

# Olanna Giving One Man Show at Cultural Exhibit

The Tundra Times Banquet will be held October 4 at the Anchorage-Westward Hotel. In conjunction with the banquet, a special Tundra Times exhibit will be held at the new Anchorage Museum beginning October 3.

One of the works of art at the exhibit will be an 8 by 4 abstract type painting with light blue background—reminder of the Eskimo's past. Toward the right of the painting is a stop sign, slit in half by a dagger. Out of the wound, the sign oozed black oil. Attached is a one dollar bill.

"The Oil Impact in the Arctic" was created by Eskimo artist Melvin Olanna. The 28 year old, Shismaref-born Olanna will host a one-man exhibit at the special Tundra Times show.

"I was angered with the developments," artist Olanna said. The Eskimo artist has been noted for his work in silver, soapstone, and wood.

As he put it, Melvin has "expanded his media" in beginning to explore other art forms, such as painting and etching.

"I believe the art will have to change with its people," he said.

The Olanna exhibit will consist of 75 pieces of jewelry, 8 soapstone pieces, and very little in wood.

"Since it is easier to ship, I send most of my woods to New York," he added.

Olanna, the Artist, tells of how he came to be a creator of art work.

"Although I grew up trying to become an artist, I never admitted that I could become one.

"I grew up trying to prove that I could do this. When I was very young, someone told me that I could never become one.

"The thing that changed my life was an accident I had when I was seven. I was hit by a sled and broke my hip. For a long time, I waddled like a duck when I walked. I had to plan my livelihood around what I could do.

"I started carving ivory at fourteen. At sixteen, I was capable of supporting myself."

Melvin said that, in the villages, craftsmen have been considered to be in the lowest income and social bracket. He wasn't entirely lacking support however.

"My uncle, Arnold Olanna, told me that if I wanted to do something, I had better be good at it. It is the same as learning to hunt in the right way. It is



ONE MAN SHOW—Eskimo artist Melvin Olanna, from Shismaref, will conduct a one-man exhibit at the new Anchorage Museum in conjunction with the Tundra Times Banquet. The exhibit is planned for October 3 and 4 at the museum. Here, Melvin is seen with two

the Eskimo way of life.

"Later, I got interested in art forms other than ivory carving. I enrolled at the Institute of American Arts in Sante Fe, New Mexico. I spent two years studying there."

It was after that when Olanna, the ivory carver, decided to become Olanna, the Artist.

"When I first started out, I often didn't know where my next dollar would come from. I nearly starved. Now, I am able to plan ahead."

Melvin returned to Shismaref. "It was later when Ron took an interest in my work. Ron taught me to expand myself to other art forms, and to things other

than crafts."

Professor Ronald Senungetuk, an Eskimo, is the Assistant Professor of Design at the University of Alaska.

"He has more or less tutored me since then," Melvin said.

When he has more fully established himself, he added, Melvin would like to train perhaps two prospective Eskimo artists.

"I want to teach them half of what they should know, and let them continue from there."

Recently, when Professor Sunengutuk traveled to Washington, Melvin's aid was solicited and he taught Sunengutuk's classes.

Olanna likes to sculpt. "My sense in designing is mainly

of his sculptures. The walrus, done in African Soapstone, is now owned by the Interior Department's Indian Arts and Crafts Board. The seal, a cherry wood piece with inlaid ebony, is owned by Mrs. Robert Atwood.

sculptural. I try to take a 50 pound peice and make it look like it weighs a ton. When I design, I have to consider light and shading.

"The harder material I work with, I get more of a feeling of conquest over matter."

As is indicated by "Oil Impact in the Arctic," Melvin's interests are expanding.

"My latest interest has been in printing and etching. I will have some of this at the exhibit.

"I find old anthropology books and do research on the old Eskimo art. They were more advanced than most artists today."

Olanna strives for perfections. "I destroy my work when it

doesn't come out. Usually I try to start with a good design so that I can avoid mistakes."

Olanna would like to see more artists and more craftsmen among his people. He attributes the lesser acceptance of artisans in the villages to exploitation by traders. "I would like to see this change," he said.

The Tundra Times exhibit at the new Anchorage Museum is the first for Melvin Olanna. He would like to catch up on his orders (he says he is nine months behind) and then present a one man show in New York.

"I never really admitted that I wanted to be an artist, but I admit it now," he concluded.

## 45 Rural Alaskans Have Jobs Waiting for Them

(Special to the Tundra Times)  
JUNEAU—Jobs are waiting for the 45 rural Alaskans who complete the seismic prospecting crew training classes in Anchorage, Commissioner of Labor Thomas J. Moore reported.

According to the commissioner, the classes are divided into two sections. The first one started August 18 and ended September 20. The second began September 2 and will finish on October 4. There were 23 enrollees in the first class and 22 in the second.

"Seismic prospecting employers have guaranteed permanent winter time jobs to all graduates of the two courses," Moore stated. "Seismic operations begin in October and run through May covering the normally high un-

employment months in North-western Alaska."

The commissioner said a majority of the trainees are "entry level" students. They are receiving training as driller, observer and mechanic helpers. A few are receiving advance training to upgrade their skills.

The seismic prospecting crew training classes are a joint operation of the Western Geophysical Company, United Geophysical Corporation, the Department of Labor and the office of Vocational Education in the Department of Education.

Western Geophysical and United are supplying members of their staffs as instructors, equipment and facilities.

The Department of Labor recruited the trainees and is providing transportation and living allowances plus follow-ups with employers after the training is over.

Vocational Education is coordinating the project and paying the cost of instructional materials and instructors' salaries.

A third class in seismic prospecting crew training is scheduled to start in January.



### SEISMIC PROSPECTORS

JOB WAITING—Rural native Alaskans have a bright prospect, 45 of them, of having jobs waiting for them when they complete the seismic prospecting crew training classes in Anchorage. The men are training as drillers, observers and mechanic helpers. They are training under the joint operation of the Western Geophysical Company, United Geophysical Corporation, State Labor Department and the office of Vocational Education of the Department of Education. Shown are: Sherman Sikuayugeak, left, Barrow; Jack Ekak, center, and Jack Panik, both of Wainwright.

## ANB Fund Sends Natives To Colleges

The Juneau ANB Education Scholarship Funds are depleted after rendering travel funds for 27 college bound students.

Robert Loescher of the education committee reported students from Pt. Barrow, Kotzebue, and southeastern camps were sent to colleges and universities in Alaska to the east coast and also two \$500 academic merit scholarships were awarded Christine Stitt and Joanne Triggs.

Jim Austin, president of Juneau ANB said the "ANB is committed to assisting Alaskan natives in entering and attending institutions of higher learning. The only charge to the student is that they are responsible for representing the Alaskan native in the highest manner possible and attaining the greatest academic success possible."

Funds are raised from games proceeds.

Our life is frittered away by detail . . . Simplify, simplify. —THOREAU

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