

Alaska artists donate to ICC auction

Some noted Alaskan Inuit artists have joined others from Canada and Greenland in donating artworks for a special auction to benefit C.A.R.E., an organization which helps needy people on a world-wide scale.

The auction, which is being sponsored by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, will be held Jan. 30 at the Watergate Hotel in Washington D.C.

Larry Ahvakana and Simon Koonook of Pt. Hope are among the Alaskan artists who have already contributed work to the auction. Ahvakana is contributing several items including a dance or portrait mask entitled "Seal Spirit Emerging Through Man," made of alderwood and ivory, with walrus whiskers and wolverine ruff; two sculptures carved from Colorado alabaster, and a "striking piece capturing a young man's sensation of an unseen presence," according to a release from ICC.

Among the works which have brought Ahvakana fame is a series of dramatic wall relief sculptures commissioned especially for the Anchorage Sheraton Hotel. He also is featured in a special Inuit exhibit at the Smithsonian museum in Washington, D.C.

Koonook is donating a teak-wood sculpture of a polar bear

entitled "Reaching Out." Koonook has won several art awards, has illustrated books and teaches art in his home village of Point Hope.

Alaskan artists of Inuit (any of Alaska's Eskimo groups) descent who wish to contribute works should contact Dalee Sambo at the ICC office at 429 "D" Street in Anchorage, 99510. Her phone number is (907) 338-6921.

The value of donated items may be claimed as a tax deduction. If artists wish to market additional items, C.A.R.E. will sell the second and third pieces, giving the artist a 50 percent commission.

U.S. Senator Ted Stevens is the Honorary Chairman of the event, and the U.S. Ambassador to Denmark, the Ambassador of Denmark and the Ambassador of Canada are Honorary Patrons.

ICC seeks to bring about a greater knowledge of the Inuit people world-wide. "While there have been numerous depictions of Arctic wildlife and scenery, and increasing concern about the damage the development projects could inflict upon the fragile environment," the ICC release said, "less has been written about preserving the people, their culture and traditions."



Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska, Honorary Chairman of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference Art Auction for the benefit of C.A.R.E. shows Cyndi Ahwinona of Cong. Don Young's staff the Dance or Portrait Mask, "Spirit of Seal Emerging Through Man," by Lawrence Ahvakana. The Auction is scheduled for January 30.