

Our Land: Contemporary Art from the Arctic

Karen Kramer

The Peabody Essex Museum (PEM) in Salem, Massachusetts recently organized the first traveling exhibition of the Nunavut Territorial Collection of Contemporary Inuit Art. Titled *Our Land: Contemporary Art from the Arctic*, the show is a collaborative effort between PEM and the governments of Canada and Nunavut (Fig. 11). Previously on view at PEM, *Our Land* will be hosted by the Institute of American Indian Arts Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico from October 20, 2006 through January 2007, and by the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire in spring 2007.

Established in 1799, PEM has recently been expanded and transformed both physically and philosophically. The new facility enables it to better showcase its own collections as well as traveling exhibitions. While PEM was planning its reopening in June 2003, the Government of Nunavut was seeking a partner institution in the United States that would present contemporary Inuit art in a way that celebrated the people of Nunavut.

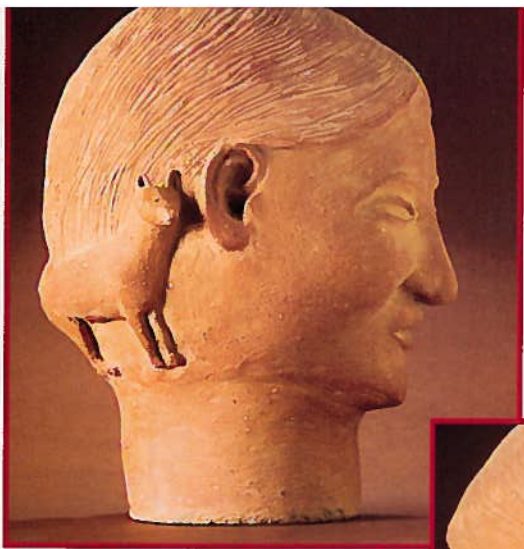
In 1999 as part of a land claim settlement between the Canadian Government and the region's Inuit people, the Canadian map was redrawn for the first time in fifty



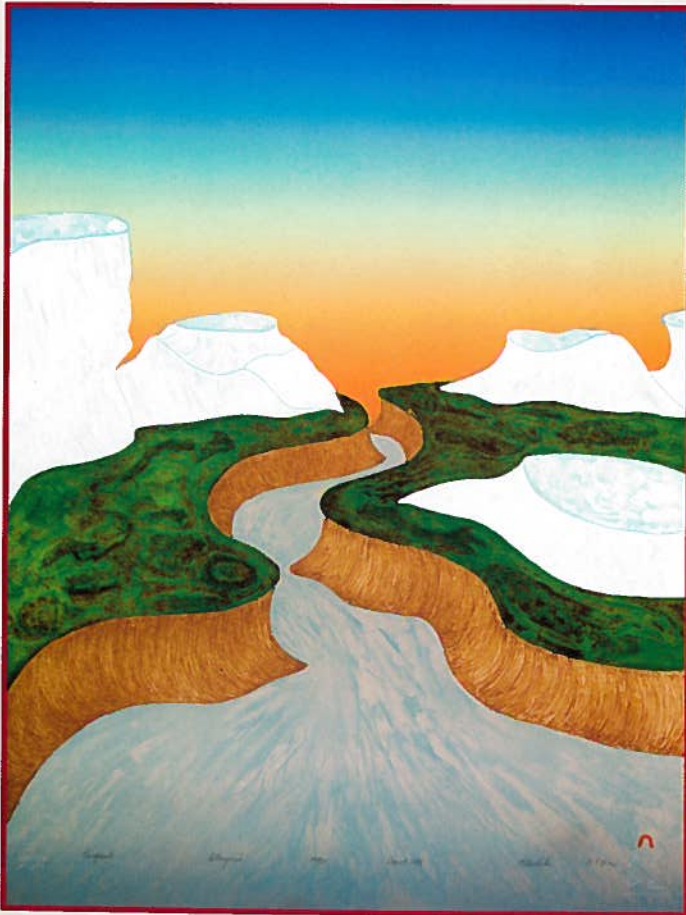
1. *Qulliq* (seal-oil lamp), Inuit, early to mid-twentieth century. Soapstone. 12" x 27" (30.5 cm x 68.6 cm). "The first day that the sun came out [in the spring] was marked by the belief that the whole community must at this day start a new life. So the children of the camp would go to each household to blow out the flames of the *qulliq*...Then a new wick was laid and a new fire lit. This was how the first day of the sun was observed" (Noah Piugaattuk in Bennett and Rowley 2004:297). Cat. No. X981.018.00.



2. Replica of a late-nineteenth-century *angakkuq* (shaman) coat by Jeannie Arnaanuk, Igloodik, 1982. Caribou fur, wool. 43" x 32" x 6" (109.2 cm x 91.3 cm x 15.2 cm). This piece is modeled on an original bought from the shaman Qingailitaq of Igloodik, Nunavut, c.1890 by Captain G. Comer, who then sold it to Franz Boas of the American Museum of Natural History, New York. Cat. No. 983.011.001a.



3. *Head* by Pie Kukshout (b.1896, d.1980), Rankin Inlet, c.1970. Clay. 16" x 13½" x 14" (40.6 cm x 34.3 cm x 35.6 cm). This piece portrays the interrelationship between humans and animals, and their ability to inhabit each other's bodies. As Inuit artist July Papatzie has said "Animals were able to change into human form, according to the belief of my ancestors. The transformation would make it possible to communicate with humans. They might want to invite the human to come into their dimension" (Von Finckenstein 2002:122). Cat. No. 974.031.103.



4. *Kuuqapik (The River)* by Pitseolak Niviaqsi (b.1947), Cape Dorset, 1992. Lithograph. 20¼" x 26¼" (51 cm x 66.5 cm). Niviaqsi, who has worked as a printmaker and sculptor since the 1970s, plays with perspective, scale and color in this landscape. Cat. No. 993.002.020.

years to create Nunavut from the Northwest Territories. Home to the Inuit for hundreds of generations, Nunavut — "our land" in the Inuktitut language — is the portion of the eastern Canadian Arctic situated west of Greenland, reaching from Hudson Bay to the North Pole.¹

Co-curated by John Grimes and Karen Kramer, the exhibition includes approximately sixty-five Inuit artworks in a variety of media, all created in the last half-century.² *Our Land* explores the implicit connection between Inuit art and culture and presents the life histories of its makers as well as their artistic talents, innovations and expressions. The show emphasizes the persistence, resilience and malleability of the Inuit worldview in the contemporary world. The exhibition is divided into three sections — "Being," "Family" and "Community" — to explore themes that inspire Inuit art and reflect Inuit societal values using traditional Inuit knowledge, or Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ), for guidance.

IQ is based on a set of long-standing practical teachings about Inuit society and human nature that is passed on through stories, songs and direct modeling of positive behavior. The Inuit are respectful of thoughtful speaking and listening, skills understood to be essential to group cohesion and survival. IQ endorses the necessity of volunteering, observing, practicing, mastery and teamwork, as well as the values of patience and endurance. As IQ incorporates Inuit values, language, life skills, perceptions and expectations, Inuit art often reflects these sensibilities. Above all, Inuit art conveys the experience of being Inuit. Being Inuit is not a matter of speaking Inuktitut, or possessing the skills of Arctic life, but of being an Inuk. IQ, a useful approach for the Government of Nunavut in protecting and promoting Inuit culture, heritage and language, also proved to be an enlightening means of understanding and interpreting Inuit artwork.

In the exhibition, information is presented in English and Inuktitut.³ Interpretive labels include the words of Inuit elders, artists and writers. In the past, Inuit artistry was often incorporated into practical objects, created for use by the maker's family and community. Individual artistic expression reflected a daily life powerfully molded by the environment and the cosmos. Even today, despite innovations like satellite navigation technology, snow-

¹Nunavut covers nearly two million square kilometers, approximately one-fifth of Canada's landmass. Nearly twenty-seven thousand people live throughout Nunavut, twenty thousand of whom are Inuit. After thirty years of dedicated work by Inuit land claims and civil groups, a transfer of power to a majority Inuit population took place in April 1999. The art collection of the Government of Nunavut (from which *Our Land* was selected) was born out of this political accord.

²John Grimes, now Director of the Institute of American Indian Arts Museum, Santa Fe, New Mexico, was Curator of Native American Art at PEM while *Our Land* was on exhibit there.

³Though the official languages of the Canadian government are French and English, there are four official languages used by the Government of Nunavut: Inuktitut (a written form of the Inuit language that employs syllabics), Innuinaqtun (the written Roman orthography of Inuktitut), English and French. The *Our Land* exhibition catalog was written in each of these four languages.

5. *Qilalugannuat Tunniit (Tattooed Whales)* by Arnaqu Ashevak (b.1956), Cape Dorset, 1996. Etching. 19¼" x 22" (49.5 cm x 55.9 cm). Born in Cape Dorset, Ashevak is the adopted son of the artist Kenojuak Ashevak (Fig. 14), whose work is also featured in *Our Land*. Arnaqu first began his artistic career as a stone carver and then learned printmaking. Cat. No. 997.003.002.



6. *Legend of the Family Who Traveled on a Wild Goose* by Joseph Patterk (b.1912), Rankin Inlet, 1966. Ceramic. 14" x 10" x 18" (35.6 cm x 25.4 cm x 45.7 cm). This piece is based on a traditional Inuit story. Cat. No. 2.70.51.

mobiles and television, the demands of the harsh Arctic environment continue to shape Inuit life. Perhaps because of this, Inuit culture fosters an appreciation of the subtle but important cues that affect life's balance — cues not only from the environment but also from the human and spiritual realms. In keeping with such attentiveness, Inuit art is often beautifully spare, understated and detailed in ways that invite and reward close examination (Grimes et al. 2004:22).

Ivory artworks, small amulets, miniature polar bears and highly adorned practical objects at least four thousand years old have been discovered in Nunavut, created by the Inuit or their predecessors, the Dorset and Thule peoples. The Dorset people occupied Nunavut around four thousand years ago, leaving behind carvings and charms that served as conduits to the spirit worlds, used by shamans as spiritual aids in attracting prey for hunting or in healing sicknesses. Thule Eskimos

arrived in the eastern Canadian Arctic closer to one thousand years ago; Thule artists made both strong, iconographic images and realistic representations, as evidenced by their carved tools and weapons.

Contact between the Inuit and Europeans began in the sixteenth century, and by the nineteenth century, interaction with missionaries, whalers and traders brought increased opportunities for the Inuit to carve stone and ivory as souvenirs. In the 1940s, the Canadian government began to incorporate the Inuit into its census and finances. One of the results of this assimilation was the forced relocation into permanent settlements of many Inuit families — many of whom were formerly nomadic, their subsistence largely reliant on seasonal animal migratory patterns. At the same time, the Canadian fur industry was

waning due to overhunting, which greatly affected Inuit families whose incomes depended on selling furs. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, schools and medical stations were set up, which created an increased dependency on the government welfare system.

In 1948–1949, Canadian artist James Houston arranged for Inuit artists in eastern Canada to trade their carvings for credit at the Hudson's Bay Company stores. Houston also brought carvings to the Canadian Handicrafts Guild in Montreal, Quebec, an organization set up to promote crafts made by Canadian artists (Native and non-Native) through sales and shows. This provided new impetus for the creation and distribution of carvings, resulting in worldwide interest in Inuit art as well as greater Inuit independence from the government welfare

system. Creating artwork for an outside market was not just about independence from the system or the ability to support a family by making money, however. Like most art, Inuit art was a means of personal expression. As Pitloosie Saila attests, "You don't just do drawings... you express yourself. It is also a way of life, a part of life. Life is sometimes heavy... you have to be able to express yourself. Some of it comes out through art... I am just doing what I know how to do best" (Leroux et al. 1994:27).



7. *Congregation* by Thomas Ugjuk (b.1921), Rankin Inlet, c.1970. Soapstone. 12" x 23" x 15" (30.5 cm x 58.4 cm x 38.1 cm). Ugjuk shows the essence of teamwork and connections between humans within an Inuit community. Cat. No. 970.003.062.



8. *Hunter Scolding Dog with Stolen Fish* by Judas Ullulaq (b.1937), Gjoa Haven, 1982. Black stone, caribou bone, sinew. 13½" x 18" x 6½" (34.3 cm x 45.7 cm x 16.5 cm). Ullulaq says, "Sometimes, it is very difficult to decide what I am going to make out of the stone. I think about legends and stories, and tales of what people did in the past. I try to figure out which of the legends I am going to carve out of the stone" (Gustavison 1999:150). Cat. No. 1.83.20a-c.

Houston introduced printmaking techniques to Inuit artists at Cape Dorset, in present-day Nunavut, in the late 1950s (Hessel 1998:138). Within two years the community had produced its first portfolio of prints, using stencils made of hide and printing blocks carved from stone and wood. By the mid-1960s, artists were using copperplate engraving and commercial lithographic equipment. Other Inuit communities, such as Baker Lake and Panniqtuuq (also known as Pangnirtung), established art cooperatives and continue to publish annual series of prints that are acquired and appreciated by an international community of art collectors.

Being

The first section of *Our Land*, "Being," includes works that express Nunavut cosmology and spirituality and examines what it is to be an individual caretaker of traditional Inuit knowledge in a changing world. Looking at the world through an Inuit lens sometimes involves shedding Western notions of art, religion and nature (Fig. 14). The ability of humans and animals to transform into the other is often illustrated in Inuit art. The ceramic head by Pie Kukshout underscores this interrelationship (Fig. 3).

Between 1959 and 1962, Rankin Inlet was the site of the North Rankin nickel mine. With its closure in 1962 many Inuit families living in this isolated region lost their source of income. In 1964 the Canadian government set up an innovative ceramics workshop, using clay from the shores of Baker Lake. Soon after that, the nickel mine donated some equipment from an abandoned mine lab. In May 1970 Inuit artists began to sell ceramic items. The unglazed, low-fired ceramic head by Kukshout dates to this time of experimentation at the workshop (1965–1974). Although the workshop formally closed in 1977, the ceramic tradition in Rankin Inlet has continued.

Qilalugannguat Tunniit (Tattooed Whales) by Arnavak Ashevak demonstrates the interrelationship between humans and animals (Fig. 5). Ashevak notes, "You are looking down at the whales' backs. The tattooed markings are [based on] an idea from long ago. Thule and Dorset people used to etch drawings on caribou antler, ivory and bones. Whales are our main food and I ornamented the whales as a way of honoring them" (2004).

Another facet of Inuit culture explored in the "Being" section is shamanism. In the older nomadic lifestyle, and even today, the shaman is a community's principal healer and visionary. A key to the survival of the Inuit people, the shaman is the intermediary between them and the greater forces. The dominant Inuit religion today is Christianity, yet many Inuit still adhere to at least some elements of their traditional religious beliefs (Irniq 2006).⁴ On exhibit is a reproduction of a shaman's coat (Fig. 2), designed after a late-nineteenth-century example in the

⁴While *Our Land* was exhibited at PEM, Peter Irniq served as Commissioner of the Territory of Nunavut.



9. *Ukiumi Qitiqqiq (Winter Noon)* by Billy Akavak (b.1974), Kimmirut, 2004. Digital photograph. 10" x 14" (25.4 cm x 35.6 cm). Akavak captures a group of people, silhouetted by the sun, out for an afternoon of snowmobiling. *Our Land* includes five color prints of Akavak's digital images. Cat. No. NPM.

10. *Woman* by Jessie Oonark (b.1906, d.1985), Baker Lake, 1970. Lithograph. 44" x 34" (111.8 cm x 86.4 cm). At the age of fifty-four, Oonark began her career in graphic arts and was the only outside artist included in the Cape Dorset print program in the early 1960s. She was instrumental in developing the arts program in her Baker Lake community in the 1960s and 1970s. Oonark was well known for her graphic treatments of bold colors and lines on both paper and textiles. Artist's proof 1/5. Cat. No. 979.051.008.



11. View of *Our Land* exhibit at Peabody Essex Museum, 2005. Exhibition design by Fred Johnson and Naomi Chapman. Most of the sculptures were in individual cases, while several larger works were on pedestals without plexiglass bonnets. The exhibit's lighting design also made use of the museum's lofty new gallery spaces, suggesting the aurora borealis, or northern lights. Photograph by Jeffrey Dykes.



12. *Favorite Place to Be* by Andrew Qappik (b.1964), Pannirtuuq, 1993. Stencil. 20" x 17 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (51 cm x 44 cm). Perhaps best known for designing the Nunavut flag, Qappik is a printmaker known for his layering of color in stencil prints, as evidenced here. Cat. No. 993.086.016.

collection of the American Museum of Natural History, New York (Cat. No. 60/440 A). The coat is made entirely of caribou fur, except for small red wool pieces that are fastened to fringed tassels spilling out of a triad of starbursts. As in the original, artist Jeannie Arnaanuk adorned the front of the coat with one hand over each breast and a central humanlike figure, while the back has two figures shaped like *uluit* (semi-circular knives).

Family

Baby birds follow their parents all over the place for some time before they are able to do things themselves. When they are able, the parents leave them alone. Then, even when the parent bird is nowhere to be seen, the young birds have exactly the same ways that their parents had — they follow the examples that have been set before them, just the same way that our parents do for us. The ways of good parents can be followed in order to live a good life, to be able-bodied, and be wise (Donald Suluk in Bennett and Rowley 2004:11).

The section titled “Family” explores the concept of individuality in the community, and includes works involving the nuclear family and identity. The heart of Inuit society is said to be the family, a unit based on mutual respect with love of family as the cornerstone. Kinship ties were, and still are, very important to the Inuit, as most people were related to one another through blood, marriage, adoption or ritual.

Storytelling is more than entertainment; it is an important means of keeping values alive. Therefore, much visual art embodies stories, both personal and historical, that convey important insights and values (Fig. 13). In *Legend of the Family Who Traveled on a Wild Goose* by Joseph Patterk, a family of three is being safely transported on the back of a larger-than-life wild goose (Fig. 6). Geese often appear in Inuit legends as animals with transformative abilities. This sculpture depicts the goose-wife and children of Qiviuk, an Inuit culture hero. The artist carefully perforated the goose’s head, long neck and back to suggest a patterning of feathers.

Naalungiaq, an Inuit elder from east Kitikmeot, explains another important aspect of storytelling in the family domain: “Children are full of life, they never want to sleep. Only a song or monotonous words can make them quiet down so that at last they fall asleep. That is why mothers and grandmothers always put little children to sleep with tales. It is from them we all have our knowledge, for children never forget” (Bennett and Rowley 2004:160).

For thousands of years women have been wearing the *amautik*, a name derived from the Inuktitut word “to carry.” A symbol of continuity and rebirth through generations, the *amautik* is a jacket that has a pouch in which a baby is carried on its mother’s back until the baby is about two years old. In *Woman*, Jessie Oonark depicts a single figure wearing an *amautik* (Fig. 10). An icon for Inuit women, this ingenious garment allows the child to be swung to the front for breastfeeding. Caroline



13. *Tattoo Lady* by Germaine Arnaktauyok (b.1946), Igloolik, c.2003. Lithograph. 13½" x 11¼" (34.3 cm x 28.6 cm). Arnaktauyok is both a printmaker and book illustrator, and is best known for portraying female characters from Inuit legends. In 2000 Jean Chretien, Canada’s prime minister, honored Arnaktauyok for two of her designs. The Government of Nunavut purchased this work for inclusion in the *Our Land* exhibition. Cat. No. NPM1.

Palliser of Inukjuak explains, “[Wearing] an *amautik*...was like finding a part of myself. It felt sacred, majestic. In it I saw a woman’s patience, energy, ingenuity. I felt such pride, respect, and love and inspiration” (Art by Larisa n.d.)

Men also played an integral role in society, as they generally provided food for the family by hunting, fishing and trapping. In the past, men would stay with their parents, even after marriage, to learn critical skills and gain environmental knowledge from their fathers and uncles. Judas Ullulaq’s carving *Hunter Scolding Dog with Stolen Fish* underscores the importance of being alert and vigilant in all aspects of life, including when fishing (Fig. 8). In this piece, a dog is caught stealing a fish from a man, as a result of which more time and energy will be expended in order to feed the man’s family. Albeit humorous, the piece captures the frustration the hunter must have felt when this hungry dog stole a fish. The fisherman is leaning backward, facial expressions straining as he pulls on the pack dog’s lead and threatens the dog with a bone-colored club. Both the lead and the club are in stark contrast to the dark figures of the dog and man.

Community

The third theme in *Our Land* is "Community," which invokes a sense of place and reveals the Inuit relationship with the land (Fig. 4), an integral part of living successfully in Inuit society. Community also involves socializing — group storytelling, entertainment and ceremony.

Inuit society has traditionally been largely egalitarian. Leadership was flexible, and primarily based on exemplary skills or group consensus. Historically, Inuit culture was transmitted directly from person to person, generation to generation. Practical knowledge, such as how to hunt, fish (Fig. 12) or make garments, was acquired through observation and experience, perhaps by a family member or a community elder.

The stone sculpture *Congregation* by Thomas Ugjuk shows a group of eleven men working together (Fig. 7). Their collective energy is palpable as they appear to be hoisting something — a whale, perhaps — in unison. Today, carvers help to keep traditions alive by representing stories and hunting traditions. As Joseph Suqslak has said, "In that way carving may...help us to survive culturally — to be Inuit" (Gustavison 1999:154).

In *The Men Hunting Caribou in Kayaks*, Luke Anguhadluq creates the sense of large space using a bird's eye perspective of this hunting and camp scene (Fig. 15). At the age of seventy-two, Anguhadluq ended his career as a full-time camp leader and hunter, and moved to Baker Lake. There he turned to printmaking

as a source of income. When drawing, he laid the paper down horizontally between his legs and turned the drawing as he worked, resulting in a unique maplike perspective.

A *qulliq*, or seal-oil lamp, has become emblematic of the home (Fig. 1). The length of the wick was constantly monitored, as it was the home's principal source of light and heat. The *qulliq* is a form that has become more abstracted and geometric over time.

Today, speaking, music and singing play an important role in maintaining a sense of community and bringing the Inuit voice to the world in the face of rapid cultural and economic changes. Communities have recorded and archived the oral histories and songs of elders. Dancing with drums and singing continue to be at the heart of community gatherings. *Our Land* includes a sound kiosk in which contemporary throat singing is featured. Developed as a game hundreds of years ago, throat singing generally involves a pair of women who pass sounds back and forth. One woman leads, and the other follows, each holding the other's forearms, producing sounds faster and faster until one person falls behind, ending the rhythmic, sonic sculpture in laughter. Lucie Idlout's rock music is also featured, as many young people seek to strengthen their cultural identity through singing and music, a traditional art form.

Our Land also includes a thirteen-part video called *Nunavut (Our Land)*, produced by award-winning director and producer Zacharias Kunuk in 1994–1995. Kunuk

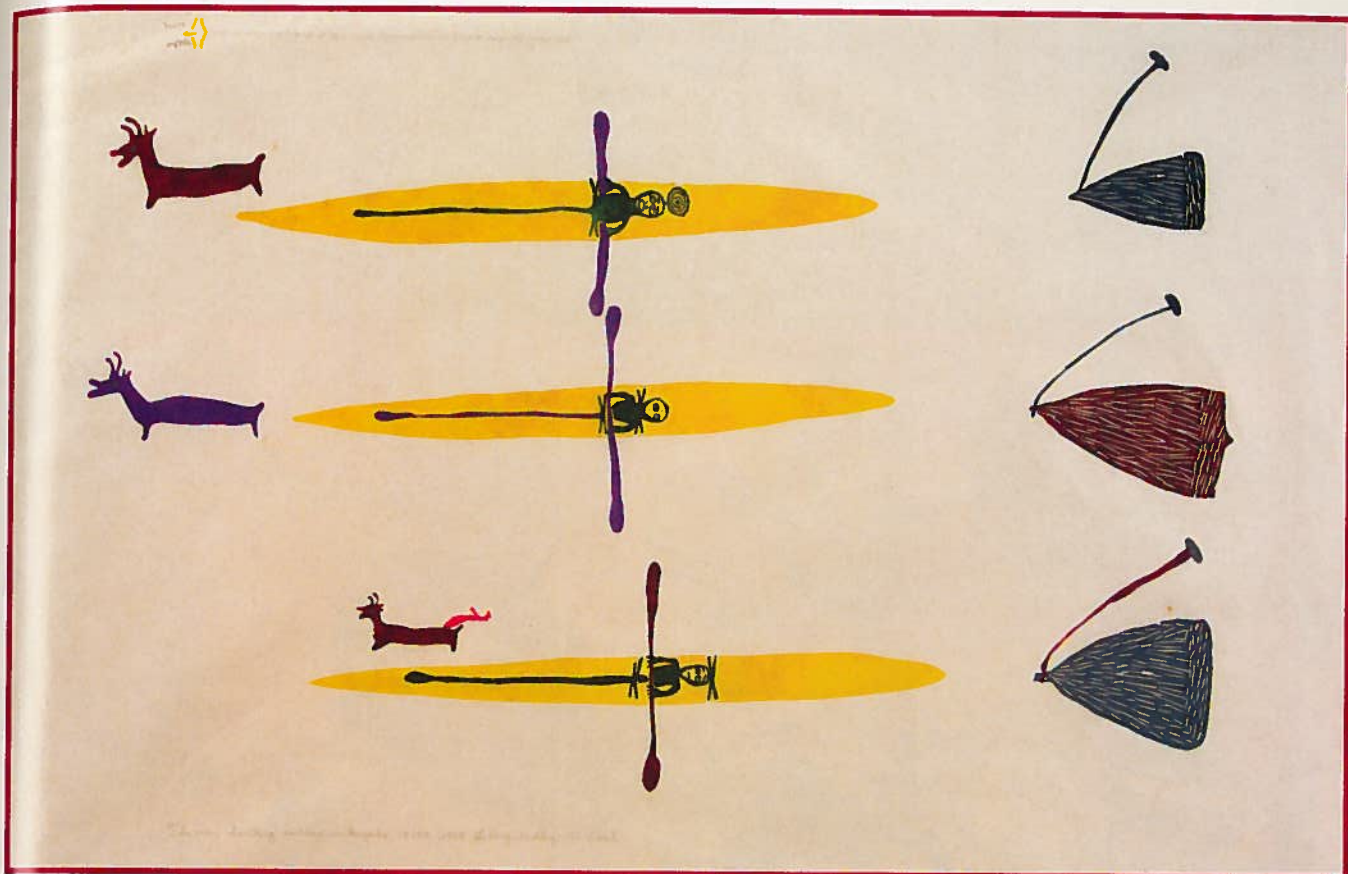
turned from stone carving to a career in video in 1981 and by 1990, he and several partners formed Isuma Productions, Canada's first independent Inuit production company.⁵ *Nunavut* first aired on the Canadian Bravo channel and was featured in *Documenta 11*, an international exhibition of contemporary art held in Kassel, Germany in 2002. Following five fictional families through the Arctic from the spring of 1945 through Christmas Day 1946, *Nunavut* re-creates the dramatic changes in an Inuit community caused by the sudden appearance of a missionary.

In Kunuk's hands, video becomes an Inuit art form. In *Nunavut*, Inuit actors portray an Inuit-authored view of history for a largely Inuit audience. The usual anthropological dynamic between observer and observed is reversed, as the world of ethnographic stereotyping is seen through an Inuit lens. And *Nunavut* also adheres to a classical Inuit aesthetic — richly narrative and highly understated.

⁵Based in Nunavut, Isuma (Inuktitut for "to think") has since established a video-training center and women's video workshop. Isuma is probably best known for its full-length feature film *Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)*, which earned the *Caméra d'Or* prize for best first feature film at the 2001 Cannes Film Festival.



14. *Audacious Owl* by Kenojuak Ashevak (b.1927), Cape Dorset, 1993. Lithograph. 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 29" (62.2 cm x 73.7 cm). Among the best-known print artists from Nunavut, Ashevak often depicts Arctic animals. Her artwork emphasizes design, form and color. Artist's proof 2/5. Cat. No. 993.087.016a.



15. *The Men Hunting Caribou in Kayaks* by Luke Anguhadluq (b.1895, d.1982), Baker Lake, 1978. Stencil. 24½" x 34½" (62.2 cm x 87.6 cm). Anguhadluq's work typically depicts daily life on the land. He was a hunter and camp leader into his early seventies. Characteristic of his work, this piece shows a caribou hunt in progress. Cat. No. 987.106.002.

Introducing new media components into *Our Land* was an important curatorial decision, not only because it adds another dimension (sound) to the galleries, but also because the two- and three-dimensional artworks chosen show very few signs of contemporary Inuit participation in the modern, global world. Kunuk's video and the sound kiosk introduce modernity and contemporary life into the show. *Our Land* also features five digital prints of landscape by Kimmirut artist Billy Akavak, one of which depicts snowmobiles (Fig. 9).

Conclusion

Inuit art has received widespread acclaim since it was first introduced to the rest of the world in the mid-twentieth century. Today, Inuit artists continue to create works in a variety of media, from sculpture to printmaking to music and video. Whether employing new or historically available materials, Inuit art is an expression of Inuit culture. We hope that *Our Land* increases awareness of and appreciation for Inuit art, worldviews and values.

Bibliography

Art by Larisa

n.d. www.artbylarisa.com/onlinegallery/celebratingwomen/myamaulik.htm

Ashevak, Arnaqu

2004 Personal communication.

Bennett, John and Susan Rowley

2004 *Uqaluraiit: An Oral History of Nunavut*. McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, Quebec.

Grimes, John R., Douglas Stenton and Karen Kramer

2004 *Our Land: Contemporary Art from the Arctic*. Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.

Gustavison, Susan

1999 *Northern Rock: Contemporary Inuit Stone Sculpture*. McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario.

Hessel, Ingo

1998 *Inuit Art: An Introduction*. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Irnig, Peter

2006 Personal communication.

Leroux, Odette, Marion E. Jackson and Minnie Aodla Freeman

1994 *Inuit Women Artists: Voices from Cape Dorset*. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver, British Columbia and Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Quebec.

Von Finckenstein, Maria (editor)

2002 *Nuvisavik: The Place Where We Weave*. University of Washington Press, Seattle.

Thanks to all of the Inuit artists, writers and elders represented in the *Our Land* exhibition, as well as Co-curator John Grimes; Douglas Stenton and his staff in the Nunavut Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth; Josh Basseches, Karina Corrigan, Donna Desrochers, Peg Dorsey, Jeffrey Dykes, Jay Finney, Merry Glosband, Lynda Hartigan, Fred Johnson, Christine Michelini, Dan Monroe, Vas Prabhu and Claudine Scoville at the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts; and Dan Gair of Blind Dog Photography, Inc., Kittery, Maine.

Except as indicated all photographs are by Dan Gair of Blind Dog Photography, Inc., Kittery, Maine and Jeffrey Dykes and are courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.

Karen Kramer is Assistant Curator of Native American Art at the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.