INDIVIDUAL ARTIST AWARDS

Information Session and Application Overview

Sheryl Saturnino Oliva
March 13, 2026

RASMUSON FOUNDATION

TAKEAWAYS

- Overview of our Individual Artist Awards program.
- Eligibility and what we're looking for.
- Open opportunities.
  - Fellowship Awards
  - Distinguished Artist Award
- Application timing and decision cycles.
- Guest speaker: Buzz Spector, panelist
- How to connect with a program officer.
- Questions.

Caitlyn Jade Armstrong, producer of *The Alaska Myth* podcast, is a 2025 Project Award recipient.

OUR VISION

An Alaska where people, cultures, and communities are thriving.

OUR MISSION

We invest, connect, and convene. We empower Alaskans to help each other.

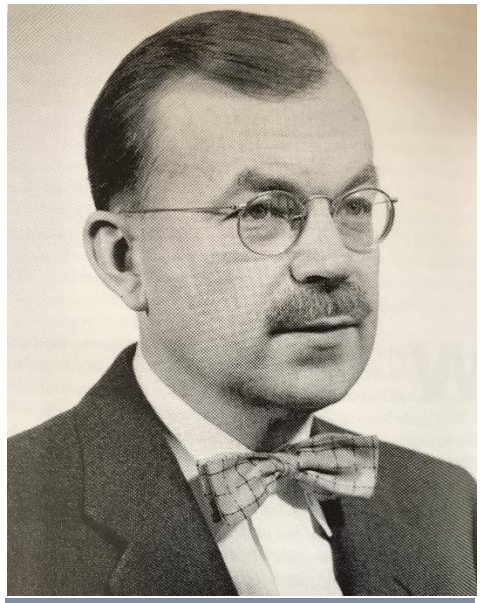
Foundation staff members at the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center for a volunteer day.

OUR HISTORY

- Swedish missionaries Jenny Olson and E.A. Rasmuson met in Yakutat and married in 1905.
- Jenny creates Rasmuson Foundation in 1955 with $3,000 and names her son, Elmer, the first board chair.
- Surpassed $500 million in grantmaking in 2023.

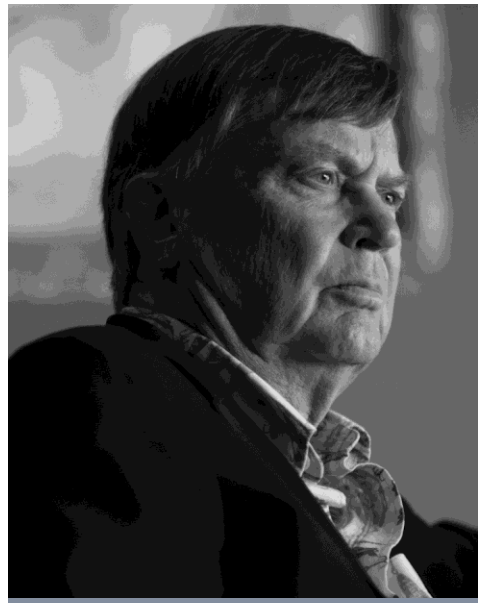
"Do good."

Jenny Rasmuson



"Helping others is an Alaska tradition."

Elmer Rasmuson



"If you do what's right, you'll never be wrong."

Ed Rasmuson

WHAT IS IAA?

The Individual Artist Awards provide one-year grants to Alaska artists that support the time, reflection, immersion, or experimentation beneficial to the development of their artistry and creative practice.

Since its inception, over 700 grants have been awarded to artists in 54 communities throughout Alaska.

Kinsie Young,
2023 Project Award, Folk & Traditional Arts.

AWARD CATEGORIES

Project Award (Open in 2027)

- Funding for specific, short-term projects that can be completed within one year.
- Open to all career stages.
- Open to individuals and groups.
- Open every other year.

Competitive grant

Up to 50 awards of $10,000 each.

"Hard at Work in the Fish Shed," linoleum relief print, by CJ Harrell
2025 Project Award, Visual Arts.

AWARD CATEGORIES

Fellowship Award (Open now)

- Flexible funding for creative growth and development of an artist.
- Open to mid-career and mature/established artists.
- Open to individuals only.
- Open every other year.

Competitive grant

Up to 20 awards of $25,000 each.

Wolf spirit mask by Ossie Kairaiuak, 2023 Fellowship, Performance Arts.

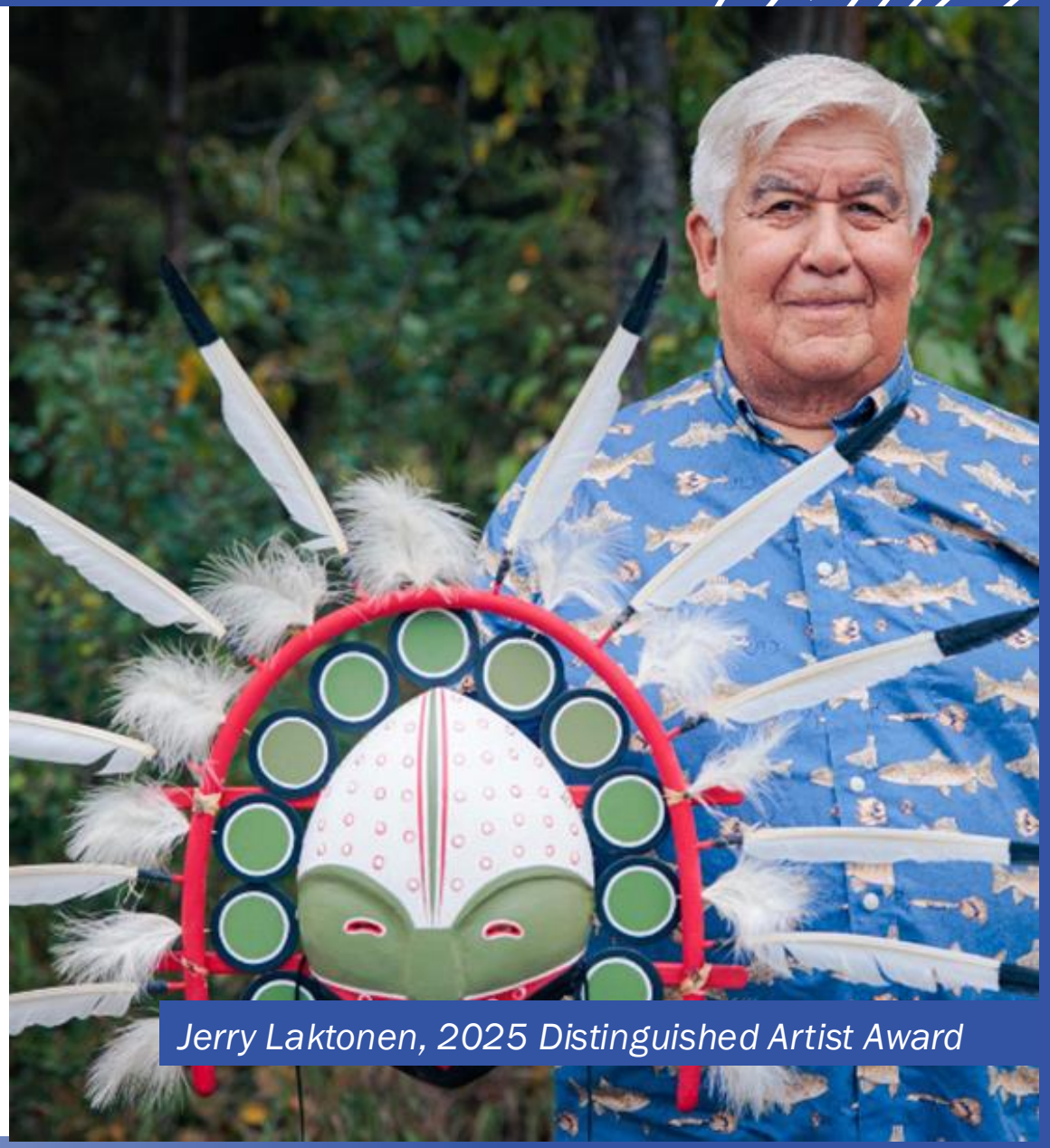
AWARD CATEGORIES

Distinguished Artist Award (Open now)

- Recognition for creative excellence and significant artistic accomplishments.
- Open to mature/established artists only.
- Open to individuals only.
- Open every year.

Nomination-based

One award of $50,000 annually.



Jerry Laktonen, 2025 Distinguished Artist Award

ELIGIBILITY

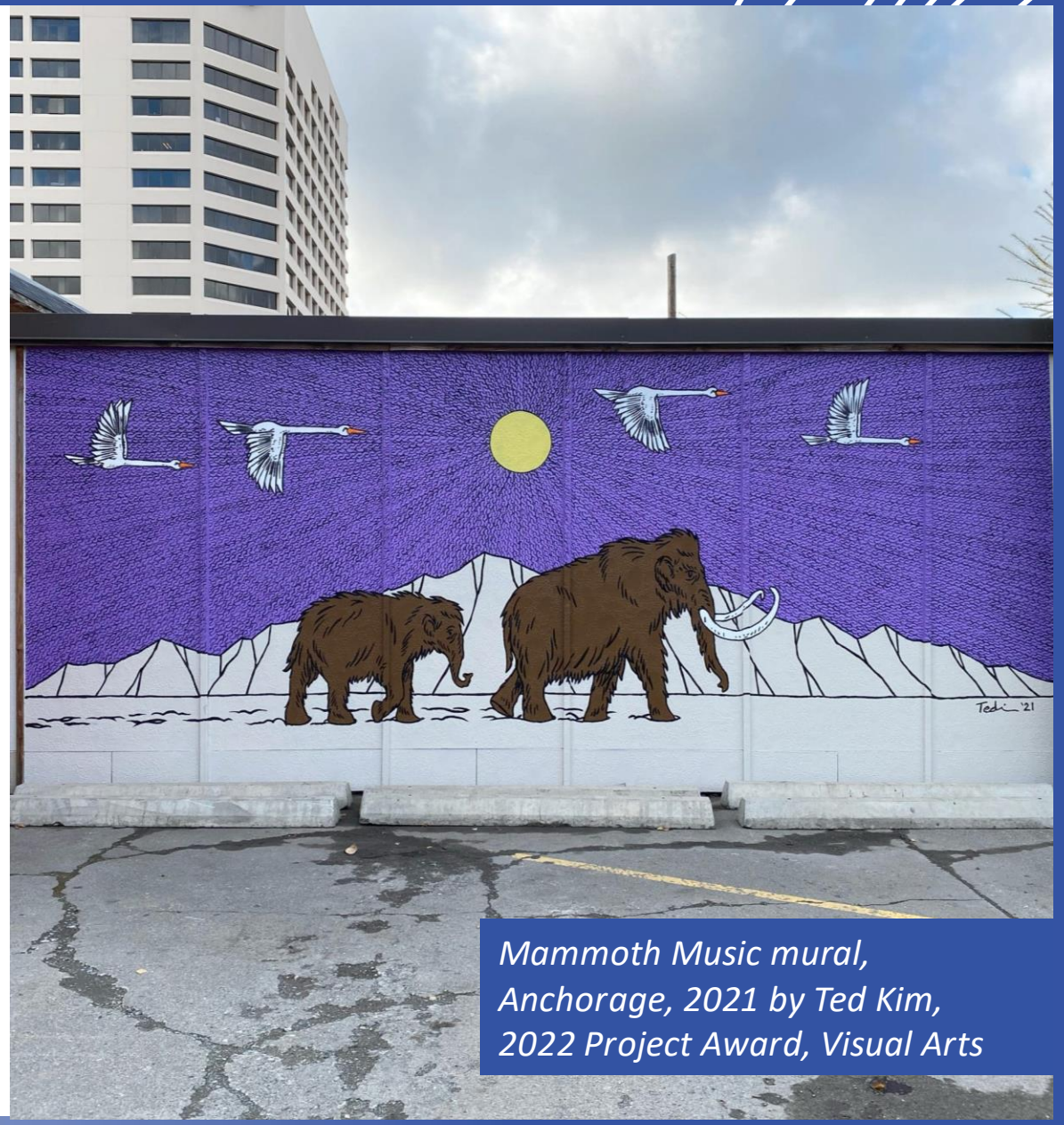
Eligible artists for Foundation grants include:

- Current Alaska resident.
  - Have lived in the state for the previous two years.
  - Living in Alaska when applying.
  - If awarded, required to maintain residency for duration of grant.
- 18 years or older at time of application.
- Produce artist-driven work.
- Able to meet specified criteria of career stage.

"The Chief," Bronze, 2003 by Darlene Lind, 2023 Fellowship, Folk & Traditional Arts

NOT ELIGIBILE

- Enrollment in an art degree program under the supervision of an art instructor.
- Rasmuson Foundation Board Director, immediate family member, or staff member.
- We will not accept or consider work samples that are:
  - Artwork completed while enrolled in an art degree-seeking program.
  - Work or projects that are academic or scholarly research.
  - Work that is client-driven or under the direction of a client, firm, government agency, school, business, or the like.



Mammoth Music mural, Anchorage, 2021 by Ted Kim, 2022 Project Award, Visual Arts

OF NOTE

- Recipients of Fellowship and Project awards must wait for three years before applying for another.
  - 2025 recipients may apply in 2028.
  - 2023 and earlier recipients may apply now.

- Any outstanding final report for a previous IAA grant must be complete before applying for a new award.

“Chilkat Masquerade,” Merino wool spun with yellow cedar bark, hand-dyed lace weight merino weft and white feather down, 2022 by Shgendootan George,
2023 Fellowship, Folk & Traditional Arts

PRIMARY DISCIPLINES

- Crafts
- Dance/Choreography
- Folk and Traditional Arts
- Literary Arts/Scriptworks
- Media Arts
- Multidiscipline
- Music/Music Composition
- Performance and Theatre
- Production Arts
- Visual Arts

Artists may choose a secondary discipline to distinguish between primary and secondary creative practice.

Seward's Folly Media
2022 Project Award, Music/Music Composition.

CAREER STAGES

Emerging Artist

- Early stages of career with a strong portfolio and established artistic voice.

Mid-career Artist

- Created an independent body of work and have progressed steadily.

Mature / Established Artist

- Extensive independent body of work representing a lifelong investigation and maturation of personal creativity.

Duke Russell, 2004 Project Award recipient, stands with his artwork at Spenard Roadhouse.

TIMING & DECISION CYCLE

Distinguished Artist Award
Nomination deadline April 20 **Award announced in October**

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Distinguished Artist

- Broad impact on arts and culture in Alaska.
- Creation of an extensive body of work, found in collections, and or publications for a public audience.
- Demonstrated creative excellence.
- Recognition by peers.
- May have received local, regional, or national awards or residences.

Selection

Alaska-based panel of artists and art professionals.

TIMING & DECISION CYCLE

Fellowship Awards

Apply by May 5
Awards announced in October

Grant period
Nov. 1, 2026 - Oct. 31, 2027

Mary Ida Henrikson
2018 Fellowship, Visual Arts

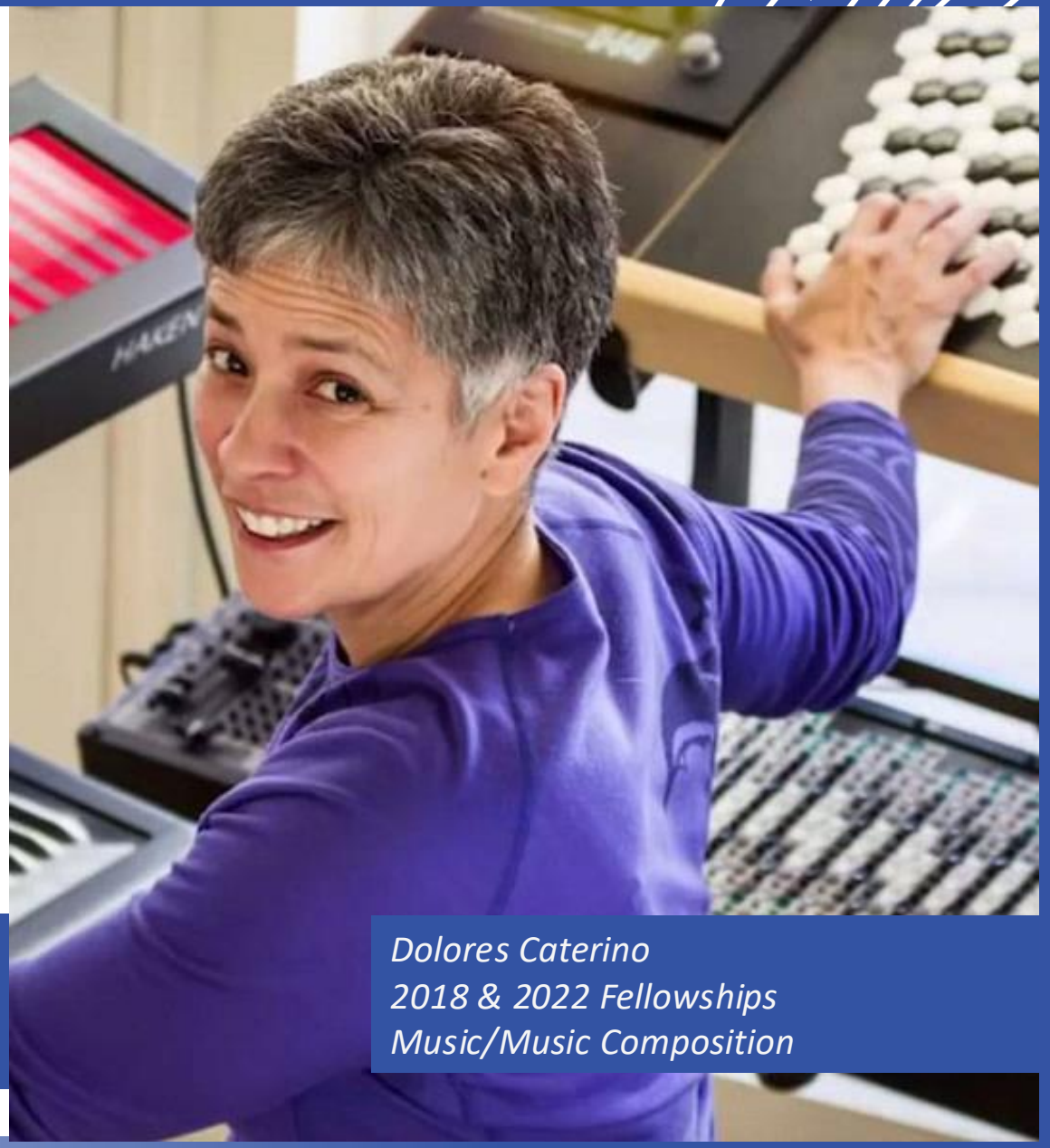
WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Fellowship Award

- Potential for artistic growth and development.
- Demonstrated success with prior projects.
- Artist statement and experience.
- Quality of work samples.

Selection

Diverse national panel of artists and art professionals.



Dolores Caterino
2018 & 2022 Fellowships
Music/Music Composition

CULTURAL CONTENT REVIEW

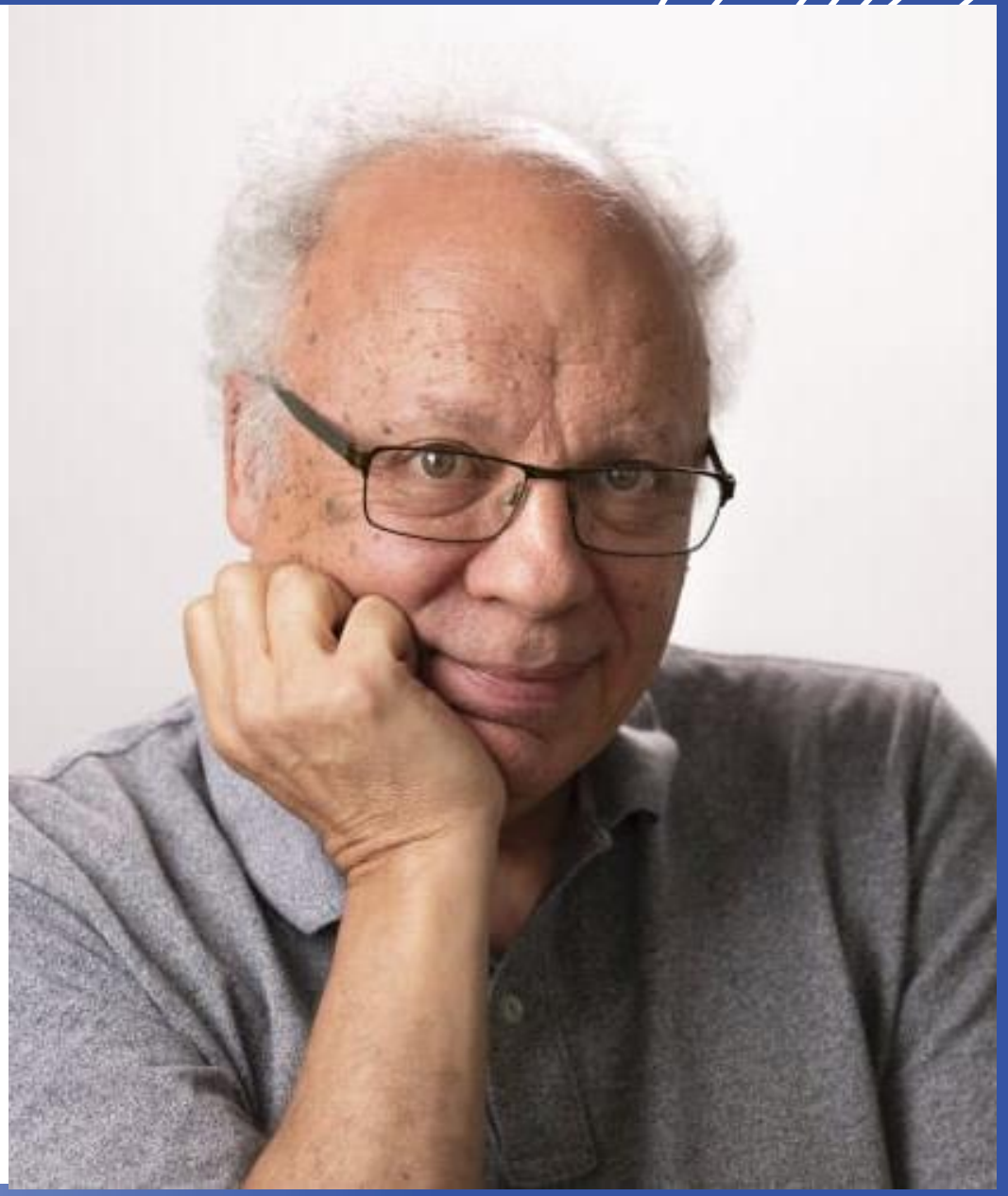
Part of review process.

- Cultural appropriation is the unacknowledged or inappropriate adoption of the customs, practices, or ideas of one people or society by members of another and typically more dominant people or society.
- Artwork and submission must convey how you partnered with the cultural group, practice, or region.

"Danny Gordon, Marcus Gallager, John Tikluk, and Donald Gordon riding their bikes on a foggy night in Kaktovik, Alaska, where the sun never sets." 2018 Photograph by Brian Adams, 2018 Fellowship, Visual Arts

BUZZ SPECTOR

Featured panelist



FAQS

I received an award in the past. Can I apply again?

Yes, but you must wait 3 years.

Do I need to have received the Project Award to apply for the Fellowship?

No!

How do I know which program to apply for?

Be mindful when selecting the program that fits your needs at the time of applying, given the cadence of this grant program.

FAQS

I have questions or need assistance with my application. Email us at arts@rasmuson.org or book time with us.

Is an Individual Artist Award taxable?

Yes.

When will I know of a decision?

Announcements will be made in October 2026.

Will I receive feedback on my declined application?

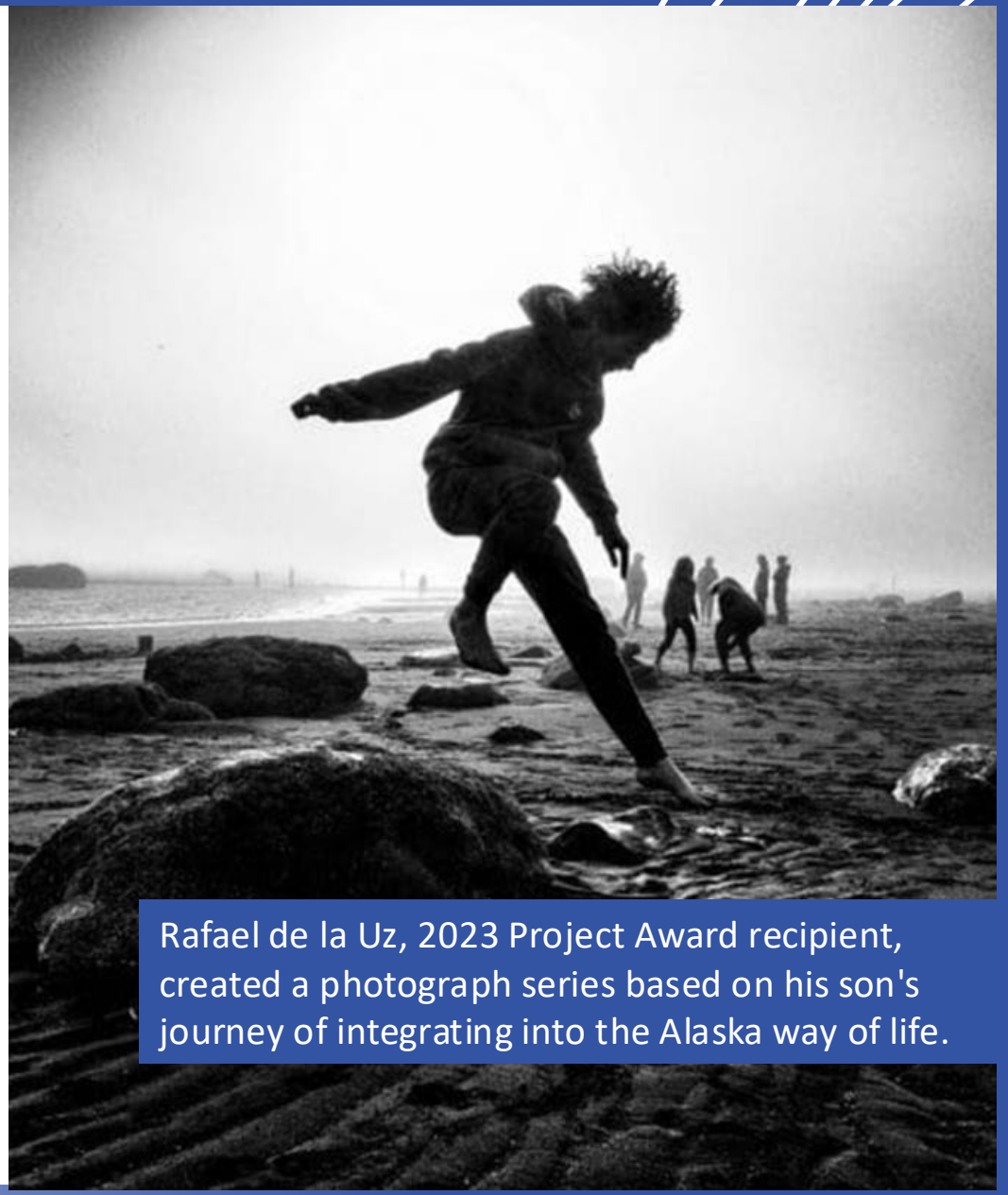
We do not provide panel feedback on individual applications.

REACH OUT

Email: arts@rasmuson.org
Call: 907-297-2700

Scan the QR below or visit **rasmuson.org** to schedule a meeting. Select “Individual Artist Awards” from our booking options.

- **Bethel –** Mar. 27-28
- **Juneau –** Apr. 10-12
- **Anchorage –** Apr. 15-17
- **Fairbanks –** *tentative*



Rafael de la Uz, 2023 Project Award recipient, created a photograph series based on his son's journey of integrating into the Alaska way of life.

QUESTIONS?

Distinguished Artist nominations due **April 20**

IAA Fellowship applications due **May 5**