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In spite of the fact that everyday life is "bathed in English," most artists in the major art-making communities still speak Inuktitut. But scholars say native language loss is moving east through the central Arctic quite rapidly.
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The Kinngait Society in Gjoa Haven has a unique project in the works and they need your help.

Kinngait Society, the Gjoa Haven Carvers' Association, is trying to set up a photography lab. Artists will be able to document their work and build portfolios. Also, the community of Gjoa Haven will have the benefit of seeing its culture recorded and preserved.

Since there are no existing facilities, they must now send their film south for processing, which takes about six weeks and is very expensive.

How can you help?

The Gjoa Haven carvers have already found the space to work in and the talent to develop the photographs, all they need is the equipment. The society needs to raise about $4,000.

If you would like to help Kinngait, please make your donation payable to

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Inuit Art Foundation
2001 Merivale Road
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K2G 1J9

Please indicate that your donation is for Kinngait Society.

(Editorial)

The People Behind the Art

by Maryelle Mitchell

Inuit Art Quarterly
Spring 1993
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You have no doubt noticed that we are attempting to fill the pages (and sometimes the covers) of Inuit Art Quarterly with more information on the Inuit lifestyle. It is my conviction that we will never properly appreciate the art unless we pay more attention to the context in which it is created and has meaning. In this issue, we have an article by anthropologist Nelson Graham on the declining use of Native languages among the circumpolar peoples. In future issues, we will bring you more articles on how Inuit live and work and think.

We are also making a greater effort to include more direct commentary from Inuit. I am told by some of our Inuit directors that, since they don't have a tradition of expressing themselves in writing, it's hard to know where to start." We decided that interviewing was the way to begin and we are developing a body of interviews that, taken together over time, will be an invaluable resource for those wishing to understand the people behind the art.

This issue contains a lengthy but excellent interview with Saima Patsulak, an intelligent and articulate artist from Lake Harbour. We also have short interviews with three Baker Lake artists on the controversial new arts and crafts centre which was built in that community by the Government of the Northwest Territories. The comments of these three, who are living with the controversy, represent three different positions: one is for the centre, one is against it, and one would like to know what is happening.

The production of souvenirs was discussed throughout at a recent meeting of Inuit Art Foundation directors (half of whom are practicing Inuit artists). The artists feel that manufactured souvenirs are "competing with what the people are already doing," and will be "confusing to tourists who don't know the difference between real hand-made souvenirs and work and the so-called styled products produced by employees of the centre." Indeed, we heard at the same meeting that the German ambassador had visited Baker Lake last fall and left with some of the souvenir carvings made in the centre, seeming not to care that, although they were made by Inuit, they were more akin to manufactured items than to handmade. The artist/directors expressed great concern over the damage to the industry that could be done by an important source of livelihood for large numbers of people, not just in Baker Lake but elsewhere. The irony is that the largest single source of income for Inuit for many years has been the production of soapstone carving, some of it art and some of it souvenir. I understand the need for economic development programs, but why compete with the most successful industry Inuit have? As Virginia Watt points out in her regular column in this issue, the Government of Canada has been promoting and legislating against Lake Inuit art from Germany and Japan since the 1930s, and now we are setting up the Inuit to produce their own imitations.

To the casual observer, the Inuit Oomak Arts and Crafts Centre—a large and well
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A EUROPEAN DEALER SPEAKS OUT

Back in Canada from France, I bring not only a collection of more than 100 Inuit sculptures but also deep concerns based upon George Swinton's American article ("The Art of the New West," April 1, page 61) and confirmed by the information in a letter published in "Art in Winter" (Winter 1992) on the art of the new Inuit art market. We were all so taken by the beauty of the Inuit art we were shown that we did not realize the price of this is a catastrophe for Inuit art.

I believe that a work of art belongs to the artist who has the right to ask for, or demand, better treatment. But Inuit art is a commodity item, not a luxury, and it's a tragedy that the artist is not able to make a decent living from his art.

Not the first of its kind

As usual, I find your articles on Inuit art very stimulating. In the current issue of Inuit Art Quarterly (Summer/Fall 1992) you reviewed the exhibition "Women of the North," which is the first of its kind. You probably receive several letters stating otherwise. The Guild Shop had an exhibition by female Inuit artists in 1987.

A WORD FROM HENRY MOORE

"Has there ever been a Henry Moore of the Inuit?" ("Challenging Long-Cherished Beliefs," by Peter Millard, Spring 1992). Henry Moore seemed to think so. After knowing Abraham and his wife died in a fire in 1974, the Prime Minister of Canada received a telegram from Henry Moore declaring that Canada had lost its finest artist.

COMPELLED TO RENEW

Because of the recession I've had difficulty deciding about resubscribing to IAQ. You've convinced me I cannot go without your journal by the superior quality of its contents and design. The Summer-Fall issue was outstanding, with the views of Inuit artists and their works and Peter Millard's scholarly article. I urge you to continue your fine work.

Betty Isselman

RICHMOND VIRGINIA

FROM PANGNIRTUNG

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Notes:
2. "Because of the recession I've had difficulty deciding about resubscribing to IAQ. You've convinced me I cannot go without your journal by the superior quality of its contents and design. The Summer-Fall issue was outstanding, with the views of Inuit artists and their works and Peter Millard's scholarly article. I urge you to continue your fine work." From Betty Isselman, "RICHMOND VIRGINIA:

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RICHMOND VIRGINIA
that "...to me personally, any work of art — and even souvenir art — contains an important ingredient: the personal touch, the handwriting and concepts of the individual artist. That quality does not merely mean the 'think,' but exists in the total character of the work and, therefore, not merely in the finish."

At the same time, I do agree with Mr. Upton that Inuit need work and want jobs. But I do not think the way to do this is by the kind of mass production he endorses — "low-end merchandise created by a northern theme covered by the proliferation of souvenirs produced copies." Neither is it a desirable method for Inuit to capture a share of that market. It is not desirable because of the price structure of the commercial fake carvings, which sell from $15 to $50. Can any carvings be produced in the North to compete with these southern prices?

Furthermore, would it be desirable to compete with carvings that are ostensibly phony? Wouldn't it be better to improve the quality rather than the quantity of carvings? Or do Mr. Upton and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism think that this is not possible? I think otherwise. Baker Lake is probably the best example of why I think so. Along with Cape Dorset, it was a place where the best of Inuit art was produced and appreciated as such. Now it is one of the weakest, and the new mass production scheme might make it one of the most regressive. The only way to reverse this trend is by concentrating again on quality of production and by encouraging artists sensitively and economically. This is an important point and it evidently contradicts Mr. Upton's logic, especially the logic of his last paragraph.

I believe that better quality greatly improves the economic expectations of the artists. Better quality results in higher prices. There is, therefore, no need to produce "twice as much work" of poorer quality, at lower prices for, perhaps, no demand. It is not uncommon that when better quality work is sold at higher prices than originally calculated, the artist receive extra remuneration.

Finally, I have checked into Mr. Upton's assertion that "artists in most communities make about $5 cents on the retail dollar for the work they create." It is closer to 20 to 25 cents in Gjoa Haven is higher, closer to 30 cents. I, like others, wish they could receive more, but as long as most works in the North are bought for cash, and not on consignment as in the South, the capital requirements are considerable, as Mr. Upton surely must have found not on his sales trip south. It is not easy to find ready cash buyers for even the best work. The problem of large investments is reflected in the low return to artists, it is inherent in the current marketing system, which is difficult, though not impossible, to replace. But then, I am an optimist who believes in a government-assisted system, which would be more effective and realistically more wholesome than mass-producing phony "low-end merchandise" to compete with southern souvenir art.

Maybe Mr. Upton will use my original commentary. He, and the organizers of the questionable "souvenir Inuit carving" scheme may then better comprehend my arguments and my fears. It would be good not to have to feel sad and apprehensive about their lack of awareness.

And may the Jessie Oonark Arts and Crafts Centre uphold and protect the high quality and integrity symbolized by Jessie Oonark's name and her work, and not by twinkle-tangle "low-end merchandise."
I find David Upton's Commentary (IAQ 7:1, Fall/Winter 1992) more sad than shocking, yet disturbing enough to respond to. His arguments, though well meant, are too simplistic and largely off the mark. I am, therefore, not in the least surprised that he finds my argument (IAQ 7:1, Spring 1992) "sour"; he doesn't seem to understand it, nor does he seem to understand the concept of art-making and, particularly, of art-making by Inuit. That is, I find, a sad state of affairs.

I agree with him, of course, about the plight of the Inuit, their alarming economic needs and their difficulties of achieving a more equitable participation in the retail price of their work. Obviously these problems, art-making in general, and my argument against the mass production of "souvenir Inuit carvings" (the term used by the N.W.T. Department of Economic Development and Tourism) are interdependent. I am, however, that a former Economic Development Officer like Mr. Upton (also founder of an artists' association in Geor Haven called the Northwest Passage Trading Company) would be ill-informed on this subject.

His assumption that the production of "souvenir carvings (low-end merchandise) and the creation of fine art are only related... by the fact that they will both be made by Inuit" is, I believe, increasingly true. If it were not for the following:

1. In their language, Inuit do not make a quality distinction in art. All is "inuit," i.e., just art.
2. Even what Mr. Upton euphemistically calls "low-end merchandise" are objects, (i.e., indifferently carved objects produced by Inuit carvers in all Northern communities), receive the "Inuit" tag which authenticates that the carving are "inuit," i.e., "inuit" art made by a Canadian Inuit artist" (my emphasis) and so certified by the Government of Canada.
3. Quality (and prices) difference de, of course, exist, but neither the Government of Canada nor the Inuit producers nor the Inuit themselves discriminate in terms of quality.
4. However, the art market does discriminate in terms of quality and expresses that discrimination by the retail price.
5. Collectors and galleries make this distinction as well, based on their knowledge, sensitivity and experience.
6. The large number of less knowledgeable purchasers of Inuit art among the public, however, do not make, or are largely unable to make, such distinctions.

On the other hand, I do make quality distinctions and, I believe, that I am often able to do so successfully. That is why some people, who know my work, might call me an "expert." I do say and write what I believe, based on long experience and knowledge gained in the field. Mr. Upton, too, writes what he believes, but I fear he lacks knowledge, sensitivity and depth in the field of art. And that, of course, was one of the reasons why I was sad, but not surprised, that he would talk with such misplaced assurance.

I also fear that several of his other main points were not well thought through and are factually wrong. For instance, he claims that I am against the introduction of new approaches and techniques when, in fact, I stated unequivocally that "nobody with intelligence would mind power tools as such. But the indiscriminate and merely duplicative and purely mechanical (missile) of power tools in order to compete is simply in bad taste and with imitation Inuit art... will create the very opposite economic effects (similar to Gresham's law which observes that bad money drives out good)."

Also, Mr. Upton seems to equate soullessly and mechanically produced "souvenir Inuit carvings" with what he calls "souvenir carving (low-end merchandise)." Nobody with sensitivity to art would do that. And, in fact, I had specified...
In the fall, at the meeting, they mentioned that it will be opened for the carving in the month of November, but now I have not heard anything and I don’t understand.

Goo-Doyle: Do you think the new centre will have any benefits for you and carvers like you? I know that you are a well-known carver and you have had exhibits in the past. Your carvings have been bought by collectors and galleries. I think that you will now be producing mass-produced items which are not as good as a quality as is real. Do you think that it will interfere with real artist or quality carvers?

Amarasungaq: Since 1961 I have been carving with carvings and I have been using simple tools. And I have not used any electric tools or other tools that are now being used. I don’t know if the new centre will have benefits. I have not used that building and I don’t think that they buy carvings. I do not know if it will be of use for people or not.

Goo-Doyle: Some people have questioned whether the new centre will have any benefits for the community, and in talking to William Soo. He said there is a high unemployment rate in Baker Lake. He said that with the centre, there are now educational programs and employment for people. Do you think the youth will benefit from employment training and work?

Amarasungaq: Yes, that is the way it should be. Some people will benefit, but only some. The people who are now working will be picked or voted in. There are now people learning and working, learning to carve with carvers and artists. And the youth are employed in the new centre are benefiting, but those people who do not associate with the building are still unemployed. They do not even buy carvings or anything from the general public. So I don’t know if people are being helped in some way, but it is probably helping people.

Goo-Doyle: Yes, I think to some extent the carvers would benefit if they started a committee. I think that if this committee of carvers would do something about their problems outside of the committee of the new centre, they would move ahead. You know, there is some friction between the carvers and the committee of the new centre. There are groups that deal with art, to Baker Lake — Benny Ford, Mario Bouchard, the co-op. These people are competing with each other. They buy carvings from people. I have been told by the people who buy carvings to sell only to them. "You sell them only to you," I don’t like to hear that. It makes me unhappy to hear something like that. I would much rather sell my carvings to whoever I want to sell them to. More than a few times I have been told to sell carvings only to the person who wants them.

Goo-Doyle: So you have these three places to sell your carvings to and they are telling you to sell them to only one.

Amarasungaq: Yes, they routinely tell me to sell them only to one. But when I started to sell only to one, the prices of my carving slowly started to go down. So whoever will buy my carving at the highest prices, it is to that person who I will sell. But then they all told me before that I should sell only to them and not the others. It is becoming a heavy thing to deal with and the only thing I know how to do is carve.

Goo-Doyle: Thank you.

Comfortable in two worlds

AN INTERVIEW WITH SIMATA PIISULIK

I first met Simata (Pitsiulak) about eight years ago when I visited Lake Harbour, a small and beautiful community on Baffin Island, which is the main east of Baffin (Frobisher Bay). Simata is the generation of Inuits who have known the world; in his case, it is conditioned in both the Inuit's traditional culture and skills, and also in the skills of modern society. I was the first to be an airport in Lake Harbour and the second to fly to this remote area in the Northern Rockies. Simata is also a carpenter and sculptor. In 1996, he participated in the Royal Trust Project to create a model for the Inuit's traditional culture and skills. This is the first time that a sculptor from Baffin Island has been invited to participate in an international project.

Simata Pitsiulak: I don't do a lot of carvings, but when I'm in the studio, I tend to work on the sculpture. I'm a sculptor, but I'm also a painter. I like to work with the sculpture that this project is about. I'm working on a sculpture that has to do with the sea and the land. I'm working on a sculpture that has to do with the idea of a Ukaktuk, the young woman, the sea and the land. I'm working on a sculpture that has to do with the idea of a Ukaktuk, the young woman, the sea and the land. I'm working on a sculpture that has to do with the idea of a Ukaktuk, the young woman, the sea and the land. I'm working on a sculpture that has to do with the idea of a Ukaktuk, the young woman, the sea and the land. I'm working on a sculpture that has to do with the idea of a Ukaktuk, the young woman, the sea and the land. I'm working on a sculpture that has to do with the idea of a Ukaktuk, the young woman, the sea and the land.

Ronald Weiss: Who else was involved?

Pitsiulak: We had a project manager from Vancouver, his name was George Platt. And we had an elder from Pond Inlet, Philip Pitsiulak, and a woman and a woman from Cape Dorset. Each of us had a job to do, to do the sculpture, but the rest of the team is not involved. We had help from Philip. During my stay, the finishing touches on the sculpture.

What's the shaman like? What is he doing?

Pitsiulak: The shaman is a powerful, spiritual-type man. He performs magic, in a way. He can travel anywhere himself, anywhere. He wears a mask and a shaman's costume. He is a rubber bear, the bear, the seal, and the walrus. All of them are made of wood and metal. It was a major commission, the biggest commission I ever did.
Pitsiulak: Yes, very much so. Some were known to be able to change the weather, or make the wind shift, calm the weather. Anything. I guess. Heal the sick.  
Wehils: The shamans were the spiritual leaders of the Inuit communities, and then when the Catholic [white men] came with the Christian religion, the shamans retreated, that right?  
Pitsiulak: The story I know of our region was that when the first missionaries came, they said to the people, it's not right to practice shamanism. So, in a lot of places the people who were practicing shamanism were cast out, and they were told that wasn't the way to live. Even though there were good shamans, and, I guess, bad ones too.

"Shamans knew how to heal the sick or change the weather. It would be nice to be able to heal the sick these days."

Wehils: Do you think that was a law in the Inuit community?  
Pitsiulak: There was no laws to heal the sick, or, so they say, to change the weather. It would be nice to be able to heal the sick, these days.  
Wehils: Tell me more about how you did this project. Did you organize it?  
Pitsiulak: I was George from Vancouver who found Royal Trust, who were willing to pay money up front. George convinced Royal Trust to buy our sculptures, even before it happened. So George ended up being the project manager, and he was handling all the money and stuff like that. I was subcontractor, handling smaller money, travel arrangements, things like that.

Wehils: How did this come to you?  
Pitsiulak: We knew each other before. Mr. Free's place was to give carving workshops, using materials other than soapstone, teaching in the South, how to work with marble and granite, regular rock that's available everywhere up North. All these years, our people were carving only soapstone or serpentine. That's how I came to know George.  
Wehils: They use soapstone because it's softer?  
Pitsiulak: In the Raffin region there's no soapstone, it's all serpentine. It's a lot harder than soapstone. Nobody's carving soapstone in Iqaluit that I know. The hardness is somewhere between soapstone and marble.  
Wehils: The Lake Harbour stone is very distinctive, isn't it? It polishes up green.  
Pitsiulak: We have green stone, and black, and a bit of white.  
Wehils: Is this project in the Lake Harbour stone?  
Pitsiulak: No, it was in hard marble, not far from Cape Dorset. We did most of the carving right on the site. That was in Andrew Inukshuk Bay, thirty miles southeast of Cape Dorset. I almost finished the seal that I was doing right on the site, and after I'd done the seal I started doing the shamans. We did the finishing touches here in Toronto, because we finished it in the North, it would be too bulky.  
Wehils: How do you carve that kind of marble?  
Pitsiulak: We used electric mini-grinders and, along with that, we used hammer and chisel. Mostly hammer and chisel, and grinding.  
Wehils: Do you do a drawing before you start? How do you know what it is that you are going to do?  
Pitsiulak: George and I, with the advice being given by fax and phone, did the model of what we were going to do. And Royal Trust, I guess, were convinced after the models were done. And on the site, because

previous page:  
1. Simeta Pitsiulak is an agent with First Air and carves part-time. He is also an avid pilot of ultra-light aircraft.  
2. Simeta Pitsiulak uses an electric mini-grinder to carve a life-size seal, one of five sculptures which, together, make up the Sedna Installation. (Photo: Ruediger Fortmann)
work. Is it available for all the cars to use? Would you use the equipment?

Kogvik: No. I never use it personally. If you want to do rough work, you could use it, and then complete your carving with your own tools or other tools. The ventilation system is quite poor in the centre for stone carving. You cannot use grinders for stone carving because of the ventilation system which is only designed for wet-stone carving.

Goo-Doyle: I understand the centre isn't complete yet. Is a ventilation system going to be installed?

Kogvik: I have no idea if they are planning to install a ventilation system, but the last I heard was that they ran out of money, so they could not install ventilation. The system they have now can handle only the wet-stone carving. I have been in there recently, but the thing that bothers me is that they will be mass-producing stylized carvings. For quite some time, I have noticed that when you travel south, you look into the airport shops and you see lake carvings. When you travel with an Inuk companion, you notice the fake carvings and get quite upset about them. They say that they should not do that, they should not sell fake carvings. It is sad to see that. Mass production could kill the real art. Inuit should not mass produce. By mass producing, we could destroy the art and the market. We should build up the art instead.

Goo-Doyle: Have you talked to the other well-known artists, like Simon Tookey and Barterious Aningaaq? How do they feel about the mass production of carvings and the new centre?

Kogvik: A couple of days ago, the carvers' committee met to elect carvers, but there were not many people there so they will hold the meeting again in a couple of days. The carvers do not want to see the mass production of carvings because they feel that it will drive the prices down for their own carvings.

Goo-Doyle: So the new centre is basically owned by the Government of the Northwest Territories, because the hands came from them?

Kogvik: I think they have a five-year plan to transfer the ownership to the community. I think the government is going to assist the centre for five years. I think that's how it works.

Goo-Doyle: So it's really quite upsurging for an artist like you who does it all at home?

Kogvik: Yes, and also Paul Tookey was very disappointed. He mentioned that about four years ago he started a petition to have a building erected for carvers to use. He wanted a heated and well ventilated building for the carvers. The carvers were looking forward to that kind of building. He was very upset when the new centre was built, because it was totally the opposite from what he wanted.

Goo-Doyle: Have you talked to the committee or the chairman? Do they know that you are also upset about the new centre?

Kogvik: Well, there were a couple of people who were upset about the new centre. In the last meeting with my fellow carvers these people expressed their dissatisfaction with it.

Goo-Doyle: I believe there was a lot of opposition from art collectors and critics outside the community. I read an article written by George Swinton, who is a collector of Inuit art. His views on the new center are very critical. He said that it was a disgrace. Do you agree with him?

Kogvik: Yes, I would have to say that I agree with him, because the mass production of Inuit art means we lose the quality of the art. When you produce large numbers of things, you lose the quality and the genuine of the art.

Goo-Doyle: Thank you, Charlie. Do you have any other comments about the new centre or the committee of artists?

Kogvik: There is going to be a committee set up again very soon; the artists are anxious to start another committee. I myself plan to start an association that will deal with "real" art. I want to see Baker Lake carvers run their own affairs. I want to see them run a committee by themselves.

Goo-Doyle: Before we sign, I'd like to ask you about your experience teaching a workshop in Nain, Labrador, last winter. Was there any benefit to the community?

Kogvik: I believe it helped the community. It also helped me a lot.

Goo-Doyle: I heard the building being used by the carvers in Nain did not have a proper ventilation system to get rid of all the dust from the carving stone. Do you know if the government or the council have tried to start a program to build a new facility that will suit the carvers?

Kogvik: The last I heard from the Labrador carvers was that they were fixing a building in the building. I was talking to John Terrick and I think they are carving there almost daily. They are lucky in Nain to have a building for their use. When they are carving they do their grinding outside the building so that the dust will not bother them. It is always better to do your heavy grinding outside. It is safer. The ventilation in the building is sufficient for general carving activities.

Goo-Doyle: The Inuit Art Association sponsored workshops for artists in Ottawa and Labrador. Do you think that if they had a workshop in Baker Lake it would help the artists and the community?

Kogvik: Yes, the people would be interested in a workshop. I believe they would be interested, because quite a few young people who know have asked me if I could help them to do better carvings. I always tell them that I will do a workshop on carving sometime in the future.

Wechs: While you were working, were you filming? How did this happen?

Pitsiulak: Back in 1988, when I was on another project we created a life-size marble sculpture of a drum dancer. And there was this fellow from Winnipeg and a woman from Ottawa who wanted to film us doing it. They didn't get the money they needed for that year, but they had a lot to do with this Sedna project. They wanted to film Inuit carving. Like sculptures, they filmed us for the first three or four weeks when we were starting out, and then the artists returned to the community. And they came back with a different crew to finish the dancing, and we did very much work here in Toronto. Weachs: And then they asked us to do the narration?

Pitsiulak: Yes, George Pratt and myself did the narration.

Wechs: What do you think of the film?

Pitsiulak: I've got a copy of the film. They did a lot of filming. A lot of good stuff was there. But most of it has been erased [edited], to make way for this. I guess.

Wechs: What was some of the stuff that they left out?

Pitsiulak: Us eating and laughing, helping each other out. A lot of stuff. They wanted to film a little of everything that was going on in the camp. Shooting, kids playing outside the tent and stuff like that. And in the end, I was asked to go to Montreal to do the narration at the last minute. And a lot of what's in the film wasn't quite coming from my heart. I was asked to say things, sort of against my will, in a way.

Wechs: They wanted you to say certain things that would fit the film?

Pitsiulak: That they thought I guess, was useful.

Wechs: Can you give me an example?

Pitsiulak: Well, I didn't feel like saying: 'My mother used to say, when we were camping. North for the first time, they were like new-born babies who didn't understand anything yet. I don't know where that line came from, but I was asked to say that. I have a lot of white friends. I didn't want to say that in front of... the film is going to be watched by the whole of Canada. There were things that I didn't want to say, that I was convinced to say because they were the facts.

Wechs: Did you mother actually say that?

Pitsiulak: No, my mother. It must have been somebody else's mother.

Wechs: What else did you have to do?

Pitsiulak: It seemed when I talked about white men I was almost referring to our project manager, who was in Montreal. So, like, 'white men always want to become famous.' things like that. I said that in the film.

Wechs: Do you think that's true?

Pitsiulak: I don't know. Yes and no. I wasn't comfortable saying it, because I knew I was talking about George. I just wish that they had put more positive stuff in the film. In what they did in the final version. George is a good friend of mine, and when I asked to say these lines I said to the producer, or the director. I don't want to say those, but they said...
6. Simata Pittilulik and Jimmy Manning (Capo Dorset) are both actively involved in the management of their local co-ops.

7. Pittilulik beside a large whale bone in front of the Hamlet office in Lake Harbour.

8. Pittilulik and George Pratt on the carving site.

"There's nothing wrong with saying this. It's the fact. People from the South want to become famous." It wasn't my opinion.

Wehils: Do you think that Inuit people in particular, and北方人在一般，are used to being only a very primitive person.

Pittilulik: Well, they certainly did it on this film. I'm not sure about the others, but knowing ... They had some good looking, good shoes, all the way. Stuff like that, as a little bit of fishing. I would have rather seen those things in a one-hour film, than see myself talking about while men most of the time.

Wehils: Does it come through in the film, all the different things that you do in your life? Or does it look like you're just a career? I don't mean that it's a small thing to be a career. But it is clear that you run a shop and fly airplanes? And play music, and are the president of the co-op and ...
William Noah: Yes, the final funding is from the GSNW and the development corporation is managing it. We have a committee that oversees it at the moment, and I am the chairman of it. At this time we do not own the buildings. It is foreseeable that maybe in one or two years, that we will own the buildings, when it is running smoothly, but we do not know at this time when we will own the centre.

Geo-Doyles: I read that weathermen prefer real art as opposed to mass-produced objects. George Swinton wrote that mass-produced carvings will not be bought (Commentary, AG, Spring 1992). What do you think about that?

Noah: The print shop here closed some time ago, and there are many people unemployed, as many as 70 per cent in Baker Lake. The people had to look for ways of producing jobs and creating employment. We now have a more positive atmosphere due to the centre and we have thirty or thirty-five people working. The building is new and the people working are comfortable. When you are comfortable, you produce better. People are also learning how to carve. The carving is now looking better because they are learning and improving. The "real art" as in [Swinton's] talk, it was made in the cold, not in a heated building. They were rough and quickly made, and not appealing. But now we have a very varied art forms to make. We now make jewelry and sewing, and now we are serious artists that will help the artists. The art being made now is not artistic to some, and George Swinton I think was trying to say that what is seen is world-class artists. He should not have said what he said. He has been to Inuit communities in the past and he should not have said anything like that. I should have exposed more positive aspects of art, and not commented in a negative way. I know that he is a wise man and I think he should not have judged Inuit that way, when he wrote the article in the paper.

Geo-Doyles: The people of Baker Lake, are they happy about the centre?

Noah: Yes, very much. You can see they are there. There are people learning on the job; there is employment. Even those people who were opposed to the building the centre has not shut up, maybe there were one or two people. The people in the community are definitely satisfied and happy. We have now ten young people who are learning on the job. Everybody is happier.

Geo-Doyles: In the new building that you are using, is there a ventilation system in place to take the dust from carving rooms?

Noah: Yes, in the silken-screen printing area the fan and ventilation system is working. The building is not fully complete. Dust is not limited now because of the ventilation system. That will be solved in the near future. At this time, everybody is eager and positive about the building. The only thing that might bother some people in the smell from burnt antlers, etc. The building is very well ventilated.

Geo-Doyles: The seasoned carvers like Simon Tootoo, James and Barnabas Arnakulaq, are they happy about the building?

Noah: Yes, but they are carving on their own. The only thing we can ask is do they have carvings on free-lance carvers, but those carvers will be able to use the building in the near future. The basement will be used for careers, but we do not know when. When the building is complete to the full extent it will have facilities for all arts. Every artist has use for the building, but buyers for carvings are always scarce. Even now we have four main retail areas for those who wish to buy whatever we have produced.

Geo-Doyles: With the high unemployment statistics in the North West Territories, the new centre must come at a time when people need work.

Noah: Yes, the building came at the right time and the young people are being assisted education and job-wise. The young people are usually depressed and bored due to inactivity, and the building of this centre will help them. They are happier when they see their faces because they have something to do. They are better now because, before, they stayed up mostly all night and most were bored from inactivity. The young people who are not as educated as others now have an opportunity to be employed and have jobs.

Geo-Doyles: The new art building being named after your mother must be an honour and you must be overjoyed to hear it?

Noah: Yes, it is joy and the building itself is grand and big. There is a lot of space even though we have still to complete and organize it. We cannot keep up at this time to organize everything — work areas, coffee shop, lounge areas, etc.

Geo-Doyles: Thank you William for talking. Do you have any other comment?

Noah: Yes, we are very happy here because now we have facilities for carving and people have a place to work. Young people also have a place to learn and work for their future. Even if young people could learn here, there are many more who will replace them if they should leave from here.
I would say 80 per cent of the carvers go to the co-op, and the other 20 go to Northern Stores [formerly The Bay], because they are well known by the Inuit Art Marketing Service [of the North West Company which owns the Northern Stores], here near Toronto. They get more money than if they went to the stores.

Weils: Who are some of the carvers in Lake Harbour who you think are very good?

Pitsiulak: We have Simoneq Atiq. He does very detailed carving of animals and people, and is a bit of mythology. Luciekeq Atiqtuq is a really good carver of animals and figures. Nalauq Tumataq does mainly arctic animals. And Josie Fulchak. She likes to do polar bears, everybody likes to do polar bears. But for some reason they're doing well. And Leah Atiqtuq does figures with clothing that does not perfectly fit. It's either too small or too big. They're very cute, and really well detailed. She does really well with those.

Weils: Tell me a bit about Lake Harbour. Were you born there?

Pitsiulak: I was born right in Lake Harbour, yes. Now we have about 800 people and we're situated in a little valley, very crowded now, and all the houses are everywhere. And just a five-minute walk from my house to where I go to work, is the airport. Five minutes when you're walking, but it's a very small community. Everything within walking distance. And almost everybody carves to make their living.

Weils: What else is there to do?

Pitsiulak: Well, not very much. We just get a gymnasium, which we didn't have for many years. It is being well used right now. And everybody shares, sharing food. When I go hunting, or fishing, when I'm back, I'll call up on the local radio and tell everybody we're having a feast at this house, or fish. Or everybody's going down to door to door with their catch. Everybody's door. It seems like everybody's related. It's there because, mutually, as said, everybody's sharing food.

Weils: It's a very pleasant place to live. I think. People here can't imagine what it is like to live in the Arctic. They think it's not nearly as nice as it is.

Pitsiulak: It's different from other large communities, because everything is within walking distance. You walk from one end of town to the other, it's probably not more than a five-minute walk. It's getting crowded.

Weils: But there's a beautiful area around it.

Pitsiulak: Well, hunting is good, mostly, and in the winter time we go out to the floe edge, where the water never freezes, for seal hunting. And just a little beyond that, you get some good fishing lakes, which everybody goes to all year round, almost. And good views. Climb the biggest hill and you can see all around.

Weils: Would you leave Lake Harbour?

Pitsiulak: I probably will have to move sooner or later, because my kids will have to go to a more advanced school, which was recommended by us to the local school principal. It's a little scary. I don't want to send them out. They're so young. My daughter is only ten or eleven, and she will have to go on her own, or with their family. And because I feel very strongly towards education now, about the importance of having a good education. Eventually we will probably end up living near Ottawa, or somewhere, so that my kids can go to a more advanced school.

William Noah's FOR IT

Ovilu Goo-Doyle: William Noah, let me ask you first, how the Jessie Oonark Arts and Crafts Centre is being managed. How is it being funded and is it going to be used by the people in the community?
Wehrs: Are you afraid that they will lose their language, that they won't learn to build a snowhouse, for example, or that they won't be able to hunt?

Pitsiulak: I would be concerned, as a father, if I couldn't do anything about it. But if they have to go South, I would rather go South with them, and then our hearts will always remain up North. Even if we spend most of our time in the South, while they're in school. I'm sure we'll have to go back up every once in a while to go on the land, and make sure that my son learns to build an igloo, because it's a very useful thing to have. It's a hard land. You really have to know how to survive to be in the North. If I spend ten years down South and I forget how to build an igloo, that would be a big loss for me.

Wehrs: But there are a lot of young people in the North who don't know how to hunt.

Pitsiulak: Yes, but they're being taught in the schools. Back home, we have these culture-inclusion teachers who tell old stories and make knives and traditional-style tools, and teach how to build igloos. We have programs in the school where we teach these things, the useful things, to the students. But, yes, bigger communities like Iqaluit, people coming in Yellowknife, I would say that there's a lot of kids, Native people, who can't build igloos these days, which is unfortunate, but in the smaller communities there are programs where they're being taught to do these things.

Wehrs: Do you feel that the Inuit have lost out by having contact with the South?

Pitsiulak: Well, they adapted to a better way of things because, I guess, it's part of evolution. Now in the South, you have lights everywhere, big tall buildings, how were they built? Who's idea was it? All the buildings are holding together, not falling down. You are making airplanes. So Inuit are adapting to what's better for them. Some are maybe not as good, like alcohol and drugs, but there are more good things that Qullimani have introduced to us, like snowmobiles and cellphones. The only time I see dog teams is when the people are getting things, Nobody's really hunting with them right now, going from place to place. Snowmobiles are faster; they go from point A to point B a lot faster than a dog team.

Wehrs: Is there something that you feel people who live in the South should understand that they don't understand?

Pitsiulak: Maybe it's in relation to carving, because there's been a lot of misunderstanding about Inuit now starting to use electric tools, or advanced tools, to do their carving. Some people even say, 'Because you're using electric tools we won't buy your carving.' I say to those people, 'What we use now is helping us. And, besides, electric tools cannot create a carving, alone, it has to be by a human hand. You can press a button and tell your electric tool to carve a drum design. You have to do it. There's been a lot of people from the South who don't like Inuit using advanced tools.'

Wehrs: Why do you think that is?

Pitsiulak: I guess their understanding is toward the more primitive types of carving that were carved in the 40s and early 50s, that were done only by primitive tools. If you were to use only tools that you used in the 40s and 50s, you can't evolve. You aren't able to carve life-size sculptures. Somebody we're trying to tell you to use a hand tool. So it's very important that people know that more advanced tools are just helping our Inuit artists who have learned to live with them.

Wehrs: What are some of the tools you're talking about?

Pitsiulak: Marble carving tools rather than just wood carving tools. All these Inuit have been using wood carving tools to carve hard wood. Now we have stone carving tools. You can buy them in Iqaluit, you can buy Inuit carving tools. You can carve just about any rock, from sandstone to regular granite rock with them, which is really good. That's very positive.

Wehrs: What is your impression of the Inuit? Is that they're very practical. They like things that work, and they're happy to take ideas from the South, if they work. Is that right?

Pitsiulak: Yes, that's very true. They like adapting to a better way of doing things.
THE INUIT ART SECTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT WOULD LIKE YOUR HELP IN IDENTIFYING THESE PHOTOS

IF YOU RECOGNIZE ONE OF THESE PEOPLE, PLEASE CALL OR WRITE TO:

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Can you help?

The Inuit Art Foundation was incorporated in 1987 to facilitate the creative expressions of Inuit artists and to foster a broader understanding of these expressions worldwide. Core funding provided by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is supplemented with private sector funding for the following programs of the foundation:

The Scholarship Fund
Scholarships are provided to Inuit artists to enable them to attend art sessions organized by us in collaboration with other art institutions. Awards are also made annually to Inuit artists, selected by a jury of their peers, to enable them to attend regular sessions at art schools and studios. Amige Artework of Cape Dorset and Joseph Saglik of Gjoa Haven received awards last year to attend an international carving session at the Vermont Carving Studios. The Foundation has also provided awards to artists to attend sessions at the Rietveld Centre for Fine Arts.

The Friends of Inuit Artists
A number of donors have contributed $100 or more towards the purchase of perishable art libraries in Arctic communities. We produce inexpensive instructional videos on such topics as protection against the health hazards of stone dust and how to photograph artwork. These videos, along with art books and catalogues, are being distributed in northern communities and operated as lending libraries by the local artists.

Artists' News
A series of bilingual modules, employing a variety of formats—posters, comic books, brochures, newsletters—is being developed to provide information to Inuit on art and related topics. For instance, a health module consisting of a comic book, a poster, a mask to wear when carving and a plastic bag in which to store the mask when not being used. This fund also enables us to print extra copies of Inuit Art Quarterly to send free to approximately 2,400 Inuit artists in the Northwest Territories, Nunavik and Labrador.

Donors will receive all press releases issued by the Inuit Art Foundation and will be acknowledged in Inuit Art Quarterly. Tax receipts will be issued to all Canadian donors. Please call us if you would like more information about any of these programs.

Yes, I would like to help Inuit artists.
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Please mail to: Inuit Art Foundation, 2081 Merivale Rd, Nepean, Ontario, Canada K2G 1G9 (charitable registration number 0793556-22).
The press had been enjoying an ongoing exposé of “fakers” since the early 1930s and the public responded in kind. The guild was plagued with queries from clients seeking reassurance that the Inuit works they had purchased were not imitations. A 1960 government press release on the subject conveyed the information that three years ago, it had produced a registered trade mark with a symbol in the form of an igloo and the words “Canadian Eskimo Art.” This inscription and the igloo appeared on a coat attached to every “authentic carving.”

I know from experience that some people who buy imitations are well aware of what they are doing, and I also know that some do not. They do not read labels.

Over the years, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs published several booklets and pamphlets etc., which have been widely distributed. Ironically, though, today we don’t have to worry about the imitation of imitation carvings we manufacture our own. They can be purchased in department stores, gift shops, airports and hotels, and are often displayed side by side with genuine arts. As long as they are labelled appropriately, this is legal. I know from experience that some people who buy imitations are well aware of what they are doing, and I also know that some do not. Their lack of knowledge has nothing to do with their social status or lack of education, but very often it has everything to do with the fact that they simply do not read labels.

I always caution people to be sure that what they are buying is genuine. Is it a “faking” or an “imitation”? Are they buying a real piece or just a copy of one? Is the piece being sold as genuine? Does the seller have a written guarantee that the piece is genuine? These are all important questions to ask before making a purchase.

During this time, the Canadian Eskimo Art Association was formed to protect the rights of Inuit artists and to promote their art. The Association works to ensure that Inuit artists are fairly compensated for their work and that their art is treated with respect. They also work to create awareness about the importance of Inuit art and culture.

In conclusion, it is important to be aware of the different types of Inuit art and to make informed decisions about what to purchase. By being informed and aware, we can help ensure that Inuit artists are fairly compensated for their work and that their art is treated with the respect it deserves.
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1. Imitation Inuit art for sale at the Crystal Gardens in Victoria, B.C.

2. Imitation Inuit art by Romo of Pearlette for sale at the Hudson Bay Store in Yellowknife, N.W.T. These items are actually produced in the South, for shipment to Northern Canada where they can be sold to tourists as souvenirs of Northern Canada.

In a letter of June 30, 1998, from the HBC to the government, it was stated that “upon investigation it was found that Rolland had sold certain of his consumers some Eskimo figurines which had been made in Japan.” It was also stated that the imitations were clearly labelled and were no longer being sold by Rolland. The guild, which had received a copy of the letter, replied that “a person who had no little regard for genuine Eskimo carvings that he would be prepared to sell the Japanese imitations along with the originals is not a fit agent” and suggested that he should be carefully watched.

On one or two Indian reserves, replacing Native materials as they became exhausted with imported substitutes, the local bands have claimed that their shadily articles have seriously interfered with the sale of better things individually produced by Indians all over the country. Complainants on this score have been repeatedly sent from different districts, mainly the West Coast, to the point where sales of fine cedar-root baskets of British Columbia have been adversely affected. Indians using good native materials and occasionally care in their work cannot compete in price with the cheap mass-produced articles. Now that you have become responsible for the department of which Indian Affairs is a part, we are appealing to you to encourage the preservation of the best Indian crafts so that these people may be proud of their inherited skills and may continue to practice them.”

The reply to this letter came in typical bureaucratic jargon: the guild was invited to collaborate in a study which may result in an encouragement for the best Indian crafts still in existence. The use of the words “may result in” and “still in existence” reveals that the government bureaucrats were fully aware of what they were doing and that their mass production on the reservation was a “make-work” endeavour to decrease welfare payments to the Indians. It had the effect of denying one of the visible manifestations of an ancient culture.

The following year, the guild received a letter from Yellowknife reporting that imitation Inuit ivory carvings were being sold in that city. The Hudson’s Bay Company had been the official distributor of Inuit carvings from Winnipeg to all of western Canada since 1993, and the guild immediately sent a copy of the letter to the Bay and the government. Officials of the Bay replied that they did not feel the sale of the ivory carvings would have any effect on the sale of genuine stone carvings because “the retail prices of the wares are exorbitant.” The letter goes on to say that “they supposed there was every probability that this type of thing will be produced in a substance which looks like soapstone in due course.” These words turned out to be a prophecy. One of the HBC’s clients was Rolland and Company of Edmonton.

In September of 1999, the guild informed the government that Rolland in Edmonton was still supplying imitation carvings to shops in the west and “that a label appeared to have been scratched off the underside of the same.” The Hudson’s Bay Company stopped shipping Inuit carvings to Rolland and Company.

CORRECTIONS

The cover of the Fall/Winter 1992 issue was cropped. The correct view is shown above. Also, we forgot to identify the location of the name “Inuit Art” located on our back page in the Fall/Winter 1992 issue. The photo was taken by Hans Blohm in Pangnirtung, Nunavut (Northern Quebec).
Imitation Native Art

by Virginia Watt

Have we forgotten the laws of the past?

Imitation Native art is not new:
what is new is that boutiques are now selling it themselves under a government make-work project.

At the turn of the century, the arts and crafts of Canada's native Indians were flourishing across the country. Ninety years later, Indian art has made a remarkable comeback, but where are the beautiful, exquisitely crafted baskets, embroidery, vessels, and other artifacts of yesteryear? Why did they disappear?

In 1932, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild launched a protest, directed towards the Government of Canada, concerning imitation room poles that were being imported from Japan into North America. These were being sold to souvenir shops, particularly on the West Coast. The shops made money from the tourist trade, but Native people didn't. They couldn't compete with imitations selling at $1.75, compared with $4.50 for the real thing. The minister of the government responsible for the Indians admitted that Indian crafts, as well as other crafts, were being injured by Japanese importations. But he feared that an absolute ban on such Japanese goods would be a serious step for the Government to take.

In 1939 the government announced 'that imitation crafts were required by law to carry a definite imprint or label showing the country of origin.' However, the Japanese imprint was so small that it was difficult to read. In fact, to see. By this time, grey baskers had been added to the list of imports. In sheer frustration, the guild wrote to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and asked her what the U.S. government had done to prevent the importation of Japanese 'copies' of North American crafts. The reply, which came from Harry Hopkins, Secretary of Commerce, was that a Congressional Act had been passed in 1935 making it a misdemeanor for any person to offer for sale as an Indian product, a product which the person knew was not genuine. This letter was forwarded by the guild to the Department of Indian Affairs.

The war years from 1939 to 1945 solved the problem of imported imitation crafts from Japan. However, it wasn't until December 1953 that the Canadian government announced that "low priced foreign crafts sold in Canada may soon bear a stamp stating their country of origin." As we all know, stamps and labels are removable.

In 1958, the president of the guild wrote to the Honourable David Felton, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Ottawa. The letter accused the government of "narrowing down" its efforts to control the mass importation of cheap baskers and souvenirs by encouraging the mass production of these goods.

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George Tataniq (Tattener),
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A mottled dark grey soapstone carving mounted to a dark stone base. c. 1935, 60 inches (15.9 cm)

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Grants to preserve oral traditions were made by the Government of the Northwest Territories to several Inuit communities. The Igloolik Research Centre received $7,500 to translate a backlog of material collected on the traditions of the local people. Cambridge Bay Centennial Library received $8,300 to record on video various seasonal activities. Igloolik Isuma Video received $5,727 to make a film on the traditional knowledge of women on child care, health, and the Inuvialuit Social Development Program (Inuvik) received $6,000 to interview elders and document genealogies in six communities and another $8,300 to complete a project begun in 1990 to record the use of the Yukon North Slope and Herschel Island by Inuvialuit. Finally, the Coral Harbour Community Education Council received $8,300 to collect traditional knowledge on caribou hunting and the legends of the Sدالنیلاکနث for use during that community's 25th anniversary celebrations.

**LAND, SPIRIT, POWER: FIRST NATIONS AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA**

including the work of eight contemporary First Nations artists from several First Nations groups and one Inuk. They opened September 19, 1992, and closed November 22, 1992. Zacharias Kunuk's video **Eejas** was the only Inuit art included in the exhibition. Curated by Diana Nemiroff, Charlotte Tremblay-Gebois, and Robert Houle, the exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue which is available for $53 at the bookstore of the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

The new Carleton University Art Gallery recently received an important donation of Inuit art from collectors Patricia Tyler, University of Miami, and Marnie Brooks, retired student and teacher at the Shumow Mission School in Kansas. The donation, a collection of 25 paintings plus 10 prints, is on display until November 30.

Michael Mansel of Happy Valley-Goose Bay, under the auspices of Arctic College, is teaching a jewelry course to Inuit artisans in Gjoa Haven from September to the end of the winter semester.

Jean Bledgett, assistant director of the McMichael Canadian Collection, was teaching an intensive three-and-a-half-week course in Inuit art at Colorado College in conjunction with the exhibition theme of Inuit art in Denver in the summer of 1992. The course was organized by the McMichael Collection and now travelling.

The Inuit Art Gallery in Mainz, Germany, has produced a 1993 calendar featuring reproductions of sculpture by George Aulik of Baker Lake and Paul-Olivier Papineau of Cape Dorset.

Dennis Hillman and Denise Gagnon, both formerly employed by Canadian Arctic Producers, are now with the North West Company, based in Toronto.

In September, bevin Ratcliffe of Arrancata Corporation in Wabun, Ontario, the largest marble quarry in North America, filled an assessment of several quarries near Lake Harbour with Stefan Pisarek. Ratcliffe and Pisarek documented their time, and expenses were covered by the Inuit Art Foundation. August, the lake Harbour carvers' association, is planning a quarrying course to be held at a site near the community this summer.

There was only one presentation on Inuit art at the 1992 meeting of the Native Arts Studies Association of Canada, held this year in Victoria, British Columbia. Archeologist author and teacher George Swinston gave a talk entitled 'Inuit Artists and their Art: Changing Perceptions.'

**DEATHS:**

Tiktuk Qinnuayuk of Cape Dorset died in January 1992 at the age of 84. His 1992 print, *My Mother's Refuggions* will be his last to appear in an annual Cape Dorset collection. Ossomchakq Pudlat, also of Cape Dorset, died in the spring of 1992. He is represented for the first time in a solo exhibition of his work at the Auyuniuk Gallery in Madison, Wisconsin, in the fall of 1992. In May 1992, 29 Inuit artists from Cape Dorset made pieces for a sale of Inuit art at the National Gallery of Canada. Harry Klauser died on October 21, 1992. The Klamer collection, which is the basis of the collection, was donated to the Gallery of Canada on May 21, 1992. It is a collection of prints and prints from the Klamer collection.

This article is about the contemporary languages of the Canadian Inuit, and how the linguistic situation has changed in the last 40 years. The article also contains a list of Inuit names and a discussion of the languages and their speakers. The article is divided into three parts: the history of the languages and the speakers, and the impact of educational policies on the speakers. The article also includes a discussion of the relationship between the languages and the Inuit. The article is divided into three parts: the history of the languages and the speakers, and the impact of educational policies on the speakers. The article also includes a discussion of the relationship between the languages and the Inuit.
Inuit consists of a number of dialects within Canada which are mutually inelligible with the dialects of North Alaska (Ilingmiut) and Greenland (Kalaallisut). Western and southwestern Alaska Inupiaq, along with their near-relatives across the Bering Strait in Russian Chukotka, speak dialects of Yupik, the other "half" of the Eskimo language subgroup. Most of the Eskimoan dialects are monothetic, that is, few people under 40 or 50 years of age speak them, and all use Russian. However, those close relatives on the north (but Alaskan) St. Lawrence Island, are 100 per cent bilingual, and recently removed contacts may serve one of the Siberian dialects.

O n the Alaskan mainland, Central Yupik (about 10,000 speakers) is still strong, but the number of villages in which preschool children can still speak their language drops every year.

Pacific Coast Yupik (and Aleut) are threatened or moribund, with only older speakers, and everyone can speak English. In North Alaska and in the adjacent Mackenzie and N.W.T. areas as far east as Cambridge Bay, the Inupiak, touched the Inuit languages are characterized in their efforts to use the language in schools. Meyers told us of a linguistic "immersion" experiment which involves placing young children and their children in day care with older women.

The Nunaita Campus of Arctic College in Iqaluit is holding a juried fine art and craft competition open to residents of the Eastern and Western Arctic, Labrador, Northern Quebec and Greenland. The jury will be drawn from the regions involved and elsewhere in North America, and awards, presentations and exhibitions will take place during the Thirty-Two Annual Festival in Iqaluit. April 26-30, 1993.

Matisse:
The Inuit Face, an exhibition organized by Canada House Culture Centre in London, England, and sponsored by Hydro-Quebec, will tour North America when it closes in London on February 26. In the forward to the exhibition catalogue, curator Michael Beggs wrote: "Inspired by a collection of Inuit masks belonging to his son-in-law, Georges Duquette, and using his own resources, Matisse produced a remarkable group of portraits, executed in charcoal, pencil, and lithography. This exhibition assembles for the first time all of the known drawings and prints, displayed alongside much of the original source material used by the artist."

Michel Noel, director of the Direccteur du Nord-du-Quebec, the Ministere des Affaires Culturelles du Quebec, is editor of a newly published book on the artist of Nunavik entitled Nartsak. The 111-page hardcover book (French and English) is available in many bookstores in Nunavik, some in English.

Recent Exhibitions:

Drawings and Sculpture from Baker Lake was the title of an exhibition at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, October 10 to January 31, 1993. It was accompanied by a simple but well designed and interesting black and white brochure which anyone interested in Baker Lake art will want to acquire. Corridor d'exposition sur les Inuit du Nouveau-Quebec: an exhibition mounted by the Musee de la Civilisation and Sur la piste des caribous, mounted in collaboration with Hydro-Quebec, were shown at La Galerie du Centre Social-Cultural d'Armes in Quebec from October 30 to November 22, 1992. Donmark, Paulil and Kunganginek, an exhibition featuring Inuit prints by the three artists, has been organized and is being circulated by the Winnipeg Art Gallery with the support of the Manitoba Arts Gaming Fund Commission. It will continue to travel to communities in Manitoba until December 1993.

The Canadian Guild of Crafts Quebec, located in Montreal, held an exhibition from November 21 to December 31, 1992, comprised of sculpture by contemporary Inuit artists. Inuit Vision: Recollections of a Lost Heritage, an exhibition of stone sculpture by Janusie Quaumassi, Baker (from Greenland, now living in Canada) was held at Images of the North in San Francisco, October 2 to January 18, 1993. Small Sculptures by Great Artists was the title of an exhibition of recent sculpture from Cape Dorset at Felley's Fine Arts in Toronto in November.
The first print collection in four years was released September 23 by the Ukjuqmitut Inuit Artists Association of Pangnirtung. Previously, the printshop was run by a cooperative, but it was closed in 1988 due to lack of funds. Ukjuqmitut recently purchased the equipment and inventory from the co-op and set up a printing facility in the new centre for arts and crafts.

Rose Olipik, chair of Ukjuqmitut, was quoted in Nunatsiaq News (September 18, 1992) as saying: "People told us that printmaking in the North was in trouble and perhaps should just die, but we didn't care about those things. We just kept right on going." The printmakers produced the 1992 collection on their own time and will be compensated as the prints are sold.

The collection includes thirty-five images by such well-known artists as Andrew Karkak, Thomasie Alavatuktok, Inessa Marniapik, Eneodie Atuluk and Jacobson Tagik. Sales are being organized by Ukjuqmitut. For information, contact Ukjuqmitut Centre for Arts and Crafts, Pangnirtung, NWT, (819) 473-8670.

FIRST PRINTS IN FOUR YEARS

I am Austuck, The Man with the Whip, 1992, Eddiussak Komaniq, Pangnirtung (stencil, archives, green, blue, orange, black and yellow). 56 x 68 cm.

2. Participants from the conference Language and Educational Policy in the North gathered at the University of California, Berkeley, with organizer Nelson Graburn (bottom left).

3. In Quebec, schoolchildren learn Inuktitut up to Grade 4, after which it is balanced equally with English or French until high school, where it drops to a few hours a week.

and with their employers, political bosses (including the leaders of Inuit-owned Makivik Corporation) and visiting Qallunanat.

INUIKTITUT LANGUAGE LOSS, EDUCATION AND THE MEDIA
The usual pattern of language shift, most apparent in the West, is that the first generation to undergo intensive schooling continues to speak Inuktitut to their parents and among themselves. Their children understand Inuktitut, but usually don't speak it among themselves or to their parents. The older generation speak to their children in Inuktitut, and the younger generation reply in English. The children of the next generation, then, never hear their parents speak Inuktitut with each other, and grow up speaking only English. Though this stage has not quite been reached in the Central and Eastern Canadian Arctic, it may be reached in a decade or so.

Since the late 1960s, increasing attempts have been made to teach Inuktitut in the schools. Dickey (a 30-year Inuit health service worker) in the North told us that school policy has devolved from Ottawa to Yellowknife (and Quebec) to local school districts. This has produced a variety of experimental language-maintaining strategies. Ideally, Inuktitut is now the language of instruction in Grade 1 through Grades 3 or 4, after which it is balanced equally with English
Eight Inuit women are participating in a workshop at the Art Studio of the Banff Centre for Continuing Education for five to ten weeks. The women are participating in a residency which began in January and has as its theme "art as a social force." They will work together on a theme or issue of their own choice, along with Japanese-Canadian ceramic artists, AIDS activists and Quebec artists searching for new environmental symbols that cross language and cultural barriers.

The involvement of Inuit women is the result of a collaboration between Peuquniit (Inuit Women’s Association) and the Banff Centre. Ruby Arnaquag, originally from Baker Lake, has been hired as a consultant by the Banff Centre and she worked with Peuquniit to identify women who wanted to take part in the residency.

Showrooms and galleries are available to the groups during the session, and a special symposium was planned for February. Funding to assist the Inuit women to participate in the program was provided by the Banff Centre of Fine Arts, the federal Department of Communications, the Chalmers Foundation, the Town of Banff, the Canada Council, the Inuit Art Foundation and others not yet confirmed.

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5. Map: Language groups in Arctic Canada, Alaska and Greenland.

Artists are beginning to think in English (hence Western) aesthetic and spatial concepts, so different from those in Inuktitut.

In spite of these efforts, Armit and others warned us that the forces of television, videos, magazines and education all compete against young people using Inuktitut. Many in the parental generation are, with good pride, determined to hang onto their language, knowing what happened in Alaska, and they are aided by the example of their neighbours in Greenland, but as a tiny minority in Canada they will need all the help—and self-discipline—they can muster.

Everyday life in Inuit communities is based in English. Only when the people are out of camp or hunting is Inuktitut dominant, and this, too, is threatened by radios, tape recorders and written material. One of the present strategies is to send classes of young people out on the land with elders for language immersion, but this needs to make the experience a special, annual break, quite divorced from the dominant lifestyle. In Canada, printed material is an extra problem. Though syllabics have become an ethnic and political marker, demanded by the middle and older generations, they are not used west of Cambridge Bay or in Labrador. Furthermore, they are now made more complex by “scientific” rationalization with excessive finals (superfluous characters), so that many of the young leaders told me that they can read English or Inuktitut in roman letters more easily than syllabics.

or French—and it is continued a few hours a week in high school. Only Nunavut and Greenland train their teachers in Inuktitut (as opposed to instructing bilingual or trilingual teachers in the colonial language), and only Greenland has university-level education in the Native language (at Ilulissat in Nuuk).
LANGUAGE AND INUIT ART

Language shapes and has had a great bearing on the evolution of Inuit commercial arts. Before and at the time of the original efforts of Alma and James Houston (1949-61), most Northern traders spoke at least some Inuktitut and were able to communicate their wares for small souvenirs. By the 1960s and 1970s, when the demand for the arts became much greater, few, if any, of the many Inuit artists were fluent in English or Inuktitut were used (Graham 1985). This led to endless misunderstandings about the Inuit's stylistic preferences, prices, materials and processes to be used and even, about the purpose of making the "art" (Graham 1985). After a generation of formal English-language schooling which started in the 1960s or 60s, depending on the area, most of the young people have to speak and read English and many traveled to the "outside.”

For the past decade, the majority of the younger artists have been able to speak English. They are beginning to think in English (hence Western) aesthetic and spatial concepts, so different from those in Inuktitut. Their awareness of the world has expanded immensely and, even without living down South, they have read and heard enough to assume the "burden of Western art history" and the "Western" ideology about the privileged status of being an artist. These trends are aided by, for instance, reading Inuit Art Quarterly, taking workshops with art-school trained artists, even other Eskimos (Mitchell 1991), and the activities of the Inuit Art Foundation (IAF) 2007. Spring 1992, p.53). Thus, their art is increasingly informed by a different set of aesthetic and ideological attributes (Wight 1991), like most Canadian and American Native artists, they will self-consciously include aspects or symbols of "traditional" (i.e., past) Inuit culture. They will compete more openly and, given suitable support, probably successfully with the rest of the world's artists. The art will be different, and the artists will be able to discuss it with their patrons in the patrons' terms, something that until recently was impossible, in spite of the reams of publications and stories about Inuit art. I predict that the Inuit art market will rapidly segment itself into those who collect the new "ethnics" (Inuit-Canadian) artists, those who remain interested in the whole range and those seekers of the "primitive" who will continue to buy the productions of the first 30 to 40 years, of the older generation of artists, or archivist revivals thereof.
It seems likely in his discussion of "post-Contemporary" Inuit sculpture, Swinton has once again put his finger on the areas which will be the loci of future discussion.

Indeed, yes. The shift in irony represented by these sculptures resonates with meaning for both Inuit and southern viewers. Could it be that the irony is symptomatic of a subtle political consciousness, in a continuum that stretches from ritual self-mockery, as in Nick Smith's Spirit Swallowing Animal (p. 38 this article), through to the atavistic hilarity of a piece such as the Devil with Horns from the collection of Harold Snedden (p. 37 this article), which is not illustrated in the book? This phenomenon, like the acquiring of aesthetic distance (of which it is one aspect), troubles the illusion, as do other poems raised by Swinton.

Scrambled though the additional material might be in Sculpture of the Inuit, and therefore irritating to read, ultimately it does not disappoint. It seems likely that in his discussion of "post-Contemporary" Inuit sculpture, Swinton has once again put his finger on the areas which will be the loci of future discussion. Not only that, there is a feature of the revised book that deserves particular mention. It has become almost sixty items in which the 1972 entries have been amended either by replacing the depressing "undetermined" tag with the name of the artist, or by correcting a wrong attribution. This improvement, together with the wholesale revision of names and other details, could only have been the result of enormous diligence and patience. Correct attributions are, of course, of paramount importance, and Swinton's conscientiousness in this matter is testament to how seriously and responsibly he treats his beloved subject.
THE NEW BOOK

And now we have the third version of Swinton's classic, with its revamped title, *Sculpture of the Inuit*. Long-awaited, the publication of this book is an important event in Inuit art circles and it is of some significance in the cultural life of Canada generally.

Expectations are perhaps unreasonably high. Consider the problem. Since 1972, something like one million sculptures have been produced (Swinton 1992:246), and there have been dramatic changes in the Inuit way of life and consciousness. Such changes really deserve a book-length study. To deal with it in just thirty odd pages requires an encyclopedic knowledge of all the developments, and a formidable power to condense the material into a clear framework. Swinton possesses the former but not, unfortunately, the latter.

The problems of clarity and organization evident in the 1972 book occur also, considerably aggravated, in the material added to *Sculpture of the Inuit*.

The format of the revised book seems designed to confuse the reader. Take, for instance, the very first piece of new text (p. 244), it occupies a page to itself, with no heading or title to explain what it is about or that it is indeed new material. As for the content of the essay, it is mainly about quality, but it takes more than one reading to reassemble its meaning into some sort of order so that one might grasp the points.

Then follows a section called "Musings," made up of text and illustrations of twenty-five sculptures. Here again, the reader is puzzled by the lack of clear connection in the prose. It is jumpy and scattered, as if it were once a longer and more cohesive essay which has been subjected to unskilled cropping.

Since 1972, something like one million sculptures have been produced and there have been dramatic changes in the Inuit way of life.

The major element of the additional material is a section entitled "Changes 1972-1992." This part is composed of photographs of fifty-six pieces of sculpture, illustrating such themes as family, the supernatural, faces, and so on, accompanied by commentary. (One is left wondering why a batch of similar illustrations appeared in the "Musings" section instead of being included here. And what is Donald Anawak's 1968 kusiks vase doing amongst sculpture from after 1971?)

Buried within the commentary in the "Changes" section are clues to the main points Swinton wishes to make: but it is up to the reader to dig them out and give them the appropriate prominence. Not until the very end of the section do we find a clear statement as to where Inuit art has been going during the past twenty years. There, finally, Swinton provides the broad analysis, the summing-up observations that the reader has been hoping for throughout the preceding material. Here is an example: "The earlier, unself-conscious art pieces were more concerned with content in the sense of stories and illustration. The generation who came to the forefront thereafter (right into the 80s) became more concerned with sculptural form than with narrative. It became important how sculpture looked rather than what it said. In post-Contemporary sculpture the latest emphasis is on abstraction and hyperbole of form and content." (p. 271). Clarity at last.

6. Fa Da (Fox with Spirit), 1986,
Tutuyaa Bikiilluak.
Cape Dorset (metalled dark green stone);
33.6 x 17.2 x 9.4 cm;
Art Gallery of Ontario, gift of Judge and Mrs. Darrell Drapek.

7. Spirit Swallowing
Animal, 1985,
Nick Sikkuqak, Gjoa Haven
whel whale bone, bone, antler, hide, fur and white pigment;
24.1 x 19.6 x 18.9 cm;
Art Gallery of Ontario, promised gift of Samuel and Esther Sarick.

Jerry Riley
There was always just enough food. Never too much, but always enough. It was very important, the storage of food. Every part of the animal was used. Never any waste. I remember the houses that we lived in when I was young. They were wooden houses and wooden frame houses. The house I live in now is modern. I do miss that way of life. In the camps there would be better hunting for some than others, so we would always share. My father, Peter Pitsudak, could see ahead to where the Inuit would change, so where the way of life would become much harder. He was always drawing and making photographs, showing them to the children, having them help to develop his films in the igloo. He knew that someday these drawings and photographs would be valuable as a record of Inuit life.

"The government and nursing station arrived in 1950. I think this was the beginning of the changes. I was working at the nursing station, and was around white people all the time. I remember when the men would come back from hunting with a seal or walrus, this would be a time for all the family and relatives to gather round. As families we were very close because of the lifestyle, whole extended families living in one camp. That is not to say that families are not close now, but it is different, as some members of the family live in different places, sometimes far away.

"My father was a good role model as a camp leader, always providing for all, such as widows who could not hunt for themselves."

"The 1972 book, then, became the Bible of contemporary Inuit art. It has meanings similar to those of the Bible itself. For one thing, like the Bible, it is a bit of a mess organizationally, although in a different way. To impose order on so much disparate material in one book would present a challenge to the most ingenious of writers, but clear organization is not one of Swinton's gifts. The result is that pieces of text are mixed in with sections of illustrations in a sequence that is not immediately clear to the reader. Indeed, the two elements of the book — straightforward exposition and personal essay on the illustrated sculpture — are bound to go unappreciatively together. And Swinton's prose can become cloudy at times, especially when he deals with art theory. His discussion of the difference between form and content, for instance, is particularly problematic (perhaps because, in fact, form and content cannot be separated). Even so, Sculpture of the Eskimo remains a formidable document."

Not everyone agreed with his opinions or his methodology, but for better or for worse, his 1972 book set down the terms on which almost all subsequent debate on Inuit art would be carried out.
The ground certainly needed clearing. Among other things, Swinton had to deal with prejudices concerning the economic motives of the Inuit for making art, as well as the belief that it was something contrived by contact with white people. He provided chronological perspective by sketching the history of Inuit art-making from prehistory to the present, and he questioned the Southern romantic sentimentalism that painted an idealized picture of the Inuit past. He placed the contemporary production of art within the context of the customary ingenuity of the Inuit in adapting to change, and demonstrated that, nevertheless, it had real meaning for them.

Having established these points, Swinton wanted to illustrate the social qualities of Inuit sculpture — its extraordinary expressiveness, its great variety, its

3. Caribou, 1990, Augustin Analluq, Polly Bay (whale bone and antler, h. 45.7 cm; Art Gallery of Ontario, promised gift of Samuel and Esther Sorick).

4. Mother and Child, 1989, Tutoyakaq Shudloqua, Cape Dorset (green stone, h. 1.1 inches; private collection).
George Swinton’s new Sculpture of the Inuit

George Swinton’s first work in the field of Inuit art, Esquimaux Sculpture, published in 1965, was a landmark in Inuit studies. It was badly needed because, during the preceding seventeen years or so, the production of Inuit artifacts had grown to spectacular proportions. Southern collectors were faced with a bewildering choice of sculpture, prints, drawings, textiles, and even pottery. For the average southerner, these objects were shrouded in mystery. They came from the North, of course, and it was clear that they were delightfully unlike anything discovered before in Canadian stores. But how were they produced, what did they mean, how exactly should one respond to them?

Limiting himself to sculpture, Swinton set out in his 1965 book to shed light on the subject. Basic facts were needed — almost anything about the Inuit would be news to the average southerner — and some sort of evaluation of the art was obviously in order. Swinton supplied both. The book was well received, and seven years later he produced his second book, Sculpture of the Inuit.

The 1972 book had much the same purpose as the earlier Esquimaux Sculpture and covered much of the same ground, although it was considerably expanded. It was not merely that much more sculpture had been produced in the years since 1965, but it appears that Swinton had more time to think matters through and, perhaps, to benefit from...
"One time when I was a child I went into the Hudson's Bay post. It was there I saw my first soapstone carving. There was an igloo and a small walrus, both carved from serpi tine, sitting on top of a life ring cabin. I was so amused with them. I will never forget this.

"People in this community should be proud of the talent we have here. This talent should be passed on to the younger generation. It is very important that it [art skill] becomes part of their culture, carried on with full support from the government. What they are able to make today they will see many years from now.

"What should white people and others in Canada know so better understand the Inuit? Many people in the South still think we live in igloos, which is not the case at this time. Many of us are now living in the modern way, with much success."
"I used to think it was man's work to carve, but when I saw other women carving I didn't want to be left out, so I learned. At first I was scared, but I was determined. Women can now do many things.

"...What makes me happy is knowing I am filled with the holy spirit."

"After the first building was built here, just after this picture was taken, I got a new wife and I decided to go to Iqaluit. I was the first man to go there alone without anyone telling me directions. I went overland, not by the coast. This was just after the Second World War, when we lived the old way, not the way we do now. It was when it was hard to get food. We live the Qallunaat way of life now.

"The younger generation is living the way now in a way that is different from my youth, so that I'm living the white man's way through them.

"I've heard stories about shamans back then, and I know stories of how they used to try to put a spell on people...

"It is too bad there are none of them around, and no descenders so I could learn how they became shamans.

"I was raised by older parents, so I heard a lot of stories from them. I know many stories. I had a father-in-law once who was a shaman. His name was Ajaqiaq. The shamans were having a meeting to get the family they found a frozen man... They asked my father-in-law to take the man to his family. That man was frozen, but a spirit was moving through his body, and there would be movement here and there in whatever part of his body and, finally, the person who was frozen spoke, revived by the spirit.

"This story depicted in his carving is about a shaman and an old man living in the same igloo. They were hungry and the igloo was cold because they had nothing to heat it with, and no light, so they decided to have their spirits go out hunting. The shaman lay down on his stomach... His spirit rose and started walking towards the mountain. It was quite far, but all of a sudden he reached it, but it wasn't a mountain or hill, but an igloo, a giant igloo. Inside was a woman, a big woman, who couldn't hear anything because her ears were filled with cornbread. She was plucking it out of her ears. She..."
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“One time when I was a child I went into the Hudson’s Bay post. It was there I saw my first soapstone carving. There was an igloo and a small whale, both carved from serpentine, sitting on top of a filing cabinet. I was so amused with them, I will never forget this.

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further research and discussion. The new book was a little bit clearer in outline, the tentative and the somewhat defensive tone of 1963 had largely disappeared, and Swinton carried out various other changes in the text, such as wholly removing several simplistic and potentially misleading comparisons between Inuit sculpture and certain great works of Western sculpture. Despite its limitations, though, there remains something special about the 1965 book. Perhaps it is due to the reader’s nostalgia for the early days of contemporary Inuit art — what Swinton now calls the “Classic Period” — more likely it comes from the intimacy and enthusiasm imparted by a man who sincerely wanted others to share his love of Inuit art. Whatever the reason, the first book has a good spirit.

The present work, Sculpture of the Inuit, is a “revised and updated” version of the 1972 book. It corrects details of the illustrations, adds material in order to fill the gap from 1971 to the present. Since it is largely a reprint of the 1972 publication (of 288 pages, only 33 are new), it might be useful to review what was achieved in the earlier book — its strengths and weaknesses — before going on to consider the new material.

In the 1972 book, Swinton achieved several enormously important things. He provided the factual framework that would allow non-experts in the South to approach Inuit art in something other than ignorance. He supplied an aesthetic rationale whereby we could begin to appreciate it intelligently as art. And he challenged and altered (he thought were misguided) attitudes towards both the art and the Inuit. Not everyone agreed with his opinions on his methodology, but for better or for worse, his book set down the terms on which almost all subsequent debate on Inuit art would be carried out.

3. Caribeau, 1995, Augustin Anaittuk, Polly Ray (whale bone and antler; h. 45.7 cm; Art Gallery of Ontario, promised gift of Samuel and Esther Sarick).

4. Mother and Child, 1989, Tuttu grey, Cape Dorset (green stone, h. 11 inches; private collection).

“Sometimes I would leave the camp in the afternoon. I would hunt early the next day, at a spot where I left an animal would be. Sometimes, I had only water to drink. I had no food until I was successful at hunting. Most times, I was right about where the animal was. I would feel very proud to take food back to the camp, to provide for not only my family, but others, too.

“...Getting my own dog team was a very important time for me. I was then free to hunt any time I wanted. It was a good feeling.

“...Government welfare has changed everything. It is too easy to sit and wait for money.”

Pablo Pudlat
1916-1992

Six Cape Dorset Elders

Vol. 8, No. 1, Spring 1999
Kooovo Ottoche
1930-1992

"There was always just enough food. Never too much, but always enough. It was very important, the storage of food. Every part of the animal was used. Never any waste. I remember the houses that we lived in when I was young. They were one-room huts with wooden frame huts. The house I live in now is so modern. I do miss that way of life, in the camps there would be better hunting for some than others, so we would always share. My father, Peter Pisuevak, could see ahead where the Inuit would change, so where the way of life would become much harder. He was always drawing, making photographs, showing them to the children, helping them to develop his films in the igloos. He knew that someday those drawings and photographs would be valuable as a record of Inuit life.

"The government and nursing station arrived in 1950. I think this was the beginning of the changes. I was working at the nursing station, and was around white people all the time. I remember when the men would come back from hunting with a seal or whale, this would be a time for all the family to gather round. As families we were very close because of the lifestyle, whole extended families living in one camp. That is not to say that families are not close now, but it is different, as some members of the family live in different places, sometimes far away.

"My father was a good role model as a camp leader, always providing for all, such as widows who could not hunt for themselves."

exploitation of new materials and techniques, and the Inuit delight in complexity and extenxes. He chose to do by the saturation method. The greater part of the 1972 book is taken up with no fewer than 820 photographs of sculptures, isolated out in form "a small museum without walls" (p. 28) with special comment by Swinton. Although Swinton went to pains to interpret Inuit attitudes to their art, and attempted to explain the

5. Devil with Cross, 1975, Charlie Upkuk, Spence Bay (brown stone, ivory and antler: 5 x 13.5 x 13 inches. Courtesy of Images Art Gallery, Toronto, Canada)

6. Scene, c.1982, Mark Tunuguit, Repulse Bay (grey-green stone, ivory, balance, copper and black pigment: 18.5 x 33.6 x 10.3 cm; Art Gallery of Ontario, gift of Samuel and Esther Sarchi)

5. Devil with Cross, 1975, Charlie Upkuk, Spence Bay (brown stone, ivory and antler: 5 x 13.5 x 13 inches, collection of Images Art Gallery, Toronto, Ontario)

6. Scene, c.1982, Mark Tunuguit, Repulse Bay (grey-green stone, ivory, balance, copper and black pigment: 18.5 x 33.6 x 10.3 cm; Art Gallery of Ontario, gift of Samuel and Esther Sarchi). not everyone agreed with his opinions or his methodology, but for better or for worse, his 1972 book set down the terms on which almost all subsequent debate on Inuit art would be carried out.

The 1972 book, then, became the Bible of contemporary Inuit art. It has fallings similar to those of the Bible itself. For one thing, like the Bible, it is a bit of a mess organizationally, although in a different way. To impose order on so much disparate material in one work would present a challenge to the most ingenious of editors. But clear organization is not one of Swinton's gifts. The result is that pieces of text are mixed in with sections of illustrations in a sequence that is not immediately clear to the reader. Indeed, the two elements of the book — straightforward exposition and personal comment on the illustrated sculptures — are bound to go unruly together. And Swinton's prose can become cloudy at times, especially when he deals with art theory. His discussion of the difference between form and content, for instance, is particularly problematic because, in fact, form and content cannot be separated. Even so, Sculpture of the Eskimo remains a formidable document.
THE NEW BOOK

And now we have the third version of Swinton's classic, with its revamped title, Sculpture of the Inuit. Long-awaited, the publication of this book is an important event in Inuit art circles and it is of some significance in the cultural life of Canada generally.

Expectations are perhaps unreasonable high. Consider the problem. Since 1972, something like one million sculptures have been produced (Swinton 1992:246), and there have been dramatic changes in the Inuit way of life and consciousness. Such changes really deserve a book-length study. To deal with it in just thirty odd pages requires an encyclopedic knowledge of all the developments, and a formidable power to condense the material into a clear framework. Swinton possesses the former but not, unfortunately, the latter.

The problems of clarity and organization evident in the 1972 book occur also, considerably aggravated, in the material added in Sculpture of the Inuit.

The format of the revised book seems designed to confound the reader. Take, for instance, the very first piece of new text (pp. 244), it occupies a page to itself, with no heading or title to explain what it is about or that it is indeed new material.

As for the content of the essay, it is mainly about quality, but it takes more than one reading to rearrange its meandering into some sort of order so that one might grasp the points.

Then follows a section called "Musings," made up of text and illustrations of twenty-five sculptures. Here again, the reader is puzzled by the lack of clear connection in the prose. It is jumpy and truncated, as if it were once a longer and more cohesive essay which has been subjected to unskilled cropping.

Since 1972, something like one million sculptures have been produced and there have been dramatic changes in the Inuit way of life.

The major element of the additional material is a section entitled "Changes 1971-1992." This part is comprised of photographs of fifty-six pieces of sculpture, illustrating such themes as family, the supernatural, faces, and so on, accompanied by commentary. (One is left wondering why a batch of similar illustrations appeared in the "Musings" section instead of being included here. And what is Donat Anawak's 1966 bowhead doing amongst sculpture from after 1971?)

Buried within the commentary in the "Changes" section are clues to the main points Swinton wishes to make: but it is up to the reader to dig them out and give them the appropriate prominence. Not until the very end of the section do we find a clear statement as to where Inuit art has been going during the past twenty years. There, finally, Swinton provides the broad analysis, the summing-up observations that the reader has been groping for throughout the preceding material. Here is an example: "The earlier, self-conscious ethics were more concerned with content in the sense of stories and illustration. The generation who came to the fore sometime after 1965 became more concerned with sculptural form than with narrative. It became important how sculpture looked rather than what it said. In post-Contemporary sculpture the latest emphasis is on abstraction and hyperbole of form and content" (p. 271). Clarity at last.

7. Spirit Swallowing
Animal, 1980
Nick Sikkakak, Gjoa Haven
(wale bone, bone, antler, hide, fur and white pigment;
24 1/4 x 19 1/2 x 19 1/9 cm;
Art Gallery of Ontario, promised gift of Samuel and Esther Sarick).

E. Ta Da (Fox with Spirit), 1986
Turulek Bediauk, Cape Dorset (metalled dark green stone;
33 6/4 x 17 2/4 x 9 3/8 cm;
Art Gallery of Ontario, gift of Judge and Mrs. Darrell Drapeau).

7. Jerry Riley

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Hedging his bets, however, Swinton speculates that the "spirit" carvings have several underlying meanings, which serve to illustrate some of the changes in Inuit life and art" (p. 236).

It seems likely in his discussion of "post-Contemporary" Inuit sculpture, Swinton has once again put his finger on the areas which will be the loci of future discussion.

Indeed, yes. The shift to iconography represented by these sculptures resonates with meaning for both Inuit and southern viewers. Could it be that the icon is symptomatic of a subtle political consciousness, in a continuum that stretches from non-Indian self-mockery, as in Nick Sidin's Spirit Swallowing Animal (p. 38 this article), through to the arcane hilarity of a piece such as the Devil with Horns from the collection of Harold Seideman (p. 37 this article), which is not illustrated in the book? This phenomenon, like the acquiring of aesthetic distance (of which it is one aspect), invites investigation, as do other points raised by Swinton.

Scrambled though the additional material might be in Sculpture of the Inuit, and therefore tiring to read, ultimately it does not disappoint. It seems likely that in his discussion of "post-Contemporary" Inuit sculpture, Swinton has once again put his finger on the areas which will be the loci of future discussion. Not only that, there is a feature of the revised book that deserves particular strong commendation. I have amassed almost sixty items in which the 1972 entries have been amended either by replacing the depressing "unidentified" tag with the name of the artist, or by correct attribution. This improvement, together with the wholesale revision of names and other details, could only have been the result of enormous diligence and patience. Correct attributions are, of course, of paramount importance, and Swinton's conscientiousness in this matter is testament to how seriously and responsibly he treats his beloved subject.

Notes

1 This article is based in part on the conference mentioned in the text, and on the author's 15 years of research among Canadian Inuit. Much of the information on the status of Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun languages in general is drawn from the paper presented by Dr. Michael E. Krovitz, Director, Alaska Native Language Institute, Fairbanks. A board of the 13 Working Papers from the conference is available for $5 each from Dr. Graham, Department of Anthro- pology, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720. Dr. Graham and codirector Roy J. Chirikurevitch (Kuskokwim Campus, University of Alaska, Fairbanks) are revising the papers and adding one or two new chapters for publication by a major press.

2 Recent hypotheses claim distant connections with Chukchean and Uralic-Mongolian (Woolworth, 1984), or, even, to Eurasiatic languages in general (Greenberg et al., 1986).

3 The word Eskimo is generally used by Native people and social scientists when speaking English outside Canada as the designation for all the Yupik and Inuit-speaking peoples. As local Inuit would, gracefully all over Alaska and Quebec, "Eskimo Power!"

4 In Nunavut there are two school districts (both well represented at the conference). Most of the Inuit communities belong to Inuit school board, based in Kangiqsaag (Fort Chimo), and Inuit, based in Frobisher Bay and Iqaluit, representing the "disclivities" from the James Bay Agreement. Both permit a choice between English and French "curricula" after Grade 6.

References


Nelson Graham & Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, and author of several books and more than 300 articles on the Inuit, their work and their life. CAL


LANGUAGE AND INUIT ART

Language usage has had a great bearing on the evolution of Inuit commercial art. Before and at the time of the original efforts of Alina and James Houston (1949-61), most Northern elders spoke at least some Inuktitut and were able to communicate their wishes for small souvenirs. By the 1960s and 1970s, when the demand for the art became much greater, few if any of the many Qulliupuk, or local translators and pedagogues English or Inuktitut were used (Graham 1985). This led to endless misunderstandings about the Qulliupuk's stylistic preferences, prices, materials, and processes to be used and even, about the purpose of making the "art" (Graham 1987). After a generation of formal English-language schooling (which started in the 1960s or 60s, depending on the area), many young people came to speak and read English and many traveled to the "outside."

For the past decade, the majority of the younger artists have been able to speak English. They are beginning to think in English (hence Western) aesthetic and spatial concepts, different from those in Inuktitut. Their awareness of the world has expanded immensely and, even without living down south, they have read and heard enough to assume the "burden of [Western] art history" and the [Western] ideology about the privileged status of being an artist. These trends are aided by, for instance, reading Inuit Art Quarterly, taking workshops with art-school trained artists, even other Inuktitut (Mitchell 1991), and the activities of the Inuit Art Foundation (IAQ 7/2, Spring 1992, p. 53). Thus, their art is increasingly informed by a different set of aesthetic and ideological attributes (Wight 1991). Like most Canadian and American Native artists, they will self-consciously include aspects or symbols (or symbolically "Inuit") materials of "traditional" (i.e. past) Inuit culture. They will compete more openly and, given suitable support, probably successfully with the rest of the world's artists. The art will be different, and the artists will be able to discuss it with their patrons in the patrons' terms, something that until recently was impossible, in spite of the remains of publications and stories about Inuit art. I predict that the Inuit art market will rapidly segment itself into those who collect the new "Umiat" (Inuit-Canadian) art; those who remain interested in the whole range and those seekers of the "primitive" who will continue themselves to the productions of the first 30 to 40 years of the older generation of artists, or any of these as you wish.
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5. Map: Language groups in Arctic Canada, Alaska and Greenland.

Artists are beginning to think in English (hence Western) aesthetic and spatial concepts, so different from those in Inuktitut.

Canada leads the northern nations in providing television and film/video products for the Inuit. In the first 20 years of radio (since the late 50s and the first five years of television (since 1975), English language programming dominated, accelerating the loss of Inuktitut (Graham, 1981). However, since the 1980s, Inuit-made programs and broadcasting have facilitated the daily use of Inuktitut. This is offset by the popularity of soap operas and hockey and the availability of videos in English.

or French,* and it is continued a few hours a week in high school. Only Nunavut and Greenland train their teachers in Inuktitut (as opposed to instructing bilingual/ trilingual teachers in the colonial language), and only Greenland has university-level education in the Native language (in Ilmangiak in Nuuk).

In spite of these efforts, Armita and others warn us that the forces of television, video, magazines and education all combine against young people using Inuktitut. Many in the parental generation are with great pride, determined to hang onto their language—knowing what happened in Alaska and they are aware by the example of their neighbors in Greenland, but as a tiny minority in Canada they will need all the help—and self-discipline—they can muster.
Eight Inuit women are participating in a workshop at the Art Studio of the Banff Centre for Continuing Education for five to ten weeks. The women are participating in a residency which began in January and has as its theme “art as a social force.” They will work together on a theme or issue of their own choice, along with Japanese-Canadian ceramic artists, AIDA activities and Quebec artists searching for new environmental symbols that cross language and cultural barriers.

The involvement of Inuit women is the result of a collaboration between Pauksuktuk Inuit Women’s Association and the Banff Centre. Ruby Arngiyaq, originally from Baker Lake, has been hired as a consultant by the Banff Centre and she worked with Pauksuktuk to identify women who wanted to take part in the residency.

Showrooms and galleries are available to the groups during the session, and a special symposium was planned for February. Funding to assist the Inuit women to participate in the program was provided by the Banff Centre of Fine Arts, the federal Department of Communications, the Chalmers Foundation, the Town of Banff, the Canada Council, the Inuit Art Foundation and others not yet confirmed.
The first print collection in four years was released September 23 by the Uqquqmit Ilinuks Art Association of Pangnirtung. Previously, the printshop was run by the Pangnirtung Co-operative, but it was closed in 1988 due to lack of funds. Uqquqmit recently purchased the equipment and inventory from the co-op and set up a printing facility in the new centre for arts and crafts.

Rose Oljipik, chair of Uqquqmit, was quoted in Nanuyalik News (September 18, 1992) as saying: "People told us that printmaking in the North was in trouble and perhaps should just die. But we didn't care about those things. We just kept right on going." The printmakers produced the 1992 collection on their own time and will be compensated as the prints are sold.

The collection includes thirty-five images by such well-known artists as Andrew Karpik, Thamusie Alkatchuk, Jones Mellaqik, Eqaluaq Akuulik, and Isagani Tagil. Sales are being organized by Uqquqmit. For information, contact Uqquqmit Centre for Arts and Crafts, Pangnirtung, NWT, (819) 473-8870.

First Prints in Four Years

2. Participants from the conference Language and Educational Policy in the North gathered at the University of California, Berkeley, with organizer Nelson Grauburn (bottom left).

3. In Quebec, schoolchildren learn Inuktitut up to Grade 4, after which it is balanced equally with English or French until high school, where it drops to a few hours a week.

Since the late 1960s, increasing attempts have been made to teach Inuktitut in the schools. In 1992, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) joined forces with the Nunatsavatmiut School District to bring Inuktitut back into the curriculum. The ITC has been working with schools to introduce Inuktitut as a subject at the elementary level and to develop resources for teaching the language.

Inuktitut Language Loss, Education and the Media

The usual pattern of language shift, most apparent in the West, is that the first generation to undergo intensive schooling continues to speak Inuktitut to their parents and among themselves. Their children understand Inuktitut, but usually don't speak it among themselves or to their parents. The older generation speak to their children in Inuktitut, and the younger generation reply in English. The children of the next generation, then, never hear their parents speak Inuktitut with each other, and grow up speaking only English. Though this stage has not quite been reached in the Central and Eastern Canadian Arctic, it may be reached in a decade or so.

Inuktitut is now the language of instruction in Grade 1 through Grade 3, and in some cases Grade 4, in the Nunavut territory. The government of Nunavut has also launched an ambitious program to teach Inuktitut to all students in the territory, regardless of their background.
Inuitus consists of a number of dialects within Canada which are mutually intelligible with the dialects of North Alaska (Unangan) and Greenland (Kalaallisut). Western and southwestern Alaskan Eskimos, along with their relatives across the Bering Strait in Russian Chukotka, speak dialects of Yupik, the other "half" of the Eskimo language subgroups. Most of the Chukotkan dialects are mono-phonetic—that is, few people under 40 or 50 years of age speak them, and all use Russian. However, those close relations on the eastern (or Alaskan) St. Lawrence, more than 100 per cent bilingual, and recently renewed contacts may serve one of the Eastern dialects.

On the Alaskan mainland, Central Yupik (about 16,000 speakers) is still strong, but the number of villages in which pre-school children can still speak their language drops every year.

Pacific Coast Yupik (and Aleu) are threatened or moribund, with only older speakers, and everyone can speak English. In North Alaska and in the adjacent Mackenzie and N.W.T. areas as far east as Cambridge Bay, the Inupiaq, Unalitlik and Inuinnaqtun dialects are characterized in spite of efforts to teach the language in schools. Movik told us of linguistic "immersion" experiments which involve placing young mothers and their children in day-care with older women.

Of the more than 20,000 Inuit west of Cambridge Bay, Dorais told us, almost 100 per cent, including most of those in the premier art-making communities, speak Inuktitut. All of the people under 40 are bilingual, and in Nunavik some young Inuits are trilingual, speaking French as well, in Greenland, since Inuit, now being re-introduced, has extensive contact with the Inuit here. The "Eskimation" program has increased the proportion of those speaking the native language (including many of the 10,000 asking questions), by over 80 per cent of the more than 50,000 people. As in Canada, the most people are bilingual (in Danish) and an increasing number are trilingual (with English). The areas in which the Eskimo-Inuit language groups appear "safe" include St. Lawrence Island and Central Yupik, the Central and Eastern Canadian Arctic, and Greenland. However, the trend toward the use of the native language is moving east through the Central Canadian Arctic quite rapidly.

The areas in which the Eskimo-Inuit languages appear "safe" include St. Lawrence Island and Central Yupik, the Central and Eastern Canadian Arctic, and Greenland. However, the trend toward the use of the native language is moving east through the Central Canadian Arctic quite rapidly.

The Nunatsia Campus of Arctic College in Iqaluit is holding a juried fine art and crafts competition open to residents of the Eastern Arctic, Labrador, Northern Quebec and Greenland. The jury will be drawn from the regions involved and elsewhere in North America, and awards, presentations and exhibitions will take place during the Tuttarun Festival in Iqaluit, April 26-30, 1993.

Matisse: The Inuit Face, an exhibition organized by Canada House Culture Centre in London, England, sponsored by Hydro-Quebec, will tour North America when it closes in London on February 26. In the foreword to the exhibition catalogue, curator Michael Begun wrote: "Inuit face" is based on the concept of Inuit faces belonging to his son-in-law, Georges Dufault, and using his own resources, Matisse produced a remarkable group of portraits, executed in charcoal, pencil, pastel and lithography. This exhibition resembles the first time all of the portraits, prints, and etchings, displayed alongside the original images used by the artist.

Michel Noël, director of the Ministre du Nord-du-Quebec, is editor of a recently published book on the artists of Nunavik entitled Nunavimmiut. The 111-page hand-bound book (French and English) includes many illustrations of Nunavik sculpture, some in colour.

Recent Exhibitions:

Drawings and Sculpture from Baker Lake was the title of an exhibition at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, October 10 to January 31, 1993. It was accompanied by a simple but well designed and interesting black and white brochure which anyone interested in Baker Lake art will want to acquire. 

Circa 1993, the Canadian Council of Crafts Quebec held an exhibition from November 21 to December 21, 1992, comprising of sculpture by contemporary Inuit artists. Inuit Visions: Recollections of a Lost Heritage, an exhibition of stone sculpture by Inuit artists, was shown at the Galerie du Centre culturel d'Amos in Quebec from October 30 to November 22, 1992. 

An inukshuk constructed from 200 stones by Juajak Nasutuk in Nunavik has been dismantled and erected at the entrance to the McCord Museum of Canadian History in Montreal. Nasutuk was assisted by Montreal by Bobby Aupaluk and Allie Nartal to erect the giant sculpture, which measures over three metres in height and weighs nine tons. The stones were numbered and marked before being transported south.
Grants to preserve oral traditions were made by the Government of the Northwest Territories to several Inuit communities. The Iqaluit Research Centre received $7,500 to translate a backlog of material collected on the traditions of the local people. Cambridge Bay Centennial Library received $6,100 to record on video various seasonal activities. Iqaluit Isua Video received $5,727 to make a film on the traditional knowledge of women on child care and health and the Inuitautok Social Development Program received $6,000 to interview elders and document genealogies in six communities and another $8,300 to complete a project begun in 1990 to record the use of the Yukon North Slope and Herschel Island by Inuit. Finally, the Coral Harbour Community Education Council received $6,810 to collect traditional knowledge on caribou hunting and the legends of the Sudominaq for use during that community's 25th anniversary celebration.

Iqaluit Isua Video received $5,600 from the Government of the Northwest Territories to hire a family to the production of a video entitled Sepeq. The Inuvialuit Communications Society (Inuvik) received $4,830 to collect elders' knowledge in Inuvialuit on video (or airing on TVN), the new Northern Broadcasting company, and another $47,600 to produce the newspaper, Nunaquak, in three Inuvialuit dialects. The Arvai Education Council received $3,500 for an Inuit literacy project, and The Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (Iqaluit) received $23,557 which will enable it to hold a workshop to improve Inuit skills of producers in conjunction with elders.

CURATOR RENATA HALEY gave a talk in October to the Nunaamtut Art Study Group on the subject of the Graffiti of Continents bell seen at MAC. Fall/Winter

1992, Haley was responsible for curating the Inuktituk museum of the National Museum of Civilization to exhibit it along with the Graffiti exhibit.

The Inuit Gallery in Mammihoe, Germany, has produced a 1993 calendar featuring reproductions of sculpture by George Atuluk of Baker Lake and Paukitis Photogak of Cape Dorset.

Dennis Hellenas and Denise Gagnon, both formerly employed by Canadian Arctic Producers, are now with the North West Company, based in Toronto.

In September, Bevin Ratcliffe of Arris Beach Corporation in Iqaluit, Nunavut, the largest marble quarry in North America, did an assessment of several quarries near Lake Harbour with Simonis Pitsiulak, Ratcliffe and Pitsiulak donated time, and expenses were covered by the Inuit Art Foundation. A report to the Lake Harbour owners' association, is planning a quarrying course to be held at a site near the community next summer.

There was only one presentation on Inuit art at the 1992 meeting of the Native Art Studies Association of Canada, held this year in Victoria, British Columbia. Author and teacher George Swinton gave a talk entitled "Inuit Artists and their Art: Changing Perceptions."

DEATHS:

Tikitu Qinnualuk of Cape Dorset died in January 1992 at the age of 84. His 1992 print, "My Mother's Reflections," will be his last to appear on an annual Cape Dorset collection. Ossokatik Pudlak, also of Cape Dorset, died in the spring of 1992. His most recent prints have been "A Moment in Time" and "A Man's Reflections." He is represented by the last ten prints of the 1992 Cape Dorset graphics collection with the print, "Inuit Hunter Gather on Mudflats," published by Pablo Pudlak, another well-known Inuit artist, the first to have a solo exhibition at The National Gallery of Canada in 1993. Pudlak died in 1992. The Klamer collection forms the base of the Art Gallery of Ontario's Inuit holdings and was used in a 1983 exhibition curated by Jean Biddall entitled "Gorge Tight on the Old Ways."
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Imitation Native Art

by Virginia Watt

Have we forgotten the lessons of the past?

Imitation Native art is not new: what is new is that limitation is now producing itself under a government make-work project.

At the turn of this century, the arts and crafts of Canada's native Indians were flourishing across the country. Ninety years later, Indian art has made a remarkable comeback, but where are the beautiful, exquisitely crafted baskets, embroidery, vessels, and other artifacts of yesteryear? Why did they disappear?

In 1932, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild launched a protest, directed towards the Government of Canada, concerning imitation room pokes that were being imported from Japan into North America. These were being sold in souvenir shops, particularly on the West Coast. The shops made money from the tourist trade, but Native people didn't. They couldn't compete with imitations selling at $1.75, compared with $4.50 for the real thing. The minister of the government responsible for the Indians admitted that Indian crafts, as with other crafts, were being injured by Japanese importations. He feared that an absolute ban on such Japanese goods would be a serious step for the Government to take.

In 1939 the government announced that imitation crafts were required by law to carry a definite imprimatur or label showing the country of origin. However, the Japanese impetus was so small that it was difficult to read or, in fact, to see. By this time, the government had done to prevent the importation of Japanese "copies" of North American crafts. The reply, which came from Harry Hopkins, Secretary of Commerce, was that a Congressional Act had been passed in 1935, making it a misdemeanor for any person to offer for sale as an Indian product, a product which the person knew was not genuine. This letter was forwarded to the Department of Indian Affairs.

The years from 1939 to 1945 solved the problem of imported imitation crafts from Japan. However, it wasn't until December 1953 that the Canadian government announced that "low priced foreign crafts sold in Canada may soon bear a stamp stating their country of origin." As we all know, stamps and labels are removable.

In 1975, the president of the guild wrote to the Honorable David Fulton, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Ottawa. The letter accused the government of "narrowing down" its efforts to control the mass importation of cheap baskets and souvenirs by encouraging the mass production of these goods.

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George Tataniq (tattener),
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A mottled dark grey soapstone carving mounted to a dark stone base, c. 1935, 61 inches (15.9 cm)

SOLD IN OUR DECEMBER 1992 AUCTION FOR $1,540

We are now accepting consignments for our next collective sale of Inuit and Ethnographic art. For further information contact A. Duncan McLean at the offices of the auctioneers:

189 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario M5A 1Z2
Tel: (416) 362-1678
The cover of the Fall/Winter 1992 issue was Ripped. The correct view is shown above. Also, we forgot to identify the location of the scene in the Fall/Winter 1992 issue. The photo was taken by Hans Bollin in Puvangnituk, Nunavik (Northern Quebec).
The press had been enjoying an ongoing exposé of “fakers” since the early 1930s and the public responded in kind. The guild was plagued with enquiries from clients seeking reassurance that the Inuit works they had purchased were not imitations. A 1961 government press release on the subject conveyed the information that three years ago, it had produced a registered trade mark with a symbol in the form of an igloo and the words “Canadian Eskimo Art.” This inscription and the igloo appeared on a card attached to every “authentic carving.”

I know from experience that some people who buy imitations are well aware of what they are doing, and I also know that some do not. They do not read labels.

Over the years, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs published several booklets and pamphlets, etc., which have been widely distributed. Ironically, though, today we don’t have to worry about the importation of imitation carvings we manufacture on our own. They can be purchased in department stores, gift shops, airports and hotels, and are often displayed side by side with genuine works. As long as they are labelled appropriately, this is legal. I know from experience that some people who buy imitations are well aware of what they are doing, and I also know that some do not. Their lack of knowledge has nothing to do with their social status or lack of education. But very often it has everything to do with the fact that they simply do not read labels.

During economic slow-downs, to which we seem to be subject at least once every decade, governments come forth with programs and projects aimed at putting people to work and reducing welfare rolls. This is admirable, providing the program produces works that have been thoroughly researched and labelled appropriately and, above all, do not compete with existing co-operatives and private enterprisers, particularly in the North.

In her recent article in the Inuit Art Quarterly (Fall/Winter 1993), Martina Devine outlines the interest of the Northwest Territories Department of Economic Development and Tourism in founding the Jessie Oonark Arts and Crafts Centre in Baker Lake and funding the centre for five years. She quotes department officials: “The machine-made souvenirs will look different from authentic Inuit fine art carvings” and “each souvenir will be unique.” She also says “they would be packaged differently than the imitation carvings. The term “fine art” is no longer in common usage and, in my opinion, is the consumer who decides whether a work is “art” or a souvenir, not a dealer, nor a price label, nor the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. I am also confused by the statement that these works would look “different” from Inuit sculpture, even though it is evident that knives of low-priced carvings start works they consider to be “typically Inuit.” If the souvenir produced at the centre in Baker Lake do not have a recognizable “Inuit look,” then they won’t sell, so why bother producing them? In fact, imitations do have the Inuit look. That’s why they sell.

I do like the idea of giving the women of Baker Lake an opportunity to practice their considerable sewing and embroidery skills, providing that the market research was conducted thoroughly. Improvising a design on tee-shirts is the “hit” thing. But why use an existing work of art? Oonark’s Woman, which launched the first collection of Baker Lake prints, should be used in this manner, particularly in Baker Lake where untrained graphic artists are more capable of producing a commercial design for a tee-shirt.

Most of us are so concerned with the present that we forget the lessons of the past. It is time to pause and consider the decisions we make today and their influence on the future of Inuit artists and their art, too.
THE INUIT ART SECTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT WOULD LIKE YOUR HELP IN IDENTIFYING THESE PHOTOS

IF YOU RECOGNIZE ONE OF THESE PEOPLE, PLEASE CALL OR WRITE TO:

Inuit Art Foundation
2081 Merivale Road
Nepean, Ontario
K2G 1G9
Phone: (613) 224-8189
Fax: (613) 224-2907

Can you help?

The Inuit Art Foundation was incorporated in 1987 to facilitate the creative expressions of Inuit artists and to foster a broader understanding of these expressions worldwide. Core funding provided by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is supplemented with private sector funding for the following programs of the foundation:

Friends of Inuit Artists
A number of donors have contributed $500 or more towards the purchase of portable art libraries in Arctic communities. We produce inexpensive instructional videos on such topics as preserving against the health hazards of stone dust and how to photograph artwork. These videos, along with art books and catalogues, are being provided to northern communities and operated as lending libraries by the local artists.

Artists' News
A series of bilingual modules, employing a variety of formats — posters, comic books, brochures, newsletters — is being developed to provide information to Inuit on art and art-related topics. For instance, a health module consisted of a comic book, a poster, a mask to wear when carving and a plastic bag in which to store the mask when not being used. This fund also enables us to print extra copies of Inuit Art Quarterly to send free to approximately 2,800 Inuit artists in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Labrador.

Donors will receive all press releases issued by the Inuit Art Foundation and will be acknowledged in Inuit Art Quarterly. Tax receipts will be issued to all Canadian donors. Please call us if you would like more information about any of these programs.

Yes, I would like to help Inuit artists.
I enclose my donation of $_____ which is to go to the following program:

☐ The Scholarship Fund
☐ Friends of Inuit Artists
☐ Inuit Artists' News
☐ Operating Fund

Please make cheques payable to the Inuit Art Foundation.

Name: ____________________________
Address: ___________________________
City: ____________________________
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Provinces: ________________________
Telephone: _________________________
Signature: _________________________

Please mail to: The Inuit Art Foundation, 2081 Merivale Rd., Nepean, Ontario, Canada K2G 1G9 (charitable registration number 079356-22).
Wehs: Are you afraid that they will lose their language, that they won't learn to build a snowhouse, for example, or that they won't be able to hunt?

Pitsuluk: I would be concerned, as a father, if I couldn't do anything about it. But if they have to go South, I would rather go South with them, and then we could remain up North. Even if we spent most of our time in the South, while they're in school, I'm sure we'll have to go back and teach them everything we need to know.

Wehs: But there are a lot of young people in the North who don't know how to survival be in the North. If I spend ten years down South and I forget how to build an igloo, that would be a big loss for me.

Pitsuluk: Yes, but I'm being taught in the schools. Back home, we have these culture-specific teachers who teach old stories and make knives and traditional-style tools, and teach how to build igloos. We have programs in the school where we teach these things, the useful things, to the students. But yes, bigger communities like Yellowknife, people living in Yellowknife, I would say that there's a lot of kids. Native people, who can't build igloos these days, which is unfortunate, but in the smaller communities there are programs where they're taught to do these things.

Wehs: Do you feel that the Inuit have lost out by having contact with the South?

Pitsuluk: Well, they adopted some better ways of things because I guess it's part of evolution. Now in the cities you have big buildings. How were they built? Where did they come from? The buildings are holding together, not falling down. You are making airplanes. So Inuit are adapting to what's better for them. Some are maybe not as good, like alcohol and drugs, but there are more good things that Qallunaat have introduced to us, like snowmobiles and cars. The only time I see dog teams is when the people are driving horses, Nobody really hunts with them right now, going from place to place.

Wehs: Are there something that you feel people who live in the South should understand that they don't understand?

Pitsuluk: Maybe in relation to carving, because there's been a lot of misunderstanding about Inuit art now starting to use electric tools, or advanced tools, to do their carving. Some people even say: 'Because you use electric tools we won't buy your carving.' I say to those people: 'What we use now is helping us. And, besides, electric tools cannot create a carving alone. It has to be inspired by a human being. You can't press a button and tell your electric tool to carve a dream dancer. You have to do it. There have been a lot of people from the South who don't like Inuit using advanced tools.

Wehs: Why do you think that is?

Pitsuluk: I guess the understanding is toward the more primitive tools of carving that were carved in the 60s and early 70s that were done only by primitive tools. If you were to use only tools that you need in the 60s and 70s, you can't evolve. You aren't able to carve life-size sculptures. If somebody were to tell you to use a hand tool, so it's very important that people know that more advanced tools are just helping our Inuit carvers who have learned to live with them.

Wehs: What are some of the tools you're talking about?

Pitsuluk: Marble carving tools rather than just wood carving tools. All these Inuit have been using wood carving tools to carve hard stone. Now we have stone carving tools. You can buy them in Yellowknife, you can buy Italian carving tools. You can carve just about any kind of stone, from soapstone to regular granite stone with them, which is really good. That's very positive.

Wehs: My impression of the Inuit is that they're very practical. They like things that work, and they're happy to take ideas from the South, if they work. That's right?

Pitsuluk: Yes, that's very true. They like adapting to a better way of doing things.
THREE
Baker Lake artists

comment on the new
Jessie Oonark
Arts and Crafts Centre

Ovilu Goo-Doyle, who resides in Ottawa, interviewed William Noah, Charlie Kegvilk and Barnabus Arnasungaq by telephone in November 1992
William Noah: Yes, the initial funding is from the GNWT and the development corporation is managing it. We have a committee that oversees it at the moment, and I am the chairman of it. At this time we do not own the building. It is to be reorganized in the future, maybe in one or two years, that we will own the building. It is running smoothly, but we do not know at this time when we will own the centre.

Goo-Doyle: I read that the small rooms prefer art as opposed to mass-produced objects. George Swinton wrote that mass-produced carvings will not be bought (Commentary, Metis Spring 1992). What do you think about that?

Noah: The print shop here closed soon after 1990, and there are many people unemployed, as many as 70 per cent in Baker Lake. The need is for ways of producing jobs and creating employment. We now have a more positive atmosphere due to the closure and we have thirty or thirty-five people working. The building is new and the people working are comfortable. When you are comfortable, you produce better. People are also learning how to carve. The carving is now looking better because they are smoothly ground and are now polished. The "real art" as it is known in this area is now being taught. We have a more variety of art forms now. We now make jewellery and sewing, and now we will make art that will help the artists. The art being made now is not artistic to some, and George Swinton I think was trying to say that Inuit are world-class artists. He should not have said what he said. He has been to Inuit communities in the past and he should not have said anything like that. He should have expressed more positive aspects of art, and not commented in a negative way. I know that he is a wise man and I think he should not have judged Inuit that way, when he wrote the article in the paper.

Goo-Doyle: The people of Baker Lake, are they happy about the centre?

Noah: Yes, very much. You can see that they are. There are people learning on the job; they are employed. Even the few people who were opposed to the building of the centre have shut up, maybe they were one or two people. The people in the community are definitely satisfied and happy. We now have ten young people who are learning on the job. Everybody is happier.

Goo-Doyle: In the new building that you are using, is there a ventilation system in place to take the dust from the carving area?

Noah: Yes, it is in the silk-screen printing area the air and ventilation system is working. The building is not fully completed as yet, so the ventilation is still limited now because of the ventilation system. That will be solved in the near future. At this time, we are using caribou bone, antlers, bone and musk-ox horn. There are also new tools that are being used and the people will learn new tools as they go. At this time, everything is eager and positive about the building. The only thing that might bother some people is the smell from burning antlers, etc. The building is very well ventilated.

Goo-Doyle: The seasoners carvers like Simon Tuttie, Simo Tuttie and Barnabas Arnautoge, are they happy about the building?

Noah: Yes, but they are carving on their own. The one thing we are not able to do is buy carvings from free-lance carvers. But those carvers will be able to use the building in the near future. The basement will be used for offices, but we do not know when. When the building is completed to the full extent it will have facilities for all artisans. Every artist has use for the building, but buyers for carvings are always scarce. Even now we have four main retail areas for those who wish to buy whatever we have produced.

Goo-Doyle: With the high unemployment statistics in the Northwest Territories, the new centre must come at a time when people need work.

Noah: Yes, the building came at the right time and the people are being assisted educationally and job-wise. The young people are usually depressed and bored due to inactivity, and the building of this centre will help them. They are happier when they see their faces because they have something to do. They are better now because, before, they stayed up much of the night and most were bored from inactivity. The young people who are not as educated as others now have an opportunity to be employed and have jobs.

Goo-Doyle: The new art building being named after your mother must be an honour and you would be overjoyed to hear it?

Noah: Yes, it is a joy and the building itself is grand and big, and there is a lot of work space even though we have still to complete and organize it. We cannot keep up at this time to organize everything — work areas, coffee shop, lounge areas, etc.

Goo-Doyle: Do you have any other comment?

Noah: Yes, we are very happy here because now we have facilities for carving and people have a place to work. Young people also have a place to learn and work for their future. Even if young people go out, here, they are many more who will replace them if they should leave from here.

I think that this is a milestone. We didn't do any work, nor enough property, not enough of what I had hoped would take place. Most of it was stuff that wasn't really useful to me.

Weils: What are some of the things that you do in the community?

Pitsulak: Take part in our local co-op as a director. Weather man, airport communicator. And then I am in the community, my part of the work that I am doing now.

Weils: You don't have a .

Pitsulak: I am a pilot. That's one thing I really like doing right now, flying ultra-light planes.

Weils: When did you get your first light plane?

Pitsulak: Back in 1979. That was when I retired from the government. After a couple of years, in 1983, you had your licence then, and I went here to Toronto to look at the planes.

Weils: To say nothing of being a navigator, which is an equally important set of skills, isn't it?

Pitsulak: Yes, it's very useful to know the skills, so able to survive up North. If you go out to do some hunting, and you break down on your machine, and you get stuck, and you break down, what do you do? You have to be able to build an igloo, to survive until the storm is over. So I know how to build an igloo, and how to wire the land, which I am proud of too.

Weils: Does the co-op do any art in the community?

Pitsulak: We have been doing art at the weather station.

Weils: What is the co-op doing?

Pitsulak: It's a co-op, not a co-op to sell our carving, it's an insurance, but a lot of co-ops don't know what's involved in trying to sell what there's no market for. I get three dollars hundred dollars instant cash for my carving. I forget what the co-op will have to do to sell it. A lot of people depend on the co-op right now. After I sell the carving to the co-op, it goes to Artic Co-operative Limited, and they are responsible to sell to galleries and businesses here in the South.
There's nothing wrong with saying this, it's the fact. People from the South want to become famous. It wasn't my opinion.

Wehiks: Do you think that Inuit people in particular, and Native people in general, are used in this way very often, that words are put in their mouths to say what they are supposed to think?

Pituluk: Well, they certainly did do it on this film. I'm not sure about the others, but knowing... they have some very good footage, good shots, all the scenery, and stuff like that, we, as a little bit of fishing, I would say. I never really seen those things in a one-hour film, than see myself sitting down while men most of the time.

Wehiks: Do you come through in the film, all the different things that you do in your life? Or does it look like you're just a career? Don't mean that it's a small thing to be a career. It is clear that you put on a show and your appearance, and play music, and are the president of the co-op and...

Pituluk: None of that was there.

Wehiks: So, somebody watching the film might get the impression that you were sort of a primitive person, but you're not a very primitive person.

Pituluk: No. When the film turns out, me and George... George is talking to the people at Royal Trust about what we have in mind, it's not very likely that he has the idea of what it means. There's no problem with us, we are the people of the film in carving. George was a big help. He had a lot of good ideas. He knew how... to use the tools that were new, these new sources and tools. He was a good man, as far as I'm concerned. He said a lot of good things about us, but there is hardly anything good that came out in the film, all he talked about was money.

Wehiks: Do you feel manipulated?

Pituluk: Yes! Like I felt manipulated when I was doing the... because there are other things that I feel. When they put them together, that's when it really made me...

Wehiks: Tell me about how you came to carving.

Pituluk: The very first time that I started carving was watching my father carving. That was when I was eight years old, I would watch him carve, and I would imitate what he was doing. Once in a while, he would take my carving and fix it up a little bit. The detail.

Wehiks: What sort of carving did you do?

Pituluk: Arctic wildlife, mostly arctic animals, seals, fish, whales, birds, polar bear... the animals that I've seen. When I was eight, when I started carving, I was about doing animals, and when I was maybe 12 years old, I started doing human figures. The first time I made a man or woman, that's when I really felt good about what I could do. That's when I really got serious about carving. Right now I've got a steady job, now in my quiet time, I carve arctic animals, human figures, and a bit about mythology.

Wehiks: Are there any people you want to work with in the future, or is it just when you're doing it?
work. Is it available for all the carvers to use? Would you use the equipment?

Kogvik: No, I never use it personally. If you want to do rough work, you could use it, and then complete your carving with your own tools or other tools. The ventilation system is quite poor in the center for stone carving. You cannot use grinders for stone carving because of the ventilation system, which is only designed for wood carving.

Goodeye: I understand the center isn't complete yet. Is the ventilation system going to be installed?

Kogvik: There is going to be a committee set up again very soon. The artists are anxious to start another committee. I myself plan to start an association that will deal with "real" art. I want to see Baker Lake carvers run their own affairs. I want to see them run a committee by themselves.

Goodeye: Before we sign, I'd like to ask you about your experience teaching a workshop in Nain, Labrador, last winter. Was there any benefit to the community?

Kogvik: I believe it helped the community. It also helped me a lot. Goodeye: I heard the building being used by the carvers in Nain did not have a proper ventilation system to get rid of all the dust from the carving stone. Do you know if the government offers any help to build a new facility that suits the needs of the carvers?

Kogvik: The last I heard from the Labrador carvers was that they were trying to build a facility that they had been using. Goodeye: Have you talked to the committee or the chairman? Do they know that you are also upset about the new center?

Kogvik: Well, there were a couple of people who were upset about the new center. In the last meeting with my fellow carvers these people expressed their dissatisfaction with the new center.

Goodeye: I believe there was also a lot of criticism from art collectors and critics outside the community. I also heard that the government did something about it. Do you agree with him?

Kogvik: Yes, I'd have to say that I agree with him. Before the new center opened, the artists were upset with the building that was built. They felt it was a disgrace. Do you agree with him?

Goodeye: Thank you, Charlie. Do you have any other comments about the new center or the committee of artists?

Kogvik: I believe the committee is basically owned by the Government of the Northwest Territories, because the hands came from there. There is a feeling that the government is going to the center for five years. I think that's how it works.

Goodeye: So it's really quite uplifting for you, an artist like you, who does it all at home?

Kogvik: Yes, and also Paul Toolook was very disappointed. He mentioned that about four years ago he started a petition to have a building constructed for carvers to use. He wanted a heated and well-ventilated building for the carvers. The carvers were looking forward to that kind of building. He was very upset when the new center was built, because it was totally opposite from what he wanted.

Goodeye: How have you participated in the committee or the council? Do you know that you are also upset about the new center?

Kogvik: Well, there were a couple of people who were upset about the new center. In the last meeting with my fellow carvers these people expressed their dissatisfaction with the new center.

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Pitsulak: Yes, very much so. Some were known to be able to change the weather, or make the wind shift, calm the weather. Anything, I guess. Heal the sick.

Wehrs: The shamans were the spiritual leaders of the Inuit communities, and then when the Europeans came with the Christian religion, the shamans retreated. Is that right?

Pitsulak: The story I know of our region was that when the first minsters came, they said to the people: It's not right to practice shamans. So, in a lot of places the people who were practicing shamans were cast out, and they were told that wasn’t the way to live. Even though there were good shamans. And, I guess, bad ones too.

“Wehmas knew how to heal the sick or change the weather. It would be nice to be able to heal the sick these days.”

Wehrs: Do you think that was a loss to the Inuit community?

Pitsulak: They knew how to heal the sick, or, swords even till, to change the weather. It would be nice to be able to heal the sick, these days.

Wehrs: Tell me more about how you did this project. Did you organize it?

Pitsulak: It was George from Vancouver who found Royal Trust, who were willing to pay money up front. George convinced Royal Trust to buy our sculptures, even before it happened. So George ended up being the project manager, and he was handling all the money and stuff like that. I was subcontractor, handling smaller, travel arrangements, things like that.

Wehrs: How did it come to you?

Pitsulak: We’re known each other before. The first time he went up North was to give carving workshops, using materials other than soapstone, teaching crews how to work with marble and granite, regular rock that’s available everywhere up North. All these years, our people were carving only soapstone or serpentine. That’s how I came to know George.

Wehrs: You use soapstone because it’s softer?

Pitsulak: In the Baffin region there’s no soapstone. It’s all serpentine. It’s a lot harder than soapstone. Nobody’s carving soapstone in Iqaluit that I know.

The hardness is somewhere between soapstone and marble.

Wehrs: The Lake Harbour stone is very distinctive, isn’t it? It polishes up green.

Pitsulak: We have green stone, and black, and a bit of white.

Wehrs: Is this project in the Lake Harbour store?

Pitsulak: No, it was in Whitehorse. Not far from Cape Dorset. We did most of the carving right on the site. That was in Andrew Gordon Bay. That’s about thirty miles south of Cape Dorset. I almost finished the seal that I was doing right on the site, and after I’d done the seal I started doing the shaman. We did the finishing touches in Toronto, because if we finished it in the North, it would be too buggy.

Wehrs: How do you carve that kind of marble?

Pitsulak: We were using electric mini-grinders and, along with that, we used hammer and chisel. Mostly hammer and chisel, and grinding.

Wehrs: Do you draw a drawing before you start? How do you know what it is that you are going to do?

Pitsulak: George and I. We have the idea being given by fax and phone. For example, he had the model of what we were going to do. And Royal Trust, I guess, were convinced after the models were done. And on the site, because

3. Barnabas Arnasungaaq is hoping carvers will be able to work in the Centre

Ovilu Goo-Doyle: Thank you Barnabas for talking to me. First of all, are you a printmaker?

Barnabas Arnasungaaq: No. I’m a stone carver.

Goo-Doyle: The new art centre in Baker, what do you think about it and do you think you and your fellow carvers will benefit from it?

Arnasungaaq: I do not know. But I know that this month, in November, it was going be open for carvers. The month is almost over and I don’t know what is happening. They do not buy carvings and they do not supply carving stones. I do not understand what is happening. I am also on the committee of the new centre but there have been no meetings and I have not heard anything as of this time.
In the fall, at the meeting, they mentioned that it will be opened for the carving in the month of November, but now I have not heard anything and I don't understand.

Goo-Doyle: Do you think the new centre will have any benefits for you and carvers like you? I know that you are a well-known carver and you have had exhibitions in the past. Your carvings have been bought by collectors and galleries. I think that they will now be producing more original and unique items which are not as good a quality as real art. Do you think that it will interfere with real artists or quality carvers?

Amarasungaq: Since 1961 I have been carving with carvingannas. I have been using simple tools, and I have not used any electric tools or other tools that are not being used. I don't think that the new centre will have benefits. I have one but that building and I don't think that they can carve. I do not know if it will be of use for people or not.

Goo-Doyle: Some people have questioned whether the new centre will have any benefits for the community, and in talking to William Noah she said there is a high unemployment rate in Baker Lake. He said that with the centre, there are now educational programs and employment for people. Do you think the youth will benefit from employment training and work?

Amarasungaq: That is the way it should be. Some people will benefit, but only some. The people who are now working will be picked or voted in. There are now people learning and working, learning to carve with carvers and artists. But those who are employed in the new centre are benefiting, but those people who do not associate with the building are still unemployed. They do not even buy carvings or anything from the general public. So I don't know if most people are helping in some way, but it is probably helping people. The thing that I had on my mind was that at the fall meeting of the artists, they were saying that in November it will be open for the carvers, and that they will probably be buying carvings. The month of November is almost over and I have not heard anything, so I don't know what is going to happen for carvers.

Goo-Doyle: Baranulas, you are a carver. Do you sell your carvings at the moment or are you competing with them?

Amarasungaq: At the moment I sell my carvings to the co-op and to Henry Ford. I have never sold a carving to the new centre. I don't think they buy carvings at the moment.

Goo-Doyle: Any other comments, Baranulas?

Amarasungaq: No comments in general. But for those carvers who carve, most carvings outside of the dust. It is cold outside. I thought that the carvers might have a room in there to carve, but I have not heard anything regarding carvings or carvers. I don't know at this time what will happen. When they first started a committee, they had good meetings with lots of ideas, but now the building is up and you don't know what is going on. Maybe in a short time something will come up.

Goo-Doyle: I was talking to Charlie Kopelick some time ago. He was thinking of forming an association of carvers to deal with problems of the carvers. Do you think that if there was a committee that it might help the carvers? This committee would be separate from the committee of the new centre.

Goo-Doyle: Yes, I think to some extent the carvers would benefit if they started a committee. I think that if this committee of carvers would do something about their problems outside of the committee of the new centre, they would move ahead. You know, there is some friction between the carvers and the committee of the new centre. There are groups that deal with art, in Baker Lake — Henry Ford, Marie Bouchard, the co-op. These people are competing with each other. They buy carvings from people. I have been told by the people who buy carvings to sell only to them: 'You sell them only to me.' I don't like to hear that. It makes me unhappy to hear something like that. I would much rather sell my carvings to whoever I want to sell them to. More than a few times I have been told to sell carvings only to the person who wants them.

Goo-Doyle: So you have these three places to sell your carvings to and they are telling you sell them to only them?

Amarasungaq: Yes, they routinely tell me to sell them only to them. But when I started to sell to only one of them, the prices of my carving slowly started to go down. So whoever will buy my carvings at the highest prices, it is to that person who I will sell. But then all old and new before that I should sell only to them and not the others. It is becoming a heavy thing to deal with and the only thing I know how to do is carve.

Goo-Doyle: Thank you.
I find David Upton's Commentary (IAQ 7(4), Fall-Winter 1992) more valid than disturbing, yet disturbing enough to respond to it. His arguments, though well meant, are too simplistic and largely off the mark. I am, therefore, not in the least surprised that he finds my argument (IAQ 7(2), Spring 1992) "unreasonable"; he doesn't seem to understand it, nor does he seem to understand the concept of art-making and, particularly, of art-making by Inuit. That is what I found so valid.

I agree with him, of course, about the plight of the Inuit, their alarming economic needs and their difficulties of achieving a more equitable participation in the retail price of their work. Obviously, these problems are not unique to Inuit art-making. In general, and my arguments against the mass production of "souvenir Inuit carvings" (as used by the N.W.T. Department of Economic Development and Tourism) are independent. I am surprised, however, that a former Economic Development Officer like Mr. Upton (also founder of an artists' association in Gjoa Haven called the Northwest Passage Trading Company) would be so ill-informed on this subject.

His assumption that the production of "souvenir carvings (low-end merchandise) and the creation of fine art are only related... by the fact that they will both be made by Inuit" might sound acceptable if it were not for the following:

1. In their language, Inuit do not make a quality distinction in art. All is arnangaaq, i.e., just art.
2. Even what Mr. Upton euphemistically calls "low-end merchandise" art objects, (i.e., indifferently carved pieces produced by Inuit in all northern communities), receive the "Inuit" tag which authenticates that the carvings are authentic, i.e., art "hand made by a Canadian Inuit artist" (my emphasis) and so certified by the government of Canada.
3. Quality (and price) difference de, of course, exist, but neither the Government of Canada nor the Inuit producers nor foreign custom officials discriminate in terms of quality.
4. However, the art market does discriminate in terms of quality and expresses that discrimination by the retail price.
5. Collectors and galleries make this distinction as well, based on their knowledge, sensitivity and experience.
6. The large number of less knowledgeable purchasers of Inuit art among the public, however, do not make, or are largely unable to make, such distinctions. They depend almost entirely on the fact that the carvings are "handmade by Inuit artists," i.e., on the "Inuit" tag, as do custom officials.

On the other hand, I do make quality distinctions and, I believe, that I am often able to do so successfully. That is why some people who know my work might call me an "expert." Certainly, I do not do so, but I do say and write what I believe, based on long experience and knowledge gained in the field. Mr. Upton, too, writes what he believes, but I fear he lacks knowledge, sensitivity and depth in the field of art. And that, of course, was one of the reasons why I was sad, but not surprised, that he would talk with such misplaced assurance.

I also fear that several of his other main points were not well thought through and are factually wrong. For instance, he claims that I am against the introduction of new approaches and techniques when, in fact, I stated unequivocally that "nobody with intelligence would mind power tools as such. But the indiscriminate and merely duplicative and purely mechanical (misuse of power tools in order to compete in price and kind) with imitation Inuit art... will create the very opposite economic effects (similar to Gresham's law which observes that bad money drives out goods)."

Also, Mr. Upton seems to equate souvenirs and mechanically produced "souvenir Inuit carvings" with what he calls "low-end merchandise." Nobody with sensitivity to art would do that. And, in fact, I had specified...
that ",... to me personally, any work of art 
and even souvenir art - contains an 
important ingredient: the personal touch, 
the handwriting and conceptions of the Indi 
idual artists. That quality does not mere 
ly mean the 'think,' but exists in the true 
character of the work and, therefore, not 
mere in the finish.

At the same time, I do agree with Mr. 
Upton that Inuit need not want jobs. But 
I do not think the way to do this is by 
the kind of mass production he endorses - 
'low-end merchandise created by a nor 
time theme, a proliferation of souvenirs 
produced copies.' Neither is it a fave 
rable or desirable method for Inuit to 
capture a slice of that market. It is not favourable 
because of the price structure of the commercial 
fake carvings, which sell from $15 to $50.
Can any carvings be produced in the 
North to compete with these southern 
prices?

Furthermore, would it be desirable to 
compete with carvings that are ostensibly 
phony? Would it be better to improve 
the quality rather than the quantity of 
earth works? Or do Mr. Upton and the 
Department of Economic Development 
and Tourism think that this is not possi 
ble? I think otherwise, and Baker Lake is 
probably the best example of why I think 
so. Along with Cape Dorset, it was a place 
where the best of Inuit art was produced 
and appreciated as such. Now it is one of 
the weakest, and the new mass produc 
tion scheme might make it one of the 
most regressive. The only way to reverse 
this trend is by concentrating again on 
quality of production and by encouraging 
artists sensitively and economically. This 
is an important point and is evidently 
contradicts Mr. Upton's logic, especially 
the logic of his last paragraph.

I believe that better quality greatly 
strengthens the economic expectations of 
the artists. Better quality results in higher 
prices. There is, therefore, no need to pro 
duce "twice as much work" of poorer 
quality, at lower prices for, perhaps, no 
demand. It is not uncommon that when 
better quality work is realized at higher 
prices than originally calculated, the artists 
receive extra remuneration.

Finally, I have checked into Mr. Upton's 
assertion that "artists in most communi 
ties make about $5 cents on the retail dol 
lar for the work they create." It is closer 
20 to 25 cents and in Gjoa Haven is 
higher, closer to 30 cents. I, like others, 
wish they could receive more. But as long 
as most works in the North are bought for 
cash, and not on consignment as in the 
South, the capital requirements are con 
siderable, as Mr. Upton surely must have 
found out on his sales trip south. It is not 
easy to find ready cash buyers for even 
the best work. The problem of large 
investments is reflected in the low return 
art, it is inherent in the current mar 
keting system, which is difficult, though 
not impossible, to replace. But then, I am 
an optimistic who believes in a govern 
ment-assisted market system, which 
would be more effective and antiaesthetically 
more wholesome than mass-producing 
phony "low-end merchandise" to com 
plete with southern souvenir "art."

Maybe Mr. Upton will read my original 
commeentary. He, and the sponsors of the 
questionable "souvenir Inuit carving" scheme may then better comprehend my 
arguments and my fears. It would be good 
not to have to feel sad and apprehensive 
about their lack of awareness.

And may the Jessie Oonark Arts and Craft 
Centre uphold and protect the high qual 
ity and integrity symbolized by Jessie 
Oonark's name and her work, and not by 
twinkle-tinkle "low-end merchandise."

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A EUROPEAN DEALER SPEAKS OUT
Back in France from Canada, I bring not only a collection of more than 100 Inuit sculptures but also deep concerns based on George Swinton's commentary (Art, Spring 1992, page 61) and confirmed by the information I was granted in a published article (AAQ, FallWinter 1992) on the wet-surface catlyng facility at the new Greenland Arts and Crafts Centre in Baker Lake. Unfortunately, it is already late to name an inquiry; the production has begun, and this is a catastrophe for Inuit art. The poling is already pre-nating.

Who am I to interfere? Stranger to the North, stranger to the country, neither elected nor appointed, how could I dare to send a letter of protest to the GMWT Minister of Economic Development and Tourism?

As a European art dealer, knowing the feelings Bernardette Mupkay expressed against us, I have no intention to argue with Mrs. Mupkay whose concerns about the socio-economic situation of the North I understand. I just believe she is wrong to look for solutions in the greater production of souvenirs items. Local economic success cannot be used for this purpose.

I want to let you know two of my conditions: As now produced, these "souvenirs" earn far more than the "souvenirs" of the Baker Lake Arts and Crafts Centre, of course without the Igloolik tag, and not sold in art galleries yet, we should be already preparing to do this with thought and care.

Do you support this GMWT policy? Have you ever been concerned? Are you again finding a new Deadly example of bureaucratic division, not sufficiently informed in any way, this re-intentioned as it is badly intended?

In this last case, even if it is already late, I call you, the North, citizens, elec tors, and representatives, to react urgently with forcefully and determinations about what will be the future of the "only economic successes story in the North."

Let me finish by repeating the profound admiration and respect I have for Inuit artists to whom I have been exhibiting for 16 years and for whom I have struggled in France since 1980. Those opinions are no more than an European dealer's (politically) if this letter could seem useful published, please feel free to do so.

Claude Baud
Upolu Art Consultancy
Dijon, France

NOT THE FIRST OF ITS KIND
As always, I find your articles on Inuit art very stimulating. In the current issue of Inuit Art Quarterly (SummerFall 1992), your review of the exhibition "Women of the North" is the first of its kind. In future, you will probably receive several letters stating otherwise. The Gold Händel had an exhibition by female Inuit artists in 1985.

Ann Tompkins
Director, Inuit Art Centre
The Gold Händel
Toronto, Ontario

A WORD FROM HENRY MOORE
"There has been a new trend in Inuit art, ("Challenging Longstanding Beliefs," by Peter Milward, AAQ, Spring 1992), Henry Moore seemed to say. After years of hard work and his life's work in 1971, the Prime Minister of Canada received a telegram from Henry Moore that Canada had lost its famous artist.

John McFarland
Cumbria, N.W.T.

COMPELLED TO RENEW
Because of the recession I've had difficulty deciding about subscribing to AAQ. I've convinced me no longer need the journal by the superior quality of content and design. The Summer Fall issue was outstanding, with the usual high-quality art and Peter Milward's scholarly article. One image that will not let me go is Jim Logan's "Landscape," which I admire greatly.

Betty Isserman
Anne's, Quebec
a PHOTOGRAPHY LAB in GJOA HAVEN!

The Kinunquin Society in Gjoa Haven has a unique project in the works and they need your help.

Kinunquin Society, the Gjoa Haven Carvers’ Association, is trying to set up a photography lab. Artists will be able to document their work and build portfolios. Also, the community of Gjoa Haven will have the benefit of seeing its culture recorded and preserved.

Since there are no existing facilities, they must now send their film south for processing, which takes about six weeks and is very expensive.

How can you help?

The Gjoa Haven carvers have already found the space to work in and the talent to develop the photographs, all they need is the equipment. The society needs to raise about $4,000.

[Sample text about how to donate]

The People Behind the Art

You have no doubt noticed that we are attempting to fill the pages (and sometimes the covers) of Inuit Art Quarterly with more information on the Inuit lifestyle. It is my conviction that we will never properly appreciate the art unless we pay more attention to the context in which it is created and has meaning. In this issue, we have an article by anthropologist Nelson Graham on the declining use of Native languages among the circumsipar peoples. In future issues, we will bring you more articles on how Inuit live and work and think.

We are also making a greater effort to include more direct commentary from Inuit. I am told by some of our Inuit directors that, since they don’t have a tradition of expressing themselves in writing, “It’s hard to know where to start.” We decided that interviewing was the way to begin and we are developing a body of interviews that, taken together over time, will be an invaluable resource for those wishing to understand the people behind the art.

This issue contains a lengthy but excellent interview with Sitinma Piisupik, an intelligent and articulate artist from Lake Harbour. We also have short interviews with three Baker Lake artists on the controversial new arts and crafts centre which was built in that community by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The comments of these three, who are living with the controversy, represent three different positions: one is for the centre, one is against it, and one would like to know what is happening.

The production of souvenirs was discussed thoroughly at a recent meeting of Inuit Art Foundation directors (all of them practicing Inuit artists). The artists feel that manufactured souvenirs are “competing with what the people are already doing,” and will be “confusing to tourists who don’t know the difference between real handmade souvenir quality work and the so-called stylized earnings produced by employees of the centre.” Indeed, we heard at the same meeting that the German ambassador had visited Baker Lake last fall and left with some of the souvenir carvings made in the centre, seeming not to care that, although they were made by Inuit, they were more akin to manufactured items than to handicrafts.

The artist/directors expressed great concern over the damage that could be done to an important source of livelihood for large numbers of people, not just in Baker Lake but elsewhere. The irony is that the largest single source of income for Inuit for many years has been the production of soapstone carving, some of it art and some of it souvenir. I understand the need for economic development programs, but why compete with the most successful industry Inuit have? As Virginia Watt points out in her recent column in this issue, the Government of Canada has been promoting and legislating against lake Inuit art from Germany and Japan since the 1950s, and now we are seeing the Inuit try to produce their own imitations.

To the casual observer, the Jesse Oomark Arts and Crafts Centre— a large and well...
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TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS


Charles Camenzell Hospital Inuit and Indian Collection, on display in the main foyer of the Charles Camenzell Hospital, 12600-118 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5M 1A4. Exhibition to travel, itinerary not confirmed. Information: (403) 455-9161.

PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS

The Toronto Dominion Gallery of Inuit Art, a permanent exhibit, open to the public seven days a week, no charge. Guided tours on Tuesdays (11:30 a.m.) and Thursdays (2:00 p.m.), Lobby and mezzanine areas of the R.M. Barton, 75 Wellington Street West, Toronto. Information: (416) 962-824.

Deno Museum Center, Northwestern Michigan College, permanent exhibition entitled Inuit — A Cultural Repertoire. Hours are Monday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday open until 9:00 p.m., additional summer hours. Address: 1701 E. Front Street, Traverse City, Michigan 49684, U.S.A. Information: (616) 922-1955.

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, a permanent exhibition of Inuit art opened at the end of August. Hours are Monday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Address: 1130 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec. Information: (514) 283-1600.

Chedoke-McMaster Hospital, a permanent exhibition of Inuit art, open to the public, daily 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Address of the Chedoke-McMaster Hospital, 1200 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario. Information: (416) 521-3180 ext. no. 5387.

McCord Museum of Canadian History: The First Nations of Canada, comprised of Inuit and Indian materials from the museum’s collection. Hours are Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Monday 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.) Saturday and Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Address: 600 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec. Information: (514) 398-7100.

The Canadian Guild of Crafts, a rotating exhibit of work from the Inuit collection on display at the Guild during opening hours: 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Catalogue of permanent collection available from the Guild of Crafts, 2025 Peel Street, Montreal, Quebec. Information: (514) 849-4099.

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Vol. 8, No. 1
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Feature
Will the Language of Inuit Artists Survive?

In spite of the fact that everyday life is "bathed in English," most artists in the major art-making communities still speak Inuktitut. But scholars say Native language loss is moving east through the Central Arctic quite rapidly.

Review
George Swinton's Sculpture of the Inuit

It seems likely that in his discussion of "post-contemporary" Inuit sculpture, Swinton has once again put his finger on the areas which will be the focus of future discussion.

Cover
ABRAHAM ANGHIK
SCULPTOR

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