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The Contemporary Living Art
Mattiusi Iyaituk, Theresie Tunilik, Natar Ungalaq, Charlie Kogvik, Joseph Suqsluk, William Gruben, John Terriak, Charlie Inukpuk

Departments

Editorial
Following Their Dreams 3

Focus
Mike Massie of Labrador 16

Reviews: Exhibitions
Images of the Land by Kate O'Rourke 44
Shamanism in Inuit Art by Maureen Flynn-Burhoe 48

Reviews: Books
Confessions of an Igloo Dweller by John Ayre 42
Our Boots: An Inuit Women's Art by Jeanne L'Esperance 51

In Retrospect
Malaya Akulukjuk — A Tribute by Deborah Hickman 53

Update 59
At the Galleries 67
Letters 70
Advertiser Index 70
Calendar 71
Views 72

Cover photo ...
May-Tea, 1991, Mike Massie, Stephenville, Newfoundland (sterling silver, maple; 16 x 14 x 7 cm; Arts of the Arctic).
Photo: Robert Keziere

Igloolik Video: An Organic Response from a Culturally Sound Community
by Kathleen Fleming
"As a form of creative expression, independent video production in Igloolik lies at the intersection of art and television, the latest example of how people can assimilate a medium effectively and use it for their own ends."

Mary Kunuk: From Printmaking to Computer-Animated Video

Mary Kunuk: From Printmaking to Computer-Animated Video
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Following Their Dreams

When, as a staff of one, I was struggling to find material for yet another issue of Inuit Art Quarterly — and a way to pay for it — I would have been cheered to know that our tenth anniversary would be marked with a greatly expanded publication communicating what the artists think and care about. It started as a 20-page newsletter, but the Quarterly has grown with the artists. In the early days, we had little choice but to rely on safe art — “memory art” as it has been called — but as Inuit become more sure of themselves, we have access to more contemporary work. As Theresie Tungilik writes in this issue, “Our art continues to document our past, but it also reflects the life we are living now.”

The focus of this, our tenth anniversary issue, is the contemporary living art of Inuit. Appropriately, we open with remarks from a number of artists, some living and working in the home communities in the Northwest Territories, Labrador and Nunavik, and others, like William Gruben from Tuktoyaktuk, living in the South. They talk about the tools and materials they use and the meaning artmaking has for them.

There has been a marked change in attitude among many artists over the 10 years we have been publishing this periodical. People are timid about departing from the norms established for “Inuit art” several decades ago by traders and public servants, but the Inuit Art Foundation continues to encourage the most talented among them to follow their dreams. Some are taking up the challenge.

Although carving is largely the domain of an older generation of unilingual Inuit, their only way to participate in the wage economy, there is a growing number of new-generation carvers who are determined to do contemporary work. There are some visionary dealers and curators supporting their efforts, but generally the system remains conservative. As Mattiusi Iyaituk writes in this issue, some people “don’t give us the freedom to create what we want with what we want.” A survey conducted in 1989 for our Inuit Art World issue revealed that the majority of dealers were adamantly opposed to Inuit using “non-traditional” materials. The consensus was that they should stick to “soapstone” and hand tools. This is a significant constraint for artists who need to balance the desire to explore media and ideas with the necessity of supporting themselves and their families. Nonetheless, some are forging ahead: Mike Mastic of Goose Bay is working on a series of silver teapots based on the tuq image; the prize-winning videomakers in Igloolik have made an imported medium their own; Mary Kunuk, also of Igloolik, is experimenting with printmaking and computer animation; Mattiusi Iyaituk, of Ivujivik, is dreaming of creating a series of monumental sculptures incorporating stone, steel and wood. In a word, Inuit artists are discovering who they are.
Mattiusi Iyaituk

"In the North, we don't have schools where we can go to learn how to make sculpture. My brother was always carving and one day I decided to take a piece of stone that he had chipped off his work. That's how I became interested in carving. In the North we learn by watching because we don't have texts, written texts about art in our culture. We learn by observing.

"Now I use power tools, diamond blades, and everything. I like working with dark green serpentine, which is so hard that you cannot carve it with regular hand tools. In Northern Quebec we don't normally have serpentine. The serpentine that I am working with came to Ivujivik by ship about 28 years ago, but it was too hard for the local artists to use. I find it in the sand where it was dumped. Houses have been built around it because Ivujivik is very sandy and the stone was used to strengthen the ground.

"When I first started carving, I was using regular hand tools — hacksaws, axes, chisels, files and sandpaper. I learned about the use of power tools during a workshop at the Ottawa School of Art in 1992. I am now able to work with hard stone like marble, hard stone that I normally would not be able to carve.

"If I use steatite soapstone, I can make it shine, but it's so porous that you can't get the same polish that you can get on the serpentine. Because it's hard material you can get a glass finish on serpentine. I also use alabaster in different colours — orange, pink, green — and crystalline alabaster, which I like to use for faces.

"We don't have a written history of our culture. Some people are starting now to use computers to produce a text about our culture. But in the beginning, when we started carving, it was to record the history of the people.

"In the future I would like to see freedom for artists to use the materials that they feel comfortable with. For instance, I did a wood carving with stone inlay. That was the first wood carving that I had ever done. And I was impressed by what I can do with wood. I have also done a carving using a piece of copper as a beak, a bird with a copper beak. In the North, people don't see that as 'Inuit art,' but to me, it's just like anything else in the world. Everything is evolving, for better or worse. Some people don't allow... 'allow' is not the correct word — they don't give us the freedom to create what we want with what we want.

"I've tried to tell them that an artist has the right to create what he feels. When I think of people telling us, 'Okay, you do it this way, or you do it that way,' I feel it's like they are putting people on an assembly line telling us the size to make, the material to use. That I would like to see changed.

"I work outside because working with power tools creates a lot of dust. I have a shack where I can do some inside work, but normally in the wintertime, because it's not heated and there's no ventilation, I'm obliged to work outside for heavy grinding or chipping. I can do water sanding inside. It takes a lot longer than in the summertime because the mask freezes in the cold and doesn't work anymore after a while. It's good for maybe only 15 or 20 minutes at this time of the year, when it's 40° below.

"When I went to that first workshop at the Ottawa School of Art, a doctor explained to us the danger of breathing stone dust. At the time I felt sick to my stomach because I hadn't known that there was any danger from stone dust. I was on the verge of quitting being an artist. But she also introduced us to safety equipment such as masks and eyeglasses.
“Sometimes I wish I could get a job. But being an artist I have the freedom of not having to work from nine to five, of being able to make money when I feel inspired to do art.

“I get my inspiration from the people around me, from family life or life on the land, and sometimes the stone provides the inspiration. When I look at the stone I can imagine in my mind what is in it. It might take only one second to decide what’s in there. Or it might take a long time until it decides for you what it wants to be. Also, if you want to create a particular thing, you look for the right stone.

“When you look at my sculpture, you don’t understand all of it. That way, you have the freedom to dream. Everyone has their own opinions about art, so I just give titles to each piece and leave the rest for dreams.

“I started to do abstract forms in 1979. One day, I was doing a sculpture of a man but I didn’t like it. So I just made shapes on one side. Since then, I have been doing sculptures using abstract forms. I also inlay different materials such as caribou antler or different coloured stone for faces or other details like tools. The inlaying of bone faces is an old form of art used by earlier Inuit sculptors. My work is in both worlds. The abstract forms I use are considered by many to be a modern way of doing art, but I combine these abstract forms with the old Inuit technique of inlaying.

“Before 1979, I was doing my sculpture the way I saw it done in Ivujivik, Quebec. I used to put detail on my work like everyone else until I fell in love with abstract form. It makes me feel good to work with abstract form, therefore I know it is the right kind of art for me.”

The above is an excerpt from an interview with Dave Depper, recorded in Ottawa in February 1995.
Theresie Tungilik

My late father, Marc Tungilik, provided me with ivory ulus, knives, forks and spoons and hair barrettes. He made me wooden dolls. My mother, Angugatsiaq, taught me how to make clothing for them. This type of teaching went on among Inuit, to prepare the young to be good at what they would do with real things later on in life. My views about Inuit art are probably completely different from curators and others who work in museums. But maybe we do not completely differ.

In Inuit life, a woman is usually judged by how well she can sew. In the olden days, every woman had to be a good parent, wife, seamstress, designer, cook, counsellor and teacher. She had to be a “Jane of all trades” in order to survive our former nomadic life. Men had to be good hunters in order to provide for the family, make their own hunting tools and know how to skin animals the right way (depending upon how the skin was going to be used). The passing on of traditional skills meant survival for the child in later life. But as times changed, so did we. We didn’t have much chance.

Carving was a part of our lives. Cookware was carved and so were dolls and toys and tools. Before we had cash, our possessions showed how wealthy we were. Being a perfectionist in the things you did was imposed at a very early age. Men taught their sons to be good hunters and taught them how to skin animals and how to store food for the winter. And they taught them songs that were important for social acceptance. They taught them to know the land, how to read the land, to identify good hunting grounds. Women taught their daughters to be good seamstresses and to be fussy about how the skins were cared for. Women who did not do so well in sewing were snickered at and hunters who were lazy were treated in the same fashion. This drove young people to want to do their best.

Sunny Day, 1994, Theresie Tungilik, Rankin Inlet (stroud, embroidery, beads, felt, sealskin; 62.5 x 72.0 cm; collection of the artist).

For, once they became young adults, they had to be very good at everything that married people were expected to do.

The missionaries told the Inuit that shamanism was wrong, that they now had to live to please the Heavenly God only. Little did the missionaries realize that, before their arrival, Inuit had their own golden rules. Though its power was feared by many Inuit, shamanism was used to help the Inuit. During poor hunting seasons, shamans would use their power to help locate animals or to heal the sick, and in some cases to help alter one’s unfortunate future life.

Once Inuit stopped being nomadic and moved into settlements, some of the old ways were stopped forever. Inuit
started making carvings, exchanging them for cash. They had carved before, but now they were doing it to buy food and other items. But their memory of the life of their ancestors and the life they had just recently left lived on in their artwork. The legends and old life were immortalized in carvings of ivory, soapstone, whalebone, baleen, caribou antlers or hooves. Women expressed themselves in wall hangings and drawings and by transferring traditional clothing patterns from animal skins to store-bought materials. Our oral tradition is also slowly transforming, becoming a written form.

I feel we are the last people to have lived a primitive life in Canada. We have gone through some big changes very fast, but we still live like nomads once school is out. Our art continues to document our past, but it also reflects the life we are living now. Today is the reality for our children, and they are growing up completely different from us. My generation went from living in igloos to going away from home to school in a different culture. We adapted to that. Some of us think now that we have the best of both worlds. What all this means is that there will definitely be changes in the art we create. We once worked very hard to keep up with the new world; now the world has to try to keep up with us.

Teresie Tungilik, from Rankin Inlet, Northwest Territories, is president of the Inuit Art Foundation.

Natar Ungalaq

try to do different art. I used to make mostly the same kind of carvings, but now I try to create new things. I can work with anything. I can work with stone. I can work with ivory and bone. But I prefer soapstone because it's soft. It's more 'creatable.'

I started carving when I was nine or ten years old. I saw people doing it and learned on my own. But I ended up using my grandparents' tools. We aren't having a problem getting tools, but we need a good place to work. People here have been working in little shacks. We have received funding to turn an empty building into a studio and we hope it will open soon. We bought the building from the government for a dollar. It has a ventilation system. That's very important. The artists will use their own tools.

"In the past, I thought I wasn't a real artist, but through the foundation, I've found that I am an artist. They published my art. Now I'm a well-known carver.

"Some people say the art is dying. Is Inuit art dying? I don't think so. I think it's going to stay forever. The only way it will die is if we run out of rock."

The above is an excerpt from an interview with Dave Depper, recorded in Ottawa in February 1995.
attended the first workshop given by the Inuit Art Foundation. Working with other well-known artists was very interesting, very educational for me. It was like meeting movie stars. I learned a lot from them. I was 15 when I started carving. What got me started was school. I was always into art; I really enjoyed it. My mother and father did a lot of sculpting, and my mother also made wall hangings depicting images from stories and legends. I was influenced by them, and my granny also. She was blind, but she did a lot with her hands. I'd ask her: 'How could you do this? You can't see.' But she did it just by feeling. And she said: 'When you take your time, anything is possible. You don't have to see to do it.'

The way I see it, our art is part of a tradition that is still going strong. There are a lot of things you can put into stone.

You can put stories into stone, legends that a lot of us will forget. But they will still be there in the stone.

"It hits the spot to know that there are all types of art in the world, but more and more people everywhere are getting interested in Inuit art, and wanting to know more about it and our lifestyle. That makes you feel even stronger. It makes you want to produce more.

"I always believed that if there was a better marketing system, the artists in the North would be a lot more creative, and put a lot more into their work. When I'm up north, and when I want to create something, I try to spend as little time as possible on a piece. But when I'm in the South working, I spend more time on a piece because I am doing my own marketing. The thing is the price difference. When middlemen are involved, an artist doesn't get as much as he would if he were to market his own work. There have been a lot of discussions about that by Inuit artists. I try to explain the marketing system, why art is sold in the South for so much more than they received.

"I always feel when you're in the North and you're working with stone, you're very limited to working in the way the stores want. For instance, if you wanted to inlay copper arms or plastic on a piece, usually the Northern store or the co-op won't accept it. If an artist had more freedom to be creative, I think you would see a lot of different styles of work.

"If the foundation wasn't here, I think we would still be struggling in the same old way. A lot of the artists wouldn't even be taking precautions [against dust]. The foundation sends educational comics to the North — about safety and other troubles that artists face, like copyright. Just anything that can aid an artist. It's a good, fun way to educate. I would like to see the marketing agencies working with one another. Maybe they could help by putting up studios so that the artists would have a decent place to work. That's what I would like to see. I'd like to see the market joining hands with the artists.

"A lot of artists are now more aware of what's happening and I know there are going to be a lot of changes over the next couple of years. I know that artists will soon be a lot happier."

The above is an excerpt from an interview with Dave Dopper, recorded in Ottawa in February 1995.

Charlie Kogvik

Angatuk vs. Nuliayuk, 1991, Charlie Kogvik, Baker Lake (Brazilian soapstone; 17.0 x 15.5 x 9.5 cm; private collection).
I do mostly soapstone. Some whalebone, not too much. That's about it, except when I go down south to try other types of stone, like marble. About two years ago, I was awarded a scholarship by the Inuit Art Foundation to go to Vermont, where I did some work with pneumatic tools. I'd never used them before; it was good.

"I've been an artist for more than 20 years. When I was 15 or 16 years old, I had a job but noticed that people were making money from carving. I tried it and found that just about anything I carved, I could sell. So I just kept on doing it. Not seriously at first. It was only about eight years ago that I started really carving.

"My grandfather and my uncle carved. My grandfather's brothers used to carve. I watched and learned. Also, when I was very young — maybe six or seven years old — I found a piece of soapstone out on the land in a tent. I filed it down to a fine finish and when I showed it to my grandfather, he told me I was a very good carver. He paid me for all the hard work I did. I thought it was pretty good, so I just kept on going.

"Our main problem now is getting soapstone. We used to be able to just go to the quarry and pick stone up off the ground. The stone was all on top. For many years now, the loose stone has been gone and we have to dig it out of the ground. And you can't really do that until summertime. We can't reach it by boat or by anything else in summer. The only time we can reach it at all is in the wintertime, by skidoo and sleds. Our main problem is getting an aeroplane to fly up there and dig it out for the winter. We can't even get it back to the community when we dig it out in the summer because it's too heavy. We need some money to get a plane to the quarry so we can dig stone out in the summer with a few guys. We'd leave them out there for a while to dig it out like they did two years ago. That soapstone lasted for about two seasons but this spring it's all gone again.

"The Inuit Art Foundation is not only educating people down south about Inuit art, they are also educating northerners about southern ways of dealing with Inuit art. They have given us the opportunity to interact with other artists. Some of [those artists'] ideas about art are different from ours, but sometimes we find they have the same ideas."

Thanksgiving, 1991. Joseph Suqsluk, Gjoa Haven (Brazilian soapstone, strawberry alabaster; 12 x 14 x 10 cm; private collection).

"Before, I thought I could only work the way that people who were buying my pieces wanted. I thought that was the only reason why I was carving. Because I needed the money, and I had to produce something that the purchaser wanted. But after going to meetings and workshops organized by the Inuit Art Foundation, I learned that as an artist I can do whatever — I can carve whatever I want. I don't have to just think about selling."

The above is an excerpt from an interview with Dave Depper, recorded in Ottawa in June 1994.
The Contemporary Living Art

William Gruben

I started carving because I wanted to interpret my own thoughts about the stories that I used to hear from elders. I've always liked art; I've always drawn or painted or whittled in wood, but I wanted to try carving in stone. I wanted to know how it felt to look at a piece after you've worked on it and to see if you've come close to what you saw in your mind.

"If I had to describe my style, I'd say that I try to put a lot of movement in most of my work. If I'm doing human figures, I usually portray them engaged in some aspect of Inuit life, like fishing, hunting a seal, or travelling in a kayak. I think it is the desire to portray some aspect of our culture that inspires me to carve."

There were probably three or four carvers in Tuktoyaktuk who inspired me to carve. Big Philip used to sit outside his house in the spring and summer. I would stop and sit with him and watch him, when he used to carve. He used to do some very intricate work with caribou antler, and his style was more realistic, with some abstract overtones. But his work always seemed to have some movement.

Another person would be Jimmy Jacobson; he was more abstract and did a lot of larger pieces. The thing that I liked about his work was that every piece he did had a story or represented some aspect of our culture. The third would be Frederick Robert Gruben. What he used to say to me was that if you know how to draw, you'll probably be a good carver. So I think that those comments that he made gave me the curiosity to try my hand at carving.

"My carvings are realistic in that they tend to represent some aspect of our daily lives as we try to live off the land. Whoever looks at my carving may get a little understanding of the effort and the ingenuity that Inuit need to live in the Arctic."

The first time I carved stone was in Calgary. It was a polar bear and it was the first time I had used a power tool. It was in Brazilian soapstone, and I was cutting away some parts of the stone because it was so soft. I was [accidentally] taking off parts of the feet, the legs, the neck, but I finished it because I wanted to see how my first effort would turn out. It was a very good experience because I learned that you have to be careful and take your time. You can't rush. I learned all that from that first carving.

"There are two carvings that I thought I did a particularly good job on. One was of a polar bear climbing up a rise on a little bank. It has one foot up in the air and is turning back to whoever is looking at the carving. The scene was taken from an actual photo that Robert Kuptana shot, and I think I managed to take the
movement that I saw in the photograph and make it come through in the carving. The other one is of a hunter with a spear going up an iceberg, and there's a bear made out of ivory and it is backing off the edge of the bank. That one was made of black soapstone, and the contrast between that and the ivory was quite sharp.

"I use soapstone, some ivory, some caribou antler when it's available, but mostly soapstone. I like the harder stone because you can do more detail, whereas with the softer stone such as Brazilian, you deal more with form. You can't really do smaller details because it will break, whereas with the harder stone, it will hold to the point where you can turn form into detail, which in my opinion gives a lot more movement to the carving.

"I try and look into what the stone is holding inside until I actually start carving and taking away bits of the stone that don't belong, to bring out a form or a shape. Then it is more of a collaboration between the stone and myself. If the stone is in blocks that have been cut into squares, that represents a little more structure and I have a fairly good idea of what I want to do. If it is a rough piece of stone that just has the base, I find that more exciting because I'm actually working with the stone.

"I don't know if this is the same for everybody, but every carving that I do, I always feel a little bit nervous because I wonder if I'm going to do it justice. And look into what the stone is holding inside until I actually start carving and taking away bits of the stone that don't belong, to bring out a form or a shape. Then it is more of a collaboration between the stone and myself. If the stone is in blocks that have been cut into squares, that represents a little more structure and I have a fairly good idea of what I want to do. If it is a rough piece of stone that just has the base, I find that more exciting because I'm actually working with the stone.

"I don't know if this is the same for everybody, but every carving that I do, I always feel a little bit nervous because I wonder if I'm going to do it justice. But I always start."

The above is an excerpt from an interview with William's wife, Gayle Gruben, recorded in Ottawa in November 1995, for a CD-ROM project she undertook in the Cultural Industries Training Program.

money to spend. This lasted a few years but then the economy took a turn for the worse. Money became scarce and carvers became disorganized again. But there were a few of us who kept on doing what we do best - carving. There was still a market for well-made carvings so we managed to keep food on the table. We were isolated again but we survived.

In 1988 or 1989, Gilbert Hay was nominated to the board of directors of the Inuit Art Foundation. At that time the foundation was a mystery to us, but Gilbert came back and, along with Bill Ritchie (IAF employee) and Dick Andersen, organized Sananuqat Katikaligengit Labradorimi [Labrador Artists' Association]. There was a local market in Goose Bay for our work, and a teacher by the name of Herb Brown began buying carvings for resale. This was good for us until he moved to Happy Valley and we lost touch for a while. Herb set up a small gallery in his home and it slowly helped to expose the Inuit art world to the rest of Labrador.

About four years ago, the Inuit Art Foundation held a two-week carving workshop in Nain in a studio provided by the Labrador Inuit Development Corporation. Two carvers were sent by the Foundation as instructors, Charlie Kogvik and Mattiusi lyaituk. This workshop was a real eye-opener for most of the Labrador carvers. We were taught how to use power tools and we saw how other carvers worked. Using power tools makes the work of carving much easier, but we still need to finish with a file and polish by hand. At about this time, the Tornasök Cultural Association became interested and another workshop was organized with the same instructors. This time we learned about critiquing our carvings and how to photograph our work. A representative of the North West Company attended this workshop as well to talk to us about marketing. Soon, a buying system was set up through the Tornasök Cultural Institute using a video phone. The North West Company would offer us a price and we could accept or decline the offer as we saw fit.
Charlie Inukpuk

"We lived in Nauligaqvik, at the time that Inuit lived in houses. There were no white people in Nauligaqvik. We settled here [Inukjuak] in the 1960s or mid-1970s. It was for purposes of education that we moved. Everyone was aware that those who had a child had to go to Inukjuak to stay. The reason the parents moved was because of their children's education.

"I have never had a real job. I work in construction at this time and as a garbage collector. In the 1950s, I think, that's when I started to carve. I have never been taught, but I learned by watching back then when we lived in the camps where there were no white people. That's how I learned, from watching my father and other carvers.

"When we lived in Nauligaqvik, where I first learned to carve, we could get soapstone from the point of Nauligaqvik. I don't recall exactly what my very first carving was. Back then, we just carved. If the carvings were small, we could make around ten in a week. We just carved to sell while we worked.

"During the 1960s and 1970s, we made good money from carvings. We would go very far to get soapstone. For three consecutive years, we would go by skidoo to a place near Salluit. The soapstone we got there was soft. I went there three times during the 1980s.

"The carvings I spent a long time on were carvings of Inuit making kayaks. Those were the ones I enjoyed carving. I stopped making carvings in 1983, when the buying of carvings ended. It seemed there were no more buyers, so I joined the labour force. But sometimes, someone from the South specifically asks me to make a carving and I do so.

"I have made many carvings but I don't really remember them all. I carved several of a polar bear in a fight with an Inuk. Although I've done other carvings, that was one of the ones I enjoyed most.

"When I first started carving, the main challenge was determining the hardness of the soapstone since the density varies. It was easier to work with the softer stone. I would start off by axe-chipping it, and as I was doing this I would start visualizing it. The shape of the stone also provided me with ideas. As I axed it gradually, my thoughts would go: 'This is shaping like this... It is going to be...' and the carving being formed would begin following my thoughts from there.

"The Inuit who make good carvings, who still carve today — people like Lucassie Iqaluk, for instance — do really good work. I don't think they have ever stopped carving. I carved according to the shape of the soapstone, but I think I made the hands too large. When the soapstone felt too fragile, I just made the best of it.

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"We used shoe polish [to darken the stone] because it made the carvings more attractive and shiny, the black polish. We used to polish the carving by getting it hot and then applying the polish. The soapstone I was talking about earlier, the stone we got from far away, isn't the best type of soapstone. The people who lived at that place had developed their own polishing technique which they taught us. We also used sandpaper.

"I don't know, however, what the carving looked like after a period of time. When it was freshly polished, it looked very attractive. But I don't know if it went back to the original white after it was handled a lot, or if the polish stayed. I made several ivory carvings inland when we were trapping. Since I didn't have soapstone, I carved the ivory. I think that would have been in the 1970s, when we went on long hunting trips inland. We used to carry material like walrus tusk to carve instead of soapstone on those trips. I have never carved anything other than soapstone or ivory, not even white soapstone.

"You can tell by looking at a carving if the person has taken time with it or not. Soapstone only looks attractive if it isn't done in a hurry. It's easy to tell a carving that was made without rushing just by looking at it.

"Now I sometimes carve doll heads, but I don't carve to sell for myself anymore. Just little things for baskets [handles].

"I did enjoy carving, but it is so unprofitable to do it here. I admire those who continue to carve even though it provides such a small income. There were those who were able to continue despite the decrease in carving sales. Some, however, could not continue making carvings anymore because of the low price."

The above is an excerpt from an interview with Louis Gagnon, recorded in Inukjuak in July 1995.
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Mike Massie of Labrador

Mike Massie is a painter, carver and silversmith living in Stephenville, Newfoundland. He was interviewed by telephone on November 7, 1995 by Matthew Fox.

Leaf Brooch, 1990 (sterling silver, 22K gold; 3¼ x ½ in.; private collection).

All photography by Mike Massie unless otherwise noted.

Matthew Fox: First of all, what is your general impression of Labrador Inuit art?

Mike Massie: There is some nice work coming out — textile work, like moccasins and parkas — and there seem to be many more carvers than there used to be. Maybe that is a result of the Labrador carving workshop sponsored by the Inuit Art Foundation in 1991. Overall, work is looking very good.

Fox: How do you think Inuit art in Labrador is different from Inuit art in other parts of Canada?

Mike Massie: Labrador artists are just starting to come into the mainstream. I have travelled in the North to Gjoa Haven and Iqaluit, and I was able to see some of the styles there. Labrador artists certainly have their own style, particularly those who are serious and who have been carving for a number of years. The carvings that I have seen over recent years are much improved. Unfortunately, there isn’t enough emphasis on art in Labrador. Just when something starts up, it gets shut down — the facilities aren’t there, the qualified instructors aren’t there to help, to show examples of other Canadian art. That is the problem. I find Labrador artists base a lot of their work on what’s going on in their environment. I find my work is representative of what is going on, too. In Gjoa Haven, the work is more spiritual, more mystical. In Labrador, the work is based more on everyday happenings.

Fox: You are not what many people would consider a typical Inuit artist. How do you see yourself fitting into that description of Labrador art?

Massie: Grade 6 was the last year that I had anything to do with art. It was depressing because it was one of my foundations that I could go into and be relaxed. I had been drawing since I was about five or six, and I always enjoyed it. When I finished high school, I knew I wanted to get into the arts, but I didn’t venture out to see what was there. I did a commercial-art course in St. John’s for a year, and then I came home for a couple more years.

Right: Ulu Bowl, 1990 (sterling silver, purple heartwood; 3½ x 2½ x 3½ in.; collection of Erla Arbuckle).

In 1986 I went back to school in Newfoundland, where I did a visual arts course. That was the big turning point for me. Finally I was able to sit down with a lot of other Newfoundland artists. I might have been the only one from Labrador at the time. From there, I went to the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and did four years of study, with three years in jewellery. It is just something I have always wanted to do. There were so many different types of art to work on —

sculpture, jewellery, painting, drawing, printmaking and photography. Unfortunately, in Labrador, there wasn’t any other place to do it. The facilities aren’t there, which is depressing because there are a lot of very talented people who seem to be quite interested in doing art. People don’t like to venture out into larger centres; they find it too distracting and confusing, which is understandable, especially if you come from a small community. But I just wanted to do whatever I could with art. With my teapots, earrings and brooches, I have a tendency to go back to a story years ago when I was down at my grandparents’ old house, when I was camping with my father and we came across an old ulu.

I have always kept it as a souvenir, and I have always been intrigued by its shape. I never really grew up in the Inuit culture. I didn’t grow up living off the land or anything. I grew up in a white community. I hunted and fished, but it wasn’t my living. I always found it interesting trying to understand my background, and to understand and try to relate to what Inuit do and how they live.

Fox: Do you feel like you are part of two different worlds, being part Inuit and yet being brought up in a southern environment?

I am part Inuit and part Qablunaaq; I might as well combine the two and come up with something different.

Massie: I must say that it gets kind of confusing at times. I remember that in one of my first jewellery classes, I was making some earrings — I think they were komatiks [sleds] — and a lot of my ulu designs were just starting to emerge. The instructor came up to me one day and said she wasn’t too impressed with students who were trying to copy other cultures. I asked, “What do you mean?” and she said. “Well, if you are African…” She didn’t really say it but I got her point. She was saying that I shouldn’t be copying what I didn’t really understand. I told her that I was part Inuit and that I was trying to understand this. At the time, she didn’t realize that I was Inuit. It gets confusing. While I was teaching up north, one of my students told me that I wasn’t an Inuk, that I was more a Qablunaq. And I said, “That’s true, I did grow up in that environment, but I have always tried to understand cultures are, especially being part Inuit.” I have always wanted to understand the Inuit and their beliefs.

Teaching in the North for two years helped me to understand people and their culture.

Fox: And do you feel more a part of that culture now?

Massie: More than I ever have. Even now, people ask me why I am making Inuit art and I just tell them that I am part Inuit, and right now, that is what I am comfortable with. I really want to try and understand it more. I just want to be able
to put it out visually. It's interesting because my painting doesn't take on any Inuit images whatsoever, but when I do some stone carving — I really don't know why, but these are the images that are coming out. I didn't sit down and plan it; I didn't work out those designs, it just came about. And with jewellery — I've heard that Inuit should not be making jewellery because it's not traditional. I say that experimentation is what it's all about. It doesn't matter if it isn't traditional. I think experimentation is a way to understand, if you are interested in art.

**Fox:** Do you feel that formal training helped promote that sort of experimentation?

**Massie:** Yes, because when I went to school here in Stephenville, the first year we had to do everything. In the first three months, you might do photography, sculpture, painting and printmaking. And the next three months, you would do three or four different things. It gave me a chance to try these mediums, which was good because if you got tired, or if you really didn't want to try painting this time around, then the next semester you could try something else. When it came to my teapots, if I had a problem with a spout or a handle, I would sit down and talk about it and work out my problems with one of my best friends, who was into ceramics and who also made teapots. Because ceramics and silversmithing are a lot alike, in experimenting you discover that a problem in one area might help you with a problem in another area. It's those kinds of things that interest me, because we are only here for a short time and, in my opinion, it's more exciting to try as many different things as you can, in as many different mediums as you can. I think that art in general is nothing but an experience of life.

**Fox:** How do you think other people perceive you as an artist?

**Massie:** People have made comments about the strange objects that I have made. I was at the CNE [Canadian National Exhibition] in Toronto last August, and I received some great responses from the people who own galleries and from the general public. I wasn't there to worry about making money. I just wanted to go up and see what kind of response I was going to get. Unfortunately, I had only one finished teapot and other partially finished teapots to show, but what they saw they liked. The response I am getting is the one that I am looking for. I haven't really had a negative response yet, but if I do, that is fine too. Not everyone can agree.

**Fox:** I am going to make an assumption here and I may be wrong in this, but I would think that a lot of galleries dealing with Canadian art would want to show your work and present you as a Canadian artist, rather than strictly as an Inuit artist. There are a lot of Inuit artists whose work would only be shown if it portrayed stereotypical Inuit images, because Inuit are always put into a pigeonhole. Now I don't know if that assumption is right or not.
Massie: I kind of agree because one of my really good friends, who was also one of my first instructors, asked me one time why I was making Inuit art if I didn’t really understand it. Well, a lot of times I do feel that I am caught between two worlds. So what I try to do is incorporate Inuit images, like the ulu. When my teapots are finished, hopefully they will convey what I am trying to get across here. I am part Inuit and part Qablunaaq; I might as well combine the two and come up with something different. I don’t really want to be considered a stereotypical Inuit artist in that sense. All I really want to do is express what I see. If it comes out as being Inuit, then I think that is fine; if it comes out as being contemporary, that is also fine. I think a lot of times I have a tendency to put the two of them together to see what happens.

Fox: Do you sometimes get angry at what seems to be a system in which Inuit artists, if they are not working in a certain type of stone, or drawing certain types of images, are not going to be shown in galleries?

Massie: Yes. That really gets me. I had that experience in Goose Bay this year. I was talking with a gallery owner who said she didn’t like to get any wood carvings from Inuit artists. I don’t understand that. I don’t understand how people can think that just because you are an Inuit artist, you have to carve in stone. I don’t agree with that: it is too limiting to an artist. Beauty — like I tried to explain to my students — is not in the material itself, but in the work that is produced. What I find quite interesting is that Inuit pick up techniques and the function of tools instantly; it seems natural to them. They pick up things so quickly and so easily. It is very restrictive to an artist to do things only one way. I saw one carving student while I was working up north — he wasn’t my student — and his work in sculpture class was okay, but when he was given a video camera, it was amazing the way he produced images on the screen. He was more comfortable with the video camera than he was with the carving tool. I have a problem with these restrictions, because once you start offering different things to different people, you are going to start finding that they might prefer to do painting over stone carving, or they might prefer to do textiles, cinematography, anything at all. When people are given the opportunity to experiment, that is what I appreciate.

Fox: How do you think other Inuit artists break out of that stereotype? You seem to have done it quite successfully. Is there any specific advice you can give or any comment you can make on that?

Massie: Well, trying different mediums is one. If you find it hard with one, try another. There is nothing wrong with that. Also, be true to yourself. Don’t ever take offense when someone says they don’t like it. Not everyone will like what you do, that is only natural. As long as you are true to yourself and if that is what you are comfortable with, go for it. I never did agree with the idea that you
have to please others before you please yourself. I have always found that you have to please yourself, and while you are trying to please yourself you please others, especially in your work. If you are out there just to please others all the time, a lot of times what you want to do or what you really want to say gets lost. Never be afraid to experiment.

Fox: Do you have any concerns or problems? Are there certain challenges that you are facing that you would like to overcome?

Massie: Well, financially I am not doing the greatest. The biggest thing I would really like to have for myself and that I am trying to get by next summer is my own studio, where I can work in stone or metal, both in the same building. Right now, those seem to be my two strongest areas. The only other concern I’ve talked about with other carvers is the problem of Labrador artists getting any funding whatsoever to do anything in the arts. I would like to see some sort of facility in Labrador that would be well looked after by responsible people who are trying to meet the needs of the artists.

Fox: What you are doing right now?

Massie: I haven’t taught since June. Arctic College in Iqaluit gave me my first break. Because of the carving workshops in Nain [organized by the Inuit

Oil Decanter, 1990 (sterling silver, brass, copper; 2¾ x 2½ in.; private collection).
Art Foundation], *Inuit Art Quarterly* decided to put one of my jewellery pieces in the magazine and that's what gave me my break in teaching. I went to Gjoa Haven the first year to teach a seven-month jewellery program. That was the first time Arctic College tried that. The second year, I was hired in Iqaluit to teach first-, second- and third-year students in Iqaluit. Then last year, I taught carving in Goose Bay. Since June, I haven't been teaching. Right now, I'm just working on my teapots.

**Fox:** Can you tell me about the teapots, and can you talk about how that project started with the Canada Council grant?

**Massie:** It was interesting. It just started out as a class project at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. It was just before Christmas, and one of our instructors gave us a project to make a vessel. My grandmother, who I was really close to, had passed away in October. Tea was one of her favourite drinks. She was on my mind a lot at the time, so I thought about teapots. I did a bit of research on teapots, and then I just started making them. One of my instructors told me about the Canada Council and how she had been trying for years to get a grant; she suggested that I apply, which I did. They ended up having their jury in Labrador and I got to meet the jurors. Meeting the people face to face might have helped me to get the grant. That was in 1992 and I still haven't finished it yet. I have been working on the ulu design. What I did was use two shapes—one with a concave top and one with a flat top—so there is the half-moon shape and the quarter-moon shape. I want to keep making teapots. I would like to start getting more elaborate with them. Right now, I'm just concentrating on very simple forms which take line into consideration. I'm trying to work with very simple lines and shapes without making them too elaborate, but later on, I would like to be able to work in a more abstract form with the teapots.

**Fox:** How many teapots are you supposed to make for the grant?

**Massie:** I had originally written in my plan that I would make seven tea sets. Unfortunately, after I got my silver, I realized there was no way I was going to be able to make seven tea sets with the amount of silver I had. So I wrote a letter explaining the situation. The Canada Council was most helpful, letting me change the plan to just seven teapots on their own, instead of the original idea of doing a teapot with the sugar bowl, milk container, spoon and tray to go with it.

*Rock Study #2, 1990 (copper, brass; collection of Noranda Inc.)*
Later on, I would like to do a complete tea set. To me, that would be more of a challenge because you have to connect everything together as one.

**Fox:** How many have you completed to date?

**Massie:** Well, I have one that is completely finished. The second one is waiting for the handle, and I am waiting to put on all the handles at the same time. I'm also looking for a few other materials. I'm short on materials again right now, so I'm unable to finish them. There is a third one that needs a handle and a buff.

**Fox:** Does the shortage of materials often get in the way of your work?

**Massie:** For this type of work, yes. It's the amount of silver that I need to do certain parts of the teapot, and if I don't have it, I usually have to wait to make a few extra dollars first. While I'm waiting, I work on the handles, so I can get that much done anyway.

**Fox:** Can you go into more detail about how you applied for the Canada Council grant?

**Massie:** I was just graduating, and a lot of us who were graduating really were not sure what kind of jobs were going to be out there. So we were given different avenues to look down and one was the Canada Council grant. I went to the administration office and I picked up the information and took it back to Labrador when I graduated. I sat down with my wife, Jo-Arm, and she was a great help. It took about three weeks for me to fill out the application and I went over and over it, rewriting and rewriting. Then sent it out, and it was approved. I wasn't expecting half the money I was granted. I was told that not a lot of northern artists apply for Canada Council grants, which is unfortunate because the money is out there to help people get started, to help them buy their tools, to travel, to get experience from other artists. But in talking with people in the North about the grants, I find that people are timid and don't want to even consider trying to answer the application questions. People will say, "Well I just pick up a piece of stone and I carve." That's fine, but I think artists need to be encouraged to keep track of their work with photographs or sketches, and to try and find out how each one relates to the others, through technique or through design. I think all that needs to be done is for artists to look at the work they have done and take that into consideration. If someone is considering working in a new style, write that up in the grant application. Any artist is bound to have new things come out of it.

**Fox:** Unfortunately, it was under the Explorations Program, which was, I think, a victim in the latest round of budget cuts. I may be wrong, but the number of places to apply is decreasing.

**Massie:** Exactly. It's unfortunate because there are a lot of people who are going through school, and it would be amazing what a grant could do for them.
Self Portrait, 1991
(etched and baked:
sterling silver, 22K gold,
copper; 5½ x 3¼ in.;
collection of
Stephen Fox).

Fox: What do you have planned and where do you want to take your art?

Massie: I would like to incorporate silversmithing with stone carving somehow. I have been thinking about that now for the last couple of years, but so far I have only come up with a few simple ideas. I really want to put the two of them together. But until something comes to mind, I’m just looking at Inuit art and contemporary art. And if there’s something that catches my eye, what I will do is make a quick sketch of it and put it in my sketchbook. For now, I just want to work on a carving here and there. If I get a bit tired working in stone, I would like to be able to start working in metal again, and be able to go back and forth, or work on them at the same time.

Fox: Was your first experience with carving when you were at the workshop in Nain?

Massie: Yes. I did sculpture at school here in Stephenville and over at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. But it [the Nain workshop] was my first experience with stone, and it was quite enjoyable. I was quite timid at first to try it, because I had seen the work that other people do and I didn’t expect to be as good as them starting off. But you can’t expect to be good for the first while. So I think working with the two materials together is what I want to do once I finish my teapots. I would like to stop working in silver for a while and work in stone. When I was working in Labrador, I was able to make a few soapstone carvings on my own and I enjoyed it. It’s a different medium, and it’s exciting.

Fox: Is there anything that I haven’t asked about that you want to bring up?

Massie: I’d like to thank the Inuit Art Foundation for having those workshops, because that’s basically where I got a kickstart. I would also like to thank the colleges I’ve worked with for giving me the opportunity, and for all the people I’ve met and the information they gave me. The opportunity to do interviews like this; to have that chance. Other than that, for artists who aren’t quite sure what’s out there, just contact a college or get hold of somebody in your community and see what you can find out. There is lots of schooling available for whatever kind of art you want to do. I know it’s difficult to go to the South, I understand that, but it might help if there were a couple of people who went down together. It makes a big difference if someone you know is there. I know it’s kind of intimidating at times, but that intimidation always goes away.

Fox: Do you think that formal training has a lot of other things to offer without taking away from what artists have learned by themselves?

Massie: I know that some places will have a tendency to kind of restrict you from doing what you normally do. One thing I’ve found is that if you go into class and your instructor wants you to try something different, you should just try it, because you never know what might come out of it. But there is no reason why you can’t continue to do the same thing you would do if you weren’t in the school. I think that the South has a lot to offer, and there are colleges in the North that have a lot to offer, like Arctic College. The idea is, I think, to experiment as much as you can while you can. It doesn’t mean you have to follow the rules; you make your own rules, really. You can learn as much technique as you want, but the idea is to be able to come up with your own ideas and use your own rules, as long as you don’t break them or abuse them. I think that the more information you get, the better you are. Goose Bay is not a very big place, but I was fortunate that my parents took me to Montreal and larger cities when I was younger. The more experience, the better.
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FEATURE

IGLOOLIK VIDEO:
An Organic Response from a Culturally Sound Community

by Kathleen Fleming
My unlikely relationship with Igloolik, a small Inuit settlement located 2,000 miles north of my home in Montreal, has been shaped and determined over the past eight years by the medium of video. I was introduced to people there through video, and it continues to animate and sustain my long-distance relationship with them. As a tool for communicating information, video is irreplaceably vivid and direct. As a form of creative expression, independent video production in Igloolik lies at the intersection of art and television, the latest example of how people can assimilate a medium effectively and use it for their own ends.

Igloolik is unique in northern communications in that video as an active and interactive medium was introduced there around 1979, well before the passive medium of television began flooding homes late in 1983-84. Certain key people managed to get an idea of what they could do with video before being saturated and sapped by the conventions of television. Since that time, video activity in Igloolik has taken a number of dynamic forms that have had an impact on the community: documentation and dissemination of current social and political affairs and traditional techniques; larger, organized shoots on location that dramatically re-enact traditional lifestyles and stories; oral history and inter-village communication projects; fictional animations, and intimate personal and home video experiments. Of the 1,100 people living in Igloolik, over 30 have now had direct professional experience shooting and editing video, preparing story lines and scripts, and fundraising. In turn, many others have now had experience acting, interviewing, narrating and story telling for the camera, and making "sets" and "costumes" (traditional clothes, tents, houses, kayaks and tools) behind the scenes.

Norman Cohn, Paul Qulitaliq, Mary Quilitaliq, Rachel Uyarasuk, Zach Kunuk and two children on location during the filming of Nunaqpa, August 1990.

Igloolik Isuma Productions
A scene from *Ataguttaaluk* (Starvation), produced by the Women's Video Workshop in 1992.


scenes, many of the younger participants getting involved in these things for the first time. The proactive concern that Igloolik videomakers have traditionally had for making “Inuktitut television” continues to expand and diversify.

The “video movement” in Igloolik is not an anachronistic phenomenon arising inexplicably out of nowhere; it is the reasoned, organic response of a culturally strong community within a longer regional history of contact through telecommunications. Technically, the use of video corresponds with the advent of satellite technologies in the North; politically it coincides with the conception, planning and formation of Nunavut, the self-governed Inuit territory that will come into being in 1999.

The advent of television in the North dates back to 1972, when the first Anik-A satellite began beaming radio and telephone signals and CBC television into 17 northern communities. By 1975, unilingual English television was being broadcast into most settlements in the North, but Igloolik refused TV broadcast for 10 years on linguistic and cultural grounds. Igloolik's first official video project — the first systematic attempt to put video equipment at the disposal of Igloolimniut — was the Inukshuk project of 1978–1981, an interactive, inter-village communications project facilitated by the new Anik-B satellite, which allowed six remote communities to talk to each other on TV by means of a satellite link-up in Iqaluit. Paul Aapak got his first professional exposure and training on this project, which involved two years of preparation and eight months of broadcast, sixteen and a half hours per week. The coverage in Inuktitut of local events, issues, consultations and stores that Inukshuk served to disseminate was enthusiastically greeted by communities that had not yet received TV in their own language, and this ultimately led to the creation of the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (IBC) in 1981.

In 1982–83, after travelling to Montreal to buy his own camera, Zach Kunuk joined Aapak and others as an IBC trainee, learning the video production process from start to finish, and collaboratively producing one half-hour program every week. In 1983, after a minimum of Inuktitut programming had been guaranteed by IBC and the federal government,
Igloolik was the last community to accept television broadcast. IBC used late-night CBC Northern Service airtime to broadcast five hours a week of community-produced video. Although Inuktitut television was now entrenched in the broadcast system, compared to the pilot project, the actual airtime for Inuktitut programming was drastically reduced, and the interactive component done away with altogether.

IBC activity has continued in Igloolik and elsewhere against the odds: geographic dispersal, bureaucracy and funding cutbacks, and cultural difference with board members. Aapak continues to produce IBC projects on contract, and other IBC trainee/employees from Igloolik have included Simon Quassa, Paul Quillipi, Jake Kadluk, who has recently returned from IBC Iqaluit, and Julie Ivalu, who singlehandedly runs the IBC office in Igloolik, producing eight and a half minutes of current-affairs and other stories each week on a shoestring budget.

Today, IBC broadcasts its five hours — less than four per cent of which comes from Igloolik — on TVNC, a new network licenced by the CRTC in 1991 and dedicated to airing 100 hours a week of exclusively Native programming across northern Canada. The irony is that now that the link-up technologies and network infrastructures are in place, IBC has had to centralize more of its production in Iqaluit due to fiscal constraints, and the Igloolik centre has even less real airtime at its disposal. The other irony is that, despite the North/South-dialogue rhetoric used in the planning and implementation
Returning from a July hunting trip, Ami Kipsigak (left) and Aisa Irgmaut carry one of their four caribou onto the Igloolik beach. They left again early the next morning when a herd of narwhal was sited to the north of the community. 

Onlookers watch Ami Kipsigak and Aisa Irgmaut unload, and look forward to an impromptu snack and conversation. 

Fairly soon after IBC was launched in Igloolik, the inevitable happened: independent video. By 1986, Kunuk had produced From Inuk Point of View, his first independent tape funded by the Canada Council. In 1987-88, Aapak produced a five-part series, the Greenland dog-team expedition tapes, in association with IBC but conceived and executed over almost a year as a special project.

In 1988-89, Kunuk shot and produced a one-hour feature, Qaggiq, with Norman Cohn, with a larger grant from the council. Qaggiq was the first Igloolik tape to be subtitled and distributed independently in the South, and exhibited and broadcast internationally.

Qaggiq led to Nunaq in 1990-91, and later, Sapaq. Also in 1990, Kunuk, Aapak, Quillalaq and Cohn incorporated Igloolik Isuna Productions (IIP), the first Inuit-owned video production company. In the same year, Aapak found his own funding to produce Umuak, documenting another expedition he made to Sereniki in northern Russia to record the making of a walrus-skin boat.

IIP progressed steadily and encompassed more and more people, from (re-en)actors like Rachel Uyarasuk and Mary and Paul Quillalaq, to trained producers like Simon Quassa and a number of others.

In 1994-95, a Bell Canada award and a boost from Telefilm Canada enabled the group to produce a 13-part series of half-hour programs entitled Nunavut, set in the 1940s and conveying traditional ways of life in the region of Igloolik through straight and dramatic depiction, comedy, storytelling and songs. Although chronically underdistributed, this series remains their tour de force and may well lead to the production of a feature film or "movie of the week" based on a full-length script written by Paul Aapak.
Meanwhile, other community-based activity has sprung up in connection with the dramatic projects. The Tariagsuk Video Centre started in 1991 with an Explorations Grant from the Canada Council, and gave rise to the Women's Video Workshop, Arnait Ikajurtigiit, conducted under the tutelage of Marie-Hélène Cousineau, a video artist originally from Montreal. To date, Arnait includes a number of projects carried on simultaneously. Madeline Ivalu conducted most of the interviews with women that comprise the Oral Tradition Project, documenting traditional health, birthing and social knowledge. Ivalu, Susan Avingaq and others wrote and produced Quilliq, named after the sealskin lamp traditionally kept by women. They and other women have participated in straight and interactive interview/story-telling projects, and an expedition to Pond Inlet.

Artist Mary Kunuk is currently working on computer-animated video to convey themes and stories she previously executed in print media. Tariagsuk has also recently launched a home-video contest, inviting members of the community to submit home-made tapes for editing, post-production and possible broadcast.

Today, Tariagsuk and Isuma are housed together in a brand-new building with off-line video production facilities, located in the heart of Igloolik, between the Anglican and Catholic churches, just down from the IBC office. It hums with activity most of the time. The people who work there can look out the windows towards the even horizon over the water and ice of Ikpiarjuk (Turton Bay). I would like to thank the people of Igloolik who welcomed me, answered my questions, and shared the same horizon with me last summer.

Kathleen Fleming is a translator and writer living in Montreal. She spent time in Igloolik during July 1990 and July 1995. An interview with Zach Kunuk from Fleming's first trip was published in the Summer 1991 issue of Inuit Art Quarterly.

Paul Aapak

"When I first started out, I had no idea about a story or about television. I was always trying to meet the deadline, so I tried to find easy things to do that could be done quickly. I ended up with videos on harness-making, or skinning a seal. Later, when I became more relaxed, I had more time to think creatively. That is how I developed, since I didn't have any formal training. My training was just my own experience."
As the only non-Inuk on the Isuma team, I had to learn a new way of thinking and working: one that embraces consensual collaboration (an Inuit value) rather than individual self-expression (a southern value). This is a challenging shift for any artist: I went from a competent, articulate member of my own culture to someone often bewildered by simple activities conducted in a sophisticated foreign language and culture. In living with my own confused emotions, I've come to a deeper understanding, not only of the Inuit view of outsiders, but also of the anxious, authoritarian confusion with which much of the outside world seems to view Native people. As videomaker, fundraiser and occasional contact with the world outside, I contribute my own particular skills to Isuma and the community. Since our objective is the benefit of our own community, my decision to live in Igloolik permanently makes the community benefit naturally my own.

There was a sewing group every Saturday, and there were mainly elder women teaching younger women how to sew clothing. I went there with the camera and asked them if it was okay to record the gathering. People found it interesting that I was there with a camera; they were wondering when they would see the footage. Then I started to associate myself more with the women. I found activities separated by gender in Igloolik. Men were doing things together, and women were doing things together. I was not necessarily comfortable filming men's activity, so I started to go where the women were. Before coming to Igloolik, I had started to work mainly with women. I was interested in women's problems and women's culture.

I got involved with the Tariagsuk Video Centre when I heard on the radio that there was going to be a show for women at the Adult Education Centre, and I didn't know what they meant. I got curious, so I went there to get some more information. After watching some videos, we were asked if anybody would like to join in a meeting for the women's video workshop. After watching videos by women in the South, Marie-Hélène told us that even if you're an Inuk, you can do it too — you can make videos like that, telling stories. But I had a difficult time when I joined Tariagsuk because of my husband. I was always out and my husband expected me to stay home. I quit for a while and Marie-Hélène was very understanding about that. I never said anything to him, and later on I realized it was because of the house. I'm the only one who cooks or cleans, and when I joined Tariagsuk, it was one too many things to do. But, I felt so proud of myself after we finished making a video. My songs are there and the stories are there. While I was working on it, I didn't feel anything until it was finished. Then, I started to think of what other projects we could work on.
Simon Quassa

"I made a program about kayaking. I submitted a proposal and got a grant from the Canada Council. I ordered three kayaks, and we planned to go up to three lakes, but there was too much ice that year. So, the next year, we were taken to Baffin Island, to Bafford's Fiord. It took us two days. I couldn't shoot on the water. I had to get onto the land to start shooting. It was too tippy trying to shoot in the kayak."

Julie Ivalu

"IBC [Inuit Broadcasting Corporation] was a very good idea when it started, and watching Inuit on TV was special. It gave me hope in life, as I'm sure it did for other Inuit. I still see a lot of potential in terms of the shows we produce about our lives in the Arctic. The problems we encounter here at IBC are similar to the ones everyone has in publicly-funded organizations today: leadership, communication, cutbacks and productions schedules. It would help a lot if we could improve communication with management, and if we could transport our heavy, outdated equipment to shoot events in other locations, even out on the land. I am working at this to produce shows for a better future."
**Madeline Ivalu**

"I get ideas for projects when I am doing other things, mainly when I'm out in the camp, inside the tent and preparing caribou skins. I think of things that I would really like to have on a video. I like the idea of making a video about caribou skins, preparing them and letting them dry. My family really likes seeing me on the tapes. They say, 'It's really well done. It's really well edited.' They are happy about it. I am so proud of the stuff that we have done. I would really love it if it was shown to the other communities. I also wouldn't mind going to the South and showing it to other people."

**Paul Oqilitaloq**

"I make video programs about my culture and I never want to quit until a project is finished. In 1990 I was a producer in training for Inuit Broadcasting Corporation. I was the oldest IBC producer and the first one to speak only Inuktitut. I am also a founder and director of Igloolik Isuma Productions. I play the main role in some of the videotapes we have produced because I care about the Inuit culture and I want the world to see that we have our own way of living."

**Zach Kunuk**

"We still leave a lot of sensitive subjects out of our videos, for instance, raising children and shamanism. They are still too touchy. We just show the basics, such as how to build in stone, how Inuit hunted walrus, how they travelled. I want to do Inuit legends. Paul Aapak wrote a script based on legends. It's one story, but a lot of people tell it differently. We thought of working with categories — romance, violence, action. It would be longer than the usual half-hour format. Half an hour seems too short to the audience, but it is a lot of work for us."

**Jake Kadluk**

"When I'm working for IBC, they give me a specific format to follow. It's my job and I have to do it. But when we are shooting for Igloolik Isuma Productions, out on the land, I am more free to do what I want. I want to portray my culture well in video. What I learned from my training as a cameraman is that this is a hard way to produce a show, with all the footage we compile. Like Zach and Paul Aapak, I learn through the viewfinder as I work. When we are editing, we can spot things we want to change: 'That's my mistake. That's my mistake. That is what I will have to do differently next time.'"

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COMPOSITION, George Arikuk (1949 – ), Baker Lake, 1972
Stone, 14.5" x 15" x 2.25"

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MARY KUNUK:
From Printmaking to Computer-Animated Video

Kathleen Fleming travelled to Igloolik, Northwest Territories in July 1995 to visit the Tariagsuk/Isuma Video Centre and interview those involved in Igloolik videomaking. Following is her interview with Mary Kunuk, who is applying her visual-arts training to new media.

Kathleen Fleming: First, what is the full story of the dream that you portrayed in a print and that you are making into an animated video?

Mary Kunuk: This dream — I don't know what you call it in English, but we call it aqtuqsi, when you're dreaming and you feel really heavy. You feel numb. You try to move but you can't. You try to say something but you can't. It seems like you're talking but you're not making any sound. You can hear yourself but other people can't hear you. That is aqtuqsi in Inuktitut. I was a little girl, about 11 or 12 years old, when I had that dream. My friend was camping with us. We were lying on a caribou skin under a tarp that we had laid over some sticks. We fell asleep as we were talking about our favourite moments. I dreamed I was completely nude. I had long hair that was braided behind my back. Two hands were holding my arms from behind. I knew it was a man because of the big arms and hands. He was so strong, I could feel the pressure. I wasn't really scared at first. I felt as if I was floating. I wanted to see that man, but whenever I turned, he would turn with me, following my movements.

Above: Video still from Mary Kunuk's animation sequence entitled Aqtuqsi (1995), based on a dream she had as a young girl: Nuvujatlauungittuq (Strange cloud).
I kept looking, trying to see him but I couldn't. We kept moving until we came to a lake. I could see beautiful green, green grass and a big rock beside the lake. And there was a really nice blue sky, with just one cloud. He started to push me down to the lake, to the water. I realized he was trying to kill me. So whenever he pushed me down, I moved my legs as if I was swimming. He would pull me up again, and push me down, and when I moved my legs he would pull me up again. We fought like that for a long time. I was getting scared. I didn't know what to do. I went to the rock and concentrated on the cloud. I was looking at it, wondering how to contact my friend. I kept calling her name, "Annie, Annie!" And I kept trying to move my body. It was at this point that I realized I was dreaming. I kept trying to move and calling Annie's name, but she wasn't responding. As I looked at the cloud, it became a face with eyes, eyebrows, nose and a mouth. I was really scared; it seemed that I knew this face. I realized I was having a nightmare, aqtuqi. I remembered my mother telling me that if you have this kind of dream, you can wiggle your toes and you will wake up. I did this and when I asked Annie why she didn't answer me, she said: "I would have heard you because you were right next to me, but I didn't hear your name. You weren't calling my name." So that was my first experience of aqtuqi.

As soon as I opened my eyes I saw that our tent was tipped over and there was a spider walking over the tarp. I told my mother about my dream and how I felt numb and paralyzed, and how I couldn't talk. "You were having aqtuqi," she said, and told me more about that kind of dreaming.

Fleming: All the elements in the dream appear in the print simultaneously. We see the lake, the braid, the hands, and the cloud with the face. But when you animate it, it returns to the form of a fluid story, rather than that of a single image.

Kunuk: I made that print while I was taking a course in Iqaluit. I took a course for three years. Kate Pengerton, our first-year instructor, was showing us how to stencil, and I thought of that dream. This year, Marie-Hélène Cousineau told me to think about what I wanted to make for the video project. I thought about other things, but that nightmare kept coming back to me and I got more and more interested. I received a grant to do computer drawings and animation. An American was here for two weeks to give me a workshop on animation and computer drawing. I learned a lot from him. I didn't know anything about animation before.

Fleming: This must be really exciting because it frees you to do things that you can't usually do with images shot with a video camera, like people floating.

Kunuk: Yes, we wanted to have two little girls act for that program. We asked my brother's daughter and another girl who's been acting for Zach [Kunuk, of Igloolik Isuma Productions]. A week ago we went up to the bay to film. We had a lot fun. Cora was...
Video stills from Mary Kunuk's animation sequence entitled *Aqtuqsii* (1995), based on a dream she had as a young girl:
Right: *Qangatajuq* (She is floating); Opposite page: *Tigumiagtaujuq* (Someone is holding her); *Kappiasuktuq* (She is scared).

our main actor. The girls were pretty good until they were making a tent and acting inside the tent. We're going to have to do that again. But the lake sequence is really nice.

**Fleming:** You are one of the few bona fide artists in the video group. I know Zach was a carver before, but you are about to teach art, and you have studied art. Would you consider yourself an artist first?

**Kunuk:** Yes, I would. I have never thought before about whether I am a real artist, because I don't know much about carving. But there are a lot of ways you can be an artist. I have learned a lot about etching and engraving, linocut, woodcut and lithograph, silk-screen and stencil. This year I'm going to teach in the public school. People say that I'm going to be the first Inuk art teacher.

I'm very nervous because I never thought of that before, but I'm going to try to be strong. I had a talk with Loretta, who was the art teacher last year, and she gave me information, which helped me a lot. I feel more relaxed about it now.

**Fleming:** What other projects have you participated in here?

**Kunuk:** Well, there is a video workshop for women. The first year, we invited young people to get to know the women's video workshop. And we invited young mothers so we could videotape them and ask questions about how it feels to be a young mother. We made a video about that called *Mixed Feelings*. It also has some boys in it. That first summer mainly involved young people.

**Fleming:** The women's video project with the older women is what you've primarily been involved with. You started with the younger people early on, in 1991. Has the experience of working on that project helped bring people together and make them realize that they're not isolated in what they're experiencing as young people?

**Kunuk:** Yes. When we're interviewing elders it makes them recall how wonderful it was back then. How hard it was, how they did a lot. Sometimes they say "I feel so much better," because they got to think and talk about it. It makes them realize that people are still curious and that they want the traditions to live on.

**Fleming:** When young people talk, does it help them also, in different ways?

**Kunuk:** I think so. When we were interviewing young mothers, we asked them how they felt. Most of them felt that they were not alone. So many young mothers feel the same things.

**Fleming:** Do people make friends during the project and remain friends afterwards?

**Kunuk:** Yes, they do. Susan and Madeline had been friends, but not close friends. When we started working, they got closer, they made plans to do things together. They made songs together. They got closer and that makes me feel good.

**Fleming:** What does the word *tarraguk* mean?

**Kunuk:** I still haven't asked Marie-Hélène about it, but I know it is a little different from...
isuma. We ask for grants independently of Isuma and we work on separate projects. Every year now, Marie-Hélène travels with one of us to Montreal, Ottawa or Buffalo. So, we have our own screenings.

Fleming: What about ikajurtigâit?

Kunuk: Ikajurtigâit means “women who help each other.” I haven’t seen those tapes.

Fleming: I haven’t seen them all, but each of the women in them was interviewed and the interviews appear in a 20-page booklet for each tape. The information in there is amazing. They talk about what they were told when they were pregnant, the positions they were in, the procedures they used when they were having babies, what they did when the baby was an infant, and how they cared for sick and dying people.

Kunuk: That reminds me. I’m thinking of making a video about my mother. She has done a lot of stuff; twice she delivered a baby all by herself, without any help from any women. She was pushing and positioning herself properly, something she learned from her mother. When the baby was out, she cut the umbilical cord and tied it with caribou sinew. My brother, who is two years older than me, was that second baby delivered out on the land. His umbilical cord was around his neck and he wasn’t breathing well. So she put him on his side. She gave him water and a little bit of tea. She kept doing that. And then, he vomited. After that, he started breathing normally. She told me that she also delivered baby Paul — Paul Quassa — by herself.

Fleming: So, did Zach’s involvement in Isuma influence you to work at Tariagsuk during the summers?

Kunuk: Not really. I got interested when Martha and Marie-Hélène, who worked together, talked to me a little bit. I got interested because it was mainly about women.

Fleming: What were your impressions of what was going on here? You must have seen some of the tapes. Did you see any of Zack’s tapes?

Kunuk: Oh yes, I’ve seen some and they’re quite interesting. I liked the one called Qamaq (Stone House) because it deals with the old ways, how the elders used to talk. I really like that one. It reminds me of what my mother used to tell me about how her mother talked to them.

Fleming: It seems like the women’s community is pretty dynamic, in a completely different way than Isuma. I find there’s quite a division between what Isuma is doing and what Tariagsak is doing. It is obvious, even in the way the building is set up. The men are upstairs and all the women are downsairs. Symbolically the women are grounded, they have their feet on the ground. There are little kids coming in and out. The women deal with the children while the guys are upstairs thinking and getting different kinds of ideas about fiction and stories. The women are dealing with direct information. They’re telling stories, but they’re imparting information straight to whoever is watching the tape. It’s not fiction. It is like the difference between documentary and drama. The women are documenting.

Kunuk: Yes, we’re completely different from Isuma because we try to find our own projects.

We get a lot of ideas, mainly about women’s myths or everyday life, such as how women prepare sealskins, make amautiit, things like that. We try and get a lot of information about making things or doing things.

Fleming: Do you think that your experiences are going to change what you’re going to teach at the school?

Kunuk: I don’t know. I know it’s going to be completely
different. We can also do videos in art class. I was thinking about making our own video project now that I have editing experience. I am hoping to get younger people involved in taping and producing their own projects.

**Fleming:** Almost everyone in Igloolik video has come to it from the standpoint of art, as opposed to people who go through film school and get taught the right way to do documentary film-making and plot formulas. Because this work hasn’t come out of film school, it has an original approach. People are making up the rules as they go along. They’re changing conventions because they make their own formula.

**Kunuk:** Well, I’m really happy that we have this building now and that we’re getting more Inuit involved. I think this is a very good start. I wouldn’t mind if there were more Inuit who worked here, because the projects are for us.

**Fleming:** Do you think that after you start teaching you’ll continue to work with Tariagsuk?

**Kunuk:** I’m going to keep working until February. I’ll be part time here. I still have another project about stories that Madeline Ivalu wrote. I’m going to use those stories to make computer drawings and a video. I was also thinking about making a book using computer drawings. I could print them and write the story down.

**Fleming:** When you read about carvings or printmaking in Cape Dorset or Pangnirtung, the artists always have a story behind their art. This is the first time that Inuit have a more contemporary medium available than prints or carvings. You still tell stories, but you are using a new medium. A story takes a certain amount of time to tell; a video takes time, but a drawing or a carving doesn’t move. I think it’s interesting when you mesh your animated video with real shots. It must be exciting to work on that. When it’s finished, would it be important to you to have it broadcast in the South?

**Kunuk:** I wouldn’t mind that!

**Fleming:** It seems to me that the most important thing is that the idea comes from your dream, and that it is your creative efforts. The fact that you are an Inuk is secondary. But if you go south, they’ll make a big deal instead over the fact that you’re an Inuk. Zach finds that. He is just doing his work. He’s not an Inuk doing his work, he’s a person. But every time he goes to the South, it’s such a big deal that he is an Inuk.

**Kunuk:** He was telling me about the first time he went south. After the show, he was up there with the microphone talking with Norman [Cohn]. A lot of people were asking Zach what it’s like in the North:
“Do you still live in igloos? Do you have electricity?” He found it stupid because he knows where he lives, and of course we have electricity.

Fleming: In the South, we don’t get anything except the old films, like Robert Flaherty’s work [Nanook of the North, among others]. I’ve been talking about Igloolik for about seven years; I’ve given my father Zach’s tape. The day before I left to come here, I called and told him where I was going and gave him all the phone numbers. Later, he called back and said, “We don’t know where Igloolik is. We’re really worried that you’re leaving. We’ve got the map out and we can’t figure it out.” I’ve only been talking about this place for eight years and I’ve been here before. Even when you give people all the information, it’s like phoning them up and telling them you’re going to the moon tomorrow. There were some really influential films in the 1930s and 1960s, but those are the last images people seem to remember.

Kunuk: When I went to Ottawa I realized what an easy life I have. I find it so much easier to live in the North than in the South. It’s cheaper in the South, but it’s harder to live there. It’s harder to find a place to stay and you run around every day — busy, busy, busy. There’s a lot of places you have to go to. Here, it’s a small town. You’re comfortable; you’re relaxed; you know where you’re going to go. We get a lot of help from others. If I ever get hungry, I can just ask my friends or my neighbours, “Do you have any caribou meat, do you have soup mix to go with it?” They’re willing to give anything. They want to help me. Down south, there are so many people, you don’t know them.

Fleming: One of the women in the oral-history project said, “Well, I learned all this stuff from my elders when we were visiting. We would make visits at night.” It seems to me that people sit and watch TV at night now. What blocks people from communicating with each other is the TV set. Yet here, the same medium is being used to help people to communicate with each other again. Once the tools to make the video are back in the hands of the community, they can ignore the networks and use the medium to get communication going again.

Kunuk: Exactly. That’s what I was thinking of doing. If we had a big screen to show our videotapes, it would be really nice for people to come here and watch. I was thinking of doing that.

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Towards the end of Confessions of an Igloo Dweller, a memoir of his years in the North (1948-1961), James Houston writes of receiving four loaded mail bags at Cape Dorset. People from all over the world who had read a feature about the new Cape Dorset prints in the February 22, 1960 edition of Time magazine pleaded with him to send samples by direct mail. Some people, he says, even sent cash. Houston had no way of answering all the mail, and before leaving Cape Dorset the following spring, he took the bags to an exposed spot during a storm, opened them and tossed the letters to the wind.

Houston says that, while he felt guilty about it, he also experienced a wonderful sense of release: “That’s what kind of a nut I was in those days. I cared a lot more about humans, land animals, sea mammals, birds that fly, and, above all, art. No decent civil servant would ever throw away his mail!” (p. 299).

Throughout the memoir, Houston presents himself in his most innocent, boyish persona. Rather than an astute organizer of Inuit art — yes, even decent civil servant — who wrote many crucial Ottawa memos, smoothed ruffled bureaucratic feathers, pushed and pulled, arranged and promoted major exhibits in Canada and the United States, attracted journalists and wealthy patrons and reliably generated new ideas for the art through-out the 1950s, we see him in a hundred short chapters as a romantic, sometimes bumbling southerner in touch with the last vestiges of a traditional northern culture. Civilization barely seems to intrude. While he (and others) may arrive in airplanes, they’re quickly swallowed into the North, where people travel by dog sled and live in snowhouses or drafty little cabins. We see images of eccentric

James Houston gave a reading and book signing at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa on October 28, 1995 (and at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto on November 1).

Hudson’s Bay traders, “ace” bush pilots, uptight missionaries and noble romantic hunters like Pootoogook whom Houston describes as having “much more the role of some ancient king” in their cultures (p. 108).

It doesn’t take long to realize that we are entering the hoary imaginative realm of the northern memoir that was both common and popular in the first half of the century. Some accounts, like Gontran de Poncin’s 1941 Kabloona, were quite influential and it is no coincidence that two important figures in Inuit art, Gabriel Gély and Houston himself, have cited this book as one compelling reason for their first being drawn to the Arctic. In his time as an Ottawa bureaucrat, Houston drew the illustrations for another highly regarded memoir, Raymond de Ciccota’s 1955 Ayora. These books focused on whatever could be focused upon in the seemingly minimalist arctic environment: hunting, dangerous winter travel, perilous encounters with polar bears and walrus, crowded igloo life, Native leadership, shamanism and mythology — in other words, many of the basic early themes of Inuit art itself.

Houston’s Confessions provides all of this in abundance. Sex and shamanism take three chapters each. Dog-sled travel (with attendant adventures) runs to
eight. By comparison, Inuit art takes up only eight. Because of his strong storytelling ability, Houston is superb with basic anecdotal material. Some of the chapters, like “Travelling with Ian,” wonderfully evoke the North of the 1950s. The stories about Inuit art are also presented in highly readable narrative form. There is an unfamiliar story of Houston’s demonstrating stencil printing as a result of seeing a skin cutout design. “Rabbit Eating Seaweed” on Kenojuak’s shoulder bag: it later reappeared as one of her best early prints.

The story of Osuitok’s involvement in generating the idea for Inuit prints first appeared authoritatively in Houston’s 1971 book Eskimo Prints and has been retold so many times that it is probably the most famous tale in Canadian art. Briefly, one winter night in early 1957, Osuitok asked Houston how the same little sailor’s head appeared on each Player’s cigarettes. In an effort to show him the principle of printing, Houston inked some drawings which Osuitok had incised on a walrus tusk. He pressed down some tissue paper on the inked lines and pulled off a crude print. Osuitok, “with the instant decision of a hunter” (p. 263), replied, “We could do that.”

Although this is a very enticing view of artistic invention, it is at variance with archival documentation. While Houston ties the beginning of Cape Dorset printmaking “in the early winter of 1957” directly to Osuitok’s enthusiastic understanding of the print process (p. 263), Houston had actually proposed the idea sometime in 1955. Worried about the declining quality of soapstone carving, he wondered in a memo dated January 5, 1955 if it weren’t possible to “successfully introduce a graphic art of native concept [such] as they have in the Congo or Haiti.” Reconstituted “primitive” art was capturing attention in major American magazines like Life and Saturday Evening Post.

In both the Belgian Congo and Haiti, the artists mostly concentrated on painting but at the Lubumbashi school in the Congo, some artists also started carving woodblocks to use for printing fabrics and book illustrations (Mount 1989:75-6).

**The documentation points not to glowing moments of serendipity but to some very inspired long-haul thinking and planning by Houston and others in Ottawa to raise the Inuit standard of living through art.**

By the end of that year, Houston suggested in a further memo that he wanted to start a printing project in Cape Dorset involving a small press in either the school or a new “Eskimo Arts and Crafts Building.” To quote from the memo: “In the beginning I would like to concentrate on the reproduction of their art, using soapstone blocks etched by hand, inked and the impressions taken on paper” (Houston 1955). Realizing that there might be a ready market, he initially thought of making Christmas cards and wrapping paper and, as was done nearly a century before in Greenland, to illustrate books of stories and songs. Just two and a half months later, on March 15, 1956, Gordon Robertson, then deputy minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, officially asked the Queen’s Printer on Houston’s behalf for a small printing press for the Cape Dorset workshop “to reproduce Eskimo graphic arts for various purposes, using blocks of stone, wood, linoleum, etc.” (Robenson 1956).

Does this discrepancy matter? Well, yes it does. The history of Inuit art in Canada in the crucial decade of the 1950s has long been hobbled by a welter of unsubstantiated anecdotal information. While hard data exist in abundance, hardly anyone has bothered to explore them. The documentation points not to glowing moments of serendipity but to some very inspired long-haul thinking and planning by Houston and others in Ottawa to raise the Inuit standard of living through art. The introduction of art techniques by southern professionals starting with Houston himself was deliberate and well considered and often shaped by reports about similar programs in places like the Belgian Congo, Uganda and Mexico. Yet even today, art scholars continue to sweep up and recycle all the available and unquestionably compelling stories of the early art which nearly always ignore the vital southern part of the equation. The process becomes curiously sterile and removed from reality. There’s a need for a well-rounded history based on established fact.

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John Ayre is a writer living in Guelph, Ontario.
Images of the Land is the latest in a series of mini-exhibitions of Inuit art curated by Marie Routledge at the National Gallery of Canada. This exhibition is an interesting and varied selection of works in different media that reflect Inuit encounters with the land they inhabit. The curator asks several implicit questions with her selection of images: What is the Inuit relationship to the land? How is it manifested in their art production? What elements are chosen to represent the landscapes of the North? Has this changed over time? Through this exhibition, viewers can experience the way artists from different communities interpret their surroundings, whether through depictions of real places or through symbolic landscapes.

Above: Camp Scene with Whales, Fish, and Plants, 1976, Etidloie Etidloie, Cape Dorset (coloured pencil, acrylic, black felt pen on wove paper; 56.5 x 76.5 cm; National Gallery of Canada, gift of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development).
in some cases, the artist's sensory experience of the land is conveyed. There are essentially three types of landscape in this exhibition: works in which the land is mapped and used as a guide; works in which the landscape is implied in the background of the image, and works in which the land and the activities played out upon it fill the page in exhaustive detail.

In her introductory lecture on the exhibition on November 3, 1995, Mame Jackson highlighted the distinct lack of landscape works in Inuit art. She noted that many of the images of the land reveal a cartographic sensibility, as map-making is an essential survival tool in the Arctic. Knowing the places that are travelled and using this knowledge to create works of art is a theme that emerges quite clearly. The figures are often symbolically rather than realistically placed in relation to each other and to the land. The lines and symbols of the “map” depict how one would move through the land and navigate an amicable relationship with it. These works tell us about the social landscape as well, illustrating where settlement occurs and where activities such as hunting take place.

Mark Emerak’s print *First White Man’s Ship* (1982) is a good example of the artist using a map to illustrate an historical event and the landscape on which it happened. The figures are disproportionate to land and sea, oriented towards the land and each other, rather than towards the horizon or the page. The depiction of the relationship between the different groups of men outweighs the necessity to depict the land as it seems in reality. The figures are both in the water and on the land, surrounding the ship. The topography underlying this activity is real, the geographic place is evident, clearly identified. This is true, too, of other works in the exhibition, such as Simonie Quappak’s *Nunagaq* (1989–1990) and Pauloo sie Karpik’s *Landscape* (1986).

Quappak’s work is an example of how the artist uses both line and colour to imply human activity, without actually illustrating it. The water is coloured entirely blue, the land is grey, and the human elements and key locations are marked with symbols. The artist communicates places and activities without human forms. It is both a map of place and a documentation of implicit human activity.

In his large, colourful, crayon-and-coloured-pencil drawing, Karpik also highlights the activities of the community and its physical location by using a large-scale map and dotting it with figures and boats, as well as particular places.

The second theme that runs through this exhibition is that of implied landscape, a more traditional Inuit image. In Luke Angahadluq’s coloured-pencil drawing *Grazing Caribou* (1978), the animals are isolated on the page. One of them becomes aware of activity off to the left of the drawing, and it cocks its head to listen. The white background implies the snow and ice of the landscape as experienced by the artist. The central focus is the herd of animals, not the land. Similarly, in the stonecut *Nasigniatuq*, by Kananginak Pootoogook (1978), the hunter is boldly outlined against the whiteness of the page. His hunting ground is implicit in the background.

In addition to portraying the traditional white background of many Inuit landscapes, Pudlo Pudlat’s print *Arctic Waterfall* (1976) also reflects the tendency to depict more than one activity or place at one time. All of these images reflect the more traditional approach to the land.

A series of highly detailed exploratory works through which the artists examine the land that they inhabit constitutes the last and best-illustrated theme of the exhibition. Works such as Etidloie Etidloie’s *Camp Scene with Whales, Fish, Plants* (1976) demonstrate the common practice of overlapping images one on top of each other, eliminating the concept of horizon. As with the cartographic illustrations, the world of these landscapes is not flat or three-dimensional. It is a shifting place in which the artist creates a new spatial...
relationship with the land each time it is approached. Thus, in *Summer Camp* (1974), Pitsiulak Ashoona has created a multi-layered simultaneous image of various activities and places. The entire life of the camp is seen from one angle, so the viewer can see all its elements at once.

This final grouping also reflects, perhaps inadvertently, the developing relationship with artists from the South. Many of the images are done in non-traditional media such as watercolour, gouache and acrylic washes. In *Landscape with Settlement* (1981-82), Pudlo Pudlat illustrates a changing conception of the landscape by using acrylic paint, coloured pencil and felt pen to reflect the settlement onto the low-lying clouds. The entire page is coloured in, and no white space remains. Jackson suggests that this use of space, seen also in Kingmeat Uliqtok’s *Boaters See the Northern Lights* (1976), indicates the use of newer and changing media and an increased awareness of images from outside sources. Nothing is implied; all the details are highlighted.

Perhaps the most dramatic of these detailed examinations of the landscape is Ruth Qualluayuk’s embroidered textile piece *Tundra* (1993). Through her embroidery silks, the artist examines the surface of the tundra, creating a beautiful and colourful decorative pattern of fauna highlighted against a dark rich surface. This microscopic analysis is the antithesis of the cartographic representations. Its close-up view brings us directly to the surface of a land stripped of contextualizing landmarks or figures.

It is interesting to note certain parallels between *Images of the Land* and Charlie Hill’s exhibition *Art for a Nation*, housed above it in the gallery’s main exhibition halls. Through the landscape artistry of the Group of Seven, *Art for a Nation* also explores different approaches and reactions to the land. Both exhibitions reflect the curators’ consideration of the effect of the land on the artistic community. Both deal with the relationship between people and their environment, whether negative or positive.

Routledge’s selections map out the change in attitude towards the landscape and illustrate the various media used by the different communities. A rich picture of the northern landscape emerges, showing the viewer that the land poses its own, perhaps unanswerable, questions to its inhabitants. My only criticism is that there were not enough images.

Kate O’Rourke is a graduate from the Masters in Canadian Art History program at Concordia University. She currently works as an art archivist in the Art Acquisition and Research Section, Visual and Sound Archives Division, National Archives of Canada.
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Shamanism in Inuit Art

by Maureen Flynn-Burhoe

Rose Ann Hoffenberg's curiosity about the significance of shamanic images depicted in three generations of Inuit art led to Shamanism in Inuit Art, an exhibition of prints and sculpture from the Tyler-Brooks Collection shown at the Carleton University Art Gallery between August and October 1995.

In a thematic exhibition the challenge is to balance aesthetics with descriptive or narrative content. Ideally, theme and artwork should be connected seamlessly, without detracting from the formal qualities of the work. Hoffenberg achieved this in an intimate space that lends itself to smaller exhibitions. Didactic panels and excerpts from her 10-page catalogue linked the works to the theme of shamanism. Recorded Inuit music from regions across the North was provided by Dr. Elaine Keillor of Carleton's Department of Music.

Noah. Like Oonark, Kalvak's contributions to Inuit art and culture have long been recognized; her shamanic imagery has been seen in countless exhibitions on the theme.

In Kalvak's *Song of Power* (1985), a series of circles suggests the powerful rhythm of the drum. The drummer, a masked woman with her mouth open in a chant, faces the viewer. A woman on the right wearing a wolf mask appears to be joining in the chant. In the upper left-hand corner, a sun with prominent rays listens in awe to the powerful words chanted by the woman in the centre. The masks take on their own life and communicate with one another. The woman dances as she drums, moving from one foot to the other. The dance appears to be slow-paced and heavy. The three figures, though floating freely, inhabit an implied enclosed space.

The same central-circle motif is found in Sorosiluto Ashoona's 1972 print *Angakoq's Dream.* The circle is an intense red, implying an energy that sheds both heat and excitement. A baby in the amauti responds energetically as its mother to the beat of the drum. Two whale-like figures surround and enclose the igloo. As in the early days of whaling, they are attracted by the powerful and ancient chani of the woman. Birds with highly textured wings support the weight of the igloo domain, creating a space that is more dreamlike than physical.

Although similar to his 1970 print, *Shaman,* Baker Lake artist William Noah strives for greater accuracy in anatomical detail in the bones, joints and organs of the skeletal figure in the 1978 print *Vision of Man Cutting Snow.* Whether he is working on the computer to capture the exact colours of the tundra or working with paint, Noah seems to be fascinated by the natural world. The skeletal state through which a shamanic initiate may pass is grounded in a space occupied by three-dimensional blocks of snow. The sacrificial knife here is given the utilitarian purpose of cutting snow blocks, perhaps for a ceremonial snowhouse.

Johnniebo Ashevak's *Untitled* engraving (1962) is charged with shamanic iconography. A figure in the centre of the image, who may be the shaman, reaches out to touch (or become) the hand of Talaleeya. He clings to a bird figure with the other. Birds at the top of the page appear to carry the whole scene aloft by gently touching each other. A bird to the left touches a striped wing-like appendage of Talaleeya, whose hair flows freely as she meets with angakoq. Her whole body is striped and her face covered with unusual radiating tatoos. Stripes, often used in shamanic imagery, may be seen as a form of powerline or ray. The shaman travels on the back of one of two fish-like creatures. The figures are textured, giving them an added weight and density. All the figures are connected. At times, the lines barely touch, but it is sufficient. None of the figures can move separately. The entire page is filled almost to the edges. The physical space is completely replaced by the psychic space.

This small but successful exhibition provided an intimate look at images of the shamanic world while respecting the mystique of the angakoq. Hoffenberg ended her catalogue as she began it, with a question: "Will shaman figures disappear? Will they become a treasured legend or will they be regarded in a new context as the complexities of the twenty-first century unfold?"

Maureen Flynn-Burhoe works at the National Gallery of Canada. She recently produced a CD-ROM presentation on Jesse Oonark towards her Masters in Art History degree at Carleton University.
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Our Boots: An Inuit Women's Art

Reviewed by Jeanne L'Espérance

By Jill Oakes and R.R. Riewe

Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre;
Toronto: Bata Shoe Museum, 1994
224 pp. $50.

Our Boots, an exhaustive and scholarly study of the construction, making and meaning of footwear in Inuit culture, is the product of two remarkable people who are partners in life as well as in authorship. Jill Oakes is already well known for her research on Inuit clothing; Rick Riewe, a zoologist, met her while she was taking a course he was giving in arctic survival. Over the past 25 years they have, either singly or together, visited almost every community in the Canadian Arctic. Many of their expeditions have been generously supported by the Bata Shoe Museum, which also provided assistance for the production of this volume.

Woman's shaved sealskin boots.

Amnon Vecera

Their purpose in writing this book is to provide detailed and specific information on the making of Inuit footwear, information that they collected while making boots under the supervision of Inuit seamstresses. Their research is based on an analysis of over 5,000 pairs of footwear made and worn by Canadian Inuit, and is supported by further research conducted in archives, photo-archives

and museums and by informal interviews with community members.

The book is divided into three sections. The first three chapters describe the importance of skin clothing in Inuit life and give an overview of the process of footwear construction, including the tools used (ulus, scrapers, scraping platforms, stretching frames, sinew, thread and needles), preparation of the skin of animals and birds, the construction of various types of footwear and the maintenance of skin garments. Clearly drawn illustrations, diagrams, cutting patterns and photographs accompany each stage of every process.

Chapters four to eleven present the styles of footwear made and used in eight different Inuit cultural groups. This section includes an overview of the physical and human geography of the regions (Igloolik, Baffinland, Labrador, Ungava, Caribou Inuit, Netsilik, Copper and Inuvialuit) as well as summaries of past and present clothing styles that provide a background for the descriptions of footwear typical of each region. The illustrations for this section include a map and archival photographs or prints that document the persistence of a regional style through time.

The third section presents a short conclusion and an identification key that helps the reader recognize the origin of Inuit footwear from the Canadian Arctic and also includes a few styles produced in Alaska and some that are unique to Greenland. A glossary, a list of the scientific names of the animals referred to throughout and a reference list of people and books consulted conclude the volume.

The book is large format and very easy to read. It has a pleasant page layout, often with specific pieces of information presented in boxes. The numerous illustrations are well chosen and well placed in the text to help the reader follow the stages of the technical processes described. Inuit seamstresses from every region of the Canadian Arctic contributed invaluable information to the authors. Their contribution is fully acknowledged, and the authors are to be congratulated for their documentation and for their presentation of this important part of the Inuit heritage. As Sarah Ovanuaria Philip is quoted as saying in the conclusion of the book: "Kamiks are part of our identity — kamiks are a form of Inuit art made by women."

Jeanne L’Espérance is an archivist in the departmental library of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.
Malaya Akulukjuk began to draw at the age of 51 in the hamlet of Pangnirtung on Baffin Island. Born at Qikitat (Kekerton) camp in Cumberland Sound in 1921, she had lived half of her life on the land raising 13 of the 15 children she bore before moving into the small settlement of Pangnirtung in the early 1960s. Neither camp nor settlement life provided much tangible reward for artmaking in this area until the federal government opened an arts-and-crafts project in 1969.

I first met Akulukjuk in the summer of 1980, shortly after I arrived in Pangnirtung to manage the weave shop (an offshoot of the arts-and-crafts project). I knew little of the Inuit or of life in the Arctic, but I knew that I was about to meet someone very special when the imposing figure of an elderly woman filled the door of my office one day. Malaya had the bearing of a queen. She said nothing but peered at me unsmiling through her thick spectacles as she handed me a roll of white paper. I was a little intimidated but learned later that it was poor eyesight that caused...
her to stare in this unnerving manner.
I spread the roll of perhaps half a dozen drawings out on my desk, taking in the somewhat clumsy lines and the fantastic subject manner. Strange creatures, composites of human, bird and animal forms, flew or battled across the pages.

It was with the first early drawings by Malaya Akulukjuk that the weavers of Pangnirtung began a history of weaving cultural stories into tapestry form, a form that would receive worldwide attention. In a recent conversation with Donald Stuart, first manager of the weave shop (1970-72), I learned that the weavers' first experiments with designs for tapestries were based on geometrics. This was natural as the grid formed by warp crossing weft encouraged geometrics. The resultant hangings resembled Navaho blankets; any reference to the Arctic or the Inuit was missing. Taking the advice of a colleague, Stuart invited a local shaman, Akulukjuk, to draw for tapestry. He purchased all of the drawings she brought him. It was her drawings that laid the foundation for the narrative direction the weavers were to follow for the next 25 years. Gary Magee, first advisor to the print shop, followed suit. Dozens of prints and tapestries flowing from both shops have been based on drawings by Malaya Akulukjuk.

The first exhibition of Pangnirtung tapestries was held in 1972 at the Canadian Guild of Crafts in Montreal. Of the 25 tapestries on display, 10 were based on drawings by Akulukjuk. All were depictions of her fantastic creatures. Drum Dancer (50½ x 36 in., woven by Peah Naulalik) features the body of a human in parka and kamiks with the head of a bear. In his right hand he holds a baton, in his left, a drum with a grimacing human face.

Sedna (52 x 36 in., woven by Olassie Akulukjuk) is from the creation myth by that name. It features a simplified fish form swimming upward with the arms and head of a woman. Both are typical of tapestries based on Akulukjuk's early drawings: simplified forms in flat, strong color float on a single color ground. The selection of color was often the choice of the weaver as the drawings were usually uncoloured. Simplicity of design was accentuated by the lack of technical expertise on the part of the weavers at the time. As a result, details of line or texture were omitted. This tendency changed in later years as the weavers acquired greater skills.

Akulukjuk continued to provide drawings for the majority of the tapestries produced through the 1970s. Reflecting on the tapestries of that decade are her creatures of myth and imagination often placed in scenes of confrontation with...
humans or with each other. Judging from such scenes as those of humans fleeing "monsters" — for example, Scaled Monster Chasing Two Men (40 x 44 in., 1978, woven by Olassie Akulukjuk) — the human and spirit worlds were often in collision, though conflict and humour went hand in hand. Balancing this are tapestries of human form and activity that document a way of life. Children at the Summer Camp (55 x 40 in., 1979, by Kawtysie Kakee) depicts a scene of skin tents pitched for the summer, children sprawled in front of them amid scattered cooking implements and drying kamiks.

On several occasions I questioned Akulukjuk about particular drawings, their subject matter and where she got her idea for a particular creature. Usually her response was that they came to her in dreams or that someone had once told her about having seen such a creature. What I found interesting and perhaps distinctive about Akulukjuk's drawing was her approach to seemingly very different subject matter. Whether drawing scenes of landscape and human activity or content of a more spiritual or supernatural nature, her approach was direct. She simply put down on paper what she remembered, the things that interested her.

In 1982, the weavers wanted to create a tribute to Akulukjuk. They selected six of her drawings — three representing the human world and three the spirit realm — to use in a composite design. The intention was to recognize the artist's vision, both apparent and everyday as well as spiritual and supernatural. The design resulted in the popular tapestry Malaya's Story (102 x 44 in.), woven by Kawtysie Kakee.

Akulukjuk was plagued by poor eyesight all of her adult life, which sometimes resulted in the clumsy lines referred
In recent years she depended on a magnifying glass as an aid. Despite this handicap she continued to draw until her illness of the early 1990s, which prevented her from even speaking. But her very last drawings, depicting the land of her youth, are of an unprecedented clarity. On large rag paper using coloured pencils, Akulukjuk carefully laid out scenes of mountains and valleys lit by setting suns, of fiords and icefields coloured in the soft hues of the arctic land. Populated only by inuksuk and birds, the land of her memory is not empty and desolate as one would imagine but gives the impression of a paradise, vast yet inviting. Lack of perspective flattens each image, bringing it to the surface rather than drawing the viewer in. The result is the immediacy of vivid memory. It is from these drawings that the studio chose to weave the 1995 Malaya Akulukjuk Special Collection, again as a tribute to the artist. Four landscapes averaging 40 inches in height by 55 inches in width were woven in the exacting detail that is now typical of the level of sophistication of the weavers.

To complement the four landscapes and complete the balance in Akulukjuk's universe are eight smaller works based on mythical creatures drawn by Akulukjuk in recent years. Humour dominates with only a hint of the former darkness. In Long Necked Creature (20 x 25 in.) by Leah Qaqqasiiq, a bird with a human body wearing a bright orange parka, mittened hands on hips, peers off to one side. A rather charming Dancing Bird (24 x 24 in.) by Igah Etoangat sports red spoons on a white head. To capture the look of the original line drawing on white paper, Etoangat has woven only the outline of the bird so that the background and the colour of the clothing are the same.

The attention paid by the weavers to detail, their efforts to capture the original colours and textures of the drawing - ultimately, their intention to remain true to the original drawings - bring Malaya Akulukjuk's spirits and landscapes to life as never before. The hundreds of Pangnirtung tapestries that have been based on her drawings are certainly part of her legacy as an Inuit artist and a recorder of the cultural history of her people.

Deborah Hickman is a tapestry artist and writer living in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia. She was the Pangnirtung weave shop manager from 1980 to 1983. Since 1989, she has been an artistic advisor to the Pangnirtung tapestry weavers.

Editor's Note: As Inuit Art Quarterly went to press, we were saddened to hear that Malaya Akulukjuk passed away in hospital surrounded by family in Iqaluit, Northwest Territories, on November 29, 1995.
Judith Varney Burch

Projected Exhibitions:

February — Northern Weavings come south from Pangnirtung to Richmond

Spring — Baker Lake Wall Hangings
Canadian Embassy
Washington, D.C.

Projected Symposium/Exhibition:

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Vol. 11, No. 1 Spring 1996

Printers who worked on the collection included Pitseolak Niviaqsi, Qatsuq Niviaqsi, Pee Mikkiga, Kavavaq Mannomee, Niveaksie Quvianaqtuliaq and Arnaqu Ashevak. The collection also featured the work of a southern printer, Paul Machnik of Studio PM in Montreal. Machnik spent two weeks in Cape Dorset in February 1995 working with the artists. Four proofed etchings by Inuit artists were chosen to be printed in the South.

In the catalogue foreword, studio manager Jimmy Manning gave a brief overview of the year’s activities and explained the absence from the collection of prominent drawer Pitaloosie Saila, who was unable to work this year because of problems with her arm.

**INUIT COMMUNITIES RECEIVE FUNDING FOR LITERACY PROGRAMS**

In October, the Government of the Northwest Territories announced funding for 54 literacy projects in various Inuit communities including Iqaluit, Pond Inlet, Igloolik, Grise Fiord, Sanikiluaq, Arctic Bay, Cape Dorset, Clyde River, Hall Beach, Lake Harbour, Resolute Bay, Coral Harbour, Arviat, Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet, Taloyoak, Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven and Inuvik. Some examples of projects being funded: the Inulliit Society in Igloolik received $16,180 to transcribe and publish Inuit oral histories into written Inuktitut; the Whale Cove Training Advisory Committee received $7,000 for a part-time Inuktitut literacy program, incorporating oral language and reading skills with traditional land skills; the Coral Harbour Community Education Council received $3,050 to deliver a part-time English literacy program to elders, and $8,500 for a community-based theatre project which will attempt to develop literacy skills through the performing arts. The Northwest Territories Literary Council received $45,000 to organize Aboriginal writing workshops and to publish stories emerging from the workshops.

The announcement of these projects marked the beginning of the Northwest Territories Literacy Week, between September 30 and October 7. At the time, NWT education minister Richard Nerysoo recognized five northerners for their contributions to literacy, including Peoyok Enoogo of Arctic Bay and Dorothee Komangapik of Iqaluit. Enoogo is a teacher and author of four Inuktitut books widely used in Baffin classrooms. She believes children should be given as much opportunity as possible to read, and be read to, in their first language and in English. Komangapik promotes aboriginal first-language literacy as a necessary foundation for English literacy. She has written literacy learning materials for adult-education classes.
FOUR HUNDRED OTTAWA STUDENTS EXPERIENCE TAKUGIT

Sessions of Takugit (Inuktitut for "Look"), an interactive educational program designed to promote Inuit art and culture in the Ottawa region, were held in September in two schools. On September 27, carver William Gruben from Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories, now living in Ottawa, gave a carving demonstration at Ecole Secondaire de la Salle, the only francophone high school in Ontario providing a full visual-arts program to its students.

Suzanne Lacasse, from the National Gallery of Canada’s education department, gave an introductory overview of Inuit art and translated Gruben’s commentary for the students. As a follow-up to Takugit, the National Gallery organized a bilingual tour of the Inuit art collection for the students.

On September 28, Silas Kayakjuak, an artist from Hall Beach, Northwest Territories who has lived in Ottawa for several years, demonstrated carving techniques and the functions of various tools to 12 classes (kindergarten to Grade 6) at R.E. Wilson Public School in Vanier.

This elementary school is attended by most Inuit children in Ottawa. Theresie Tungilik assisted with the demonstration and answered students’ questions on Inuit art and culture. Takugit is supported by the Ontario Arts Council. The project is an initiative of the Inuit Artists’ College, owned and operated by the Inuit Art Foundation.

OFFICIAL NAME CHANGES FOR TWO INUIT COMMUNITIES

Two Inuit communities in the Northwest Territories underwent official name changes on January 1: Coppermine was changed to Kugluktuk, while Lake Harbour became Kimmirut. The territorial government’s Geographic and Community Names Policy determines when and how a community’s traditional name should be adopted as the official name.

ANOTHER USE FOR INUIT ART?

An Inuit carving that Canadian prime minister Jean Chrétien kept in his bedroom came in handy when an intruder invaded the leader’s official residence at 24 Sussex Drive in Ottawa, Ontario during the early morning of November 6. The intruder scaled a wall on the grounds and broke a glass door to gain entrance to the house. Aline Chrétien, the prime minister’s wife, heard a noise outside their bedroom at about 3 a.m., and, upon opening the door, confronted a man armed with a knife. Rushing back inside and locking the door, she phoned the guard hut on the grounds and woke her husband, who armed himself with a carving of a long-necked bird. The locked door kept the attacker at bay until the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) arrived several minutes later. The RCMP is conducting an internal investigation to determine how the man reached the house without the officers on duty taking action. Charges of attempted murder have been laid against a Montreal man. Few details on the carving are known. Chrétien, minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for several years in the 1970s, is a well-known Inuit-art collector.

ARTIC ANTHROPOLOGY CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON

Challenges and Opportunities: The Repatriation of Cultural Knowledge in the North American Arctic was the theme of the American Anthropological Association’s general meeting, held in Washington, D.C. from November 15–19. Among the presentations at the conference: Stephen Loring (Arctic Studies Center, Smithsonian Institution) spoke on the center’s objectives to make its extensive collections of material culture accessible to people in the Arctic; Andrea Lafontet (Canadian Museum of Civilization) gave a talk entitled “Consultation and Authority: The Planning of the First Peoples’ Hall at the Canadian Museum of Civilization”; Ann Fienup-Riordan and Marie Meade of Alaska presented a paper outlining plans for an exhibition of Yup'ik masks at the Bethel Cultural Centre and the Anchorage Museum of History and Art; Bernadette Driscoll-Engelstad (Johns Hopkins University) presented “Silent Echoes: The Displacement and Reappearance of Copper Inuit Clothing,” and Martha Flaherty, president of Pauktuutit (Inuit Women’s Association), addressed the conference on “Cultural Knowledge as an Avenue of Economic Development for Inuit Women.” In her paper, Flaherty discussed Pauktuutit’s recent efforts to develop culturally based opportunities for Inuit women, using the Inuit festival Qaggi ’95 as a case study. Burdick Gallery in Washington, D.C., hosted a conference reception.

THE INUIT ART FOUNDATION 1995–96

Theresie Tungilik, an arts administrator from Rankin Inlet, Northwest Territories was unanimously elected president of the Inuit Art Foundation (IAF) at its annual general meeting in Ottawa on September 26–27, 1995. Tungilik told Inuit Art Quarterly: “As president of the Inuit Art Foundation, I want to see workshops delivered in northern communities; workshops which focus on writing...
New Stamps Have Arctic Theme

A new set of Canada Post stamps depicting arctic scenery went on sale in September 1995.

In September, Canada Post issued a set of five stamps depicting arctic scenes. The 45-cent stamps include images of wildlife, people, modes of transport and landscape scenes. Pangnirtung Fiord figures prominently in the second stamp, while the background of the fifth is taken from Arctic Red River, Northwest Territories, south of Inuvik. Children from Nain, Labrador can be seen playing, while youngsters from Pelly Bay, Northwest Territories model traditional and store-bought clothing. Each stamp is titled "The Arctic" in English, French and Inuktitut. Fifteen million stamps have been printed and are on sale until March 14, 1996.

Keewatin Arts and Crafts Festival

The first Keewatin Arts and Crafts Festival took place in Rankin Inlet, Northwest Territories in September 1993 to promote the artists of the Keewatin region, west of Hudson Bay. Proclaimed a biannual event in light of its success, a second festival was held last summer, August 25-27, again in Rankin Inlet. Visitors attended juried art competitions, bought art and crafts, watched demonstrations showing traditional tool and jewellery making, and attended fashion shows. Judy Burch, an art dealer from Richmond, Virginia was invited to Rankin Inlet as a juror, and said she enjoyed meeting with the artists, including Bill Nasogaluak (Yellowknife, Northwest Territories), Paul Maliki (Repulse Bay, Northwest Territories) and Simata Pitsiulak (Lake Harbour, Northwest Territories). Burch said that the clothing and tools on display were "better than any museum exhibit. It was a superb exhibition, and a real affirmation for the people [of the Keewatin] to continue to do this kind of work."

Inuit Women's Association Launches Anti-Tobacco Campaign

Pauktuutit, the Inuit Women's Association, recently launched "Anirsaattiarniq — Breathing Easy," a campaign to reduce the use of tobacco. The program — intended to reach children, youth, pregnant women and adults — was established in late September with a $450,000 grant from Health Canada's Tobacco Demand Reduction Strategy. The funding will be used to create education kits for northern school boards. Pauktuutit is collaborating with the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation, Inuit Communications Services Limited and Nortext Multimedia to produce the materials for schools and communities.

A Day of Celebration

The United Nations declared August 9, 1995 a special international day of celebration in honour of indigenous people. This event will be celebrated each year as part of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. The project's main objective is to strengthen international cooperation in finding solutions to problems faced by indigenous peoples in areas such as human rights, the environment, health, culture and education.
Pioneers in Cultural Industries Program

Certificates were awarded to five Inuit graduates in a ceremony held at the Canadian Museum of Civilization on December 8, marking the conclusion of the first session of the Cultural Industries Training Program launched by the Inuit Art Foundation in the fall of 1995. Gayle Gruben, Chaz Krueger, Lizzie Makkik, Steven Ejesiak and July Papatsie successfully completed the three-month program, which is designed to acquaint Inuit with the range of possibilities that exist in the cultural sector. The long-range goal is to involve them in the care and handling of their art.

Program coordinator Pam Stellick is providing follow-up to the program, working one-on-one with graduates as they develop short- and long-term goals. July Papatsie, originally from Pangnirtung, has accepted a position with the Canadian Inuit Art Information Centre (formerly called the Inuit Art Section) where he will be a reference and research officer. His key responsibilities will include conducting interviews and collecting oral histories from Inuit artists, providing information and related material to public and private institutions involved in the research, documenting Inuit culture, and acting as an Inuit cultural resource and spokesperson for the federal department.

Gayle Gruben is apprenticing with the Inuit Art Foundation, working with coordinator Pam Stellick to organize and deliver a second training session. Gruben's long-term goal is to combine on-the-job training and formal studies with a view to eventually organizing a heritage centre in her hometown of Tuktoyaktuk, where she intends to live when her children's education is completed.

Chaz Krueger, who has previous training as an engineer, has been accepted into the Aboriginal Training program at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec. Stephen Ejesiak and Lizzie Makkik are exploring various options.

Marybelle Mitchell, executive director of the Inuit Art Foundation, says: "The program succeeded beyond our expectations. We can see that these five people have been able to make a first step into a world to which they had virtually no access. They have now had the experience of taking an art history course at Carleton University. They know how to do research at the National Archives and they know a lot about the inner workings of the Museum and the National Gallery."

The students also did an interactive media project under the guidance of instructor Maureen Flynn-Burhoe. Arts administration, taught by Greg Graham, covered the basic principles of business management and involved the students in developing business plans, writing proposals, and basic accounting.

Christine Lalone developed a course on art history, in which the students surveyed the history and development of Western and Inuit art in relation to contemporary cultural-industry practices. Inuit elder Leah Idlout was responsible for seminars focusing on intercultural awareness. Pam Stellick led a communications and career development class in which the students improved their communication skills through written assignments, discussions and presentations.

Gayle Gruben says each student benefitted from the course differently. "The size of the class allowed a lot of one-on-one interaction, so each of the instructors had time to help us with our individual interests. The students also helped each other a lot, as we brought different backgrounds to the course."

University of Toronto Centre Receives Inuit Collection

The newly opened Joseph L. Rotman Centre for Management at the University of Toronto recently received 24 pieces of Inuit sculpture from Beverly Borins, a Toronto collector. Borins, former manager of Up the Wall, a Toronto gallery, is a longtime collector of Inuit art and a frequent visitor to the North. The donation includes works by Nuna Parr, Kiawak Ashoona, Kovianituk Adame, Nakashoo Qimirpik and Peter Tunullie. The works have been positioned in the centre's atrium and can be seen from several floors within the building, and from the street level outside. Borins says that at last fall's opening, the building's architect, Eberhard Zeidler, remarked, "It took the warmth of the sculptures to finish the building."
PEOPLE

Ruth Flowers of Makkovik, Labrador received the Governor General’s Award in a ceremony at Rideau Hall in Ottawa, Ontario on October 16. Flowers, the first mayor of her community and the founding president of Inuit Women of the Torngats, was recognized for her efforts to protect women victimized by violence, to involve women in economic development, and to promote Inuit women’s culture.

Igloolik filmmaker Zach Kunuk is working on a Government of the Northwest Territories contract to produce a film called Carver. At press time, Kunuk had finished a rough edit and was awaiting approval to produce the master video. Kunuk says the film comprises interview segments in which Igloolik carvers discuss how they started, why they carve, the financial aspects of carving, and how the art has evolved. In addition to the interviews, several carvers, including James and Natar Ungalaq and Jake Kadluk, gathered for a slide show on sculpture from other communities and offered commentary, some of which should be in the final cut. Kunuk says the film’s release date is not yet finalized.

Terry Ryan, manager of the West Baffin Eskimo Co-op, recently received an honorary degree from the Ontario College of Art. Ryan, who now divides his time between Cape Dorset and Toronto, has worked with Cape Dorset artists for 35 years.

Cape Dorset artist Peter Ragee and a small group of Iqaluit, Northwest Territories residents chartered a plane to Cleveland, Ohio for the opening of the Rock ’n’ Roll Hall of Fame on September 1. Ragee presented the Hall of Fame’s curators with a drum-dancing print he had produced.

Mary Sillett, an Inuit leader from Labrador, was elected vice-president of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) in the September 20 election. Sillett, who was president of Pauktuutit, the national Inuit women’s association from 1987 to 1991, recently completed a term as a commissioner on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

Igloolik carver James Ungalaq travelled to Düsseldorf, Germany in November to participate in a two-day promotion at Schadow Arkaden, a shopping mall where a small display of Inuit and other Canadian art was assembled. Ungalaq and a Yukon wood carver, Jim Shorty, gave carving demonstrations. The event was sponsored by the Canadian consulate in Düsseldorf.

Carol Heppenstall, president of Art Space Gallery in Philadelphia, has organized a week-long trip to Cape Dorset, Iqaluit and Pangnirtung to take place in July. Similar to an excursion Heppenstall led last summer, the trip is open to the public and can be booked through Adventure Canada. Tel: (800) 363-7566 or (905) 271-4000. The tour dates are from July 18 to July 24, and a maximum of 16 places are available.

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*The directors and staff of the Inuit Art Foundation*
In September, The Guild Shop of Toronto moved from 140 Cumberland Street to a new location just down the road, at 118 Cumberland. The move was made necessary by the landlord's plans for extensive renovations to 140 Cumberland, which would have forced The Guild Shop to close for six months.

The Canadian Guild of Crafts Quebec in Montreal held an exhibition featuring the work of Cape Dorset carver Pitseolak Niviaqsi from November 18 to December 31, 1995.

Orca Aart Gallery in Chicago, Illinois held a show entitled Canadian Sculpture: The Next Generation from October 26 to December 31, 1995. Over 40 works by such artists as Mattiusi Itaituk, Ovilu Tunnillie, Toonoo Sharky, Mike Massie and David Terriak were shown. News from the gallery is now available on the internet. The address is orca@inuitart.com.

The Isacs/Inuit Gallery in Toronto, Ontario was the Canadian venue for the premiere of the 1995 Cape Dorset Print Collection. To commemorate the occasion, a special limited-edition print was available for sale at the gallery. The Entertainers, by Mary Pudlat, is a stonecut print depicting three Inuit women playing musical instruments. The gallery also held a show entitled Sculpture by Jago Khuluqit of Pangnirtung from November 25 to December 30.

A solo exhibition of Ashevak Tunnillie's work was featured at the Inuit Galerie in Mannheim, Germany from October 22 to November 18. Manfred Boetzkes, director of the Roemer Museum in Hildesheim, was the guest speaker at the exhibition opening. From November 26 to December 22, the gallery featured Miniature Inuit Art, a collection of small sculpture by such artists as Camille Iquiq (Baker Lake, Northwest Territories), William Pigalak (Coppermine, Northwest Territories) and Sam Qavvik (Sanikiluaq, Northwest Territories).

Michael Family Sculpture was the title of an exhibition featuring the work of the Lake Harbour family at Gallery Phillip in Don Mills, Ontario. Pitsiulak Michael attended the opening on September 14. The other family members featured in the exhibition were Pee Michael, Paulooosie Michael, Mattoo Michael and Elijah Michael, their father. The exhibition closed October 14.

Sedna: The Spirit of the Sea was the title of an exhibition at Feheley Fine Arts in Toronto, Ontario from September 16 to October 28. Artists represented in the multimedia exhibition included Pitseolak Niviaqsi, Ashevak Tunnillie, Bart Hanna, Barnabus Arnisungaaq and Pitaloosie Salla. From November 11 to November 30, the gallery displayed Sculpture of the 1950s and 1960s.

The Marion Scott Gallery in Vancouver, British Columbia presented an exhibition to celebrate the gallery's 20th anniversary.
between November 18 and January 6. *Inspiration: Four Decades of Sculpture by Canadian Inuit* was an 80-piece exhibition of works in stone, bone, antler and ivory. Almost 60 artists were represented in the show, including Kaka Ashoona, Rex Goose, Johnny Inukpuk, John Kavik, Ralph Porter, Joe Talirunili, Lucy Tasseor Tutsweetok and Charlie Ugyuk. Author and collector George Swinton was the invited guest for the exhibition opening on November 18. *Inspiration: Four Decades of Sculpture by Canadian Inuit* is also the title of an accompanying catalogue by Norman Zepp. The catalogue, with colour illustrations of 70 of the exhibited works, is available directly from the gallery. Address: 481 Howe Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2X6. Tel: (604) 685-1934.

Ceramics from Rankin Inlet was the title of an exhibition at Arctic Artistry in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York from January 13 to February 7. The exhibition consisted of a collection of vases and urns in terra cotta and bisque. Through February and March, the gallery is planning to have a sculpture exhibition entitled *Arctic Wolves; in March and April, Sculpture from the Sixties: One Man's Point of View*, will be presented.

The Inuit Gallery of Vancouver presented an exhibition entitled *Spirit of the Bear* from October 28 to November 18. Agangajuk Shaa, Nelson Takkiq, Joe Kiloonik, Qavaroak Tunnillie, Tiktuq Qinnuayuak and Eycetsiak Peter were among the artists represented in the exhibition.

The Alaska Shop in New York City presented *A Collector's Choice of Older Hunters* in November and December. The exhibition featured sculpture from the Keewatin and from Northern Quebec.

The National Library of Luxembourg hosted an exhibition entitled *Charles Gimpel: A Photographer among the Inuit* between October 10 and October 28. The show was part of a year-long program of arts and cultural events in Luxembourg, designated the 1995 European City of Culture.

The University of Moncton recently established a permanent collection of Inuit art after receiving the donation of a private collection from Isadore and Esther Fine. Céline Saucier, who catalogued the collection, presented a talk on November 3 at the opening of an exhibit of 242 works from the collection in the university library. The collection consists primarily of sculpture, with 25 prints and one wall hanging.

Carleton University Art Gallery’s exhibition *Qivioq: An Inuit Legend in Art* opened on November 13. The works in the exhibition were drawn from the Tyler-Brooks Collection, a donation being made in stages to the gallery. Dr. Priscilla Tyler and Maree Brooks, co-editors of *The Epic of Qayaq: The Longest Story Ever Told by My People*, signed copies of the book at the opening.

*Inuit Art from the Shumiatcher Donation* was the title of an exhibition held at the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan from September 29, 1995.
to January 7, 1996. The Shumiatcher collection was developed over 40 years, beginning with a carving acquired by Dr. Morris Shumiatcher at the Hudson's Bay post at Lac la Ronge in 1954. He and his wife, Jacqui, have continued to add to their collection with purchases from Hudson's Bay House in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the Canadian Guild of Crafts Quebec in Montreal, Quebec, and other galleries in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Calgary and Vancouver. The MacKenzie Art Gallery first exhibited art from the Shumiatcher collection in 1981, when 119 works were displayed in The Jacqui and Morris Shumiatcher Collection of Inuit Art, guest-curated by Nelda Swinton. The Shumiatchers are donating their collection to the gallery in stages.

The MacKenzie Art Gallery also held an exhibition entitled Janet Kigusiuq: Recent Drawings from November 24, 1995 to January 21, 1996. The exhibit included 30 recent drawings by the Baker Lake artist. Kigusiuq travelled to Saskatoon for the exhibition opening.

Robert and Phyllis Boehnke of Gahanna, Ohio recently donated their entire collection of Inuit art to the Schumacher Gallery at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio. Having encountered their first Inuit carving at a University of Michigan professor's home in 1944, the Boehnkes' first acquisitions were from the Walker Gallery in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1963. The collection comprises more than 200 works — about 180 carvings and 25 prints. It includes the work of Pauta Saila, Kaka Ashoona, Kiawak Ashoona, Joe Talirunili, Kenojuak Ashevak and Pitseolak Ashoona. The Boehnke collection formed the basis of an exhibition entitled The Far North: Works of the Inuit (Eskimo) and Northwest Indians, shown at the Schumacher Gallery from October 6 to November 5, 1995.

The Charles Camsell Hospital Inuit and Indian Collection will be on display in the main lobby of Edmonton's Royal Alexandra Hospital (10240 Kingsway Avenue) until March 1, 1996.

Information compiled in this section is submitted by the galleries. News of recent or upcoming exhibitions, symposia and presentations should be sent to: Inuit Art Quarterly, 2081 Merivale Road, Nepean, Ontario, Canada K2G 1G9; Fax: (613) 224-2907.
INUIT DOLLS

I am writing about the "soft sculpture" on the cover of the Fall 1995 issue of Inuit Art Quarterly. Since one of my areas of special interest in Inuit art has been collecting dolls, I believe that I have a clue as to the identity of the artist who made the doll on your cover. I am enclosing a photo of a doll I collected in 1986. It is from Coppermine and is by Susie Kingoluk. There are similarities in the two dolls. Both are depicted as seated and smoking: the woman a cigarette, the man a pipe. The use and choice of materials is similar, down to the rick-rack on the mukluks. While it is hard to be sure, it looks as if the faces and noses are made of cloth. I would hazard a guess that both dolls are made by the same artist. At the very least, they were made by friends, neighbours or relatives. Frequently when a doll-maker comes up with something special, a group of artists is influenced by this. One of the reasons that I have collected dolls is that I think the really good ones show details of Inuit life that are no longer depicted in other media. All the best, and continued success with Inuit Art Quarterly.

Jane B. Schuldberg
Seattle, Washington

Editor's note: Thank you for sharing this information with us. We received several suggestions that the artist was Susie Kingoluk. She was subsequently credited as the doll artist in the Winter 1995 issue of Inuit Art Quarterly.

COLLECTORS FOR OVER 30 YEARS

Robert and I have given our Inuit art collection to the Schumacher Gallery. We've been collecting for over 30 years, loving every minute and every piece. The collection, containing over 200 works, is heavy on sculpture, with only 25 or 30 prints. We recall all the interesting conferences we've had with "Arts and Culture of the North" and look forward to each Inuit Art Quarterly. All of these will be given to the Schumacher in time. Thanks for an ever-improving Quarterly. It means a great deal to us down here in the United States.

Phyllis Boenke
Columbus, Ohio

Inuit Art Quarterly reserves the right to condense letters, and to edit for grammar and clarity. We do not publish form letters or copies. Address letters to: The Editor, Inuit Art Quarterly, 2811 Merivale Road, Nepean, Ontario, Canada K2G 1G9.

Advertiser Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertiser</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acari, Ottawa, Ontario</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agiarqitit Society, Lake Harbour,</td>
<td>I.B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Territories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Shop, New York</td>
<td>I.F.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York, New York</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albers Gallery of Inuit Art,</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco, California</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arctic Art Gallery, Hastings-on-Hudson, New</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arctic Inuit Art, Richmond, Virginia</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Space Gallery, Gladwin, Pennsylvania</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artis for Kids Trust, North Vancouver, British</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississauga, Ontario</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banff Natural History Museum,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baff, Alberta</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauregard, Ottawa, Ontario</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Native Arts Foundation, Toronto,</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJ Sensations, Iqaluit, Northwest Territories</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feheley Fine Arts, Toronto, Ontario</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallery Ela London, Montreal, Quebec</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallery indigena, Stratford, Ontario</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallery Phillip, Don Mills, Ontario</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston North Gallery, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Images Art Gallery, Toronto, Ontario
Inuit Art Foundation, Nepean, Ontario
Inuit Art Restoration Service, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Inuit Gallery of Vancouver, I.B.C.
Inuit Images of Bocim, Quincy, Massachusetts
Iqaluit Fine Arts Studio, Iqaluit, Northwest Territories
Isaacs/Inuit Gallery, Toronto, Ontario
Maconald Stewart Art Centre, Guelph, Ontario
Native Arts & Souvenirs, Oakville, Ontario
North West Company Inc., The Redettle (Toronto), Ontario
Northern Images
Oonungmak Musk-ox Producers' Co-operative, Anchorage, Alaska
Orca Art Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
Stephenson Gallery, Rochester, New York
Snow Goose Associates, Seattle, Washington
Uqarrunt Centre for Arts & Crafts, Pangnirtung, Northwest Territories
Upsairs Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Waddington's, Toronto, Ontario
Every effort is made to ensure that information in this calendar is correct, but readers are advised to check dates and times with event organizers.

**EXHIBITIONS**

Isumavut: The Artistic Expression of Nine Cape Dorset Women, Canadian Museum of Civilization, 100 Laurier Street, Hull, Quebec, October 6, 1994 to March 31, 1996. Inuit Women Artists: Voices from Cape Dorset, an illustrated book based on the exhibition, is available from the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Tel: (819) 776-7000; mail order, Tel: (819) 776-8387.

Threads of the Land: Clothing Traditions from Three Indigenous Cultures, Canadian Museum of Civilization, 100 Laurier Street, Hull, Quebec, February 3, 1995 to September 14, 1995. Santagut: Pride on Women's Work: an illustrated book based on this exhibition is available from the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Tel: (819) 776-7000; mail order, Tel: (819) 776-8387.

Inuit Woman: Life and Legend in Art, Winnipeg Art Gallery, 300 Memorial Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba, June 24, 1995 to March 31, 1996. Tel: (204) 786-6641.


Names and Lives in Nunavik, McCord Museum of Canadian History, 690 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, until April 1996. Wrapped in the Colours of the Earth: Cultural Heritage of the First Nations, an illustrated book based on three First Nation exhibitions at the McCord, is available from the museum. Tel: (514) 398-7100.

Wathanine: Photographs of Native Women by Nancy Ackerman, McCord Museum of Canadian History, 690 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, June 22, 1995 to April 2, 1996. Tel: (514) 398-7100.

See Through Our Eyes: Native Perspectives, Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario. March 16 to June 9, 1996. An exhibit of photography organized by the Native Indian/Inuit Photographers Association of Hamilton. Tel: (905) 527-6610.

Imaak Takujavut: Paintings from Cape Dorset, McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 10365 Islington Avenue, Kleinburg, Ontario, December 9, 1995 to April 14, 1996. The installation features graphics with a winter-camp theme. The subsequent installation of the paintings is drawn from the permanent collection runs from April 20 to August 11, 1996. Tel: (905) 893-0344.

Selections from the Permanent Collection, McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 10365 Islington Avenue, Kleinburg, Ontario, October 12, 1996 to January 19, 1997. Tel: (905) 893-0344.

Art of the Canadian Arctic: A Reflection of the Inuit Culture, Genre Artisans Center, 617 East 22nd Avenue, Denver, Colorado, April 5 to April 28, 1996. Tel: (303) 298-7417.

**TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS**


**PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS**

Ontario

Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto) Chedoke-McMaster Hospital (Hamilton) McMichael Canadian Collection (Kleinburg) National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa) Toronto Dominion Gallery of Inuit Art (Toronto)

Quebec

Canadian Guild of Crafts Quebec (Montreal) McIndoe Museum of Canadian History (Montreal) Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (Montreal)

Manitoba

Crafts Museum, Crafts Guild of Manitoba (Winnipeg) Winnipeg Art Gallery (Winnipeg)

United States

Dennos Museum Center (Traverse City, Michigan) Alaska Gallery, Anchorage Museum of History and Art (Anchorage, Alaska)
An inukshuk overlooks Igloolik and Ikpiarjuk (Turton Bay).
The carvers of Lake Harbour established The Agiarqtiiit Society to preserve and promote carving in their community.

Agiarqtiiit means “the ones who file”. After the carving has been blocked out — but before it is sanded and polished — the artist uses the file to give it shape.

Similarly, in the past 50 years the local carving industry has been “blocked out” like a carving stone, and now Agiarqtiiit is giving it shape and movement.

The Agiarqtiiit logo signifies this purpose. The carvers use the agiarq to smooth their work, creating distinctive sculptures that are meticulously shaped and smoothed by the file.

For more information contact:
Agiarqtiiit Carvers Society
General Delivery
Lake Harbour, NWT X0A 0N0
Phone (819) 939-2416  Fax (819) 939-2406
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