

# Alaskan artists participate in art festival

A delegation of nine Alaskans were among more than 1,000 who participated at the International Very Special Arts Festival held in Washington, D.C., last week.

Very Special Arts, established in 1974, is the international organization dedicated to enriching the lives of children, youth and adults with special needs through the arts. An educational affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Very Special Arts creates opportunities for people to celebrate and share accomplishments in all areas of the arts, including drama, dance, music, literature and the visual arts.

Alaska's delegation includes Jamie McLean of Preservance Theatre, percussionist Eddie Wood of Homer, and students Joel Symons and Gina Frickey of Juneau who collaborated to lead a drama workshop.

The workshop featured an Inupiat folk tale, "Heartbeat of the World" in which Frickey plays the part of the Eagle Woman, and Symons plays Eagle Son.

Roland Stamps of Anchorage was featured in a performance at the Kennedy Center. Mary Anne Schallert accompanied him on piano and Eddie Wood on percussion.

Cornelius Benedict Jr. of Emmonak is a 16-year-old student who participates in the Bethel Very Special Arts Festival. Benedict is a visual artist whose work was exhibited at the Kennedy Center during the festival. Benedict has been painting and sketching since he was 6 years old.