

## **RON SENUNGETUK BIOGRAPHY**

Born in Wales, Alaska, on the western tip of the Seward Peninsula, Senungetuk grew up with traditional Inupiaq values, surrounded by a rich cultural heritage. His creative talents and intellect were recognized at an early age and he was sent to study at the Bureau of Indian Affairs high school in Sitka, Alaska. Senungetuk then went on to receive his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the School for American Craftsman at the Rochester Institute of Technology, and a degree from Statens Handverks og Kunstindustri Skole, Oslo, Norway, where he studied sculpture and metalsmithing. He is the recipient of many distinguished honors and awards including a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Oslo, Norway, 1960 - 1961; the State of Alaska Governor's Award for the Arts, 1979; and named Professor of Art, Emeritus, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 1986.

Dedicated to the creative spirit and an objective to provide educational opportunities for young Native artists, Senungetuk founded and directed the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) Native Arts Center (1965-1986) and was head of the UAF Art Department from 1977 until his retirement in 1986. He has been a teacher, mentor, and supporter of talented Alaska Native students who might not have otherwise had the aspiration or opportunity to attend college. During his UAF tenure, he advocated to keep the center active for both established and emerging Native artists who did not necessarily meet the typical university enrollment requirements.

Senungetuk continues to produce art, participating in many group shows, invitationals, and solo exhibitions. He regularly serves on public art committees and national and local art and craft advisory boards. He is a frequent speaker, presenter, and panelist addressing subjects including cultural identity, contemporary Native art, and traditional Alaska Native art.

Senungetuk currently resides in Homer with his wife, Turid, also an artist.