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Two members of Council (myself and Patricia Pavlik), one printmaker (Emoena Karpip) and one artist (David Passey) formed the jury. All the artists and printmakers were invited to attend the day-long meeting and participate if they so wished, and believe me they did. Every artist and printmaker who had a work up for discussion was present for the entire meeting. It was a lively and concentrated session with everyone learning a great deal from one another. The meeting served as much as a jury as a workshop, with artists, printmakers, art advisors and council members discussing all aspects of printmaking from the nitty gritty of technique to the philosophical speculation of what it means to be an artist.

One of the most important aspects of this meeting and the resulting collection was that the Inuit had a direct say about what they presented to the South. They were fully aware that they had put together a collection which had strayed a long way from the usual Pangnirtung imagery and they were, in fact, pleased with that. On more than one occasion I heard an artist or printmaker comment that he was bored with the old style and wanted to work on something new and fresh. As an art gallery curator, I could only applaud their need and desire as artists to explore and develop. It is what we expect from our southern artists, so why not our northern artists? The other way leads to boredom of the artists and petrification of the art.

It is unfortunate that the extraordinary and historic circumstances surrounding the approval of this collection was not reported in the catalogue itself. I think this would have explained much about this year's Pangnirtung collection and put it in proper perspective.

Rosemary L. Tivell
Associate Curator
Canadian Prints and Drawings National Gallery of Canada.

Karpik has the last word

Editor's note: Andrew Karpik, the printmaker who did the portraits discussed above, has passed on this comment to IAQ: "I thought the artists would enjoy these, as that's the way they see themselves in the mirror."

Artists, Weavers, Movers and Shakers / 14
Twenty years ago, the women of Pangnirtung adopted a foreign artistic medium and made it a vehicle for expressing centuries-old Inuit traditions.

People and Places / 23
"Drawing is totally the reverse of carving," says Kenojuak. She speaks candidly about the process of "making" art.

Reviews / 27
Continuity and change in the works of Steokjuq Oqaqtaq. Also, Ivalu, great potential unfulfilled.

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LETTERS

Swinson is misinformed, says "Nunavut" owner

In response to George Swinton's letter to the Gallery, I wish to correct the misimpression it contains.

We chose the name "Nunavut Fine Arts Limited" to identify our gallery with the art of the Eastern Arctic. Mr. Swinton seems to assume that the name somehow 'deceives' an unsuspecting public. We categorically assure Mr. Swinton and the co-operatives that none of our clients have at any time misunderstood our name.

It is difficult to understand how our existence 'exploits' the Inuit artists with whom we deal. Surely, from the artists' point of view, we represent another option for the sale of their works. Indeed, an argument can be made that the virtual monopoly of Inuit art held by the co-ops and the Hudson Bay Company for so long had its own exploitive aspects. How can new investment in the north be harmful?

Mr. Swinton also implies that our business 'exploits' the Inuit artists with whom we deal. Surely, from the artists' point of view, we represent another option for the sale of their works. Mr. Swinton seems to assume that the name somehow 'deceives' an unsuspecting public. We categorically assure Mr. Swinton and the co-operatives that none of our clients have at any time misunderstood our name.

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Polar North is a division of 403186 Canada Inc.
large factor in future Canadian government decisions. An art critic from Art News and Review wrote that the artists "...are all very much more than craftsmen. Indeed they display an understanding of the potentialities of their materials, a sense of rhythm and an ability to convey a sense of the subtle and effective relationships between mass and line that should be the envy of many an established English sculptor." The Manchester Guardian called it "remarkable. Much of it is powerful enough to make the most ardent admirer of Henry Moore pause a moment and ask if there is not something to be said for sculptors who have no intellectual pretensions..."

This magazine was not to be outdone:

Instead of the familiar theory abstracts, one of London's most avant garde galleries last week was exhibiting primitive carvings that were as fresh and clean as a stand of cedars. The artists Inuit Honesan from Canada's vast Arctic territories were showing their work in Europe for the first time.

Carving by an unidentified Cape Dorset artist, presented to Princess Elizabeth by the Government of Canada at the close of the Royal visit in November 1951. In 1953 Princess Elizabeth, by then Queen Elizabeth II, loaned this sculpture to Gimpel Fils for their exhibition in London, England.
Baker Lake Wall-hangings: Starting From Scraps

Thrifty Inuit seamstresses, reluctant to waste their cutting scraps, instead gave birth to a highly acclaimed art form.

by Maria Muehlen
by Virginia Watt

Since the fall 1967 issue of IAG, this space has been devoted to telling the story of what really took place during those early years of Inuit commercial art production and marketing. Among the interesting developments in 1963 (the last issue was Jan, 1963) was the decision of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly in Ottawa to establish a "factory" for Anglican missionaries in Baker Lake. This was the beginning of a vital new industry that was to lead to the establishment of the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the launch of a full-scale export market for Inuit art. The "factory" was a strategic move by the government to encourage the production of art for export. It was a bold step that paved the way for the development of the Inuit art industry. This article explores the history of Inuit art production and marketing, focusing on the establishment of the "factory" system in Baker Lake and its impact on the industry.

In Retrospect

In 1969, a group of Inuit women working at the Baker Lake "factory" decided to sell their work as art rather than as crafts. This decision marked the beginning of the Inuit art industry. The women took their products to the Canadian Museum of Civilization and were encouraged to sell their work at the museum. This led to the establishment of the "factory" system in Baker Lake, which was a strategic move by the government to encourage the production of art for export. The "factory" was a vital place for the women to sell their work, and it played an important role in the development of the Inuit art industry.

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By the mid-1970s, Baker Lake wall-hangings had received such national acclaim that the better-known artists were commissioned to execute huge hangings for display in public buildings such as the National Arts Centre in Ottawa.

Since the 1980s there have been a number of major exhibitions of Inuit art that have brought the work of Inuit artists to the attention of a wider public. These exhibitions have helped to establish the Inuit art industry and have contributed to the growth of the Inuit art market. The Inuit art industry is now a major source of income for Inuit artists and has helped to improve the standard of living for Inuit communities.
Wall-hanging by Agnes Tuan of Baker Lake, ca. 1976, which is 146 x 139.7 cm. Toronto Dominion Collection.

composition of images used in the tapestry developed out of the intuitive sense of design which women had to cut and sew the complex skin clothing for their families. Elizabeth Whitman, in one of her reports, remarked that Inuit women have "the incredible ability of making garments after seeing a drawing or picture and of being able to make a person a parka after just looking at him...or of being able to adjust a standard garment to a perfect individual fit after only a look at a would-be purchaser in it" (Public Archives file 8 INUIT ART QUARTERLY SPRING 1989).

Similarly, as Marybelle Myers, who lived in Spence Bay and later worked with women in Arctic Quebec, observed:

The Eskimo women seem to have an uncanny eye for design components and measurements. Even today, they do not use paper patterns but cut the cloth by eye, as it were. Some women use a long string for measurement, tying knots to indicate the length of arm or back. One wonders how they remember which measurements the knots signify, but they operate, it seems, with an infallible sequence or else an innate sense of proportion. Others simply scrutinize the area to be covered and proceed to the cloth. (Myers 1974)

Remarkably, the fabric artists are able to visualize the entire composition of a large wall-hanging in their mind, never seeing it until it is finished. As Sheila Butler (1972) remembers:

One of the high points was the production of an immense hanging, approx...
approximately 12 feet by 20 feet, by the young woman Rita Ahveeleeayok. This large scale is even more remarkable when you consider that the entire work of cutting and sewing was done in a very tiny three-room house in the midst of Ahveeleeayok’s family of three children and a continuous stream of visitors, relatives and friends. In fact, the artist was never able to see the entire hanging because her house was too small to hold the work unfolded. She saw it section by section, with finished portions being folded up as work progressed. The only wall in Baker Lake large enough to hold this hanging was in the newly constructed school gymnasium. So when it was completed we took it to the gymnasium for the first viewing. The hanging seemed so right in the setting that teachers and students worked to raise money and subsequently purchased Ahveeleeayok’s large hanging for the Kamanituak Public School in Baker Lake. It has remained permanently on the wall where it was first hung.

Also derived from the skills used in sewing parkas is the wonderful sense of colour and sophisticated design that is so striking in many Baker Lake wall-hangings. During contact with European explorers, brightly coloured glass beads became popular trade items and Inuit seamstresses loved to decorate the front panels, particularly those of the woman’s parka, with elaborate designs made with these beads. Beads in large quantity, covering certain areas of the parka that traditionally had been visually separated by the use of a different colour of skin, became a sign of prestige and affluence.

Thus, image-making of a kind, albeit fairly abstract, was certainly not new to Inuit seamstresses. They transferred the creative instincts that had led them during long winter months to lavishly decorate their parkas to the new medium of wall-hangings, which they called neevigatah, literally “something to hang.” The new outlet for their sewing skills makes it possible for these women to perpetuate their roles as equal partners in their households. Previously they contributed to the well-being of their families by making windproof and waterproof clothing; now they provide through their skill in creating wall hangings. The beauty of the creations, however, indicates that this activity fulfills a deeper need than merely monetary reward. In her 1984 article, Alison Gillmore suggests that Inuit women in historic times “...responded to a hostile universe seemingly beyond their control by creating art by transforming skin and sinew into pattern and form.” She concludes: Inuit women artists bring to their modern art the physical skills and spiritual perceptions developed in pre-contact
times. Perhaps more importantly, their motive for art-making is now more ur-
gency than ever before. The threats to the survival of the Inuit people are on no longer
the shadows of bad hunting and bad weather in the modern times, they are the less direct, but no less menacing
threats of the commodification, and rapid change. In the face of these
pressures, the work of women’s hands takes on increasing value as an affirma-
tion of cultural identity: the art made by local women expresses, as traditional
inuit clothing once expressed, the strength and beauty that can exist in spirit
and physical handicap.

Five trend-setters

Approximately fifty Baker Lake scene
scapes have worked on wall hangings at
one time or another. Five of them can be
singled out as representing the main sty-
stic approaches that have been taken in this
area.

Any discussion of Baker Lake wall-hang-
ings must include mention of Jessie
Oonark, the most important of contem-
porary Inuit artists, equally acclaimed
in drawing and sewing. Fortunately,
she was showered with special honours and
awards, all richly deserved. Her wall-hang-
ings were accorded special sta-
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Lake. Recognition and acclaim from mu-
seums and collectors in the south soon
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of Oonark. There can be no greater contrast than Oonaek's linear designs, with sharply defined contour lines and shapes of flat colour, and the fluid style of Angrnaqquaq's tapestries which blur contours and weave everything into one lively surface texture.

If Angrnaqquaq's style is "painterly," Vinnie Tatya's creations could be called "graphic." Her well-balanced symmetrical compositions show clean stylized shapes against a neutral background, like the white background in a drawing or print. She makes no effort whatsoever to integrate background and image. Her creations derive their impact from the strength of the stylized animal and human figures, sparsely decorated with even V-stitching. The composite figures—a bird with a human head, a fish body with wings and a human head, and other mysterious creatures—remind one vaguely of Avaalaaqiaq's spirit creatures. While Avaalaaqiaq distributes them loosely across the picture space, Tatya arranges her composition carefully, often with a large central figure surrounded by smaller figures in symmetrical fashion. She also uses the favoured Baker Lake multiple image, in which one motif, whether a bird or human figure, is repeated many times, in rows and with only slight individual variations allowing for variety and tension in the composition. Many wall-hanging artists in Baker Lake have also contributed drawings to the Baker Lake print shop. Avaalaaqiaq has even worked at times as a printermaker. It is quite noticeable in their graphics that some artists are used to thinking in terms of organizing cut-out shapes over a certain area and linking them with embroidery. Translated into a drawing, this could mean a combination of areas of flat colour linked with contour lines. There are other close links between the two media as well, both wall-hangings and drawings tend to have complex restless compositions that often cover the entire picture space. There is also a delight in bright clashing colours, as evident in the graphics and in the textile arts. In fact, the combination of bold colours and eccentric compositions which disregarded any of our Western pictorial traditions (such as single perspective and relative size) give Baker Lake imagery, both in textiles and graphics, an expansive dynamic quality that is both upsetting and appealing.

Baker Lake wall-hangings reached an apogee in 1976 with the Art Gallery of Ontario exhibition of Baker Lake art. The People Within. It opened in the project's relative vitality after the Berties left, although most artists continued to produce until 1987, when the project was officially closed. Recently, Marie Bouchard, an art historian who, with her dentist husband, lives at Baker Lake, has been encouraging the production of wall-hangings. But only time will tell whether the creative energy of the early 1970s was a temporary phenomenon.

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Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Biographical files of artists, Inuit Art Section.
Public Archives of Canada File 255-S139, Vol. 5.

Maria Sheuks, an art historian, is Head of the Inuit Art Section, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. This article is an edited excerpt from a longer article entitled "Inuit Fibre Art" in a book in the Workshop of the Soul L'ombres du Soleil, edited by Gerhard Hoffmann to accompany the exhibition of the same name. The excerpt is printed here with permission of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, publishers of the book.

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New materials for carving

Since 1987, the Government of the Northwest Territories has been sponsoring workshops to experiment with carving in several different types of stone indigenous to the Baffin Region. Six Inuit sculptors have produced works in lapis lazuli and several kinds of marble, which necessitated learning new techniques and the use of special tools.

Craig Hall, Supervisor of Arts and Crafts for the Baffin Region, says although they are still at a very early stage, they are close to doing some test marketing. “What has to happen yet is about two more workshops to get some more pieces produced,” he said. When they have about 30 pieces available, they will organize a formal presentation to galleries to get feedback.

“We think the product is a good one, but it is important that it first be shown to the middlemen before it is exposed to the public,” Hall said.

The workshops, either in Inuktitut or Cape Dorset, are expected to be held later this spring. Carving has to be done outside, as marble creates an enormous amount of dust. Hall points out, however, that marble dust is not as serious a health hazard as soapstone dust which often contains asbestos. There is an abundant supply of marble near Cape Dorset.

It has not yet been decided who will lead the workshops. Hall says they have been, so far, to involve as many people as possible in using the new materials. Artist David Rubens Pitsiulak conducted one of the previous workshops.

In the meantime, Hall says, there are “pockets of experimentation going on. Philip Pannalak of Pond Inlet has some marble and is making some quite exquisite pieces, including a beluga whale of ivory-white marble which is superb, better than anything done in the workshops.”

Inuit art scores in Los Angeles

In December, Inuit art was included for the first time in an international fine arts fair. The acceptance of the First Nations at the 1987 edition of Art/ALPHA is something of a milestone, since only the finest contemporary art is included and only 160 galleries from around the world were invited to exhibit.

SPRING 1988 INUIT ART QUARTERLY 37
In the Shadow of the Sun opens in West Germany

"We had been saying for years that we should do something about Europe," says Maria Maehlen, head of the Inuit Art Section of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (INAC). "But the hurdles of sending an exhibit to Europe always seemed insurmountable—an un
known audience, high costs of shipping and curating, and a lack of contacts in potential receiving institutions."

The Canadian Museum of Civilization, in conjunction with INAC and External Affairs, had previously organized two major exhibits for Europe. Sculpture Inuit opened in 1978 and travelled to Moscow, Leningrad, Copenhagen, London and Paris. In 1977, an exhibition of graphics entitled The Inuit Print travelled to France, Copenhagen and Rotterdam. But there was no follow-up. The cultural extravaganza O. Kanada, prepared by the Canada Council for Berlin in 1983, had purposely excluded Canadian native arts, much to chagrin of the German public.

The solution to the problem of what could be done about Europe presented itself unexpectedly in 1985 when Dr. Gerhard Hofmann, a professor of American studies at West Germany's University of Wurzburg, proposed that the university, INAC and the Canadian Museum of Civilization collaborate to mount an exhibition of both Inuit and Inuit art which would travel in Europe. A comprehensive publication containing essays by Inuit and Indian specialists in Germany and Canada would accompany the exhibit.

Maehlen says, "Officials at INAC and CMG felt the train was an offer they could not refuse. Here was what we had been looking for—an intermediary, a European scholar with a sound American background who would find the best way to reach the European audience." Many meetings later, the project took shape with the CMG agreeing to organize the exhibit and CMG working with Dr. Hofmann on the publication. Scholars were invited to write essays, and others to serve on two committees to select which works should be included in the exhibit. Overall curatorial responsibility rested with Gerald McMaster and Quiste Lencour, Indian and Inuit curators at the CMG. Theirs years later, on December 9, 1988, the exhibit opened in Dortmund, West Germany. Entitled In the Shadow of the Sun, it contained approximately 250 artworks by 80 contemporary Indian and Inuit artists, and is being shown in two locations in Dortmund: the Museum am Ostwall (the Indian portion) and the Museum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte ('the Inuit portion').

The opening festivities were attended by officials of the three sponsoring institutions, the Canadian ambassador to West Germany, and numerous officials from Dortmund's cultural community. Inuit artists Jadis Oskooluk of Gjoa Haven and Patia Pana Sula of Cape Dorset also were present.

In the Shadow of the Sun returns to Canada in July to become one of the opening exhibitions at the Canadian Museum of Civilization's spectacular new building on the shores of the Ottawa River across from the Parliament Buildings. After that, it is scheduled to return to Europe where it will be shown in several more venues.

Copies of the German edition of the catalogue can be obtained from the Publishing Division, Canadian Museum of Civilization. The English and French editions will be available soon.

James Houston, here with some young onlookers, was at the National Library of Canada in Ottawa on February 26, where he read from a number of his works. The National Library recently acquired Houston's papers, and a small exhibition of his manuscripts and drawings was on view for the occasion.

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The Canada/Northwest Territories Economic Development Agreement (EDA), recognizes the importance of featuring activity in the industry and offers financial assistance to commercial galleries who promote and sell N.W.T. arts and crafts. The EDA, Dealer Support Program, provides funding to commercial galleries for the production of promotional materials and media advertising for specific exhibitions. The EDA, Artist and Artisan Development Program, covers travel costs associated with artists and artisans attending exhibitions of their work.

If you would like more information on the EDA Arts and Crafts programs contact:
EDA Secretariat, P.O. Box 1030, Yellowknife, NT. X1A 2N1
Phone (403) 920-8747 Fax (403) 873-0186

ARTS & CRAFTS IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

THE CANADA/NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

For many years the arts & crafts industry has been an important source of income for northern people. The industry suits a native lifestyle and promotes a unique northern culture. Long-term development is needed, however, to strengthen and stabilize the industry and to make it a consistent contributor to the N.W.T. economy.

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SPRING 1989 INUIT ART QUARTERLY 13
Artists, Weavers, Movers and Shakers
by Beverly Goldfarb

At first, Pangnirtung women didn’t like weaving such large productions as this, because they couldn’t see what the whole rug looked like until it was finished and taken outside where there was room enough to open it up. In 1980, during Megan Williams’ tenure as Weave Shop manager, this rug was commissioned for an office in New York City. All the weavers in the shop contributed to making it.
A new exhibition of Pangnirtung tapestries opened in May 1968 and Gary Magee, an arts and crafts officer with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, was hired to establish an arts and crafts program. In March 1969, Karen Bulow Ltd., a weaving company based in Montreal, was granted the first of three one-year contracts by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to establish a "training pilot program in weaving." Don Stuart, a graduate of the University of London with a degree in art education, was hired in June as the project’s first manager. The Montreal facilities of Karen Bulow Ltd. were used to conduct research for the project, including work on the development of lichen dyes.

Stuart arrived in Pangnirtung in February 1969 and observed the arts and crafts building quickly became a mecca for a wide variety of artisans. Magee had already begun print-making programs and encouraged handicrafts, carving, and jewellery work. Careers came and went, weavers joined the others, working side by side in cramped quarters. Before long, the shop became a focal point for the community.

Stuart hired three women and set about training them to weave. Because he did not speak Inuktitut, he taught the techniques by demonstration. "I made up one warp and dropped it on the first loom. Made up another warp and dropped it on the second loom. Seemed like the first warp, first loom. Meanwhile, all those eyes were carefully watching," he says. By his own account, the weavers picked up the techniques very quickly. "It soon became apparent that the young women were mastering the technique of simple weaving with remarkable ease," reads his 1971 report on the project. Magee remembers that the community’s reaction to the Weave Shop was very positive in the early days. "There were public meetings and everyone was invited to see what the project was all about. Stuart showed examples of the work and talked about plans for the future." Magee remembers people being excited about the prospect of employment in the shop and the potential for its long-term development.

Stuart decided to keep the atmosphere, Stuart refers to the shop’s vibrancy, saying it was the weavers’ second home and that it gave them a sense of importance and identity. "The project was unique," he says. "It was very prestigious for the women. There was nothing like it anywhere else in the world." The shop was open 24 hours a day. Stuart says, "I made a map and put pins in it showing when loom spaces and other equipment were marked. It was very exciting."

There were quite a few jobs for men. "Some of the men’s jobs were fast changing. They no longer had to work to keep their men outfitted for a traditional lifestyle or hunting and there was a desperate need for employment," Soon, he increased his original staff of three weavers to seven.

Along with its economic accomplishments, the Weave Shop also was developing a strong tradition in artistic directions. Ted Steeves, owner of Karen Bulow Ltd., remembers some of the good times from the early days when Stuart passed paper and pens around the community and got back some very interesting work, including some of the shop’s first drawings. Maryak Akluktulik and Elisapee Isulutak.

Stuart remembers great moments as the shop began to gain recognition. "Within the first few months, the Commissioner of Scouts came in with a group of people on a tour of the North." He was so excited about the Weave Shop that we ended up with an order for about 500 sashes for the Boy Scouts for the upcoming Jamboree in Churchill, Manitoba. In June 1970.

The Queen received the shop’s first blanket. Stuart says, "She put it on and wrapped it around her knees right away. Usually girls are passed on to the Lady in Waiting who tends to those things, and she was, in fact, reaching for the blanket. But the Queen ignored her. He Royal Highness, Prince Philip, reached out to touch the blanket and I could hear her say, ‘No, it’s mine’.

**Marketing the tapestries**

The first exhibition of Pangnirtung tapestries, organized by Virginia Watt, Director of the Canadian Guild of Crafts (Quebec),
was held at the Guild in Montreal in March 1972. Called From the Beginning, the exhibition represented the works of the initial 18 months of the Weave Shop's operation.

Watt was one of the original people who supported the Weave Shop's move from the production of run of hand to tapestries. A 1971 report on the weaving project gave economic reasons for the move. “The quality of the blankets was high but the cost of producing, northern overhead and shipping proved very expensive.” The report recommended the transition to tapestry production because “the demand for tapestries could be done by other weavers. Pangnirtung tapestries are now regularly produced in editions of either 19 or 20, although a single weaver rarely produces no more than two or three from each edition.

Lindgren also brought in more tapestry weavers and encouraged a much larger format. “They had never done big ones until I worked with the shop. They still haven’t done ones as large as I would like. We hold competitions to acquire more drawings. And we also introduced the idea of royalties to let the weavers know which of their works were being sold.”

Because she wanted to correct limited directions and improve sales, Lindgren also introduced the concept of editions. She says, “I feel strongest about the tapestries. The shop also produces ties, scarves and sweaters. For centuries, tapestries have been used to tell a story. The ability to communicate without words can be used for the Weave Shop to bring the Inuit and the North to many people. Tapestries can tell of the life of the North—in history, legends, nature and the present.”

In that way, Lindgren explains, “when they felt good ones tapestries, they were able to repeat them. There were results from the first one and have it done by someone who was very good with colour,” she says. Subsequent copies of the edition would follow the same colour schemes as the original and could be done by other weavers. Pangnirtung tapestries are now regularly produced in editions of either 19 or 20, although a single weaver rarely produces no more than two or three from each edition.

In recent years, under Kordula Depatie's management, the weaving project has developed into a wider market for the tapestries. As well, the overall technical quality of the tapestries has reached new heights. Virgil Watt of the Canadian Guild of Crafts declared them to be “technically, light years away from the first ones...” In fact, one of the earliest tapestries was brought in by a Swedish-born fibre artist from the Netherlands. However, the project has faced many challenges yet to come. By defining and fine-tuning operating policies and by establishing steady and good representation in galleries and with retail contacts, she says, “I feel strongest about the tapestries. The shop also produces ties, scarves and sweaters. For centuries, tapestries have been used to tell a story. The ability to communicate without words can be used for the Weave Shop to bring the Inuit and the North to many people. Tapestries can tell of the life of the North—in history, legends, nature and the present.”

Nevertheless, Depatie feels there are many challenges yet to meet. “I would like to give the shop stability for the years to come, by defining and fine-tuning operating policies and by establishing steady and good representation in galleries and with retail contacts,” she says. However, she adds, “there was a tremendous success. The credit for setting up a successful marketing system is given to Charlotte Lindgren, a Swedish-born fibre artist from Holstaz. She was brought in by the Government of the Northwest Territories as a consultant during part of the time (1978-1980) that Megan Williams and Deborah Halman were managers.

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The artists and weavers

The project has bred a special fel­ lowship among the weavers. Former manager Hickman's final report (November 1980) sums up the atmosphere among the weavers. Hickman attributed the atmosphere to the concepts of experts and consultants, artists and weavers during the last two decades has given the project diversity and strength.

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Complementing these articles, which place
the art in its historical context, are those
that focus on individual artists. Biogdget
analyzes the art of Outside (an artist),
providing insights into his creative process and
establishing him as a major artist. In her article on
Jose Papisuk, Myno the artist's eccentricity,
individuality and humour to his unique
artistic creations. In her equally thorough
analysis of the art of the Island brothers,
Myno-compare the more traditional "techni-
ically related realism" of Nanavut's sculptures to
those of his younger brother Mataro who integrates "modern abstraction of form" with traditional techniques. In "Fatt's, Ryan briefly relates that artist's
association with the Cape Dorset Coop.
Constituting the concept of continu-
ity and change alluded to in the two
introductory articles, are Biogdget's arti-
cles "Whale Bone" and "Chemistry and Inuit Art." In the former, she describes
the commercial uses of whale bone by Inuit
as well as its introduction as a new artistic
medium in the late 1970s. Her brief reference to whale bone carvings by artists
such as Karon Ashoona and Ablum Angikook
stresses the creativity of these artists.
In the second article, Biogdget focuses
on the effects, however limited, that
Christianity has had on Inuit artistic
production.
Alana Houston, who along with her art-
est husband James Houston was responsi-
ble for encouraging the first commercial
art production for Inuit, wrote an intro-
duction which deserves special mention.
Houston gives an overview of the last four
decades of Canadian Inuit art and her writ-
ing is infused with respect and sensitivity.
There is an emotive note of urgency in her
distinct plea for order in the marketing of
Inuit art... "to ensure that it is the art that
is being managed by a proper system, and
not the system that is being managed by the
art." In spite of its organizational ambiguities,
Inside Art, An Anasibog is a welcome pub-
llication that makes a series of articles published
over a span of at least three years in The
Barer, as well as the important interventions
by Biogdget and Myers, more accessible.
Art, although literary and scholarly quality,
varies each article contributes to an under-
standing of Inuit art.

Cynthia Cook

The staff used to select new staff—all add to
this friendly atmosphere. The happy situ-
ation at work helps account for the steady-
ness of the employees. Staff, easily, you
feel that they are happy and that their work is
theirs... I feel that the steadiness and happiness
of the employees is one of the shop's
strengths. In part, the shop's uniqueatmosphere is
due to the predominance of women.

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A view of the Weave Shop in 1983.

B. When the weavers

A. When the weavers consider new employees,
they look for women
who do not easily get frustrated.

When the weavers consider new employees,
they look for women
who do not easily get frustrated.
The weavers are constantly helping each other, dressing a loom or solving a problem, sharing their work breaks with bannock and tea.

Deborah Hickman

The weaving is done on floor looms using a beater—a huge comb—for picking down the yarn to create a flat perfect surface on the finished tapestry. The shop adopted a European tapestry technique based on the traditional centuries-old Aubusson method, an exciting and time consuming system, but one that yields excellent results.

A cartoon is made from the original drawing. This simplified, triangular or square to scale, is then placed under the loom cotton warp threads so that the longwoven image can be traced onto the warp threads with a soft pink or black felt pen. The tracing shows the weaver the outlines of the image and marks color changes so she knows when to change thread colors as she weaves.

Each tapestry, which may range in size from 24 by 30 inches to 60 by 78 inches, is the fruit of a special relationship between the weavers and the artists who contributed the original drawings. But the question of whether or not the weavers themselves are "artists" or merely technicians is a much debated one. Some critics and artists credit the weavers with color choices, while others maintain that it is the weaving which provides the quintessential element in the weaving process or how weavers create colors.

"The creation of particular shades is a complex and intricate task," Kordula Depatie, manager of Cape Dorset Weave Shop, says. "One may twist two or even three strands of wool together to create a new shade," she says. "You may have blues available to create shades for water. But when you come to creating icy water, you may want to blend a new shade by taking a blue thread and a white thread and twisting them together. None of the artists who draw the images could know anything about this," she says, "because they have no knowledge of weaving processes or how weavers create colors."

The view of Virginia Watt of the Canadian Guild of Crafts: "The colors are one thing that have made the tapestries uniquely Inuit. We [southerners] wouldn't pick those colors.

The years ahead

Although there have been critics who have called Pangnirtung weaving "borrowed art," the art carries on a centuries-old artistic tradition in the community. Weaving has also been a new medium of expression for the women. Through their tapestries, they 'tell a story of their lives and culture.'

The future? Weave Shop manager Kordula Depatie sums up her objective as, "to create a wider public awareness and visibility about life in the North." She says, "You can twist two or even three strands of wool together to create a new shade."

The creation of particular shades is a complex and intricate task, Depatie notes. "We have so much more experience with this material."

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Like clockwork...

Precision.
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Timeliness.

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Exhibitions

Ivishak: Traditions of Inuit Clothing

In this exhibit, the McGill Museum gave viewers a broad ethnographic sample of Inuit traditional and contemporary clothing and accessories. Emphasis was placed upon the entire process of making clothing, so closely related to the physical environment of the people.

The exhibition themes progressed from The Hunt, Raw Materials, Sewing Tools and Personal Adornment to Canadian Inuit Clothing. These themes corresponded one activity to the next, resulting in the final products of various amautis, jackets, boots and other appareled. The amautis and jackets displayed had been examples of the craftsmen's skill and craft in making these intriguing garments. As well, the beadwork and design manipulation of caribou skin and sealskin showed the aesthetic concerns of Inuit creators. And boots, slippers and stockings as well as outer clothing revealed distinctive styles used in some of the regions. A few items of contemporary clothing ended the exhibit. Photographs were placed throughout the three sections in an effort to complement the show.

In conjunction with the Inuit exhibition, some special events were held. Last May the fashion show Inuit Amauti, organized by Jill Meehan of the University of Manitoba and Sally Karetak of Arnait (Art's) Point, was presented in the Montreal area. A number of Inuit women and men were models in this show. In June Lucy Martin of Rankin Inlet gave a two-day beadwork demonstration and workshop, and in October, Lucy Neelin of Kuujjuaq demonstrated the making of a caribou-skin amauti and sealskin hat. The fashion show and workshops were well received and provided an enriched context for the exhibition.

Although an educational package Inuit was at first glance stimulating to the untrained eye, certain items were created that would have benefited the show. The attempts of the curators (Betty Siewierska and Catherine Randell) to tackle such a vast subject matter was commendable. But more professional research and thought was needed to create a valid survey of tradition to contemporary Inuit clothing. Five years in the making, the exhibition unfortunately resulted in confusion and incorrect information.

It was a number of years ago. There were no examples of inner garments which were, however, mentioned in the exhibition panels and the catalogue. Of the nine Canadian Inuit groups referred to, only one was represented in the footwear section. The amautis chosen represented four groups: Copper Inuit, Caribou Inuit, Butter Inuit and Quebec Inuit. Although only contemporary amautis of the Caribou and Butter Inuit were presented. As well, examples of Inuit jackets were from four groups: Copper, Mackenzie Inuit, and Quebec. Social and marital lines displayed were of the type made primarily for hunting and not used by the Inuit. Finally, there was one tangible example of the famous "calico" dress derived from the Hudson Bay Company or the well-known contemporary dress of Spence Bay. Small photographs of women wearing these dresses were shown, but there were no accompanying explanations. Thus, the exhibition failed to provide an accurate survey of Inuit clothing.

There was no more comprehensive throughout the Inuit catalogue. First of all the labelling design is poor. The numbering of items is difficult to understand, since the photographed objects have been numbered in their own presentation and not in relation to the exhibition. Secondly, the choice and placement of photographs is perfunctory and sometimes contradicts the text. On page 48, for example, a pair of Copper Inuit arctic "scrimmies" is shown while the text clearly states that scarves were never used to cut skin. These sections were probably used for the season's trade and not for Inuit. Moreover, blank pages were left between the sections of themes, valuable space which could have been devoted to more substantial photographs. One of the exhibition's strong points was as visual character, yet text predominates in the catalogue because it is in three languages and its placement is complicated by poor design. As a consequence, visual information was lost. Overall, the quality of the catalogue is disappointing.

With such a wealth of available material, the Inuit exhibition and catalogue could have been a highlight for any museum. But, as a result of improper research and preparation, both were mediocre.

Nenida Swinerton
Nenida Swinerton is a dietitian and a free-lance writer. She took a Master's degree in 1980, with a thesis concerning the life and works of Inuit legend, later published by the National Museum of Fine Arts.
INUIT ART

20 INUIT ART QUARTERLY SPRING 1989

MASTERWORKS OF INUIT ART

AN EXHIBITION OF SCULPTURE FROM Gjoa Haven/Spence Bay Featuring ThE Work Of Judas Oolooolah
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TELEPHONE (604) 688-7323

Hunter And Bear
Judas Oolooolah
27"H x 27"W x 11"D

Seal on Worm by Sheoqaj Qajugaq, Cape Dorset, 1962, acquisition: black stone, wood, white pigment. Seal is 7.2 x 17.8 x 3.4 x, worm is 2.5 x 19.6 x 6.5 cm. Art Gallery of York University collection.

Loon by Sheoqaj Qajugaq, Cape Dorset, 1977 (stone: 35.5 x 9.5 x 8.1 cm). Donated to The McMichael Canadian Art Collection by the West Haflin Edelino Co-operative.

contrasts created by incised lines emphasized by coloured pigment have been replaced by the subtle opposition of highly polished areas to those with a matte finish, such as the features of wings, webbed feet and eyes of the animals. Continuity between the earlier and later sculptures is achieved by the graceful movement characterizing both. The sinuous lines of the swimming seal and the slithering worm in Seal on Worm compare well with the similar although somewhat more exaggerated movement of the fish, seals and narwhals in The McMichael collection. Sheoqaj’s skill in expressing motion is most evident in his carvings of loons. By the twist of a neck, the turn of a beak and subtle variations of webbed feet sometimes tucked under, sometimes stretched behind, Sheoqaj suggests the bird’s movement through water. The elegance of form noted in the earlier sculptures also characterizes the later animal carvings. However, as with the exaggeration of movement, the proportions are frequently exaggerated. This tendency is particularly noticeable in the attenuated bodies of the loons.

Finally, Sheoqaj’s technical expertise is clearly evident in both early and later sculptures. Sheoqaj spoke of his commitment to carving despite its difficulties: “I have built houses and have made boats. Making a carving is harder work than making a house or... a boat. However, I try to carve the sculptures very fine. I only use a saw to carve. I never use an axe like a lot of people do... sometimes I am happy with my carvings, especially when I think I have done a good job.”

Major lacunae exist in the visual documentation of Sheoqaj’s carvings which place great limitations on a comprehensive, chronological analysis of his entire. This is particularly true of the period from 1962 to 1977. This is a transitional period in which figurative and animal imagery were carved simultaneously, or was the shift more dramatic? Was the apparent tendency toward a complexity of form, content and technique in the early carvings towards increasing simplicity in the later ones.
The iconographic complexity of Two Birds and Nanuk is matched by a complexity of formal elements. The opposition of the realistic forms of the nunavut and birds to the abstract pole that connects them, the white ivory to the black stone, smooth surfaces to textured surfaces, two-dimensional pictorial incisions to three-dimensional sculptural forms, create a visual variety in this carving.

The iconography of another carving, Seal on Worm, in which the form of a worm has been juxtaposed with that of a seal, remains elusive. Perhaps the artist was illustrating a myth or a dream, or perhaps he combined these two creatures to create an aesthetic object without any intrinsic meaning. Once again, Shockey set up a series of oppositions: the textured circular grooves of an earthworm versus the smoothly polished surface of a sea animal.

The most notable shift evident in the works on display at The McMichael has to do with Shockey’s choice of subject matter. Figurative images appear to have been totally eliminated from his oeuvre. Those of animals—whales, walrus, fish, seals and loons—now predominate. Composite sculptures such as Two Birds and Nanuk, which combine two or more forms, have been replaced by carvings that explore single forms. Consequently, any sense of narrative content, varying in the composite works from the simple interaction of a boy with his dog to the more complex representation of myths, has been eliminated. This change in subject matter and content is accompanied by a shift in technique.

The use of ivory to create contrasts of material and colour is now reduced to the representation of realistic details, such as the tails of walrus and seals. The rich
IMPORTANT SALE BY AUCTION
MAY 29TH AND 30TH

Davie Atchealak: Whale bone drummer.
26½"  
Karoo Ashevak: Double-sided whale bone spirit figure, 15 ¼ "

including many pieces illustrated in George Swinton's Sculpture of the Eskimo in Sculpture/Inuit-The Masterworks, and Inuit Art in the 1970's.


PRINTS, LITHOGRAPHS, SERIGRAPHS, ENGRAVINGS AND DRAWINGS: Some 200 lots including major pieces by Kenojuak, (including The Enchanted Owl [Red]), Kananginak, Kiakshuk, Parr, Lucy, Padlo, Putuakogk, Naqpechuaq, Agyhagayu, Pitsiulak, Johniebo, Paota, Sheouak, Kiawak, Natsivaar, Oonark, (including Woman and Big Woman), Toolookume, Anguhadluq, William & Martha Noah, Qualluarkuq, Kusaq, Iksiktaaryuk, Tudluq.

PREVIEW:
Friday, May 26th-9:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m.
Saturday, May 27th-9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Sunday, May 28th-12 noon-5:00 p.m.

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The Sculpture of Sheokjuk Oquttak
A review essay, prompted by the exhibition Sheokjuk Oquttak: Sculpture at The McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario (November 12, 1988 to January 8, 1989).

A recent exhibition at The McMichael Canadian Art Collection featured 37 carvings made by Sheokjuk Oquttak between 1977 and 1982. The exhibition was an appropriate tribute to the West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative, which donated a large number of the carvings to The McMichael, and it also provided an important overview of the last five years of Sheokjuk's artistic career. A comparison of these works with those he produced during his first 10 years of carving shows both continuity and changes in subject matter, content and style.

Sheokjuk Oquttak was born in 1920 at Shittukwek, a camp near Cape Dorset. He spent most of his youth and early adulthood on the land, as his family moved from camp to camp in search of fish and game. After a brief stay in St. John's (Northern Quebec), where his young wife and his child died, Sheokjuk returned to the Lake Harbour region on the southern Baffin coast where he remained and eventually got employment in the local building trade. Sheokjuk's second wife suffered from tuberculosis, which resulted in her frequent hospitalization in a sanatorium. Her absence forced Sheokjuk to move into Cape Dorset where relatives could assist him in raising his children. In Cape Dorset, Sheokjuk was employed as a carpenter, first by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and then, from 1961 until his death, by the West Baffin Eskimo Co-op.

It was shortly after Sheokjuk moved into Cape Dorset that he began to carve. "I started carving around 1952," he said in a 1979 interview. "I started carving when James Houston was here." The first time, Sasiok (Iqaluk) drew a picture of a igloo to show me what I was to make me into a man. The igloo I made had people inside." This and subsequent comments by Sheokjuk during the same interview suggest that Two Sleeping Families, in the collection of the Canadian Guild of Crafts, may well be the artist's first carving. In this sculpture, the sleeping platform above the igloo is represented by a flat slab of grey-black stone. The curvilinear form in turn, the simple rectangular body of six modelled statues set in ivory and carefully inset into stone. Soft undulations carved into the stone must suggest the bodies beneath it. Sheokjuk supports this body to each family member through the thinly incised lines, filled in with contrasting black lines, that define their hair and facial features.

In their clothing and the finely incised lines representing figures, smiles and facial features.
Two other carvings in the AGYU's collection illustrate another aspect of Sheokjuk's early work: an interest in creating complex composite sculptures illustrating myths and imaginative subject matter. Two Brats and Naked probably illustrated several episodes from the epic adventure of a legendary brother and sister. The stone warrior and two birds attendant to an incident in which a bird boy, who was being deliberately starved by his mother, was fed by his sister to a lake where two lumps restored his sight. To arrange her mother's solution, the boy pulled her into the sea, whereupon she became a marital. The moon and sun, instead of opposing sides of the ivory post supporting the two birds, is perhaps a graphic reference to the formation of the sun and moon. In the epic account, the sister was visited under cover of night by a lover. Waiting to identify him, she placed a rock on her nose. After her lover departed, she followed him, only to discover that he was her brother. In shame, she picked up a torch and ran away with her brother following close behind. As they ran around the igloo, they rose into the sky where they became the sun and the moon.

The author believes this to be the first carving made by Sheokjuk Oquttak. Two Sleeping Families, exact date unknown (stone and ivory, 40 x 16 1/2 x 16 1/2"), Collection of the Canadian Guild of Crafts (Toronto).
Kenojuak Ashevak of Cape Dorset was interviewed last October at Feheley Fine Arts in Toronto, where she was attending the opening of the Sculpture of Kenojuak Ashevak and Joanassie Igloolik. These two Cape Dorset artists lived and worked together from 1978 until Igloolik's death in 1981. The catalogue exhibition at Feheley Fine Arts (October 5 to October 27, 1988) comprised 21 works which they produced during these few years as well as some earlier and later carvings by Kenojuak and several of her prints. Jimmy Manning, also of Cape Dorset, interpreted for art historian Cynthia Cook.

Cynthia Cook: Before you begin to work on a piece of stone, do you have an image in your mind of what you want to carve?

Kenojuak: I work a little bit differently from others. When I work on soapstone, I begin by chipping away at the stone and as I work, my subject starts to emerge.

Cook: Is it the shape of the stone that inspires you?

Kenojuak: Yes, the shape of the stone contains within it the form of a bird, for example, and I just follow the shape.

Cook: Have you ever had to change your subject matter while in the process of carving?

Kenojuak: Yes, I have to do that if I'm chipping away and a piece breaks off accidentally. I have to adjust my subject to the new shape of the stone.

Cook: When you carve, do you work the stone evenly through all stages or do you rough out the general shape and then work on a specific area such as the head, for example, until it is finished and then move to another area?

Kenojuak: When I work on a composite sculpture, like Bird Spirit, I almost complete chipping away one area, such as the bird's head, before I return to my original thought and move to the next area.

Cook: In your prints and drawings, colour seems to be very important and to give you lots of pleasure to work with. What is it about carving that pleases you?

Kenojuak: Before I make a shine on the stone, that's the most pleasing moment. It's a good feeling because the piece is almost finished...it's where it's supposed to be.

For me, drawing is totally the reverse of the process of carving. With carving, the stone, through its shape, suggests a subject. The white paper is flat and empty, and I must think of an idea first. I cannot chip away at it to change its shape to create an idea. Drawing is much more difficult for me to do.

Kenojuak at the opening of Kenojuak Ashevak and Joanassie Igloolik, 1978-1981 at Feheley Fine Arts, Toronto, in October. Budd Feheley is on Kenojuak's left and collector Kenneth Rotenberg on her right.

Kenojuak at the opening of Kenojuak Ashevak and Joanassie Igloolik, 1978-1981 at Feheley Fine Arts, Toronto, in October. Budd Feheley is on Kenojuak's left and collector Kenneth Rotenberg on her right.

Now, because I am older, I prefer drawing to carving because carving requires a lot of physical effort.

Cook: Do you title your carvings?

Kenojuak: No, I leave that up to the buyer.

Cook: So when we look at the title of a carving, such as Bird Spirit, it doesn't necessarily reflect what you, the artist, intended the carving to represent?

Jimmy Manning interjects: I'm responsible for titling the carvings. You know, if it is a straightforward carving of an owl or a fish there's no problem. With more complex carvings, I talk to the artist and discuss the subject. I ask, "What is it? What is going on?" Sometimes they say, "I don't know!" So I look at it and I see a bird's head around a fish and, to my eyes, it's a bird spirit.

Cook: What do you see in that carving, Kenojuak?
Kenojuak: I remember that with this particular piece I made a big head and then part of the bird broke. Then I wanted to add other shapes into the head.

Cook: So you are more interested in creating pleasing shapes than in representing a preconceived image or a real object. Is that it?

Kenojuak: That's exactly it.

Cook: When you were living with Joanassie, did you talk about carving?

Kenojuak: No, we worked very independently. It was very much up to Joanassie what he wanted to carve.

Cook: Did you ever work on the same piece together?

Kenojuak: The only time I touched Joanassie's carvings was when they were in the sanding and polishing stage. I helped sand and polish his carvings.

Cook: After you polished a carving, did Joanassie then put in the details, such as the incised lines indicating eyes, feathers and so on?

Kenojuak: No, I usually incised the details after I finished polishing the piece.

Cook: Did you carve more during the time you lived with Joanassie?

Kenojuak: I carved more during this time because I was unhappy with the payments I was receiving from the co-op for my drawings. Most of the sculptures Joanassie and I carved were done when we were camping. We would sit down and carve after we fished.

Cook: Do you like to work alongside other artists, such as Joanassie, or do you prefer to work alone?

Kenojuak: I like to work with other people. Just the other day I went to my sister's shack and we worked together. She was working on her own and I was working on my drawings. We didn't talk about art but about personal things. We laughed and had a good time.

Cook: Why do you think white people want to collect Inuit art?

Kenojuak: I think white people down here, down south, collect Inuit art because they like it. For me, I don't like to collect my own work but I do collect some things from the north. I like to collect carvings that are made with electric tools. At home I only use hacks and files... I work with my hands.

Cook: Would you like to learn how to use different techniques to create sculptures?

Kenojuak: No, I like to stick to my own way of doing things.

Cook: You came down to the National Gallery recently to celebrate its opening. What did you think of the gallery?

Kenojuak: I was very pleased to see the huge new gallery. The most important thing, which was expressed by Inuit at the opening, is how pleased we are that Inuit sculptures are being looked after in such a very careful way.
Cook: Did you carve more during the time you lived with Joanassie?
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First show for Ohito Ashoona
Ohito Ashoona, a young Cape Dorset artist, attended the opening of an exhibition of his work at the Eskimo Art Gallery in Toronto on February 10. Although he has been carving for many years, this was his first show. Born in Cape Dorset in 1952, Ohito comes from a famous family of artists. His father is Kaka Ashoona and his uncle is Kiawak Ashoona. There was a preponderance of bears in the exhibition and most of them sold within a day of the opening. During the following week, the artist gave a demonstration of carving on the streets outside the new Harbourside quarters of the Eskimo Art Gallery. When asked how he liked carving on the busy Queen's Quay, he said he found the crowds distracting. It was a cold day, "but not as cold as it is in Cape Dorset," he said.

Ohito was enthusiastic about his show.
"Drawing is totally the reverse of the process of carving"

Kenojuak talks about art-making

Kenojuak Ashevak of Cape Dorset was interviewed last October at Ryerson Fine Arts in Toronto, where she was attending the opening of the Sculpture of Kenojuak Ashevak and Ivanasse Iqaluk. These two Cape Dorset artists lived and worked together from 1978 until Iqaluk's death in 1988. The catalogue exhibition at Ryerson Fine Arts from October 5 to October 27, 1988 comprised 25 works which they produced during these few years as well as some earlier and later carvings by Kenojuak and several of her prints. Jimmy Manning, editor of Cape Dorset, interpreted the art historion Cynthia Cook.

Cynthia Cook: Before you begin to work on a piece of stone, do you have an image in your mind of what you want to carve?

Kenojuak: I work a little bit differently from others. When I work on sculpture, I begin by chopping away at the stone and as I work, my subject starts to emerge.

Cook: Is it the shape of the stone that inspires you?

Kenojuak: Yes, the shape of the stone gives it the form of a bird, for example, and I just follow the shape.

Cook: Have you ever had to change your subject matter while in the process of carving?

Kenojuak: Yes, I have to do that if I'm chopping away and a piece breaks off accidentally. I have to adjust my subject to the new shape of the stone.

Cook: When you carve, do you work the stone evenly throughout all stages or do you rough out the general shape and then work on a specific area such as the head, for example, until it is finished and then move to another area?

Kenojuak: When I work on a composite sculpture, like Bird Spirit, I almost completely chop away one area, such as the bird's head, before I return to my original thought and move to the next area.

Cook: In your prints and drawings, colour seems to be very important and to give you lots of pleasure to work with. What is it about carving that pleases you?

Kenojuak: Before I make a shine on the stone, that's the most pleasing moment. It's a good feeling because the piece is almost finished. It's where it's supposed to be.

Now, because I am older, I prefer drawing to carving because carving requires a lot of physical effort.

Cook: Do you like your carvings?

Kenojuak: No, I leave that up to the buyer at the show.

Cook: So when we look at the title of a carving, such as Bird Spirit, it doesn't necessarily reflect what you, the artist, intended the carving to represent?

Jimmy Manning: I am responsible for titling the carvings. You know, if it is a straightforward carving of an owl or a fish there is no problem. With more complex carvings, I talk to the artist and discuss the subject. I ask: What is it? What is going on? Sometimes they say I don't know! So I look at it and see a bird's head around a fish and, to my eyes, it's a bird spirit.

Cook: What do you see in that carving, Kenojuak?
The sculpture of Sheokjuk Oqutaq
A review essay, prompted by the exhibition Sheokjuk Oqutaq: Sculpture at The McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario (November 13, 1988 to January 8, 1989).

A recent exhibition at The McMichael Canadian Art Collection featured 37 carvings made by Sheokjuk Oqutaq between 1977 and 1982. The exhibition was an appropriate tribute to the West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative, which donated a large number of the carvings to The McMichael, and it also provided an important overview of the last five years of Sheokjuk's artistic career. A comparison of these works with those he produced during his first 10 years of carving shows both continuities and changes in subject matter, content, and style.

Sheokjuk Oqutaq was born in 1920 at Shattowee, a camp near Cape Dorset. He spent most of his youth and early adulthood on the land, as his family moved from camp to camp in search of fish and game. After a brief stay in Sagguk (Northern Quebec), where his young wife and his child died, Sheokjuk returned to the Lake Harbour region on the southern Baffin coast where he remained and eventually got employment in the boat-building trade. Sheokjuk's second wife suffered from tuberculosis, which resulted in her frequent hospitalization in a sanatorium. Her absence forced Sheokjuk to move into Cape Dorset where relatives could assist him in raising his children. In Cape Dorset, Sheokjuk was employed in a boatyard, first by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and then, from 1961 until his death, by the West Baffin Eskimo Co-op. It was shortly after Sheokjuk moved into Cape Dorset that he began to carve. "I started carving around 1952," he said in a 1979 interview. "I started carving when I wasn't carving very long. I really liked those carvings.

Two Birds and

This early carving is significant because it indicates that Sheokjuk's extraordinary talents as a sculptor were fully developed from the very beginning. Its expressiveness, elegant form, precise detail and technical refinement are characteristic of the carvings he produced throughout his artistic career.

An examination of the range of Sheokjuk's carvings reveals that he focused on figurative imagery during the early years of his career. He noted this preference when interviewed in 1979: "I carved people. .. at the beginning when I wasn't carving very long. I really liked those carvings. .. Two carvings, Boy and Bird with Dog, uncovered during recent research on the Inuit sculpture collection of the Art Gallery of York University, are in this category. Both carvings pre-date 1962 and share formal elements with the Guild's Two Sleeping Families. Similarities include the careful modelling of their ivory faces, the delicate folds in their clothing and the finely incised lines representing fringe, seams, and facial features.

Two other carvings in the AGYU's collection illustrate another aspect of Sheokjuk's early work: an interest in creating complex composite sculptures illustrating myths and imaginative subject matter. The Two Birds and Narwhal probably illustrate several episodes from the epic adventure of a legendary brother and sister. The story revolves around two birds, one of which is a Narwhal. A boy who was being deliberately starved by his mother, was found by his sister at a lake where two loons restored his sight. To avenge her mother's meanness, the boy pushed her into the sea, whereupon she became a Narwhal. The moon and sun, instead of opposing sides of the ivory post supporting the two birds, is a graphic reference to the rotation of the sun and the moon. In the epic account, the sister was visited under cover of night by a lover. Waiting to identify him, she placed soot on her nose. After her lover departed, she followed him, only to discover he was another boy. In shame, she picked up a torch and ran away with her brother following close behind. As they ran around the igloo, they rone into the sky where they became the sun and the moon.

The author believes this to be the first carving made by Sheokjuk Oqutaq. Two Sleeping Families, exact date unknown (ivory and ivory; 4.0 x 26.5 x 16.5). Collection of the Canadian Guild of Crafts (Ottawa).
The iconographic complexity of *Two Birds* and *Narwhal* is matched by a complexity of formal elements. The opposition of the realistic forms of the narwhal and birds to the abstract post that connects them, the white ivory to the black stone, smooth surfaces to textured surfaces, two-dimensional pictorial incisions to three-dimensional sculptural forms, create visual variety in this carving.

The iconography of another carving, *Seal on Worm*, in which the form of a worm has been juxtaposed with that of a seal, remains illusive. Perhaps the artist was illustrating a myth or a dream, or perhaps he combined these two creatures to create an aesthetic object without any intrinsic meaning. Once again, Sheokjuk set up a series of oppositions: the textured circular grooves of an earthworm versus the smoothly polished surface of a sea animal.

The most notable shift evident in the works on display at The McMichael has to do with Sheokjuk's choice of subject matter. Figurative images appear to have been totally eliminated from his repertoire. Those of animals—whales, walrus, fish, seals and loons—are predominant. Composite sculptures such as *Two Birds* and *Narwhal*, which combine two or more forms, have been replaced by carvings that explore single forms. Consequently, any suggestion of narrative content, varying in the composite works from the simple interaction of a boy with his dog to the more complex representation of myths, also has been eliminated.

The shift in subject matter and content is accompanied by a shift in technique. The use of ivory to create contrasts of material and colour is now reduced to the presentation of realistic details, such as the tusks of walrus and narwhal. The rich
contrasts created by incised lines emphasized by coloured pigment have been replaced by the subtle opposition of highly polished areas to those with a matte finish, such as the features of wings, webbed feet, and eyes of the animals.

Continuity between the earlier and later sculptures is achieved by the graceful movement characterizing both. The sinuous lines of the swimming seal and the slithering worm in Seal on Worm compare well with the similar although somewhat more exaggerated movement of the fish, seals and narwhals in The McMichael collection. Sheokjuk’s skill in expressing motion is most evident in his carvings of loons. By the twist of a neck, the turn of a beak and subtle variations of webbed feet sometimes tucked underneath, sometimes stretched behind, Sheokjuk suggests the bird’s movement through water.

The elegance of form noted in the earlier sculptures also characterizes the later animal carvings. However, as with the expression of movement, the proportions are frequently exaggerated. This tendency is particularly notable in the attenuated bodies of the loons.

Finally, Sheokjuk’s technical expertise is clearly evident in both early and later sculptures. Sheokjuk spoke of his commitment to carving despite its difficulties: “I have built houses and have made boats. Making a carving is harder work than making a house or... boat. However, I try to carve the sculptures very fine. I only use a saw to carve. I never use an axe like a lot of people do... Sometimes I am happy with my carvings, especially when I think I have done a good job.”

Major lacunae exist in the visual documentation of Sheokjuk’s carvings which place great limitations on a comprehensive, chronological analysis of his œuvre. This is particularly true of the period from 1962 to 1977. Was this a period of transition, in which figurative and animal imagery were carved simultaneously, or was the shift more dramatic? Was the apparent tendency away from a complexity of form, content and technique in the early carvings towards increasing simplicity in the later ones?
Personal Adornment

The Hunt, Raw Materials, Sewing Tools

Ivalu: Traditions of Inuit Clothing.

Notes

2. Ibid., p. 17.
4. Ibid., p. 17.
5. Ibid., p. 18.

Exhibitions


In conjunction with Inuit clothing, the exhibition themes progressed from the Keewatin caribou skin, beads, bone and antler. Although as an educational package, the catalogue is most disappointing. First of all, the labelling of works is difficult to understand, since the photography is poor. The number of items is limited to a few examples of Canadian Inuit and Quebec Inuit, although only contemporary dresses of Spence and the Inuit. Finally, there was not one tangible example of the famous "calico" dress derived from the Hudson's Bay Company or the square cloth. Small photographs of women wearing contemporary dresses of Spence, however, were discovered at the exhibition. Second, the choice and presentation of the exhibition was not adequate. As a consequence, visual notes in the catalogue have been a highlight for any museum. But, an attempt to tackle such a vast subject matter was commendable, but more professional research and thought was needed to create a valid survey of traditional to contemporary clothing. The attempt of the catalogue failed to provide an accurate survey of the clothing of the people. The epic tale is found in: Rasmussen, Knud, Netsilik Eskimos: Social Life and Spiritual Culture, Expedition, 1921-24, Vol. 7, pp. 77-81; and Spalding, E. W., The Central Eskimo, Expedition, 1921-24, Vol. 8, pp. 232-236: Rasmussen, "Rasmussen vs. Rasmussen", ibid., p. 78. The number of Inuit furriers. And boots, slippers and stockings as well as outer clothing reveal the design manipulation of caribou skin and sealskin showed the aesthetic concerns and values in life. These themes connected one activity to another. The fashion show was at first glance stimulating to the untrained eye. What other valid answers to these and other important questions are there? The fashion show and work demonstration and workshop, and in the last room, Montreal Museum, Montreal.
How the weaving is done

The weaving is done on floor looms using a beater a huge comb for packing down the yarn to create a flat, perfect surface on the finished tapestry. The loom is used to create a tapestry. The yarn is pulled through the loom and then through a series of harnesses, or threads, which are then interlaced to create the final design. This process is repeated until the desired length of the tapestry is reached.

The years ahead

Although some have called Pangnirtung “a maxed-out” or “laboratory art,” the art world is not the only one experiencing a new level of expression. Through their tapestries, they tell a story of their own lives and culture.

And the future? Weave Shop manager Koundala Koundala sees the future as “a wider range of access and visibility.” She would like to see the tapestries included in the exhibitions of the “chapter of Inuit Art” and in the sphere of contemporary Canadian art.

Jeanne Aluittuk says simply: “When we’re all great-grandmothers, I’ll try to weave even then.”

Galerie Elena London

INUIT MASTERWORKS FROM BAFFIN ISLAND AND THE KEEWATIN

INUIT MASTERWORKS FROM BAFFIN ISLAND AND THE KEEWATIN

JUDAS ULLULAQ, GJOA HAVEN

INUIT ART QUARTERLY SPRING 1989

SPRING 1989 INUIT ART QUARTERLY 31
Complementing these articles, which place the art in an historical context, are those that focus on individual artists. Blodgett analyzes the art of Osuitok Ipeelee, providing insights into his creative process and establishing him as a major artist. In her article on Jocie Papalook, Myers links the artist's eccentricity, individuality and humour to his unique artistic creations. In her equally thorough analysis of the art of the Iulaituk brothers, Myers compares the more traditional "technically refined realism" of Nutaraaluk's sculptures to those of his younger brother Matiusi who integrates "modern abstraction of form" with traditional techniques. In "Parr," Ryan briefly relates that artist's association with the Cape Dorset Co-op.

Contributing to the concept of continuity and change alluded to in the two introductory articles, are Blodgett's articles "Whale Bone" and "Christianity and Inuit Art." In the former, she describes the historical uses of whale bone by Inuit as well as its introduction as a new artistic medium in the late sixties. Her brief reference to whale bone carvings by artists such as Karoo Ashevak and Abraham Angulik stresses the creativity of these artists. In the second article, Blodgett focuses on the effect, however limited, that Christianity has had on Inuit artistic production.

Alma Houston, who along with her artist husband James Houston was responsible for encouraging the first commercial art production from Inuit, wrote an introduction which deserves special mention. Houston gives an overview of the last four decades of Canadian Inuit art and her writing is infused with respect and sensitivity. There is an ominous note of urgency in her closing plea for order in the marketing of Inuit art: "... to ensure that it is the art that is being managed by a proper system, and not the system that is being maintained by the art."

In spite of its organizational ambiguities, Inuit Art: An Anthology is a welcome publication that makes a series of articles published over a span of over a dozen years in The Beaver, as well as the important interviews by Blodgett and Myers, more accessible. And, although literary and scholarly quality vary, each article contributes to an understanding of Inuit art.

Cynthia Cook

Many people, men and women, bring in drawings to be made into tapestries, but the shop itself has remained mostly a women's domain. Janet Senior, manager between 1972 and 1976, suggests that the female character of the Weave Shop has had a great influence on the selection of designs used in the tapestries:

"As women, the weavers chose subjects like going to market, going out for tea on the river boat. We did have more stories of women and children, and of women's work than men's."

Different managers have lent their personal perspectives to the tapestries. Each collection has been, at least in part, a reflection of that period's manager. Those managers who successfully "bonded" with the group of weavers and with their employer-employee relationship are a team.

Pangirut tapestries are adapted from Inuit drawings purchased from local artists, the co-op or the print shop. The artists whose work has been chosen most frequently also have been women, such as Malaya Alikukak, Anięt Angalik and Elesieppie Inukshuk.

The role of the artists who do the drawings in the production of tapestries should not be underestimated. Megan Williams says sometimes the role and responsibility of the artists, Malaya Alikukak especially, is overlooked. Malaya is said to be the artist an image of her drawing in her mind before she draws it, and usually likes the weaver's interpretations because, as women, they naturally know her subject matter. She is always willing to be called in to discuss the work. "If there are free ideas, I like to interpret as weaving, I can change them, make them bigger or different."

The weavers say the hardest part of their job is adapting the drawing to a weaving format, especially if the drawing has very small areas or fine details, such as the tip of a person's hair. "Sometimes you don't know when to begin the curve of the shape," they say. "If you don't change the shape of the image, it might not work."

Colour selection for the initial weaving in each edition is a cooperative process. The weavers themselves say that selecting a colour requires two experienced people...
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SPRING 1989 INUIT ART QUARTERLY 33
Announcing the publication of a limited edition (300 copies) album on Parr's Drawings published in Quebec City by "Aux Multiples Collections" in collaboration with "Ca pe D orset Fine Arts".

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PARR 1893-1969

E

Employment opportunities in Pangnirtung throughout the 1960s were limited and the community needed a focus to create local jobs and industry. The Pangnirtung Eskimo Pilot program was started in 1968 and Gary Magge, an arts and crafts officer with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, industrialized the program in August that year to help the co-op establish an arts and crafts program.

In March 1979, Karen Boulou, a weaving company based in Montreal, was granted the first of these one-year contracts by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to establish a "training program in weaving." Don Stuart, a graduate of the University of Alberta's Institute of Art with a diverse background in fibre and industrial arts, was hired in June as the project's first manager. The Montreal facilities of Karen Boulou Ltd. were used to conduct research for the project, including work on the development of lichen dyes.

Stuart arrived in Pangnirtung in February 1979 and the arts and crafts building quickly became a beehive for a wide variety of artisans. Magge had already begun printing and papermaking programs and encouraged handcrafts, carving, and jewellery work. Careers came and went, weavers worked the looms, others worked side by side in cramped quarters. Before long, the shop became a focal point for the community.

Stuart hired three women and set about training them to weave. Because he did not speak Inuktitut, he taught the techniques by demonstration. "I made up one warp and dropped it on the first loom. Made up another warp and dropped it on the second loom. Serendipity, the first warp was first loom. Meanwhile, all those eyes were carefully watching," he says. By his own account, the weavers picked up the techniques very quickly. "It soon became apparent that the young women were mastering the techniques of simple weaving with remarkable ease." Dr. Ken's report on the project.

Magge remembers that the community's reaction to the Weave Shop was very positive in the early days. "There were public meetings and everyone was invited to see what the project was all about." Stuart showed examples of the work and talked about plans for the future. "Magge remembers people being excited about the prospect of employment in the shop and the potential for a long-term development.

Recalling the atmosphere, Stuart refers to the shop's productivity, saying it was the weavers' second home and that it gave them a sense of importance and identity. "The project was unique," he says. "It was very prestigious for the women. There was nothing like it anywhere else in the world."

The shop was open 24 hours a day. Stuart says: "I made a map and put pins in it showing where tapes were, and our other products were marked. It was exciting." There were quite a few jobs for men.

Stuart says: "It was a lot of work and there was a lot changing. They no longer had to work to keep their men out of trouble for a traditional lifestyle of hunting and there was a desperate need for employment. So, the demand increased each year of its existence to several hundred. Along with its economic accomplishments, the Weave Shop also developed successfully in artistic directions. Ted Skoene, owner of Karen Boulou Ltd., remembers some of the good times from the early days when Stuart passed paper and pens around the community and got back some very interesting work. Including some of the shop's first drawings from Malvina Aulaluk and Elspeth Naaluk.

Stuart remembers great moments as the shop began to gain recognition. "Within the first few months, the Commissioner of Scouts came in with a group of people on a tour of the North. He was so excited about the Weave Shop that we ended up with an order for about 300 scarves for the Boy Scouts for the upcoming Jamboree in Churchill, Manitoba, in June 1979."

The Queen received the shop's first blanket, in July 1979, during her visit to Inuvik (Frobisher Bay) commemorating the centennial year of the North West Territories.

"It was cold," recalls Stuart, who was at the presentation. "That when the blanket was presented, it was rolled up, tied on and wrapped around her knees, right away. Usually all the guests are on the Lady in waiting who tends to those things, and she was, in fact, waiting for the blanket. But the Queen ignored her. His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, marched over to touch the blanket and I could hear her say, 'No, it's mine.'"

Marketing the tapestries

The fine exhibition of Pangnirtung designs organized by Virginia Watt, Director of the Canadian Guild of Crafts (Quebec),
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In the Shadow of the Sun opens in West Germany

"We had been saying for years that we should do something about Europe," says Maria Muehlen, head of the Inuit Art Section of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (INAC). "But the hurdles of sending an exhibit to Europe always seemed insurmountable—an unknown audience, high costs of shipping and crating, and a lack of contacts in potential receiving institutions."

The Canadian Museum of Civilization, in conjunction with INAC and External Affairs, had previously organized two major exhibits for Europe. Sculpture Inuit opened in 1970 and travelled to Moscow, Leningrad, Copenhagen, London and Paris. In 1977, an exhibition of graphics entitled The Inuit Print travelled to France, Copenhagen and Rotterdam. But there was no follow-up. The cultural extravaganza, prepared by the Canada Council for Berlin in 1982, had purposely excluded Canadian native arts, much to the chagrin of the German public.

The solution to the problem of what could be done about Europe presented itself unexpectedly in 1985 when Dr. Gerhard Hoffmann, a professor of American studies at West Germany's University of Wurzburg, proposed that the university, INAC and the Canadian Museum of Civilization collaborate to mount an exhibition of both Indian and Inuit art which would travel in Europe. A comprehensive publication containing essays by Inuit and Indian specialists in Germany and Canada would accompany the exhibit.

Muehlen says, "Officials at INAC and CMC felt this was an offer they could not refuse. Here was what we had been looking for—an intermediary, a European scholar with a sound American background who would find the best way to reach the European audience." Many meetings later the project took shape with the CMC agreeing to organize the exhibit and working with Dr. Hoffmann on the publication. Scholars were invited to write essays, and others to serve on two committees to select which works should be included in the exhibit. Overall curatorial responsibility rested with Gerald McMaster and Odette L'Erroux, Indian and Inuit curators at the CMC.

Three years later, on December 9, 1988, the exhibit opened in Dortmund, West Germany. Entitled In the Shadow of the Sun, it contains approximately 250 artifacts by 80 contemporary Indian and Inuit artists, and is being shown in two locations in Dortmund: the Museum am Ostwall (the Indian portion) and the Museum fur Kunst und Kulturgeschichte (the Inuit portion).

The opening festivities were attended by officials of the three sponsoring institutions, the Canadian ambassador to West Germany, and numerous officials from Dortmund's cultural community. Inuit artists Judas Oolooah of Gjoa Haven and Pitaloosie and Pauta Sain of Cape Dorset also were present.

In the Shadow of the Sun returns to Canada in July to become one of the opening exhibitions at the Canadian Museum of Civilization's spectacular new building on the shores of the Ottawa River across from the Parliament Buildings. After that, it is scheduled to return to Europe where it will be shown in several more venues.

Copies of the German edition of the catalogue can be obtained from the Publishing Division, Canadian Museum of Civilization. The English and French editions will be available soon.

James Houston, here with some young onlookers, was at the National Library of Canada in Ottawa February 16, where he read from a number of his works. The National Library recently acquired Houston's papers, and a small exhibition of his manuscripts and drawings was on view for the occasion.

THE CANADA/NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

For many years the arts & crafts industry has been an important source of income for northern people. The industry suits a native lifestyle and promotes a unique northern culture. Long-term development is needed, however, to strengthen and stabilize the industry and to make it a consistent contributor to the N.W.T. economy.

The Canada/Northwest Territories Economic Development Agreement (EDA), recognizes the importance of fostering activity in the industry and offers financial assistance to commercial galleries who promote and sell the arts & crafts products of the territories.

The EDA, Dealer Support Program, provides funding to commercial galleries for the promotion of promotional materials and media advertising for specific exhibitions.

The EDA, Artist and Artisan Development Program, covers travel costs associated with artists and artisans attending exhibitions of their work.

If you would like more information on the EDA Arts and Crafts programs contact:
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Fax (403) 873-0186
The next time you are faced with moving your refrigerator or other ponderous object in your home, think of this. Last August a handful of people, without benefit of heavy machinery, moved this 6,000-pound rough-edged marble carving from its site of origin at Andrew Gordon Bay on the southern Baffin coast, put it in a Peterhead boat and took it to the nearby community of Cape Dorset. There a team of carvers led by Sam Pitsiulak of Lake Harbour did more work on it, whittling it down to 2,000 pounds. Then it was put aboard an aircraft and taken to Lake Harbour to be finished. The statue, of a drum dancer, is to be taken to Iqaluit where it will be on display in the airport until the new Baffin Region Cultural Centre is built there in about 1992.

New materials for carving

Since 1987, the Government of the Northwest Territories has been sponsoring workshops to experiment with carving in several different types of stone indigenous to the Baffin Region. Six Inuit sculptors have produced works in lapis lazuli and several kinds of marble, which necessitated learning new techniques and the use of special tools.

Craig Hall, Supervisor of Arts and Crafts for the Baffin Region, says although they are still at a very early stage, they are close to doing some test marketing. "What has to happen yet is about two more workshops to get some more pieces produced," he said. When they have about 30 pieces available, they will organize a formal presentation to galleries to get feedback.

"We think the product is a good one, but it is important that it first be shown to the middlemen before it is exposed to the public," Hall said.

The workshops, either in Iqaluit or Cape Dorset, are expected to be held later this spring. Hall says they have been trying to involve as many people as possible in using the new materials. Artist David Reuben Pigtouqun conducted one of the previous workshops.

In the meantime, Hall says, "pockets of experimentation" are going on. Philip Pitseolaq of Pond Inlet has some marble and is making some quite exquisite pieces, including a beluga whale of ivory-white marble which is superb, better than anything done in the workshops...

Inuit art scores in Los Angeles

In December, Inuit art was included for the first time in a national fine arts fair. The acceptance of Vancouver’s Inuit Gallery as an exhibitor at ART/LA 88 is something of a milestone, since only the finest contemporary art is included and only 160 galleries from around the world were invited to exhibit.
The Inuit Gallery was initially rejected on the grounds that "Inuit art was not suitable for representation in the venue." Organizers apparently viewed native art as a folk form, out of context with the quality of contemporary art expected at the International Contemporary Art Fair. Held at the Los Angeles Convention Center, this five-day event is only in its third year, yet carries considerable prestige. From its strategic location on the Pacific Rim, the LA show is seen as an important bridge between east and west.

Not to be summarily dismissed, Inuit Gallery owner Joseph Murphy and his director of promotions James Leasak persisted in their crusade, enlisting the aid of the Canadian Consul in Los Angeles, Joan Winser. Thanks largely to her efforts, the name of the Inuit Gallery was added to those of Moos and Evelyn Aimis of Toronto, Montreal's Aubes 3935 and Christiane Chassay, and Equis of Vancouver, on the list of exhibitors.

Among the artists represented at the show were Vassily Kandinsky, Claude Monet, Henry Moore, Robert Rauschenberg and Andy Warhol. With 50 pieces by Inuit artists at the Inuit Gallery's booth, this illustrious roster expanded to include the likes of Kiawak Ashoona, Abraham Etungat, Pauta Saila, Parr, Henry Evaluardjuk and Elizabeth Nootaraloo. The Inuit work drew enthusiastic attention, from the first glimpse given to 75 invited guests at a preview reception in the Consul's residence, where Terry Ryan of the West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative proved to be an effective ambassador for Inuit art. The pace was especially hectic throughout the opening weekend, with an estimated 25,000 people descending on the Convention Center between December 10 and 14.

For Joe Murphy, whose passion for the art form is well known on the West Coast, an invitation to return and the favourable response garnered by Inuit art was even more exciting than the sales generated for the gallery. Repeat visitors were common, eager for information about an art form still prone to misconception by the public.

Of all the delightful comments made about the Inuit art during the show, one from an ingenious UCLA graduate student who visited the booth in the early stages of the event is worth noting: "Your booth is the only one I keep coming back to because it is the only one where the art has a soul." Louise Whitney

### Baker and Pang print-making at a standstill

Neither the Baker Lake nor the Pangnirtung print shops have begun work on their 1988 collections. After completing its 1988 collection, the Sanavik Cooperative in Baker Lake closed its shop. A lack of operating funds made it impossible to continue, although the coop anticipated that production could resume with the help of revenue from a grocery store it has opened. It was also hoped that the Government of the Northwest Territories would provide funding for an arts advisor and some assistance with operating costs.

Last December, Arctic Co-operatives Limited advised Inuit Art Quarterly that Sanavik expected to resume print-making activities any day. The retail store had been more successful than anticipated and funding was expected from the government. As we go to press (the second week of March), the print shop remains closed. Bill Graham, Regional Superintendent of Economic Development and Tourism for the GNWT, advised IAQ that a funding proposal for Sanavik was being considered.
Five trend-setters

Approximately fifty Baker Lake scene
sculptors have worked on wall hangings
at one time or another. Five of them can
be singled out as representing the main
artistic trends that have been taken in
this medium.

Any discussion of Baker Lake wall hangings
must include mention of Jesse Oonark, one of the most important of con-
temporary Inuit artists, equally accomplished in drawing and sewing. Fortunately,
his talent was recognized early and he was awarded the status almost since the very
beginning of the arts program at Baker Lake. Recognition and acclaim from mu-
seums and collectors followed. Until his death in 1988, Oonark was showered with special honours and awards, all richly deserved. Paintings and drawings
sent from the very beginning an astounding assurance, an unerring flair for design and colour, and an overwhelming imagination.

While her early compositions show her motifs in a free-floating kind of space, she later developed compositions that are carefully balanced, often symmetrical and of almost rigid design and form. Although she may depict some company and subjects, such as travellers or hunters in action, her elegant lines and pre-occupations often result in Inuit scenes.

Her designs are often framed in a manner that makes interesting use of the interplay of positive and negative space.

A more “painterly” approach is evident in Elizabeth Angnakangiuq’s hangings. She explores the theme of transformation, both within and between the animals and humans figures, which are often done in the traditional style.

This results in a subtle blending of the skin with the surrounding background and forms. The transformation of one into another is represented by the use of oil paint. This effect is enhanced by the manner in which the birds are depicted. In addition, the use of the oil paint lends itself to the fluidity of movement within the scene. The song of life and the beauty of the animals is poised in a balance of positive and negative space.

IACA is a non-profit association of artists, collectors, and publishers. It promotes, protects, and preserves the work of Inuit artists and the cultural traditions of the Inuit. It is dedicated to promoting the art of the Inuit and is committed to the preservation and protection of the Inuit culture. It is also dedicated to the promotion of the Inuit arts and cultures. It is a member of the International Association of Indigenous Artists (IAIA).
The Holman and Pangnirtung co-ops have each received approval from the Inuit Arts and Crafts Project Liaison Committee for grants to assist them in purchasing drawings from local artists. These grants are to encourage the production of original drawings for the print shops and to build up "image banks" in the communities for future exhibitions.

Arctic Artistry, which recently relocated to Hastings-on-Hudson, New York, was invited to mount an exhibit of Inuit sculpture at Buffalo's Winterfest 89 in January and February.

Snow Goose Associates in Seattle, Washington, has organized an exhibit of more than 60 old and contemporary Eskimo and Northwest Coast Indian masks (February 23 to March 26). It was a highlight of a rare Alaskan Edikana masks dating from 1940.

Ottawa's Carleton University will host a conference entitled Convergences and Divergences on April 4 to 8. The conference is to include papers on the representation of aboriginal peoples in museums and how the state uses "culture" to promote tourism.

Last fall, Canadian Arctic Producers produced a "fine art" t-shirt in a limited edition of 250 and a sweatshirt in an edition of 25. The image reproduced on both was Drum Dance, a 1971 print from Baker Lake by the late Luke Anguqdluk. CAP intends to produce other images and eventually to transfer production to northern centres with a silk-screening capability.

Pierre Cadieux, former Labour Minister, has replaced Bill McKnight as Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Mr. McKnight is now Minister of Defence.

Father Guy Mary-Rousseliere, O.M.I., a long-time missionary in the North who lives in Pond Inlet, received the 1988 Northern Arts and Crafts Award. Father Rousseliere is an anthropologist, photographer and filmmaker whose work has highlighted knowledge about the Inuit and about Inuit history, in particular.

In March, representatives of Indian and Northern Affairs and various Inuit agencies had a follow-up meeting in Iqaluit to discuss the disposition of INAC's large collection of Inuit art. A mutually satisfactory agreement was reportedly reached. IAQ will have a report on this meeting in future Update sections.

About 150 pieces of Inuit art will be displayed at the United Nations in New York from June 5 to July 28. The exhibit coincides with an environmental award presentation to the Inuit Circumpolar Conference in recognition of that organization's development of an Inuit regional conservation strategy. The exhibit, organized by Thomas Wells of Arctic Images in Carmel, California, and Aspen, Colorado, will include demonstrations and talks with visiting artists.

Call for papers: A special issue on Inuit art is being planned by the Canadian Journal of Native Studies. Those interested in contributing should contact Professor Colleen Cook, Department of Native Studies, Brandon University, Brandon, Manitoba R7A 6A9.

FAMILY: Pitseolak Ashoona 20 x 26".
composition of images used in the tapestries developed out of the intuitive sense of design which women had used to cut and sew the complex skin clothing for their families. Elizabeth Whitson, in one of her reports, remarked that Inuit women have "the incredible ability of making garments after seeing a drawing or picture and of being able to make a person a part of a whole...just looking at him...or being able to adjust a standard garment to a perfect individual fit after only a look at a would-be purchaser in it" (Public Archives file).

Similarly, as Maybellie Myers who lived in Spence Bay and later worked with women in Arctic Quebec, observed:

The Eskimo women seem to have an uncanny eye for design components and measurements. Even today, they do not use paper patterns but cut the cloth by eye. So it were. Some women use a long string for measurement, tying knots to indicate the length of arm or back. One wonders how they remember which measurements the knots signify, but their operation seems with an infallible sequence or else an innate sense of proportion. Others simply scrutinize the area to be covered and proceed to the cloth. 

Remarkably, the fabric artists are able to visualize the entire composition of a large wall-hanging in their mind, never seeing it until it is finished. As Stella Butler (1975) remembers:

One of the high points from the production of an immense hanging, approx...
IN RETROSPECT

by Virginia Watt

Since the fall 1987 issue of IAQ, this space has been devoted to telling the story of what really took place during those early years of Inuit commercial art production and marketing. Among the interesting developments in 1952 (in the last issue) was Jim and Alma Houston's sojourn on Baffin Island. In 1953, a highly successful exhibition of Inuit Art in London appears to have had a direct bearing on subsequent government involvement with the art.

In June of 1952, a letter from the Canadian High Commissioner in London, England, found its way to the Canadian Handicrafts Guild in Montreal through the office of the Secretary of State and what was then the Northern Administration Department. Charles Gimpel of Gimpel Fils Gallery in London had requested an exhibition of "first class pieces" of Inuit art for April or May of 1953, to coincide with the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Gimpel told the Guild that the works could not be for sale because of British Treasury restrictions, of which the Guild replied that "the selling aspects would not be a factor and that many of the works would not be for sale."

For the next few months, letters flew back and forth between government departments, the Guild and Gimpel Fils. External Affairs agreed to pay the transportation costs of the exhibition to and from London. Planning of the exhibition was complicated because of British government restrictions on all imports. The shipment had to be addressed to Canada's High Commissioner in London and might not have beentraceable. It was necessary for the Office of the High Commissioner to be the importer, otherwise Gimpel would have to obtain an import license, which might not have been granted.

The shipment of 154 works left Canada on March 25 and arrived in London on May 1. Photographs and published information about the Arctic and the Inuit had been sent earlier. Charles Gimpel had requested that a Canadian write the introduction to the exhibition catalogue. Alice Lighthall, the Guild's chairperson, not only wrote the introduction but packed and labelled each work herself.

Jack Molson of the Guild had suggested to Charles Gimpel that he might see if he could display the sculpture that had been presented to Princess Elizabeth on her previous visit to Canada. Gimpel followed up on Molson's suggestion. "Canada House approached H.M. the Queen about her Eskimo carving which she said she would willingly lend if it could be found in time, because all of her belongings, which were in Clarence House when she moved to Buckingham Palace, were put into storage."

This explanation reads like that for any household during a move. Fortunately, the sculpture was found and the Lord Chamberlain's office instructed Gimpel to go to Buckingham Palace and collect it. Molson also suggested that having a "Mountie" at the opening might be of interest to Londoners and the press. Gimpel was excited by this prospect and replied that "the British press would be delighted."

The exhibition opened on May 19, 1953, with an RCMP officer present. Gimpel reported: "The High Commissioner made a suitable and pleasant speech. He was accompanied by a Mountie, Constable Biensch from Winnipeg, in all of the glory of his red coat, which is so dearly loved by Londoners. It added a nice touch of local colour."

This exhibition received extraordinary critical acclaim and in my opinion was a dazzling success. Local press interest soon began building in little hand sewn items in the hope of selling them to the press. The display purchased some items and sold many of them locally. Encouraged, the women brought more, including the occasional wall hanging, described by Sheila Butler (1972) as "small, charming, stitched and appliqued pictures, made from scraps left over from the cutting of garments."

By the mid-1970s, Baker Lake wall hangings had received such national acclaim that the best known artists were commissioned to execute huge hangings for display in public buildings such as the National Arts Centre in Ottawa.

Since the 1980s the women of Baker Lake have been encouraged, as in all the Arctic communities, to make Inuit designed clothing for sale in southern Canada. In 1986, Elizabeth Whiten, the wife of the Anglican missionary in Baker Lake, was hired to establish a sewing program, and she set up a shop where people came to buy supplies for working at home to which they returned finished products such as runners, duffle coats and camo. She was surprised by the occasional small "hanging" she received, made from scraps left over from material used for more utilitarian objects.

Eventually, this cottage industry was replaced with a factory-oriented operation, with the women working as employees in the craft shop and turned to using sewing machines in the manufacture of mass produced items. This was a project doomed to failure, mainly because the women disliked the factory system that meant they had to work away from home. The "factory" for parkas and other items was shut down in the spring of 1970, and most of the local women found themselves without employment. Most of the textile artists speak only Inuit, and this is the only form of wage employment that they have.

The sewing program renewed vitality that same year when Jack and Sheila Butler, both artists, arrived in Baker Lake to develop arts and crafts. Local women began bringing in little hand sewn items in the hope of selling them to the press. The display purchased some items and sold many of them locally. Encouraged, the women brought more, including the occasional wall hanging, described by Sheila Butler (1972) as "small, charming, stitched and appliqued pictures, made from scraps left over from the cutting of garments."

Realizing the potential of these hangings, Sheila Butler took the bold step of ordering large quantities of fabric and duffle to be shipped to Baker Lake on the annual seal. This was the beginning of the now famous Baker Lake wall hangers. Mainly, the technique involved sewing smaller pieces of fabric onto the background piece of cotton cloth using small even stitches such as those used in making clothing. Often the design was enhanced with decorative stitchery. It is a medium requiring patience, manual dexterity and careful planning, and the artists have to work within certain restrictions on the art. Usually, for instance, there is only a limited range of fabric available in duffle and chintz.

Several women with outstanding artistic talent (hangings are made exclusively by women) were chosen for the job, and rarely do they become more familiar with the new medium, they become more daring. Designs were larger and more adventurous. Galleries began to hold solo exhibits of the work of individual artists, and public galleries such as the Winnipeg Art Gallery and the Art Gallery of Ontario featured wall hangings in their recent exhibitions. By the mid-1970s, Baker Lake wall hangings received such national acclaim that the best known artists were commissioned to execute huge hangings for display in public buildings such as the National Arts Centre in Ottawa.

Certain aspects of the cultural tradition made it quite easy for Inuit women to master the new techniques needed to fabricate wall hangings. Inuit women have always known how to sew. A skilled seamstress was highly prized as a wife, because a woman's survival in the Arctic depended upon having expertly crafted clothing. The
Baker Lake Wall-hangings: Starting From Scraps

Thrifty Inuit seamstresses, reluctant to waste their cutting scraps, instead gave birth to a highly acclaimed art form.

by Maria Muehlen

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large factor in future Canadian government decisions. An art critic from Art News and Review wrote that the artists "... are all very much more than craftsmen, indeed they display an understanding of the potentialities of their materials, a sense of rhythm and an ability to convey subtle and effective relationships between mass and line that should be the envy of many an established English sculptor." The Manchester Guardian called it "remarkable. Much of it is powerful enough to make the most fervent admirer of Henry Moore pause a moment and ask if there is not something to be said for sculptors who have no intellectual pretensions..."

Time magazine was not to be outdone:

Instead of the familiar thorny abstractions, one of London's most avant-garde galleries last week was exhibiting primitive carvings that were as fresh and clean as a stand of cloyer. The artists, Eskimo tribesmen from Canada's vast Arctic territories, were showing their work in Europe for the first time.

"The Eskimo sculpture looked strikingly modern. Yet where most moderns can only try to imitate the power of primitive art—the caricature-like simplification, the economic, almost childlike use of detail—the Eskimo sculptors showed a force that set their work apart from the most sophisticated studio products."

Charles Gimpel wanted to send the exhibition to Paris, but post-war government restrictions made this impossible. Gimpel Fils went on to become an Inuit art dealer and Charles Gimpel became one of the world's most respected and renowned collectors of the art. By the end of the summer of 1953, the Deputy Minister of the federal Department of Resources and Development informed the Guild that the grant it had been providing for the development of "handcrafts work" among the Eskimos would be discontinued. Before the end of the year, James Houston, who had been hired by the Guild, would become a government employee, a shift which will be the topic of my next column.

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POLAR NORTH OPENS ITS SHOWROOM IN MONTREAL

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Our 2,000 square ft. gallery at 5823 St. Francois in St. Laurent is conveniently located within five minutes of Montreal’s Dorval Airport. Let us know you’re coming; our gallery manager will be happy to pick you up at the airport upon your arrival. Our impressive collection of original native artwork is on exhibit and awaiting your visit. We offer dealers, agents, and curators a wonderful opportunity to view magnificent sculptures in our warehouse gallery. Whether browsing or buying, you owe yourself the visit.

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We look forward to seeing you.

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Photo by John DeWolfe.

Marble Mask (60 x 57 x 11 cm) by John Ilikpak of Lake Harbour and Kawaijuak King of Igloolik.
Letters, continued from page 1

Swinton is misinformed, says "Nunavut" owner

In response to George Swinton's letter

We are pleased to note that the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the National Gallery of Canada are currently working together on a joint exhibition of Inuit art.

Letters

WILL YOU BECOME A SUPPORTER OF IAQ?

The Inuit Art Foundation, which publishes Inuit Art Quarterly, has received a charitable contribution of $100,000 from the Government of Canada. If you would like to become an IAQ supporter, please send a donation to the Inuit Art Foundation (1821, 1 Balconies, Ottawa, ON K1N 8B1, Canada) or call us at 613-236-5788.

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for your letter of April 1, 1989.

We are pleased to note that the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the National Gallery of Canada are currently working together on a joint exhibition of Inuit art. We look forward to seeing the final result of this collaboration.

In our most recent issue, we published an article on the history of Inuit art and its place in contemporary art. We believe that this exhibition will further highlight the importance of Inuit art and its role in Canadian culture.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

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[Signature]
Two members of Council (myself and Patricia Feheley), one printmaker (Andrew Karpik) and one artist (David Poysey) formed the jury. All the artists and printmakers were invited to attend the day-long meeting and participate if they so wished, and believe me they did. Every artist and printmaker who had a work up for discussion was present for the entire meeting. It was a lively and concentrated session with everyone learning a great deal from one another. The meeting served as much as a jury as a workshop, with artists, printmakers, arts advisors and council members discussing all aspects of print-making from the nitty gritty of technique to philosophical speculation of what it means to be an artist.

One of the most important aspects of this meeting and the resulting collection was that the Inuit had a direct say about what they presented to the South. They were fully aware that they had put together a collection which had strayed a long way from the usual Pangnirtung imagery and they were, in fact, pleased with that. On more than one occasion I heard an artist or printmaker comment that he was bored with the old style and wanted to work on something new and fresh. As an art gallery curator, I could only applaud their need and desire as artists to explore and develop. It is what we expect from our southern artists, so why not our northern artists? The other way leads to boredom of the artists and patronization of the art.

It is unfortunate that the extraordinary and historic circumstances surrounding the approval of this collection was not reported in the catalogue itself. I think this would have explained much about this year's Pangnirtung collection and put it in proper perspective.

Rosamund T. Trelil Associate Curator, Canadian Prints and Drawings National Gallery of Canada.

**Karpik has the last word**

Editor's note: Andrew Karpik, the printmaker who did the portraits discussed above, has passed on this comment to IAQ: "I thought the artists would enjoy these, as that’s the way they see themselves in the mirror."

**Note:**
This Calendar is correct, but you are advised to check dates and times with the institutions.

**Povungnituk Print Collection 1988-89**

opens May 27 at The Inuit Gallery of Vancouver and at Images of the North, San Francisco.

**Cape Dorset Print Retrospective at The McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg (Ontario), January 22 to April 25.**

**Contemporary Inuit Drawings, organized by the Macdonald Stewart Art Centre, Gaelich (Ontario), Itinerary: National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, until March 30; Glenbow Museum, Calgary; Oldham, June 2 to July 30; Muscarelle Museum of Art, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg (Virginia), August 26 to October 29.**

**Stories in Stone: An Exhibition of Soapstone Sculpture from Northern Quebec and Kenya, Itinerary: DeTure Center, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, April 12 to May 24; Moose Jaw Art Museum, Moose Jaw (Saskatchewan), June 13 to August 6; DesBrisay Museum, National Exhibition Centre, DesBrisay, Nova Scotia, September 23 to October 22. See Calendar in IAQ spring 1988 for complete itinerary to September 1989.**

**In the Shadow of the Sun, at the Museums of Civilization, July 1 to October 15. Subsequent itinerary to be announced.**

**Masters of the Arctic, at the United Nations, New York, June 5 to July 28.**


**The Toronto Dominion Gallery of Inuit Art, permanent exhibitor, open to the public seven days a week, no charge. Guided tours on Tuesdays (11:30 a.m.) and Thursdays (2 p.m.) Lobby and mezzanine areas of the IBM Tower, 75 Wellington Street West, Toronto. Information: 416-968-8124.**

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**People and Places**

"Drawing is totally the reverse of carving," says Kenojuak. She speaks candidly about the process of "making" art.

**Reviews**

Continuity and change in the works of Shoolik Okutuaq. Also, Ivalu, great potential unfulfilled.

**Update**

In Retrospect

**Calendar**
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