

Andrew Kreps
Gallery

22 Cortlandt Alley,
New York, NY 10013

Tue–Sat, 10 am–6 pm
andrewkreps.com

Tel. (212)741-8849
Fax. (212)741-8163

Sonya Kelliher-Combs: Secrets

394 Broadway
November 10th - December 22nd
Opening Reception:
Friday, November 10th, 6 – 8 pm

Since the 1990s, Anchorage-based artist Sonya Kelliher-Combs has produced a singular body of paintings and sculptures that weaves together the lived experiences of Alaska Native Peoples and the histories of unresolved colonial violence, through a hybrid materiality that merges craft, found objects, and animal viscera. Kelliher-Combs repeatedly returns to the form of walrus tusk, historically found on Iñupiaq Parkas. In her large-scale sculptural installations, the symbol of walrus tusk is restaged as the potent site at which obscured memories and histories of settler violence are laid bare. The artificial recreation and replication of American flags and maps further advances Kelliher-Combs's negotiation and contestation of Western notions of purity and authenticity often weaponized in anthropological and museological contexts.

Kelliher-Combs appropriates organic materials derived from subsistence hunting in her painting and sculptures, evoking scarred skins and exposed intestines, which are rendered all the more uncanny by the layering of synthetic materials. The resulting visceral forms mark the permeable boundary between historical tragedies of lost lives and present activities of mourning and grievance, human and non-human agents, and self and the environment. Often inviting interventions from family and community members, Kelliher-Combs speculates on another world that mines experiences from a traumatic past toward a reparative future.

Sonya Kelliher-Combs (b. 1969, Alaska) is an Iñupiaq and Athabascan multidisciplinary artist based in Anchorage, Alaska. She holds a BFA from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and an MFA from Arizona State University. Kelliher-Combs' work was recently the subject of a two venue exhibition *Mark*, co-presented by Stars, Los Angeles, and Tureen, Dallas. A forthcoming monograph of her work will be published by Hirmer Verlag in spring 2024, edited by Julie Decker, Ph.D. Her solo exhibitions include Yukon Arts Center, Canada (2019); Minus Space, Brooklyn (2019); Carrie McLain Museum, Nome, AK (2016, 1994, 1990); International Gallery of Contemporary Art, Anchorage, AK (2015); Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH (2014); UC Davis, CA (2012); Museum of Contemporary Native Art, Santa Fe,

Andrew Kreps
Gallery

22 Cortlandt Alley,
New York, NY 10013

Tue–Sat, 10 am–6 pm
andrewkreps.com

Tel. (212)741-8849
Fax. (212)741-8163

NM (2011); National Museum of Indian Art, New York, NY (2010); and Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK (2005). Past group exhibitions include *The Visceral Trilogy*, Alaska State Museum, Juneau, Alaska (2023), *Arctic/Amazon: Networks of Global Indigeneity*, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax and *The Power Plant*, Toronto (2022-3), *Heart of Our People*, Minneapolis Institute of Art, MN (2019); *Art for a New Understanding*, Crystal Bridges, AK (2018); *SITELINES: Much Wider Than a Line*, SITE Santa Fe, NM (2016); *Changing Hands 2: Art without Reservation*, Museum of Arts and Design, New York (2005). She is a recipient of the United States Arts Fellowship, Joan Mitchell Fellowship, Eiteljorg Fellowship for Native American Fine Art, Rasmuson Fellowship, Anchorage Mayor's Arts Award, and Alaska Governor's Individual Artist Award. Her work is included in the collections of Anchorage Museum, Alaska State Museum, Denver Art Museum, Eiteljorg Museum, Forge Project, IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Art, National Museum of the American Indian, University of Alaska Museum of the North, and Whitney Museum of American Art.

Andrew Kreps
Gallery

22 Cortlandt Alley,
New York, NY 10013

Tue–Sat, 10 am–6 pm
andrewkreps.com

Tel. (212)741-8849
Fax. (212)741-8163

394 BROADWAY

OFFICE



SONYA KELLIHER-COMBS
Natural Idiot Strings, 2023

Reindeer and sheep rawhide,
steel wire, wool, beeswax,
nylon thread
Dimensions variable: 12 parts
(SKC23-007)

SONYA KELLIHER-COMBS
Large Chinook Secret, 2023

Acrylic polymer, reindeer fur,
nylon thread, paper, porcupine
quill, walrus stomach on
airplane fabric
62 ¼ x 40 ½ x 2 ¾ inches
(158.1 x 102.9 x 7 cm.)
(SKC23-003)

SONYA KELLIHER-COMBS
Hair and Fur Secret Portraits,
2023

Human hair, seal skin, salmon
skin, walrus stomach, reindeer
fur, polar bear fur, wolf fur,
muskox wool, moose hide,
beeswax on paper with steel
pins
Dimensions variable
(SKC23-006)

SONYA KELLIHER-COMBS
Small Red, White and Blue
Secrets, 2022

Cotton fabric, human hair,
glass beads, nylon thread, steel
pins
Dimensions variable
(SKC23-004)

Sonya Kelliher-Combs

EDUCATION

- 1998 MFA, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
1992 BFA Cum Laude, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, AK

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *Secrets*, Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York, NY
Sonya Kelliher-Combs: Mark, STARS, Los Angeles, CA
Sonya Kelliher-Combs: Mark, TUREEN, Dalla, TX
- 2019 *Goodbye: The Things We Carry*, Yukon Arts Center, Whitehorse, YT
Canada
- 2019 *Mark*, Minus Space, Brooklyn, NY
- 2019 *Brand*, Bunnell Street Gallery, Homer, AK
- 2018 *Recent Work*, Cyranos Gallery, Anchorage, AK
- 2017 *New Work*, Kenai Arts Center, Kenai, AK
Remnant, Peters Projects, Santa Fe, NM
- 2016 *Sonya Kelliher-Combs*, Carrie McLain Museum, Nome, AK
- 2015 *Stitch: Line*, International Gallery of Contemporary Art, Anchorage, AK
- 2014 *Sonya Kelliher-Combs, Recent Work*, Jaffe Friede Gallery, Dartmouth
College, Hanover, NH
- 2012 *Qupak*, Pratt Museum, Homer, AK
Where they Overlap, Gorman Gallery, UC Davis, Davis, CA
- 2011 *Hide*, Museum of Contemporary Native Art, Santa Fe, NM
- 2010 *Hide*, National Museum of Indian Art, New York, NY
- 2008 *Walrus Family Portrait*, International Gallery of Contemporary Art,
Anchorage, AK
- 2007 *New Secrets*, Well Street Art Company, Fairbanks, AK
Unraveled Secret, Bunnell Street Gallery, Homer, AK
- 2006 *Unraveled Secret*, Institute of American Indian Art, Santa Fe, NM
Secret, MODO Gallery, Hudson, NY
- 2005 *Untitled Secrets*, Well Street Art Company, Fairbanks, AK
Untitled, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK
- 2002 *1000 Secrets*, Decker/Morris Art Gallery, Anchorage, AK
- 2001 *Idiot Strings*, Catch and Release Alaska State Museum, Juneau, AK
- 2000 *New Works*, Decker/Morris Gallery, Anchorage, AK
- 1998 *Asianggataq*, Harry Wood Art Gallery, Arizona State University, Tempe,
AZ
- 1994 *Formline*, Carrie McLain Museum, Nome, AK
Transformation, University of Alaska Fine Arts Gallery, Fairbanks, AK

- 1990 *Sonya Kelliher-Combs*, Carrie McLain Museum, Nome, AK
SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS
- 2023 *Salmon Culture*, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK
Arctic/Amazon: Networks of Global Indigeneity, Toronto, Canada
Arctic Highways. 12 Indigenous Artists of the Circumpolar North, National Nordic Museum, Seattle, WA
- 2019 *Hearts of Our People: Native Women Artists*, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis, MN
- 2019 *Physical Narrative*, Elaine L. Jacob Gallery, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI
- 2018 *Aiviq & Nanuq: Sea Horse and Sea Bear of the Arctic*, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK
Among All These Tundras, Leonard and Bina Ellen Art Gallery, Montreal, Canada
Place of Origin, Korundi Museum, Rovaniemi, Finland
Art for a New Understanding, Native Voices 1950's to Now, Crystal Bridges, Fayetteville, AR
Stitching Beads, North Atlantic House, Copenhagen, Denmark
The Things We Carry, Kunsthall Svalbard, Northern Norway Art Museum, Svalbard Norway
The Un-heroic Act: Representations of Rape in Contemporary Women's Art in the U.S., Anya and Andrew Shiva Gallery, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York, NY
- 2017 *Subsistence (NO/US)*, Gallery of Northern, Norway, Harstad, Norway
Native Art Now, Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis, IN
- 2016-17 *Decolonizing Alaska*, Bunnell Street Gallery, Homer, AK, Alaska State Museum, Juneau AK, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.
- 2016 *SITELines: New Perspectives on Art of the Americas*, SITE Santa Fe Biennial, Santa Fe, NM
- 2015 *Fifth World*, Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, SK, Canada
Gyre: the Plastic Ocean, David J. Spencer CDC Museum, Atlanta, GA
- 2014 *Annual Group Show*, Zane Bennett Gallery, Santa Fe, NM
Develop/Assemblage/Construct, International Gallery of Contemporary Art, Anchorage, AK
Native Art Now - Contemporary Indigenous Art from North America, Nordamerika Native Museum, Zurich, Switzerland
Gyre: The Plastic Ocean, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK
- 2013 *Masks and Transparencies: Contemporary Artists of Alaska*, Orenda Art International, Paris, France
Sakahan, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, ON, Canada
This is not a Silent Movie, Los Angeles Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Museum of Contemporary Craft, Portland, OR; University of Montana, Missoula, MT
- 2012 *True North*, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK
- 2010-11 *This is Displacement*, Center for the Arts, Big Fork, MN; Northrup Theatre, Minneapolis, MN; Diverse Works, Houston, TX; American

- Indian Community House, New York, NY
- 2010 *Contemporary Inuit Art*, Katuaq Cultural Center, Nuuk, Greenland
- 2009 *Dry Ice*, Robeson Arts Center, Princeton, NJ
50/50: Fifty Years of Alaska's History, Statewide touring exhibit
- 2008 *Native Voices, Contemporary Indigenous Art*, Five Myles Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2007 *Diversity and Dialogue: The Eiteljorg Fellowship*, Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, Indianapolis, IN
- 2005 *Changing Hands: Art Without Reservation, Part 2*, American Museum of Art & Design, New York, NY
Cheongju International Craft Biennial, Cheongju Arts Center, Cheongju, South Korea
Alaska Native Art & Culture Festival, Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C.
- 2004 *Defiant Objects*, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK
Works from Spenard 4215, International Gallery of Contemporary Art, Anchorage, AK
Alaska Native Art: People of a Place, Art of a People, Sotheby's Institute of Art, New York, NY
Grand Opening, The Center, Anchorage, AK
- 2003 *Points of View*, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK
- 2002 *The 8th Native American Fine Art Invitational*, Heard Museum, Phoenix, AZ
- 2001 *Ceremony of Healing*, Alaska Pacific University, Anchorage, AK
State of the Art Biennial, Parkland College, Champaign, IL
- 2000 *INVITATIONAL 7*, Decker/Morris Gallery, Anchorage, AK
- 1993 *Arts from the Arctic*, Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK

HONORS AND AWARDS

- 2018 United States Artist Fellow
- 2017 Joan Mitchell Fellow
- 2014 Dartmouth Artist in Residence, Hanover, NH
- 2013 Alaska State Council on the Arts Travel Award, Anchorage, AK
- 2012 Rasmuson Fellowship, Anchorage, AK
- 2011 Native Arts and Cultures Foundation Fellowship
Alaska Governors Individual Artist Award
- 2008 Rasmuson Fellowship, Anchorage, AK
- 2007 Eiteljorg Museum Fellowship, Indianapolis, IN
- 2005 Anchorage Alaska Mayors Individual Arts Award

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Andrew Kreps
Gallery

Museum of Contemporary Native Art, Santa Fe
Alaska State Museum, Juneau, AK
Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK
British Royal Museum, London, England
Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis, IN
Hood Museum, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH
National Museum of the American Indian, New York, NY
Nordamerika Native Museum, Zurich, Switzerland
University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks, AK
Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, Anchorage, AK
Anchorage School District, Chugiak High School, Chugiak, AK
Anchorage School District, South Anchorage High School, Anchorage
AK
Cook Inlet Region Incorporated, Anchorage, AK
Denaina Civic Convention Center, Anchorage, AK
Fairbanks Airport, Fairbanks, AK
Kawerak, Inc., Nome, AK
Nome-Beltz High School, Nome, AK
Shell Anchorage Corporate Office, Anchorage, AK
Ted Stevens International Airport, Anchorage, AK