KTOO's various media platforms, KTOO's archives include a rich history of Alaska's past 40 years.

In 2015, Legere envisioned a new statewide reporting collaboration to take journalism at Alaska's public media stations to new levels of quality, impact, and cooperation. He designed the project, wrote the grant applications that raised the startup funding, and sold the idea to his colleagues at other stations across the state. Today, Alaska's Energy Desk has grown to 15 reporters, editors, and producers at nine stations from both rural and urban Alaska.

"Bill has always been open to collaborating with other broadcasters," explains Nancy Johnson, VP and General Manager of KTUU/KYES in Anchorage. "He is dedicated to connecting the citizens of Alaska with their state capitol through 'Gavel Alaska' and Alaska's own version of C-SPAN, the 360 North television channel. Bill has also been an effective spokesperson for our industry's best interests, often representing us before Congress and the Alaska Legislature."

Legere is constantly creating, improving, developing - in short, thinking big about public broadcasting. He has done this while competently managing an organization with complex human resources, infrastructure, and fiscal complexity. Through his efforts, thousands of Alaskan lives have been enriched through access to rich broadcasting content and the community development that follows from strong public broadcasting.

Bringing to life KTOO's mission to "provide trusted and independent news; connect our community to a wide range of local, national and global media; promote civic participation; and embrace diverse viewpoints and cultures," Legere has "positioned KTOO as part of the community," writes former Juneau Mayor Sally Smith. "Joining with key organizations and individuals to gather and present stories of the past and present, all with an eye toward understanding who we are, where we've been, and how we can all work together for a collective future."



KODIAK HISTORY MUSEUM

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO THE HUMANITIES | COMMUNITY

This award recognizes an Alaska individual or organization that has helped strengthen communities by forging connections between people across, race, class, and cultural divides.

The Kodiak History Museum (KHM), known until 2019 as the Baranov Museum, serves as an essential and beloved community resource dedicated to preserving, interpreting, and sharing the full breadth of the history of the Kodiak archipelago. KHM is leading the way in decolonizing small museums and has proven to be a catalyst of change in Kodiak, strengthening community by forging connections between people across race, class, and cultural divides.

The museum is located in a National Historic Landmark building known as the Russian-American Magazin and the Erskine House, which also houses the office of the Kodiak Historical Society. KHM cares for over 2,300 objects and over 1,300 archive collections. In 2018, the museum undertook a massive project to redesign its permanent exhibits and upgrade its facility, driven by a collective initiative to include the stories of immigrant workers, fishermen,

servicemen, and other underrepresented stories within the community and to celebrate Kodiak as an international crossroads. There was also a desire to include the long-neglected, devastating effects of colonialism as part of the historical narrative.

“The change of the Kodiak History Museum name from a colonial name to one that reflects the whole of the community was a controversial and significant step in their commitment to their community,” explains Della Hall, the former Executive Director of Museums Alaska. “The museum did not stop at simply a name change, but has integrated this shift into the culture of the organization, inside and out. The permanent exhibit redesign acknowledges the community’s full history and does not shy away from an honest reflection of its history of violence, racial, and socioeconomic inequity. The shift to an ‘of, by, for all’ model for their temporary exhibits ensures that the museum continues to be an integral and responsive part of the community.”

Sarah Harrington, Executive Director at KHM, says that the museum’s exhibits now explore themes of immigration, industry, and cross-cultural interaction in coastal southwest Alaska, and the discovery of Kodiak’s cultural, social, and environmental history. “Stories of cross-cultural interactions and the development of new economies based on natural resource extraction are prominent – important dynamics in Kodiak today where more than one-third of all jobs derive from commercial fishing, and more than 45% of the population identifies as an ethnic minority.”

Museums Alaska board member Sarah Asper-Smith describes that the evolution of the museum has had far-reaching effects in decolonizing small museums across the state. “Now known as the Kodiak History Museum, the transformation has cemented KHM as a center of the community, where people come together to celebrate their cultures through the eras and share Kodiak’s stories,” she writes. “KHM is leading the way in decolonizing small museums in Alaska through rethinking their practices and continuing education.”



KATHY KOLKHORST RUDDY

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN THE HUMANITIES

Juneau lost a beloved leader, volunteer, advocate, and community member when longtime resident Kathy Kolkhorst Ruddy passed away on September 10, 2020. Ruddy served the Juneau community for over forty years as an attorney and public servant, volunteer, and donor.

“Ruddy was widely known and highly respected in the community for supporting and championing a diverse and large number of arts-related causes and non-profit arts organizations,” writes Linda Rosenthal, co-founder of Juneau Jazz & Classics. “She has become one of Juneau’s foremost advocates for the arts and, as such, has made a profound impact on the community’s cultural landscape.”

Ruddy was born September 21, 1949, on Staten Island, New York. Her father, a US Coast Guard officer, moved his family to Kodiak in 1956. Although the family returned East just two years later, the time in Kodiak was transformative for Ruddy – sparking a deep interest in Alaska history, Native culture, and politics.

Twenty years after leaving Alaska, Ruddy returned to accept a clerkship with Alaska Supreme Court justice Robert Boochever in Juneau. She met her future husband Bill Ruddy, and within a few

years, joined his private law practice, the law firm of Ruddy, Bradley and Kolkhorst.

For over 15 years, Ruddy was a producer of Southeast Alaska Native Radio, a weekly show on KTOO-FM, and was instrumental in raising the funds to digitize and archive the radio interviews; she was an organizer and fund-raiser for the “Friends St. Nicholas Church” restoration campaign; and an organizer of Le Cercle LaPerouse, celebrating the 1786 French round-the-world expedition that made a near month-long stop in Lituya Bay, a visit famously recorded in both the expedition’s logs and the oral history of the Tlingit residents.

Of the many and diverse projects she initiated, or donated to, or volunteered for, Ruddy took great pride in her founding role and 30-year term as chair of Juneau Jazz and Classics, and as the founding chair and a lead fundraiser for the life-size breaching whale sculpture by Skip Wallen in the Bill Overstreet Park.

Ruddy’s interest in Alaska Native culture also found expression through her involvement as a volunteer and later an organizer for the “Sharing Our Knowledge” bi-annual conferences, which bring together Alaska Native tradition bearers and students of Alaska Native culture.

Ruddy played flute in the Juneau Symphony in 1977 and marched on the 4th of July every year in the Juneau Marching Band. She was a stalwart supporter of the University of Alaska Southeast - a lifetime member of UAS Alumni & Friends and inaugural Chair of the Friends of the Egan Library Network. She was honored by the University of Alaska Board of Regents with a Meritorious Service Award in 2018 for volunteerism and professional service in the community of Juneau.

“Kathy never seeks attention for herself,” summarizes Kimberly Metcalfe Helmar in support of Ruddy’s nomination. “She has quietly and diligently produced an incredible body of work over many years. She deserves the attention of the larger Alaska community.”

Photo by Peter Metcalfe

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR LONGSTANDING SUPPORT OF ARTS
AND CULTURE ACROSS ALASKA



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Congratulations

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You have enriched
the creative and cultural
landscape of Alaska.



Promoting a better life for Alaskans
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THE AWARDS

NICHOLAS GALANIN

Each year, an Alaska artist is commissioned to create a series of unique awards to present to the awardees. This year's awards are by Nicholas Galanin (Tlingit/Unangax) of Sitka.

Nicholas Galanin's work engages contemporary culture from his perspective rooted in connection to land. He embeds incisive observation into his work, investigating intersections of culture and concept in form, image, and sound.

Galanin's works embody critical thought as vessels of knowledge, culture, and technology - inherently political, generous, unflinching, and poetic. Galanin engages past, present, and future to expose intentionally obscured collective memory and barriers to the acquisition of knowledge.

His works critique commodification of culture, while contributing to the continuum of Tlingit art. Galanin employs materials and processes that expand dialogue on Indigenous artistic production, and how culture can be carried.

His work is in numerous public and private collections and exhibited worldwide. Galanin apprenticed with master carvers, earned his BFA at London Guildhall University, and his MFA at Massey University. He currently lives and works with his family in Sitka.



Photo by Michael Conti | www.conti.biz

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Alaska Humanities Forum connects Alaskans through stories, ideas, and experiences that positively change lives and strengthen communities.

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Alaska Arts & Culture Foundation develops resources and provides services to support the arts in Alaska and advance the mission of Alaska State Council on the Arts.



Unlocking Alaska's
Energy Resources

Photo was taken Pre-COVID