



Alaska State Council on the Arts

## **2010 GOVERNOR'S AWARDS FOR THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED**

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Eight outstanding citizens and one rural arts council were recently selected by Governor Parnell as the 2010 recipients of the Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities. The awards will be presented during a dinner event at the Fairbanks Princess Riverside Lodge on Thursday, October 21, 2010. The awards are sponsored by the Alaska State Council on the Arts, the Alaska Humanities Forum and the Office of the Governor.

### **2010 Recipients of the Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities:**

**Sonya Kelliher Combs, Anchorage, Individual Artist Award**

**Tom Manning, Juneau, Arts Education Award**

**Barry McWayne (posthumous), Fairbanks, Individual Artist Award**

**Nome Arts Council, Arts Organization Award**

**Gordon Pullar, Anchorage, Humanities Award**

**Paul Rosenthal, Juneau, Lifetime Achievement Artist Award**

**Bill Schneider, Fairbanks, Humanities Award**

**Ron Spatz, Anchorage, Humanities Award**

**Martha Lalla Williams, Anchorage, Native Artist Award**

### **RECIPIENT BIOGRAPHIES:**

**Individual Artist: Sonya Kelliher Combs, visual artist,** was born in Bethel and raised in Nome. Sonya's heritage is both Athabascan and Inupiaq. Sonya received her MFA from Arizona State University in 1998, and during the last 12 years her contemporary creative style, combining her Alaska heritage with contemporary themes and materials, has been recognized around the U.S. She has had numerous solo exhibits around the US, and most recently was in Hide, an exhibit at the National Museum of Indian Art in New York City. Sonya is also in many public and private collections and has received many honors and awards for her work.

**Arts Education: Tom Manning, art educator, Juneau Douglas High School.** Tom Manning has taught art for 25 years in Juneau and has been a leader in the arts education community. Because of his passion for teaching and arts, students often are on waiting lists to get into his classes. In addition to teaching, Mr. Manning demonstrates to other teachers how to link the arts into their curriculum, displays student art in the community,

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and takes students to galleries and exhibits on the West Coast. One nominator said “Tom Manning is a ‘more’ person. He gives more to his students while expecting more of them.”

**Individual Artist: Barry McWayne, Photographer, Fairbanks (1943-2010).** Barry McWayne was coordinator of fine arts at the UA Museum of the North, retiring as Fine Arts Curator Emeritus in 2007. During his 37 years at the Museum, Barry oversaw all aspects of photography - from making portraits of museum staff to ethnographic photography in the field and photographing rare Native Alaskan artifacts around the world. He created and curated the only permanent collection of fine art photography in Alaska and encouraged the work of photographers across the state, even after his retirement. Barry's original photographic work is part of the collections of all the major museums in Alaska, corporate collections and private collections throughout the U.S. In addition to his love of photography, Barry was involved with the performing arts in Fairbanks as well, and was a board member of the Fairbanks Symphony Orchestra and the Fairbanks Concert Association.

**Arts Organization: Nome Arts Council.** The Nome Arts Council is an all volunteer arts organization that for over 20 years has been providing arts opportunities for Nome residents. Because of the nearly 100 volunteers for the organization, there are events almost every month, including art exhibits, plays, musicals, the Iditarod Art Show, Open Mike Night and the Midnight Sun Folk Festival. All events are generously supported by the community, either through in kind donations or volunteering at the events. One nominator stated: “The Nome Arts Council is vital to the growth and well being of our community. It provides a forum for people to develop and share talent and contributes to our community by introducing us to an amazing variety of artistic experiences.”

**Humanities: Dr. Gordon Pullar, Anchorage.** Dr. Pullar distinguishes himself as a civic leader in the Native community, as a mentor of students in Rural and Native Studies, and as a scholar whose research speaks to the issues facing the Alaska Native community. Dr. Pullar played a prominent part in the cultural revival on Kodiak Island that led to the creation of the Alutiiq Museum. Serving as University of Alaska Fairbanks’s Head of the Department of Alaska Native and Rural Development, Dr. Pullar built a program that graduated over 54 masters degree students. Dr. Pullar’s research has contributed to an understanding of Sugpiaq ethnic identity and historic roots. He has written on the impact of land claims, repatriation of cultural property, self determination, and intellectual property rights. His contributions are recognized internationally where he has presented his research. Dr. Pullar serves as a role model for emerging and established scholars in the field of Native and Rural Studies.

**Lifetime Achievement Award: Paul Rosenthal, musician, Juneau.** Paul Rosenthal has been playing his violin in Alaska for over 40 years. But as Alaskans know, he is much more than a musician, having founded the Sitka Summer Music Festival, a world renowned chamber music festival that has helped Sitka become the music capital of Alaska. Every summer, Paul and his world class musician friends come to Sitka. But he also shares his music with the rest of Alaska, traveling to play in small cafeterias and

gymnasiums, infecting communities with his passion for classical music. Paul will be passing the baton of artistic director of the Music Festival to cellist Zuill Bailey soon, but the legacy of his work will continue to resonate for years to come.

**Humanities Award: Dr. William (Bill) Schneider, Fairbanks.** Dr. Schneider created the University of Alaska Fairbanks Oral History program in 1981 with a concept to document the history of Alaska through the unedited words of its citizens. In 1988, Dr. Schneider started Project Jukebox to further preserve oral history, making UAF one of the first places in the world to begin digitizing oral history recordings and make them available in an integrated context with photos, maps and transcripts on the computer. Now he's leading the effort for synchronized access to video, photos, transcripts and historic film footage in the Jukeboxes and to better integrate varied resources in a digital format easier use by the public. In his work, Dr. Schneider has placed a tremendous emphasis on collaboration with communities and understanding the role of storytelling in people's lives.

**Humanities Award: Ronald Spatz, Anchorage.** Now in his 31st year at the University of Alaska Anchorage, Mr. Spatz has advanced the humanities as a professor and as founding dean of the University Honors College. He co-founded and managed Alaska's nationally celebrated literary journal, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, deemed by the *Washington Post Book World* as "one of the nation's best literary magazines." He also founded and developed UAA's innovative community outreach Web site, LitSite Alaska (and its children's site, Alaska Kids). Mr. Spatz is the driving force behind these enduring, outstanding projects that present the best of the humanities in Alaska to the nation, and significantly foster appreciation of the humanities in the state. His role in leading the development of honors education at UAA is a prime example. Mr. Spatz's record in the humanities is one of extraordinary leadership, creative vision, significant accomplishment, and major contributions to Alaska.

**Native Arts: Martha Lalla Williams, Anchorage.** Sugpiag native artist Martha Williams is widely known for her skin sewing, creating dolls, traditional and contemporary Sugpiat clothing and seal intestine windows. She came to the craft relatively late in life, attending the Institute of American Indian Art in her early 40s. Martha now shares her knowledge as a master teaching artist at the Alaska Native Heritage Center, teaching skin processing, tanning and sewing in addition to sharing her heritage's cultural traditions. Martha designs the regalia for the Sugpiat dance group Imamsuat and the Native Heritage Center Heritage Dancers. In addition, she has served as costume designer for Anchorage area theaters, designing regalia-inspired costumes for Cyrano Theater's production of Othello and Raven's Radio Hour.

For more information about the Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities, call the Alaska State Council on the Arts at 907.269.6610 or visit: [www.eed.state.ak.us/aksca](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/aksca)

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The mission of the Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA) is to foster the development of the arts for all Alaskans through education, partnership, grants and

services. ASCA is a division of the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, and is governed by eleven council members appointed by the Governor. It is supported with general funds appropriated by the Alaska State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional support for arts education programs from the Rasmuson Foundation.