



expressions of arctic tradition  
contemporary inuit art





## EXPRESSIONS OF ARCTIC TRADITION: CONTEMPORARY INUIT ART

This exhibition narrates a way of life – the old ways of the Inuit: a nomadic life of seasonal hunting, survival and spirituality; age-old traditions remembered in oral histories and kept alive by the last generations of Inuit to reach maturity before stepping into a modern world.

The Inuit (also referred to as “Eskimos”) migrated over the Bering Land Bridge from Asia to present-day Alaska, across the Canadian Arctic to the easternmost point of Greenland. Living in the harsh and unforgiving climate of the Arctic regions required strength, stamina, ingenuity and a spiritual connection with nature that allowed the Inuit to co-exist harmoniously with their environment. This, the Inuit had done for thousands of years until 1950, when the Canadian government instated a policy encouraging them to relocate to permanent settlements, a move that also required the Inuit to adapt to a Western way of life and monetary system.

One person has been credited for assisting the Inuit in this transition, the artist James Houston, who first visited the Arctic in 1948. While there, he traded some of his sketches for small carvings. Struck by the aesthetic clarity of the minimalist, carved forms, Houston requested from the Canadian Handicrafts Guild assistance in purchasing carvings in order to mount an exhibition in Montreal. The exhibit was so successful that Houston returned to the Arctic as a representative of the Guild stationed in Cape Dorset on Baffin Island. By 1956, the Canadian government put Houston in charge of lending support to the Inuit in further developing and promoting their existing art forms of stone carving and needlework. It is against this backdrop that the contemporary period of Inuit Art emerged.

The 80 works in this exhibition present a survey of Inuit stonecut, stencil, lithographic prints and sculptures from the late 1950s to the present. Selected from more than 1000 objects in the Denos Museum Center’s permanent collection, the exhibition features artists from numerous communities within six Canadian Arctic regions and reveals the vision, breadth and scope of contemporary Inuit Art through such first generation masters as Atchealak, Kenjuak, Parr and Salla, as well as their successors.

Included in the exhibition, together with the beautiful traditional stone carvings depicting the Inuit and the wildlife that sustained them, is an amazing collection of stonecut prints, sealskin stencils and lithographs, contemporary art forms the Inuit learned from James Houston. Although contemporary, these works are keeping alive the old traditions and beliefs of the Inuit. What was once known only through oral tradition is now accessible through the visual imagery of these unique prints – and the sculptures some of which look as though they could have been carved thousands of years ago.



## **EXHIBITION INCLUDES**

Approximately 80 works including 37 Inuit stonecut, stencil and lithographic prints and 43 stone and bone sculptures from the late 1950s to the present

Pedestals and vitrines

Wall labels and 15 interpretive panels

Insurance

Packing and crating

Marketing plan

Gallery brochure

Educational and docent packets

Merchandise

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR HOSTING INSTITUTION**

Approximately 250 linear feet for art works

Approximately 2,500 square feet for sculptures and objects

Pro-rated shipping costs

## **PARTICIPATION FEE**

\$33,000

## **VENUE LENGTH**

3 months minimum

## **TOUR SCHEDULE**

Fall 2009 – Fall 2014

Please contact EDG at +1 651 222 1121 [info@exhibitsdevelopment.com](mailto:info@exhibitsdevelopment.com) for more information including Tour Schedule and Object List.

For exhibition bookings, please contact our sales team at +1 651-222-1121 • [info@exhibitsdevelopment.com](mailto:info@exhibitsdevelopment.com)

For curatorial questions, please contact Diane C. Salisbury at +1 202-719-8073 • [dianes@exhibitsdevelopment.com](mailto:dianes@exhibitsdevelopment.com)



**Dennos Museum Center  
Northwestern Michigan College  
Inuit Art Collection**

The Dennos Museum Center's art collection boasts one of the largest and most historically complete public collections of contemporary sculpture, prints and drawings by the Inuit artists of the Canadian Arctic to be found in the United States. This major collection is housed in its own gallery on the campus of Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City, where the works are presented in new exhibitions annually.

EDG is proud to support the Dennos Museum Center in bringing this exhibition to the international museum community underscoring our commitment to the promotion of international cultural exchange.

The Inuit typeface was provided by Arjowiggins. Inuit is a registered trademark of Arjowiggins. [www.arjowiggins.com](http://www.arjowiggins.com)



Providing our clients professional development, venue placement,  
and management of temporary and permanent exhibitions

[www.exhibitsdevelopment.com](http://www.exhibitsdevelopment.com)



**sales & distribution**

Landmark Center 432  
75 West Fifth Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

+1 651 222 1121 tel  
+1 651 222 1124 fax

**development office**

2801 M Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20007

+1 202 719 8073 tel  
+1 202 338 8182 fax

