CARVING OUT A FUTURE: CONTEMPORARY INUIT SCULPTURE OF THIRD GENERATION ARTISTS FROM ARVIAT, CAPE DORSET AND CLYDE RIVER

by

Jill Barber

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Abstract

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This thesis on contemporary Inuit art seeks to introduce and situate the art and the artists of the third generation from Arviat, Cape Dorset and Clyde River. Through field interviews with thirty four young artists, a critical review of literature on contemporary Inuit art, and an analysis of socio-economic factors affecting contemporary Inuit art, the author attempts to answer the following questions: Is there an identifiable third generation of Inuit sculptors who are carrying forward the artistic work of the two generations of Contemporary Period Inuit sculptors whose work is familiar in the Southern market? If so, what is their work like and why? And why are we not familiar with the artists or their work? This thesis examines a selected group of young artists whose work responds to a complex dynamic of traditional values and contemporary pressures and opportunities.

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also be acknowledged, because without their guidance, I may not have pursued my goals as pragmatically.

A final note of praise must go to my parents, to whom I owe everything. I wish to thank them from the bottom of my heart for their unconditional love, faith and support. Without their constant and unbending belief in me I might not have had the courage to chase my dreams and make them come true. This one's for you.

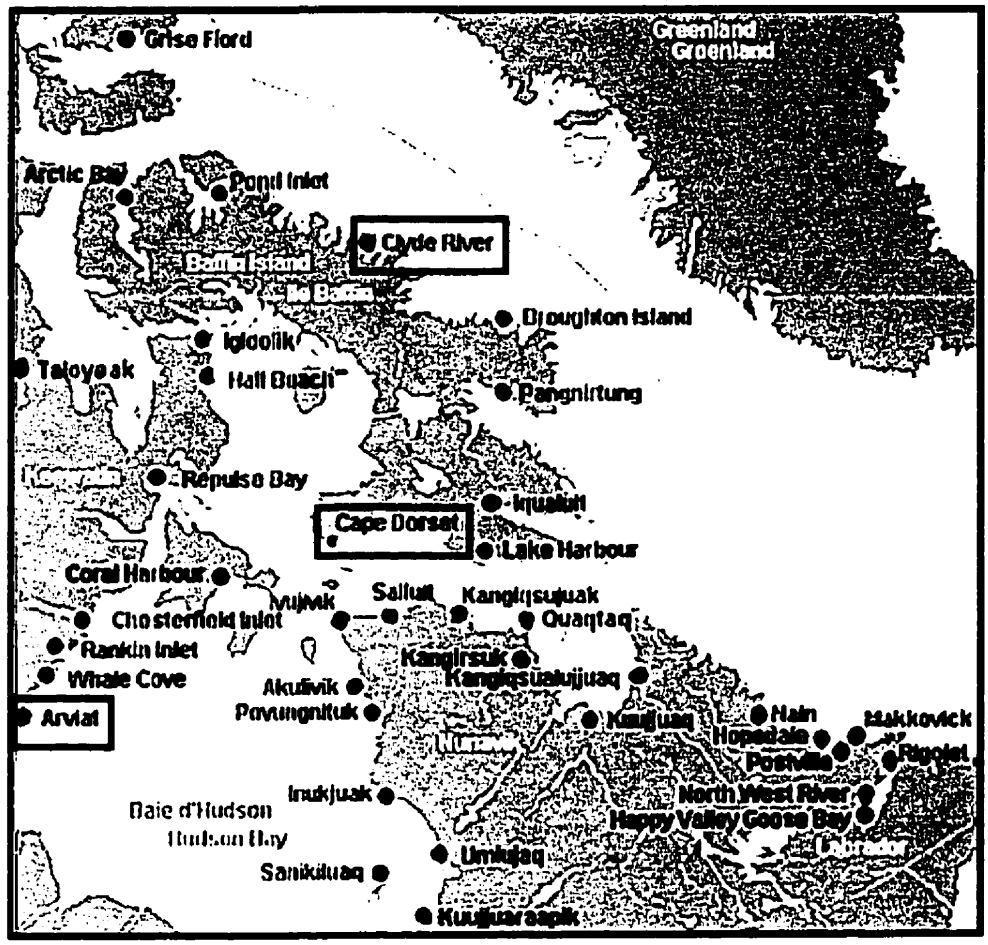

Figure 1: Arctic Map

Figure 2: Latitude and Longitude Table

Community	Latitude	Longitude
Arviat	61°07'N	94°03'W
Cape Dorset	64°14'N	76°32'W
Clyde River	70°25'N	68°30'W

PREFACE

Looking back upon the events of summer 1997 as I prepared for my research trip to Baffin Island, I recall the excitement of embarking on an Arctic adventure. Equipped with questionnaires, a list of artists whom I hoped to interview, enough film and warm clothing to last several weeks, I thought I was ready for anything, but I could never have prepared myself for the experience that would ensue. Then, like having the opportunity to have your favourite dream return, I was able to fly off to Arviat in the fall of 1998 for another adventure. In the pages of this project, it will now be my pleasure to communicate the unique experiences and memories of those weeks, spent in some of the most magical places on earth, hosted by the most fascinating and creative people.

This thesis and the research leading to it is the culmination of my M.A degree in the field of Inuit art. I have studied different avenues of the Inuit art field for the past eight years. My first exposure to Inuit art was in the summer of 1990, as an intern student at the Inuit Art Section of Indian and Northern Affairs in Ottawa, and it changed the course of my life. I believe I can best describe that experience by likening it to what Henri Matisse said about discovering his great passion for painting: "It was as if I had been called. Henceforth I did not lead my life. It led me." (John Russell, "The World of Matisse," Time-Life., New York, 1969, p.9).

Starting slowly, I began like any novice in a new field, familiarizing myself with the "masters," or first generation of Inuit sculptors, canonized in texts such as George Swinton's Sculpture of the Eskimo (1972). Having worked in various commercial Inuit art establishments in Toronto from 1991-1995, I became well acquainted with the works of the emerging second generation of Inuit carvers

whose art has recently been "validated" in important collections such as the National Gallery of Canada and in publications such as Inuit Art Quarterly. Having also visited Cape Dorset in 1994, I had the opportunity to experience for the first time the contemporary lifestyle of the Inuit there and to observe the economic importance of carving for them as a means to an end.

My employment with several Inuit art commercial establishments prompted my initial contact and immediate fondness for the work of the younger, "unknown" artists whom I have identified as "the third generation." I eagerly sought out the work of these young carvers and became familiar with their names and developing styles. The more attention I paid to this particular generation of Inuit artists, the more I felt that the sculptures that stood out the most were the works from Arviat, Cape Dorset and Clyde River. There seemed to be a concentration of active young carvers from these communities who were producing imaginative, fresh and vibrant works, and I was amazed that they had been largely overlooked in the marketplace and in the academic world.

For these young artists, their situation is precarious on many levels. Socially, they are "just starting out;" many of them still live at home with their parents, or they are starting young families of their own. Their lives are much different from their parents and grandparents, and their outlook reflects the drastic changes that have occurred in the Arctic through these generations. Artistically, both their elders and the Southern market view the third generation as beginners, or what I have termed "apprentices." As children, many of the third generation watched their grandparents and parents carve and learned technical skills and stylistic methods directly or through the process of observation. Sometimes, an elder would invite the youth to help "finish" a carving, thereby allowing the novice to familiarize himself or herself with the stone by sanding or polishing the form. Many young artists make their first carving with the discarded stone chips that have fallen

from a carving done by a family member. In this way, one might consider how the phrase "a chip off the old block" could be applied to the apprenticeship of the third generation of carvers quite literally.

It is my hope that this project will be beneficial to the young Inuit carvers who have expressed their desire to be recognized as artists and continue their artistic pursuits. This project will attempt to speculate on what the future holds for the third generation artists based upon the information gathered in the ethnographic present of 1997-1998.[1] This project also proposes to be a critical contribution to the Inuit art field of study for which new art historical approaches are beginning to shed light on the complexity and vibrancy of today's Inuit culture and art.

I believe my undergraduate background in the field of anthropology has swayed me toward contextualism as an art historian. While inspection of formal aspects of the sculpture will be employed, I believe that the individual personalities of the artists themselves and the culture they are socialized within play a central role in the expression of their art. Perhaps a glimpse of what inspires the art and its cultural relevance can be revealed through a contextual perspective.

Hence, this project will not only hear the voices of the young artists who created the works discussed but will also take into account the ideas put forth by other Inuit and non-Inuit community members, Inuit art wholesalers and dealers, as well as anthropologists, sociologists and art historians alike. It is my hope that through this multi-disciplinary approach "no stone will remain unturned." Perhaps this will give credence to Charles Martijn's wish:

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[1] "Ethnographic present" is an anthropological term that refers to the cultural circumstances that existed during the time period in which fieldwork took place and research was conducted. In this project, the ethnographic present refers to the cultural circumstances that were evident at the time of the 1997 interviews conducted with artists in Cape Dorset and Clyde River and the 1998 interviews with Arviat artists.

> "The time has arrived to foster an integrative approach. Qualified persons, trained in both art and anthropology should be invited to prepare and undertake a detailed research program into the life experiences of individual Eskimo artists, their attitudes towards existence and reality, and the manner in which these influence the creative work that they are producing today. In the process, some clues may even be obtained about the nature of the aesthetic framework adhered to by their long-dead predecessors in the north." (Martijn 1967:107).

This project does not endeavour to consider young artists' "attitudes towards existence and reality" exhaustively, but some of the realities of their existence such as socio-economic influences are considered. Artists' thoughts, concerns and opinions are central to this project. Young artists' life experiences differ from those of their elders yet are somehow closely connected and are manifested in the artistic expression of the third generation. The inclusion of an identifiable third generation in the field of Inuit art is uncharted and fertile ground that poses fascinating possibilities for future study.

Linguistic Note

Since some of the texts which I will reference use the term "Eskimo" instead of "Inuit," for the sake of continuity I will not correct or make special note of this practice as it appears in many quotations and titles of resource material. It is by now well understood that, in recent history, southerners unwittingly assumed that the term "Eskimo" was appropriate to use in reference to natives of the Canadian Arctic. One can usually estimate the date of articles that have made reference to the "Eskimo" in the title as pre-1980s for this reason. In my own writing, however, I shall use the term "Inuit" as it is used by the artists to refer to themselves generally as "the people."

I would also like to clarify the use of the terms "sculpture" and "carving" as they appear in this text. In his recent book, Ingo Hessel suggests that although these

terms are used almost interchangeably (as I have done throughout my text), the word "carving" can imply smaller-scale work that may hint at a "lesser" art form. Conversely, the term "sculpture" is usually used to describe larger, more ambitious works and may imply that such work is a "fine art" form (Hessel 1998:73). It is interesting then, that many of the renowned "masters" of the first (and recently the second) generation are known as "sculptors," while the majority of the third generation are called "carvers". I do not intend to make a qualitative distinction through the use of these terms and have used them interchangeably in reference to the art *and* the artists referred to in this project.

To further avoid assuming a qualitative position in regard to the differentiation between "carvers" and "sculptors," I am applying broad terms in my definition of an "artist." The artists represented and discussed in this thesis include those who may have achieved some recognition or commercial success in the South as well as those who are relatively unknown in commercial or academic realms.

While commercial and academic realms have different roles and approaches in conveying information to a Southern audience, they are not necessarily separate or autonomous. Not peculiar to Inuit art are the unclear boundaries between the role of commercial promotion and scholarly attention to art. Recognizing that the commercial market and academic approaches are often inter-connected and affect the way in which Inuit art has been received in the South, my effort is to document the works and aspirations of young artists and examine the complex context in which they work.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Is there an identifiable third generation of Inuit sculptors that is carrying forward the artistic work of the first two generations of Contemporary Period Inuit sculptors whose work is familiar in the Southern market? If so, what is the work of this newest generation like and why? And why are we not familiar with the younger artists or their work?

The third generation of Inuit artists occupies a unique and precarious position in history. Many of these young artists have yet to be recognized as artists of consequence because of their lack of maturity and confidence as artists in a competitive market. This project will examine what kind of art is produced by third generation artists; previously, their work has not been discussed or included collectively as an important aspect of Inuit art.

Although the history of the third generation has yet to be written or understood, their present situation can provide fascinating insight into contemporary Inuit culture as it has modified to encompass more and more Western influences, while continuing to retain some of its cultural traditions. The young artists of Arviat, Cape Dorset and Clyde River are the products of these changes, which are

reflected within the context of their social status and artistic expression. Their work responds to both the Western and traditional influences that affect their everyday lives.

Largely overshadowed by their elders who have achieved acclaim in the South, third generation artists are struggling to survive in today's competitive Inuit art market. This project will also show how the art of these young artists reflects both the influences of their elders/mentors and the demands of the Southern market.

The medium of sculpture was chosen exclusively for this study over graphic arts and other artistic ventures such as fabric arts (i.e.: tapestry, appliqué, silkscreen, sewing, doll-making), ceramics, or jewellery. While some of the artists who were interviewed may have pursued jewellery making, sewing or drawing, most artists prefer to make sculptures and their medium of choice is primarily stone or antler. Carving materials are not always readily available to young artists; stone must be purchased and antler, bone and ivory are usually gathered. Nevertheless, they have observed the carving process since childhood by watching those in their own household or within the community. For many, carving is a part of their culture and a viable way for the generations to communicate and share ideas. While each generation has experienced vast changes in their culture and the land the Inuit have called home for centuries, carving is a thread that runs through all

three generations. On a practical level, techniques, tools and materials may be shared, and - on a deeper level - ideas, legends and traditions are passed down and kept alive. Mentoring is the usual method by which ideas are shared between generations - from grandfather to grandson, mother to daughter, brother to brother, or young artists sometimes emulate the style of a successful elder within their community.

While a complete overview of the sculpture produced by the third generation of Inuit carvers would require visits to all the arctic communities of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut (Eastern Arctic) and Nunavik (Arctic Quebec) to interview young carvers, I have limited the scope of my project to the Keewatin community of Arviat, and the two Baffin Island communities of Cape Dorset and Clyde River. Although consideration of the artists from other communities would provide a larger, more encompassing perspective, narrowing the scope to three particularly active communities has allowed a more focussed approach for this study.

Personal interviews conducted in all three communities with the young carvers who live there are the primary resource of research material for this project. While these communities are home to many active young carvers, some are more prolific than others, and during the weeks of my visits, some artists were not available (or not willing) to participate in the interviews. Transcripts of interviews

with Inuit carvers from various Canadian Arctic communities conducted in Ottawa at the Inuit Art Information Centre at Indian and Northern Affairs Canada by Inuit personnel for the purpose of biographical data were also utilized when possible.

Preliminary preparation for the research trips to the Arctic required obtaining Ethics Committee approval from Carleton University Graduate Student Research Services so that subsequent research licenses could be issued by the Nunavut Research Institute. After I had arrived in each community, artists were contacted through local radio announcements or directly contacted by an interpreter and myself. Once an artist was contacted and had verbally agreed to be interviewed, appointments were arranged with the understanding that the duration of the interview was approximately forty-five minutes. Before the interview commenced, each artist signed a consent form[2] in which the artist could specify any restrictions or conditions regarding the release of information provided during the interview.

The interview questions are included in Appendix 2. The questionnaire was geared to target four main areas: 1) biographical information, 2) questions concerning carving, 3) questions pertaining to the art market and economic

[2] The consent form was written in English and was also translated into the appropriate dialect of Inuktitut for each community and artists could decide whether they preferred to give the interview in English or Inuktitut.

pressures and 4) young artist's consciousness of themselves *as artists*. These four areas were targeted in the questionnaire to obtain a broad scope of information.

In an attempt to resolve the problem of the lack of information available on young artists in the South, general biographical information was collected. The investigation of each artist's personal carving history sought to situate the particular *kind* of art produced by young artists, to establish them *as artists* and trace the details of their artistic careers. Questions that addressed the local market gave a forum to artists to vocalize their thoughts and concerns about the Inuit art market and economic pressures. Artistic consciousness and individuality within each artist's own community and in the wider, global arts arena are important aspects of this study. By targeting these areas I hoped to gain an understanding of the simultaneous forces that are manifest in sculpture by third generation artists.

Secondary sources were consulted to consider historical references to the communities, their particular carving traditions, and examination of older-generation carvers. These aspects will be examined in Chapter 2. Past interviews with such artists are plentiful and well documented. While secondary sources will inform this project as to the nature of first and second generation of Inuit culture and aesthetics, little information exists regarding young carvers. Therefore, I am compelled to draw largely from my own research with reference to the third generation.

Before continuing to introduce the succeeding chapters, it is necessary to qualify the term "third generation" as it is to be used in this paper. A generational model for studying Inuit art was pioneered by Dr. Marion E. Jackson in her doctoral thesis entitled "Baker Lake Inuit Drawings: A Study in the Evolution of Artistic Self-Consciousness" (University of Michigan, 1985). In her thesis, Jackson established the cultural and stylistic differences that could be identified through examination of the life experience of the artists as well as aspects of their artwork. While Jackson's study identified the differences between first and second generations, her work also focussed exclusively on drawings - created specifically by artists of Baker Lake. This generational model is the framework for my thesis but I have endeavoured to extend Jackson's conceptual model to incorporate the next (third) generation, while focusing on the medium of sculpture.

First Generation Artists

First generation artists lived most of their lives knowing the traditional ways of their ancestors. First generation carvers were among those who first made carvings for sale around the time when Inuit art made its official debut in the Southern marketplace in 1949. However, not all first generation Inuit began carving when the program began in 1949, and some became carvers much later. Some Inuit had made carvings for trade before they were encouraged to begin carving to supplement their income.

Typically, what we refer to as the first generation of Inuit artists was born in the first 30 years of this century. They were drawn in from the land to trade with Westerners who had established trading posts and the first generation along with their children - the second generation - eventually settled there. The first generation participated in the establishment of co-operatives (co-ops) which encouraged carving activities. Many Inuit took up this new activity and eventually some ventured into drawing, wallhangings or printmaking as a way to earn an income since trading furs was no longer lucrative.

Attempts were made to promote and legitimize first generation art in exhibitions and publications in the South, as there was resistance to the presentation of this work as a "fine art" form as opposed to craft items from a seemingly uncivilized culture. For example, the touring exhibition entitled Sculpture/Inuit was a major committee-curated collection that sought international exposure for the "masterworks of the Canadian Arctic" in the 1970s. While this exhibit set the canon for Inuit masterworks, commercial exhibitions like the 1986 show at the Inuit Gallery of Vancouver entitled Sculpture of the Inuit: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic reinforced the canon while capitalizing on the established reputations of "important" Inuit sculptors.

While it was good for business that commercial galleries perpetuated the idea of "masterworks" and promoted some artists over others in the name of fine art,

this canon was also established within the realm of Inuit art history in several publications that emerged. The "masters" of the first generation of Inuit sculptors, were recognized and canonized in texts such as George Swinton's Eskimo Sculpture (1965) and Sculpture of the Eskimo (1972) and Alistair Macduff's Lords of the Stone (1982).

In these books, the sculptures created by some of these first generation artists are generally characterized as possessing a kind of "honesty" and "purity" inherent in a culture (and artists) not yet altered by Western dominance. George Swinton's publications were important and necessary in their day and their contribution to Inuit art history is substantial although now somewhat dated. He was, however, the first to publish a wide selection of "important" Inuit sculpture which he called a "true" art form:

> "...many of the Eskimos were able to do more than produce quaint curios for southern tastes. They did more than depict the subject matter of their environment; they gave their carvings content. And they did more than reproduce a successful style; they created their own personal styles - or forms. It is the extent to which these artists were able to go beyond the commercially successful subject matter and styles that their work became true art."[3]

Swinton sought to legitimize the sculpture of the Inuit by drawing comparisons to Western or European examples while celebrating its "otherness", a topic that will be discussed in Chapter 3.

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[3] George Swinton, Sculpture of the Eskimo (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart) 1972, p. 14

Second Generation Artists

The second generation (the offspring of the first generation) are those who may have been born in a camp out on the land but who have lived most of their adult lives in a settlement. With some exceptions, second generation artists may be loosely defined as having been born in the 1930s through the 1950s. Works of the emerging second generation have only recently been "legitimated" in important art collections, solo exhibitions in commercial galleries, or featured in or on the cover of Inuit Art Quarterly. While most artists continue to use cultural imagery or indigenous materials in their sculpture, some second-generation artists have found a unique expression through employing different techniques and materials or exploring contemporary issues in their subject matter. Their departure from the "familiar" or expected form of Inuit art (regarding subject matter, tools, techniques and even carving material) has caused much debate in the South. While some scholars and dealers in the South applaud the originality and contemporary verve of these second-generation artists, others view such changes as a sign of the inevitable demise of the Inuit culture. As a result, some look upon this kind of sculpture as somehow less "Inuit". These issues of authenticity will be discussed further in Chapter 3, with a view to how this affects the struggling carvers of the third generation.

Third Generation Artists

The third generation can now be identified as those who have grown up in a settlement environment. They are loosely defined as having been born in the 1960s and 1970s. Most have spent their entire young lives in one community and rarely go out on the land for extended periods of time. Unlike the first and second generation who were born on the land or in a community, the majority of the third generation were born in hospitals. In Arviat, many third generation artists were born in the Churchill hospital and many of those living in the Baffin Island communities of Cape Dorset and Clyde River, were born in the Iqaluit hospital.

All of the youths have attended school and speak English to some extent. They are "plugged in" to the South through television and video games, and they find immediate gratification for many of their needs at the local store(s) where almost anything is available. Although their communities are relatively remote, one does not get the sense that they are isolated from many of the same Western influences that their contemporaries in the South have. In fact, third generation artists are acutely conscious of the Southern marketplace and are eager to interact with the market in order to achieve recognition and success. While their sense of a connection with the land has diminished somewhat, young artists have a sharper

awareness of the art market and many artists recognize the need to promote themselves and their work to the outside world.

In Chapter 4, I will discuss the Inuit art market or "the business of carving", as it is perceived by the Inuit. The older generations have witnessed a change in the art market, which has, in turn, affected the way they produce art. Young apprentice-carvers must "pay their dues" to gain the technical experience and knowledge of the market necessary to gain the success and independence they desire. Interviews with Inuit artists of various ages, co-op managers, and Inuit art dealers will provide interesting insight to how the market has changed and what it means for the third generation and their future as artists.

Chapter 5 deals with the art produced by the third generation and includes discussion of the close relationship between individual, family, community and culture and its influence on the artistic expression of the third generation. Through a comparison of the sculpture of the third generation with that of their mentors (whether a grandparent, parent, sibling or a successful carver from their own community), this chapter will explore how the apprentices echo the "masters" while also exploring an individual expression. As third generation artists struggle to succeed in the shadow of their well-known elders, their art manifests a unique expression while sometimes imitating the "secrets of success" proved valid by their mentors.

Throughout the following chapters, some points of discussion will be highlighted with representative examples of art or quotes from artists drawn from interviews as applicable. As an additional resource tool and since all of the information gathered from personal interviews could not be injected throughout the body of the text, individual biographies are included in Appendix 1. As none of the artists interviewed objected to being identified in this study, I am pleased to introduce all thirty-four young artists that were interviewed for this project. By including testimony from young artists and considering the art from three generations in three communities, an interesting dynamic of comparing and contrasting various aesthetic generational differences and similarities will come into play. It is my hope that the strong identity and unique character of each artist in each community will be served better in this manner.

The individual communities and their history of carving will be examined separately in Chapter 2 in order to reveal the unique and spirited nature of each settlement. Chapter 2 will attempt to "set the stage", or provide the grounding for the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2

A HISTORY OF CARVING IN THE COMMUNITIES OF ARVIAT, CAPE DORSET AND CLYDE RIVER

To understand the circumstances defining the world as it is - in the ethnographic present of 1997-98 - for the third generation of Inuit carvers, it is important to examine the history of their communities, the local culture, and the art of the preceding generations. In this chapter, an examination of the unique histories of each community shall explain how carving traditions were established - how geography, history, circumstance and the intercession of some extraordinary individuals have influenced the kind of art produced today.

While Cape Dorset and Clyde River are both on Baffin Island they are distinct communities with very different histories. Arviat in the Keewatin is again vastly different from these communities, not just geographically but historically. Geography and history have played a significant role in the development of each community's artistic traditions. With a distinct dialect, different cultural traditions and an exceptionally hard indigenous stone for carving, it follows that Arviat's artistic styles are distinctive - especially compared to Baffin Island examples.

Known as the "New York of the Arctic," Cape Dorset has long been the focus of public curiosity, while Clyde River has remained relatively isolated by comparison. Perhaps Clyde River's relatively remote location has protected it from the extremes of acculturation experienced by more accessible and larger northern settlements such as Cape Dorset and Arviat. The art of Clyde River has not received a great deal of recognition from the South perhaps for the same reason. Arviat has had periodic attention from the South. This has made research troublesome, as an abundance of material is available regarding Arviat and Cape Dorset, and virtually none exists concerning Clyde River. It is my intention to give equal weight to all three communities and finally to put Clyde River "on the map" to rectify the relative lack of interest shown for the artistic efforts of Clyde River artists.

Arviat

Named for a nearby island that resembles the shape of a bowhead whale, Arviat in Inuktitut means, "baby bowhead whale."[4] Arviat was formerly named Eskimo Point.[5]

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[4] Doreen Manik, Inuktitut/English high school teacher, Personal communication, Arviat, October 3, 1998

[5] As of June 1, 1989 the Hamlet of Eskimo Point officially changed its name to Arviat.

Arviat has had a long "historical" past - that is to say, it has sustained prolonged contact with Kallunaat.[6] Although a trading post was established there earlier than the other two communities in this study, the inland Inuit remained on the land and many had only brief contact with Kallunaat (such as traders) until finally taking up residence in Arviat during the 1950s and 1960s. The Inuit who now live in Arviat have had a distinct and sometimes tragic history.

Largely inhabited by the inland Inuit known collectively as the "Caribou Eskimos," Arviat is located in the Keewatin area on the southwestern side of Hudson Bay, 180 miles north of Churchill, Manitoba. A boulder-strewn, sandy peninsula, Arviat is windy in the winter but damp and swampy in the summer. Arviat had been a nomadic summer camp to the Padlimiut people, who were traditionally inland dwellers.

Arviat was considered a permanent settlement in 1921 when the Hudson's Bay Company established a post there. Since 1685, the Hudson's Bay trading centre had operated out of a nearby post, called Fort Churchill. By the 1860s, the Padlimiut had become known to the Hudson's Bay as "middlemen," trading furs and ivory for other groups of Inuit who came to trade when the barges anchored in Arviat.[7] Members of another group, the Sallirmiut who hunted sea mammals

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[6] In Inuktitut, "Kallunaat" is the plural form of "Kalluna" which refers to Southern/European non-natives.

[7] The Innuit Gallery of Eskimo Art, Rugged and Profound: Sculpture from Eskimo Point (Toronto: the Innuit Gallery of Eskimo Art) exhibition catalogue, 1987

from Hudson Bay, gradually emigrated to Arviat from the Coral Harbour area of Southampton Island in Hudson Bay. A third group, the Ahiurmiut (or Ihalmiut) who lived in the area of Ennadai Lake some 200 miles west, were forcibly relocated to Arviat when starvation and tuberculosis decimated the population in the 1950s. This dire situation was covered by the media and widely publicized in the South.[8] Perhaps because of their late arrival in the community, the Ahiurmiut retained their identity as somewhat distinct from the rest of the village. In fact, the name "Ahiurmiut," meaning "the other people," was given to the group upon arrival in Arviat by established locals.[9]

Interestingly, some of the most renowned Arviat sculptors are Ahiurmiut, originally from Ennadai Lake. Artists such as Andy Miki, John Pangnark, Elizabeth Nootaraloo, Luke Anowtalik and his wife Mary Akjar have been distinguished as special because of the hardship they had faced in Ennadai Lake. In a CBC Fifth Estate program, the Ahiurmiut are described as a "...tribe of Stone Age Eskimos" and their collective style of sculpture was classified as "...defiantly unsophisticated and prized by collectors."[10] Perhaps in an attempt to

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[8] See Farley Mowat People of the Deer (1952) and The Desperate People (1959) for renditions of the famine in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The 1968 Spring issue of The Beaver described the "Ennadai Lake People" in retrospect from 1955, when anthropologist Dr. Geert Van Den Steenhoven lived among them briefly. Also, a CBC Fifth Estate television program, "Inuit Hunters: The Deer People" covered the return visit of 36 elders to Ennadai Lake in 1985.

[9] Hanna Gartner, "Inuit Hunters: the Deer People", CBC, Fifth Estate, October 22, 1985

[10] Hanna Gartner, "Inuit Hunters: the Deer People", CBC, Fifth Estate, October 22, 1985

promote their art, their tragic past was magnified in order to establish the authenticity of "the voice the Ahiurmiut found:"

> "Their strong connection with the land and their feelings for the lost home at Ennadai give the Ahiurmiut of Eskimo Point a creative expression not found anywhere else. Their ability to make carved stone speak of their pain marked them indelibly."[11]

However, (some of) the artists themselves seemed to hold the memories of their traditional life dear and expressed the more positive aspects of that life in their carvings. Referring to some of her carvings Mary Akjar, in a 1982 interview with Bernadette Driscoll said:

> "Figures like these ...represent the closeness of Inuit family and relatives. They portray the intimacy of our former life at Ennadai Lake."[12]

An important issue of authenticity is raised by the tragic plight of the Ahiurmiut and the way their art was promoted. Is the art of the Ahiurmiut different from that of any other group of Inuit *because* of their relative isolation from others, the independence they enjoyed and the hardships they faced together as a group? Are they stronger artists because they are stronger human beings?[13] Is their art more *Inuit*, more *profound* or more *authentic* for this reason? And what of the third

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[11] Bonnie Dickie, "Resurgence at Eskimo Point: A Silence Ends", Up Here: Life in Canada's North, October/November, 1985, p. 22

[12] Mary Akjar in an interview with Bernadette Driscoll published in Eskimo Point/Arviat (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery) 1982 exhibition catalogue, p. 24

[13] Of "Atok, Nootaraloo, Tasseor and Uyauperk", George Swinton said "...they are perhaps the strongest, both as artists and as human beings." In "Memories of Eskimo Point 1967-1979", Eskimo Point/Arviat (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery) p. 14

generation who have not suffered such hardships in their lifetime? Is their work *less* Inuit? These are issues that will be addressed in Chapter 3.

Unlike Cape Dorset, the sculpture from Arviat has not always been favourably received in the Southern marketplace. In the 1960s, dealers refused works by artists such as Andy Miki and John Pangnark who are now known as "masters."[14] Perhaps this was a response to the essential and abstract qualities of their carvings that were a vast departure from more realistic and "marketable" works from communities such as Cape Dorset.

The stone indigenous to Arviat, of which there was a great shortage, lends itself to the rough and abstract appearance that the Southern market initially scorned. A hard and coarse type of basalt, it is difficult to manipulate, and forms often appear to be contained within the stone, with details gently emerging in low relief or roughly delineated on the surface of the stone. Most often, such stone carvings do not have protruding limbs or detailed features, and are rarely polished, giving them an even more austere appearance. Because of their simplicity of form, sculptures from Arviat are often described as monumental. The scarcity of stone and its unforgiving hardness drove some artists to work in antler, which is comparatively easier to carve but limiting as to size and shapes that can be carved.

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[14] Bonnie Dickie, "Resurgence at Eskimo Point: A Silence Ends", Up Here: Life in Canada's North, October/November,(Vol. 1, No. 6) 1985, p. 23

A similar situation is evident with regard to carving materials in Clyde River. However, in recent years, a softer type of soapstone has been quarried in the Keewatin area, and other varieties of softer stone have been imported which has afforded carvers more artistic opportunities and variety.

In 1966, the Canadian government funded the establishment of the first arts and crafts centre in Arviat. A stone quarry was located, but it was expensive and troublesome to travel some 75 miles to get to it and bring a sizeable amount back. By the early 1970s, the Territorial government had taken over the program but in 1979 the government withdrew their involvement and the management of the art centre was contracted to Hanavik Arts Ltd. Ten years later, Hanavik Arts was forced to close its doors due to financial difficulties. In 1997, Hanavik Arts Ltd. was revived under a new name, Arctic Traders Inc., and the government made supplies of stone available to the artists once again.[15]

The largest of the three communities in this study, Arviat is home to 1600 people. An Arctic vacation spot for naturalists who take guided excursions to fishing grounds or bird sanctuaries, Arviat has expanded to include tourism facilities, four churches and a mini mall. An Arctic College campus and the carvers' workshop provide opportunities for artists to develop their skills. According to

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[15] Arviat: Artists of the Past Present and Future (Vancouver: Inuit Art Gallery of Vancouver) 1997, exhibition catalogue, foreword

the young artists in Arviat, the local Kallunaat and the sewing shop called Kiluk Ltd. are the best places to sell their work; outlets like Padlei Co-op and the Northern Store primarily purchase only carvings done by well-known artists.

The second generation of Arviat artists have largely carried on the simplified, abstract imagery pioneered by the first generation. Second generation Arviat artists such as Joy Hallauk, Lucy Tutsweetok and George Arluk have attained considerable acclaim for their abstract sculptures but often complete their work with a smooth finish or polish. For Arviat artists of all generations, carving is an important part of their collective identity and their economic stability as well as a means to an individual creative expression.

Cape Dorset

Connected to Baffin Island only during low tide, Cape Dorset was named in 1631 by Luke Foxe (who gave his own name to the surrounding Foxe Basin, the Foxe channel and the Foxe Peninsula) during his unsuccessful journey to find a northwest passage to India. The first trading post was established there in 1913 to trade white fox furs. For Inuit, however, the historical significance of this area does not begin with their first contact with Scottish and American whalers in the 1800s.

Arguably, Cape Dorset has the longest "prehistory" of the three communities examined in this project. Archaeological evidence supports the theory that this area was inhabited more than two thousand years ago by the ancient Dorset culture people who were replaced about a thousand years ago by the Thule culture, the distant ancestors of today's Cape Dorset Inuit inhabitants. In Inuktitut, Cape Dorset is known as "Kingait" which means "the mountains", in reference to the mountainous terrain of the surrounding area.[16]

Cape Dorset has long had a reputation as the largest art producing community in the Canadian Arctic. With a rapidly growing population of around 1200, an estimated 10% of the community are artists.[17] Cape Dorset's prosperity and reputation can be attributed to many factors, but the key to its success is undoubtedly the strength of its co-operative. The West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative (WBEC) was established in 1959. The WBEC is the oldest and strongest art co-operative in the Canadian Arctic.[18]

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[16] Minnie Aodla Freeman, Intoduction, Inuit Women Artists: Voices From Cape Dorset (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, for the Canadian Museum of Civilization), 1994, p. 14

[17] This percentage represents an estimated 50 full-time carvers, and approximately 50 part-time carvers who support themselves or supplement their income from carving. There are roughly 20 artists who produce work less frequently. For example, (second-generation artist) Matthew Kellipalik produces only 4-5 carvings per year. This number is high, if one considers that there are approximately 10 carvers in Cape Dorset who gross an income of $100,000 per year. The percentage would increase considerably if one took into account everyone in the community who has tried carving at one time or another.

John Westren, Personal communication, WBEC Dorset Fine Arts, Toronto, August 1998.

[18] James Houston, Cape Dorset '79, The Twentieth Annual Cape Dorset Graphics Collection, (Toronto: M.F. Feheley Publishers) 1979, Introduction, p. 8

The arts and crafts project essentially began in Cape Dorset when James and Alma Houston arrived there by dog team in 1951. They have written extensively about this experience and others that ensued during their eleven years in Cape Dorset.[19] James Houston was a government-appointed administrator fresh from his accomplishment of promoting the carvings of Arctic Quebec through the Canadian Handicrafts Guild in Montreal in 1948-49. Houston's wife Alma accompanied him as a new bride in 1951, enthusiastically embracing their Arctic adventure but perhaps unaware that she was going to play an important role in the making of Inuit art history.

Of particular interest here is Alma Houston's account of how they were to win the approval of the camps' most respected leader, Pootoogook, before the carving project could begin in Cape Dorset with any degree of success. She writes in retrospect:

> "I have recorded these beginnings because before all others, Osoetuk [known as the best carver], Salomonie [Pootoogook's eldest son] and Pootoogook [the camp leader] grasped the implications, good and bad, that an arts and crafts programme would have for Cape Dorset. To the extent that anyone could at the time, they understood the objective and they acted, according to what they believed to be the maximum well-being of all concerned."[20]

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[19] See James Houston's autobiography Confessions of an Igloo Dweller (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1995, and both James and Alma Houston's accounts in Cape Dorset (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery) exhibition catalogue, 1979, pp. 9-16

[20] Alma Houston, Cape Dorset (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery) exhibition catalogue, 1979, p. 15

It is because of such detailed records that we can actually identify the players involved and the circumstances surrounding the birth of the "arts and crafts programme." Many have tried to identify what it is about the sculpture of Cape Dorset that sets it apart from other communities. James Houston attributed the artists' creative talent to the spirit of the Cape Dorset people:

> "I found the Inuit trading into Cape Dorset to be the most exciting, friendly, volatile and certainly the most talented Inuit group that I had ever met. ...When I first went there in 1951, I found a certain fiery spirit among the people of Cape Dorset which I think drives a sense of life into their carvings. In Dorset there are so many truly notable carvers...."[21]

Alistair Macduff believes that it is the variety of styles, materials and subject matter that has kept Cape Dorset from becoming "typical" which in turn gives their sculpture an air of vitality:

> "The sculpture of Cape Dorset is characterised by a greater variety of artistic expression than any other settlement, not only in the overall characteristics of carving done in the community, but also in the variety found in the work of each individual artist, whose choice of subject matter, style, and mood is remarkably eclectic. Typical pieces from [other Canadian Arctic communities] have a common denominator of style, which identifies their community of origin."[22]

It is true that Cape Dorset carvers have access to nearby natural deposits of varied types and colours of stone with which to carve, which lends itself to a degree of unpredictability in their sculpture. But the tremendous success of the

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[21] James Houston, Cape Dorset (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery) exhibition catalogue, 1979 pp 10-11

[22] Alistair Macduff, Lords of the Stone: An Anthology of Eskimo Sculpture (Vancouver: Whitecap Books) 1982, p. 27

co-op and the international acclaim of the Cape Dorset artists must owe their popularity to more than just variety of subject matter and medium. Jean Blodgett would agree with Houston that it is the character of the people, "...a strong sense of capability, resilience and individualism" that is somehow reflected in their sculpture. Blodgett adds:

> "These personal qualities of the Cape Dorset people - that is, their sense of confidence and independence, which surely have been reinforced by their lengthy association with several dedicated advisors and the very considerable and continuing success of their art program and co-operative - are consistent with certain characteristic features of Cape Dorset sculpture; primarily, the assurance and finesse evident in the completed artworks. The pieces are not tentative endeavours but accomplished statements, with a confidence in the subjects chosen and in the sculptural techniques."[23]

While the names and reputations of first generation Cape Dorset artists have endured, it was some time before second generation artists could firmly establish themselves in the Southern art market as familiar names. Artists such as Ovilu Tunnillie, Kiawak Ashoona, and Kananginak Pootoogook - to name only a few - are celebrated, internationally acclaimed second generation Cape Dorset artists.

Some third generation Cape Dorset carvers have also achieved modest success. While their sculpture may not be as ambitious in scale or as sought after in the Southern marketplace, their ability to sell their work on a regular basis has had an effect upon their social status within their communities. Unlike the two

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[23] Jean Blodgett, Cape Dorset, (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery) exhibition catalogue, 1979, p. 42

communities of Arviat and especially in Clyde River, some young Cape Dorset artists in their twenties have been able to purchase homes individually or with friends or siblings but few are able to support a family with the income earned from carving alone.[24]

Clyde River

Located on the northeast coast of Baffin Island some 280 miles north of the Arctic Circle, Clyde River is the youngest and the smallest of the three communities examined in this paper. A mix of low coastal hills, sprawling tundra and spectacular fiords characterizes the region around the settlement. Contrary to its name, Clyde River is not located on a river (although there are many rivers in the area). It is situated on Patricia Bay, just off Clyde Inlet, which flows into the vastness of Baffin Bay. In Inuktitut, the little bay where the community nestles is called Kangiqtugaapik, which means "beautiful cove".[25] In the heart of polar bear country, Clyde River is a prime location for inland caribou hunting, and the inlet yields a bounty of sea mammals such as several varieties of seals, bowhead whales, walrus and narwhals. There are also many rivers and lakes in the area which yield arctic char in the summer. Because of the abundance of food in this

[24] While artists such as Toonoo Sharky, Pudlalik Shaa, Kingwatsiak Jaw and Kakee Peter had their own homes with young families to support, others lived with family members - Markoosie Papigatok lived with his cousin Qiatsuq Shaa (and Qiatsuq's wife and child), and Alariaq Sharky lived in his brother Toonoo's house. Other young artists like Johnny Saggiatok, lived at his parents' home.

[25] Adamie Paneak, Inuktitut/English Interpreter, Personal communication, Clyde River, September, 1997

region, it has always been inhabited by Inuit. The population of the community has grown to approximately 700 people (95% of whom are Inuit) and the Inuit there are still active hunters.

Perhaps the first Westerners to come into contact with the Inuit who inhabited the Clyde River area were the Scottish and American whalers who came to hunt bowhead whales in the neighbouring Isabella Inlet from the 18th through to the 20th centuries. The whalers built lookout stations on islands in the mouth of the bay which remain there to this day and are used for observation posts.

In 1923 the Hudson's Bay Company established a trading post in Clyde River. Inuit families came into the area to hunt and trap; some came from as far as Kimmirut (formerly Lake Harbour) on the southern-most tip of Baffin Island to trade furs and skins at the post. In the 1950s, the RCMP post was established, along with the Anglican mission and the Department of Transport weather station. In the 1960s a school, nursing station and postal services were established and as Inuit families settled to send their children to school, the community expanded. As the population continued to expand, the settlement site became trampled, wet and muddy, so the community was relocated in 1970 from the south shore of Patricia Bay to the north shore, where it remains to this day. When I asked the question "where were you born?" during personal interviews, some of the young artists in Clyde River who were born in the late 1960s, specified that

they were born "on the other side", recalling their early memories before the settlement was moved. After the town was relocated in 1970, an airstrip was built to service the community.[26]

Soon after, the anti-fur movement devastated the economy of Clyde River, forcing the hunters to seek other forms of income. Since the Hudson's Bay Company (now known as Northern stores) was the biggest and oldest private business in the community, many people turned to carving to supplement their income, selling their work to Hudson's Bay/ Northern store. But the endeavour of carving was fraught with difficulties from the beginning.

Since soapstone is not indigenous to the Clyde River area, carvers attempted to import stone from other areas of Baffin Island, which was a troublesome and costly endeavour. Hence, many of the carvings created in Clyde River are of caribou antler and whalebone.[27] As has been noted in the example of Arviat, antler and bone limit the size and forms that can be created. Third generation carver Jukeepa Hainnu related the differences inherent in antler and stone, "antler

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[26] Clyde River Community Brochure, distributed by the Tourism Committee, Hamlet of Clyde River and Canada - NWT Economic Development Agreement, 1991-96, p. 2-3

[27] Marble has recently been discovered in the Clyde River area, and while it is also a costly and time-consuming endeavour to quarry it, many artists are now carving with this indigenous, hard white stone.

is limiting because of the natural curve but stone has [more mass and various] angles so there are many different objects imaginable when I carve stone."[28]

Not to be thwarted, however, carvers work creatively in spite of the limits of their materials. When one encounters these works in antler or bone, those limitations are not immediately apparent. Artists seem to manipulate the subtle tonalities inherent in antler and harmonize the imposed form with the natural shape of their material. Perhaps reflecting the quiet community whose inhabitants remain close to the land, the artists stay true to the nature of their materials to create insightful and subtle works that are sensitively and intricately carved.

In a forward to a Clyde River sculpture exhibition in Montreal, Gabriel Gély related this creative sensitivity to a reflection of spirituality:

> "...it is acknowledged that the Clyde [River] people have more than any group clung tenaciously to their traditions and past legacy. In fact the argument of spiritual intervention gets more weight and significance when viewing carvings made throughout this period of development [1953-1980] :-they show little or no stylistic change, retaining sincerity, strength and humour as common denominators.
>
> ...The people believe that as long as they can perceive the harmonies of their own world, the spirit will express itself through creative endeavour."[29]

While the harmony of their world has been threatened for some time, the people of Clyde River remain determined to find a solution. The youth of Clyde River

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[28] Jukeepa Hainnu, Personal Interview, Clyde River, September 7, 1997

[29] Gabriel Gély, Clyde River Sculpture (Montreal: Gallerie Elca London), 1980, exhibition catalogue, forward

must struggle to endure recent and discouraging changes. Although the population has expanded to about 700 people, employment opportunities have not increased substantially. While it did not purchase or promote carvings, the artists' workshop in Clyde River has struggled to survive since its inception in 1976. The Igutaq Group[30] made prints, silk-screened and sewn arts and crafts. Without consistent outside support the Igutaq Group has closed down many times. With no co-op present in the community, the Northern Store is the only place carvers can sell their work locally, but the Northern Store is facing financial difficulties of its own that compels the managers to shut their doors to carvers more often and for longer periods of time.

While the decreased buying power of the Northern store affects the success and productivity of many carvers in all art-producing communities in the North now, artists in communities such as Arviat and Cape Dorset can turn to other local businesses to sell their work. However, many Clyde River artists have fewer opportunities to sell their carvings and this situation has devastated the community and discouraged many carvers (young and old). Consequently, the young carvers can rely on carving less and less to supplement their income, yet have few alternatives in which to turn. While the Clyde River Inuit still practise subsistence hunting and retain many of their traditional ways, the economic predicament of the community is apparent and disheartening.

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[30] "Igutaq" in Inuktitut means "busy bees".

The economic predicament of Clyde River is not unique to the Canadian Arctic. In fact, most Arctic communities are experiencing economic and social problems to varying degrees. Throughout the Northwest Territories today, criminal offences are on the rise with a homicide rate double the national average.[31] In the North, high school graduation is only around 27%, and unemployment has reached a national high - up to 80% unemployment in some communities - leaving few job opportunities for most Inuit living in Arctic communities and making social assistance programs a way of life for many. Despite this, there is a general sense of optimism and hope for changes with the imminent establishment of the new Nunavut territory on April 1, 1999. But since the carving industry depends largely on the climate of the southern marketplace, no immediate opportunities or drastic changes seem to be on the horizon for the fledgling third generation of carvers.

Southern Artistic Influences/Advisors

While Arviat has been the focus of outside Southern interest, Cape Dorset remains the hub of the Arctic for sculpture. Arviat artists had the benefit of some sensitive and prolonged artistic direction by Southern artists such as Gabriel Gély, who lived among them, and George Swinton, a frequent visiting scholar. Cape Dorset has enjoyed the business acumen and artistic direction of James Houston,

[31] Jennifer Hunter, "The New North", Maclean's, Vol. 111, No. 31, August 3, 1998, p. 15

immediately followed by his successor Terry Ryan who has been committed to the success of the WBEC since the 1960s. All of the aforementioned men were artists themselves and were working in various capacities for the government when they arrived in the Arctic and encountered Inuit sculpture. While their influence has been criticized as interference, they are generally heralded for their positive influence on the art in the communities to which they dedicated many years. The marked success of these art programs suggests that the Inuit artists have benefited from the guidance of these Southern advisors.

Conversely, the Igutaq Group has invariably faltered though valiant attempts to produce unique art forms resume sporadically. Unfortunately, the artists of Clyde River have not enjoyed the same marketing success found in Cape Dorset.

The Igutaq Group is a small facility located in a small prefab home converted into a workshop. With a working group of no more than six artists, the Igutaq Group focused on prints and fabric art, so Clyde River carvers have never had a support system to which they might turn for advice, encouragement or camaraderie with other carvers. With the recent establishment of a Nunavut Arctic College campus in the community, there is a glimmer of hope for young artists in Clyde River (and also in Arviat and Cape Dorset), who wish to seek formal training and experiment with new tools, materials and media.

Perhaps it is because of the abundance of publicity concerning the artists of Arviat and the bounty of recorded accounts of the arts and crafts project in Cape Dorset that these communities are better known to the Southern world. Would the situation in Clyde River be different if they had had the sensitive support of a resident Southern art advisor and a strong co-op or arts program? Is the popularity of the sculpture from one community dependent on the way it is marketed in the South, or is the secret to success a volatile mix of variables that cannot be traced? It would be a difficult task to trace how the art of an individual artist or an entire community of artists rises above others through the complex process of inspiration, support and encouragement as well as marketing, Southern reception and demand.

As already stated, Arviat, Cape Dorset and Clyde River have similar beginnings as settlements to which the Inuit were drawn from surrounding areas for trade or out of necessity, and where they eventually stayed for the conveniences of modern community living. But the similarities end after their respective arts and crafts programs began, and each community developed its own artistic style for which it became known (or even stereotyped).

Artistic Styles in Arviat, Cape Dorset and Clyde River

Each community has its own distinctive sculptural style, and the artists tend to favour certain subject matter and media for which they have become famous or

are at least generally known. Because many of the first generation artists pioneered a unique "style" of sculpture which proved to be successful and popular in the Southern market, it was eventually adopted, echoed or revised by other carvers in the community. In this way, general "community/regional styles" emerged.

Sculpture from Arviat was usually left unpolished which, combined with the dark stone available, lends itself to its characteristic monumental and simplified forms. Early sculpture was hewn with (often hand-made) tools such as axes and files, which gave the work a more rugged quality in contrast to the smooth, polished and more detailed forms achieved today by the use of power tools.

While Arviat is known for its "minimalist" style and family themes in sculpture, Cape Dorset's style characteristically incorporates an element of realism with a delicate mastery of the medium. Popular for their whimsical anthropomorphic animals such as bears, walrus and birds - often in motion or gravity-defying positions - Cape Dorset sculptures can have smooth, undulating curves or ornate detail and are characteristically polished to a high gloss.

While stone sculpture is not uncommon in Clyde River, artists are generally known for their small to medium sized antler carvings worked to a smooth finish and highly detailed as well as medium-sized whalebone sculpture. In fact, Clyde River artists work with a variety of media when it is available including

whalebone, ivory and local marble or imported soapstone. Artists choose a variety of subject matter - from abstract figures to traditional camping scenes, imaginative and playful spirit-creatures to realistic hunters.

Clyde River sculpture, like that of Arviat and Cape Dorset, has been imbued with an air of spiritualism; artists are linked closely with the land and the animals that provide the materials with which they work to create a natural expression that comes from the heart of their culture. Early promotional efforts sought to relate the unique qualities of Inuit art to romantic notions of the exotic and simple lives of "primitive" people whose art was as mysterious and foreign as their culture. Geographic and cultural distinctiveness enabled promoters to perpetuate this view. Many issues arose as Southern scholars and experts emerged to undertake the arduous task of situating, catagorizing and promoting this novel art form by culturally distinct indigenous people and to claim it as "truly Canadian" art. In the next chapter some of the key issues that persist in the Southern Inuit art arena will be presented with a view to how such issues affect young carvers today.

Chapter 3

A CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF ISSUES AFFECTING CONTEMPORARY INUIT ART

While it is a common Western practice to classify and categorize information into groups of opposing and like data and to separate and treat each category as a distinct entity, this has proven problematic when dealing with a non-Western culture and its art. Many issues emerged as the Western world imposed its ethnocentric perspectives, interpretations and expectations on Inuit culture as well as Inuit sculpture in an effort to understand this new art form coming from a seemingly ancient tradition.

Since the time of first contact with the Western world, the Inuit have recognized the value of their carvings which could be exchanged for trade goods such as ammunition and food items. Since Inuit sculpture has been widely available to the Southern world in the past fifty years, it has been fervently collected. In that time, three generations of carvers have been witness to changes in their culture and in the Southern art market and have learned to adapt to both.

The history of the communities of Arviat, Cape Dorset and Clyde River and their unique carving traditions and styles have been examined in Chapter 2, so it will be useful here to examine the artists and sculpture of the first and second generation as well as the issues and myths that surround them. It is important to examine critically the issues surrounding the sculpture of the older-generations because they are many of the same issues that young carvers are faced with today. Historically speaking, the issues and canons that will be discussed are those created by Southern experts in an attempt to situate, categorize and promote Inuit art in the Southern world.

As often occurs when a non-Western culture is documented and theorized by Western culture, the artists and/or the art can become romanticized, misconstrued or even misunderstood to the point of controversy. Within the short history of Inuit art, all of these things have happened at one time or another.

Debates about whether Inuit art is "primitive" or "sophisticated", whether it should be considered as a craft or fine art form, and the search for a standard definition of what Inuit art *is* (or should be) have persisted among Southern marketers and scholars for almost fifty years. This chapter will discuss some of these issues, as they continue to affect contemporary Inuit art.

When Inuit sculpture was launched on the market and sold in 1949, the Western world displayed a fascinated curiosity and an appetite for knowledge about Inuit culture. What the public got, however, tended to feed their fantasies about an exotic, guileless and primitive "stone age" people living in the vast and remote reaches of the Canadian Arctic. As Charles Martijn stated, "from the very outset, those in charge of the carving project stressed not only the reputedly 'untainted' nature of this supposed 'primitive' art, but also their fervent desire to keep it so."[32]

The issue of "primitivism" versus "sophistication" has been an ongoing Southern concern regarding Inuit sculpture of the first generation. One might be reminded of the situation with the Ahiurmiut from Ennadai Lake who settled in Arviat and were said to produce a more profound style of sculpture because of the hardships they had lived through. Is their art more *Inuit*, more *profound* or more *authentic* for this reason? And what of the third generation who have not suffered such hardships in their lifetime? Is their work *less* Inuit?

The specific example of Arviat presents some fertile ground for this issue. Arviat sculpture is typically described as "primitive", "abstract" and "raw." George Swinton, for instance, describes the carvings from Arviat on the whole as having "a warm and powerful expression: raw yet mellow, and earthy but playful."[33]

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[32] Charles Martijn, "A Retrospective Glance at Canadian Eskimo Carving", The Beaver, Autumn, 1967, p.12

[33] George Swinton, Arviat/Eskimo Point, (Vancouver, Marion Scott Gallery) 1989, foreword

Seeking to situate Arviat sculpture in terms of its importance as a fine art form, a kind of romanticism emerges in regard to the artists themselves and the "innocent sophistication" of their work:

> "...is the art of [Arviat] therefore not more sophisticated than we usually assume? Are the guileless no-pretense pieces from there perhaps not like the innocent statements of the child about the emperor's clothing? Or could I go so far as to say that these carvings with their powerful presence put me into the past which is forever irredeemable? In [Arviat], however, the past lives."[34]

If the past "lives" in Arviat, one wonders if the "past which is forever irredeemable" that Swinton mourns is the perceived loss of innocence of Western culture, with the implication that it can only be glimpsed through Inuit art. On the other hand, perhaps Swinton refers to the "lost" ancient past of the Inuit whose lives have irreversibly changed because of the encroaching Western world. Indeed, the appeal of first generation sculpture to Southern audiences was (and still is) that its expression embodied the character, the thoughts and the unbridled talents of a vanishing "pristine" culture. When those "first" Inuit artists moved in from the land and settled in permanent communities, it was the symbolic end of an ancient culture - only to be revived through their memories, materialized by their artistic expression, and brought to life again through sculpture.

The distinctive style that established some of the artists originally from Ennadai Lake as "masters" in sculpture eventually resonated throughout the community of

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[34] George Swinton, Arviat/Eskimo Point, (Vancouver, Marion Scott Gallery), 1989, foreword

Arviat. Swinton compared the art to "...Cycladic art; or the caves of France and Spain"[35] because of its economy of detail and simplified forms. Swinton was prone to compare Inuit art with Western examples.[36] The universal qualities of simplified or abstracted forms and themes such as a mother and child could, he thought, provide the footing on which Inuit art could stand on its own as a valid fine art form. Indeed, anthropologist James Clifford suggests that Western Modernism and Primitivism broke barriers of artistic segregation:

> "Modernism is thus presented as a search for 'informing principles' that transcend culture, politics, and history. Beneath this generous umbrella the tribal is modern and the modern more richly, more diversely human."[37]

However, Southern audiences seem to apply different standards to Inuit art. Annalisa Seagrave argues that while the Western art market tends to embrace the avant-garde it does not expect this of Inuit art:

> "The enthusiasm the South has for what is new and different is frequently not extended to Inuit art. Rather, it is generally those things that the South perceives to be 'traditionally' or 'authentically' Inuit that are valued."[38]

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[35] George Swinton, "Memories of Eskimo Point 1967-1979", Eskimo Point/Arviat, (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1982) p. 13.

[36] For example, Swinton referred to John Pangnark as "the Brancusi of the North" (p. 14) and described Cape Dorset's artistic (sculptural) style as "more Baroque" than that of the Arctic Quebec community of Povungnituk (p. 21) in George Swinton, Sculpture of the Eskimo (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart) 1972.

[37] Clifford discusses the similarities between "tribal" and modern objects in regard to the 1984 exhibition "Primitivism in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern" at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The Predicament of Culture (Cambridge: Harvard University Press) 1988, p. 191.

When Inuit art was initially marketed in the South, it was generally not perceived as an "important" fine art form in the South even though it was eagerly collected and a staggering demand had been created for it. Since the Inuit did not have a word for "art" in their language, the first generation did not consider themselves to be "artists" as such. In the late 1940s and through to the early 1960s, people's limited understanding of Inuit culture led many to perceive Inuit sculpture as a kind of curio or craft. Once the initial novelty of the art wore off and the commercial success of the Inuit art market was established it presented new problems for academics. The real difficulty ensued when Southern scholars and enthusiasts endeavoured to define or catagorize the art and attempted to fit it into a theoretical perspective.

How is Inuit sculpture to be categorized (if at all) to adequately explain and present it to its Southern audience? Comparisons with European examples could be perceived as an ethnocentric and inappropriate practice, and defining a geographic area or an entire community of individual artists by a sweeping "regional style" can promote a homogenous view of Inuit art. Furthermore, there is an inherent risk in taking a narrow view and "ghettoizing" Inuit art by isolating it as a separate entity and comparing it with like images from within its own culture. Since Inuit art has flourished and regenerated within a relatively short

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[38] Annalisa R. Seagrave, "Regenerations: The Graphic Art of Three Young Artists", Inuit Art Quarterly, Vol. 13, No. 4, Winter, 1998, p. 14.

time period, it may be set within a chronology of its own ancient and recent past. This has been accomplished in a recent publication, Inuit Art (Ingo Hessel, 1998), although the art of well known first and second generation artists are highlighted and works by third generation artists do not appear in this chronology. If a chronological overview of Inuit art were to be applied, the third generation would simply appear at the end of the timeline (i.e. the present day). Since third generation artists have not reached a level of maturity as artists or built a body of work that is recognized in the South, it is difficult to step back and look at their artistic development in an historical context.

Art Historian George Kubler claimed that history should be examined at a distance, once it is "no longer in the condition of active change."[39] Therefore, the artistic development of the third generation of Inuit artists is not served well by a historical timeline and their artistic development can only be chronicled.

In this thesis, however, I propose that the framework of a "generational model" will overcome this limitation somewhat in allowing for a comparative approach. A comparative analysis of the work of three generations will set sculptures by the accepted "masters" of the first and second generation alongside works by the "apprentices" of the third generation, and each might then be appreciated on its

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[39] George Kubler, The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things (New Haven: Yale University) 1962, p. 26

own merits. Even though the life experiences and the sculpture of third generation artists are intrinsically distinctive, the influences that are shaping their art are evident when viewed alongside works of their mentors.

In an abbreviated and somewhat simplified view of an art historical theory put forth by George Kubler, the form of manmade things such as art is changed by "events" and perpetuated by "signals". The "event" is an original impulse and the "signal" is the perpetuation of a past event. Kubler conjectured that art throughout history is changed by an "event" when an individual discovers a solution to a formal artistic problem. Also at play, however, are the social circumstances that allow the artist's efforts to be acknowledged. According to Kubler, without a good "entrance" an artist "is in danger of wasting his time as a copyist regardless of temperament and training."[40] If one applies Kubler's "events", "signals" and "entrances" to the history of Inuit art, it may shed light upon the third generation's present position in the sequence of time.

Notwithstanding the catalyst of the actual "event" of the beginning of contemporary Inuit art, James Houston cannot be credited with creating the appeal of Inuit sculpture to the Southern masses. Perhaps it was the first generation artists - termed "masters" - who pioneered the "event" of popular styles and subject matter in art that appealed to the Southern market. From this

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[40] George Kubler, The Shape of Time (New Haven: Yale University Press) 1962, p. 6

event, a "signal" was created when the success of the new idea is relayed to other artists in the community who adopted, interpreted and capitalized on the past event until another solution to a formal artistic problem was achieved. Kubler contends that "a work of art is not only the residue of an event but it is its own signal, directly moving other makers to repeat or to improve its solution."[41]

The solutions of working predominantly with power tools, giving the works a high polish or introducing new subject matter and materials were modifications of the existing signal developed by the second generation.

In this way, the events and signals that have come to define Inuit art in general affect young artists. Compelled to create sculpture that is informed by historic events, signals and established solutions, third generation artists have not yet sought new aesthetic solutions to satisfy an easily bored market. Indeed, the third generation may not have a clear idea of the problems in order to formulate new solutions. Perhaps Kubler might say that third generation artists simply have the misfortune of a "bad entrance" as latecomers in an established tradition, and are in danger of being relegated as "copyists" despite their talent and training.

However, one must also consider the impact of the Southern market's indifference to young artists' work. Although third generation sculpture is derivative of styles, techniques and subject matter employed by their elders, the

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[41] George Kubler, The Shape of Time (New Haven: Yale University Press) 1962, p. 21

market also influences the decisions of what and how to carve. It is, after all, the market that ultimately determines what the sculpture will sell for. A single Inuit sculpture can, therefore, be viewed as an embodiment of both of these influences simultaneously. While the carving reflects traditional values it also responds to the demands of the Southern market.

For example, a recent sculpture by Mosesie (Moe) Pootoogook entitled *Diving Bear* (Figure 3) will illustrate this point. The popular subject matter of a bear was elected for this sculpture with the knowledge that it would raise the sale price. The style and technique that Moe employs are also notable features in the work of famous first generation Cape Dorset sculptor Pauta Saila, seen in the example of *Dancing Bear* (Figure 4). In comparing both sculptures, one will note how the similar styles create the illusion of an anthropomorphic beast that almost defies gravity as it is caught in movement.

Like Pauta and many other carvers, Moe opted to use electric power tools in the creation of this sculpture - he sanded it for a smooth surface and completed it with a glossy polish - a process observed and invariably practised by most third generation artists. Moe's work successfully meets the demands of the Southern market while satisfying his own immediate financial needs as well as following the traditions and innovations of carving within his own community. The past event

and the resultant signal are apparent. So why are sculptures by third generation artists like Moe still not familiar or successful in the Southern art arena?

This question is not easily answered. Perhaps the current Southern art market has developed an oversupply and a diminished demand for contemporary Inuit art. Indeed, the demand for older works by well-known first generation artists continues to be strong. Now that Inuit art is no longer considered a novel, fresh or naïve art form, is the Southern market less responsive to works by young artists? Perhaps another complicating factor is the lack of information on these young artists.

Young artists' relative lack of maturity is also an important issue. In the Southern marketplace, artistic experience is unduly valued over inexperience. In fact, it is uncommon in any cultural circumstance for the accomplishments of young artists to receive the same acclaim as mature artists who have honed a full body of work over a period of several decades.[42] However, young artists are also hampered by the Southern perception that contemporary Inuit art is in a state of decline. In this way, the main concern is that young artists may never achieve the success of their elders regardless of their efforts. While small in scale and modestly valued in the Southern market, the works by third generation artists are more self-conscious and ambitious in their intent as they strive to live up to established

[42] Marion E. Jackson, Personal communication, November 14, 1998

standards and trends. Therefore, sculptures by third generation artists could be regarded as undiscovered treasures that respond to a complicated tangle of socio-economic issues.

The exclusion of the third generation in Inuit art publications, collections and many exhibitions also speaks to issues of Southern acceptance/recognition and of quality. Even though many of the third generation artists have been carving for up to ten or even fifteen years their work has not yet been recognized as "important" in the South. Their relative youth has placed the third generation in the role of "apprentices," overshadowed by their famous elders whose work has come to exemplify Inuit art.

Art created by well-known first and second generation carvers is in high demand for private and public collections, while many third generation artists are still struggling to sell their work in their own local market. One might wonder if the qualitative judgements of the Southern market will ever recognize the third generation as "important" artists in the same way first generation artists are revered. Speaking generally about Inuit sculpture, Charles Martijn considered the ultimate demise of the "modern phase" as it existed at the time he wrote this article in the mid-1960s:

> "Despite all new stylistic influences, the modern carving phase though not 'primitive' art, is still Eskimo art and distinctively so. Particularly at its

inception, it possessed a degree of vitality and inspiration probably unmatched in comparable situations of culture contact across the globe."[43]

Martijn touches on a qualitative issue when he alludes to the fact that Inuit carving "particularly at its inception" was vital and inspired. In the next paragraph of the same article, Martijn argues that Inuit carvers have not faithfully maintained a "high level of creative expression", and that "expanding commercial opportunities have had a corrupting effect, and the percentage of uninspired and indifferent work has steadily risen."[44]

According to anthropologist Edmund Carpenter, Inuit sculpture was *never* a true expression of Inuit culture, as he posed the question: "Can the word 'Eskimo' legitimately be applied to this modern stone art? I think not. Its roots are Western; so is its audience."[45]

Statements such as these allude to issues of quality and authenticity that have been ongoing among experts in the field (i.e. scholars, dealers and collectors alike) that the "Golden Age" of Inuit art began and ended with the first generation of artists, and that subsequent works are not culturally authentic. With this pattern of thinking then, second and third generations are seen as copyists if they merely repeat the formula of the first generation carvers, but are equally condemned if

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[43] Charles Martijn, "A Retrospective Glance at Canadian Eskimo Carving", The Beaver, Autumn 1967, p. 105

[44] Martijn, "A Retrospective Glance at Canadian Eskimo Carving", The Beaver, 1967, p. 105

[45] Edmund Carpenter, Eskimo Realities, (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston), 1973, p. 194

they explore new directions with different subject matter and materials. When the next generations carve the traditional hunting scenes, igloo dwellings or rough, unpolished works in the hallmark styles their elders created and are known for, young artists are said to be artistically uninspired and stagnant. But when young carvers break new ground with innovative subject matter or use imported materials and power tools, their work is criticized as not being "Inuit."

Marybelle Mitchell maintains that contemporary sculpture is not less "Inuit" because of the variety of materials, tools and subject matter used in the sculpture produced today:

> "Although some commentators persist in believing that the older art was more 'Inuit' - that is to say, more spontaneous - I believe the opposite to be true. Having more options available to them, younger artists are freer to be spontaneous. More restricted in terms of materials, tools and selling opportunities, the older-generation artists were more likely to pay attention to directives from southern marketers." [i.e. the 1951 carving manual written and illustrated by James Houston published by the Canadian Guild of Crafts and the federal government, distributed in the north to inform carvers what "the white men like best".][46]

Certainly third generation artists are *freer* to be more spontaneous, but many continue to follow similar directives from the Southern market and produce popular imagery to ensure sale of their work. This point is discussed further in Chapter 4. While Inuit of all generations continue to create, explore and develop

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[46] Marybelle Mitchell, "Inuit Art is Inuit Art: Part One", Inuit Art Quarterly, (Vol.12, No. 1) Spring 1997, p. 12

their artistic expressions, experts in the South (those whom Mitchell calls "commentators") debate the future of Inuit art.

Issues of quality have also been debated concerning the work of young artists. A heated battle ensued in 1995 after a newspaper article appeared in The Winnipeg Free Press entitled "Inuit art losing its soul: expert" in which Inuit art authority and collector George Swinton spoke of the decline of Inuit sculpture, which he believes coincides with the Westernization of Inuit culture:

> "Before [in the 1950s] people did not know what art was, so they were carving and there was quite a bit of soul in it. And that soul is now disappearing. I think that is very symptomatic of the Inuit being in a terrible transition."[47]

According to Swinton, "the nouveau Inuit art" is slick, polished, more naturalistic and detailed (perhaps now that Inuit know "what art is"). Even though Swinton regards contemporary subject matter like "images of snowmobiles and helicopters" as "symptomatic" of the changes in the North, the real problem, he claims, lies in the actual technique; in which "...skill [is] overtaking the art" - or the technique subverts the talent.[48] Apparently, Swinton was saddened by the changes he saw in Arviat when he revisited the community in 1995, and he felt that carving workshops, power tools and the pressure to produce art had

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[47] George Swinton quoted in an article by Gordon Sinclair Jr., "Inuit art losing its soul: expert", Winnipeg Free Press, June 13, 1995, cover page

[48] George Swinton quoted in an article by Gordon Sinclair Jr., "Inuit art losing its soul: expert", Winnipeg Free Press, June 13, 1995, cover page

manifested an "assembly line" mentality in which artists only carve to substitute welfare.[49]

Not surprisingly, Swinton's comments in this article generated a heated flow of letters to the editor. The issue of quality was then disputed among several scholars.[50] But this is an issue that has been debated since the 1960s. R.G. Robertson reflected on carving as an "industry" and the problems it poses for Southern consumers:

> "The romantics who say that Eskimos must stare at the sky and create only what the spirits tell them with no reference to commercial influences are just being unrealistic - and the Eskimo is a realist. There is no doubt a minority of artists in any part of the world who turn their backs on all possibility of selling their works. They exist in about the same proportion in the Arctic as anywhere else. The average Eskimo artist probably makes about the same kind of compromise between art and commerce as his southern colleague. Consideration of what people want to buy has certainly influenced much of what is produced."[51]

Similarly, Norman Zepp (former curator of the Inuit art collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario) takes a different approach to the qualitative issue, believing that each work of art can stand on its own merits, regardless of economic motivation or materials used. The success with which the artist has expressed

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[49] George Swinton quoted in an article by Gordon Sinclair Jr., "Inuit art losing its soul: expert", Winnipeg Free Press, June 13, 1995, cover page

[50] See "Inuit art has soul despite critic", Darlene Wight, (Winnipeg Free Press, June 17, 1995) followed by Swinton's retort, "Inuit at letters raise a smile" (Free Press, June 24, 1995) and "Artless Condescension" (Free Press, July 5, 1995) by Cynthia Cook.

[51] R.G. Robertson, "The Carving Industry of Arctic Canada", The Commerce Journal, Spring, 1960, p. 53-54

himself or herself is cited by Zepp as the key to qualitative discernment:

> "Acknowledgement of the element of self-expression is paramount if one is to accept any art form as significant. I believe the element of self-expression cannot be summarily dismissed even in the case of those artists who find the production of art not much more than an attractive alternative to wage earning."[52]

However, Zepp also recognizes that the context in which art is produced has an effect on the *kind* of art produced. In this way, Zepp touches on issues of authenticity and quality:

> "In order to fully appreciate an art form the importance of individualism *and* quality must not be underestimated. Art is not produced in a vacuum. The totality of one's experiences is brought to bear directly and indirectly on one's art; the land, the climate, materials available, religion and life style (past and present) all are determining factors as to 'kind' of art produced."[53]

If the element of self-expression is paramount to issues of authenticity and quality then it is possible for third generation artists to find their own form of expression reflecting their lives and their culture. In this view, Inuit sculpture may remain a dynamic expression of the ever-changing and growing culture, and each artist can give form to his or her own unique perspective, as authentic self expression can occur in any context regardless of motivation, technique or subject matter.

On the other hand, if one subscribes to Swinton's view that the contemporary

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[52] Norman Zepp, "Contemporary Inuit Art: Acculturation and Ethnicity", Pure Vision: the Keewatin Spirit (Saskatchewan: Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, University of Regina, 1986) p. 27

[53] Norman Zepp, "Contemporary Inuit Art: Acculturation and Ethnicity", Pure Vision, 1986, p. 28

work is overtly "slick," formulaic and "soulless" the third generation may never be able to achieve the greatness of their elders because that kind of greatness only existed in "the irredeemable past."[54]

How then, can young artists carry on the traditions of their elders and aspire to achieve the same kind of success, while forging their own unique expression that appeals to a contemporary audience? Does it matter what an artist's incentives to create are if he/she has been successful at making something "great?" Do economic incentives hinder authenticity of expression - or do they enable it? Is the difference between great art and what Swinton calls "welfare art" a matter of proficiency with the tools, materials and technique, or is it simply a question of talent?

Since such views held by the Southern public ultimately effect the prosperity of the third generation of Inuit sculptors, it is useful to examine these issues and perhaps predict what the future holds for this new generation of artists. Will they be able to continue the legacy given to them by their grandparents and parents? There is a great deal of pressure upon these youths, who must learn from their elders and compete with them in the same market, even though they are removed from it geographically. With so many young people trying their hand at carving,

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[54] George Swinton, Arviat/Eskimo Point (Vancouver, Marion Scott Gallery) 1989, foreword - also see quote on page 40 of this thesis.

is it harder for sculptors to "make it" in the industry? How important is carving to young artists now? These are a few of the current issues facing young carvers, which shall be investigated further in the following chapters.

Chapter 4

CARVING TO SURVIVE: LEARNING THE BUSINESS OF ART

The production of sculpture is an established industry in the Canadian Arctic. It has been a viable means for Inuit to earn a living for the past fifty years. Third generation artists have grown up with this knowledge and have been surrounded by carvers in their own family or within their community. A third generation carver from Clyde River, Esa Qillaq recalls admiring the freedom and satisfaction he perceived other carvers realizing, which prompted his own desire to carve:

> "I use to watch an elder carving and I envied him for making what he wanted to carve. He made money from it, he enjoyed it, and I really envied him. He use to carve in the mornings and I would watch him carving at the foot of his door while I was on my way to school, and I think I started [carving] from there because of him."[55]

Influenced by their surroundings, motivated in part by economic necessity and instructed by their elders, young carvers endeavour to continue the legacy passed down to them by their grandparents and parents.

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[55] Esa Qillaq in an interview with William Qamukaq, Inuit Art Information Centre, INAC, February, 1997

Much like a family business or a master's art studio during the Western Renaissance, third generation Inuit artists assume the role of "apprentices" to their mentors. Young carvers learn a great deal about technique and style by watching their chosen mentor(s). It is an instructive period, in which many young artists develop their own style and test the market to gauge their success, to see whether their work meets with approval and fetches a good price. The art of the third generation is a product of two major forces: on one hand, it reflects the instructional influences of their mentor in style, subject matter or technique, and on the other hand, it is made ultimately to appeal to an outside market.

This is a potentially conflicting situation - young artists must learn from their elders and compete with them in the same market. But perhaps because there is a sense of distance (geographically and culturally) between the artists and the Southern art market, there does not seem to be a strong feeling of competition between generations clamouring to "make it" in the business of art. Instead, young artists seem to admire the work of seasoned sculptors and respect their accomplishments, aspiring to attain the same excellence in their own work. Furthermore, some older generation artists actively encourage young artists to carve.[56]

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[56] In Arviat, for example, first generation artists Eric Anoee and Jacob Irkok have instructed carving techniques to young artists in a formal "workshop" setting.

In this chapter, the process of "apprenticeship" will be examined as it pertains to the emerging third generation of sculptors. Older-generations' thoughts, the opinions of those in charge of purchasing carvings, and testimonies by the third generation (in particular, their perception of the market) inform this investigation.

With so many young people trying their hand at carving, is it harder for sculptors to "make it" in the industry? Although many of the young artists interviewed felt that there were more carvers today than in years before, carving is not for everyone. In fact, many young artists carve only occasionally, depending on availability of materials and proper tools but social circumstances may also factor in, such as job availability, as well as personal directives - i.e., deciding when and if to carve at all. Arviat resident Ben Hannak testified to the element of talent required when pursuing this vocation:

> "I know carving is hard work because I tried it a couple of times. I wasn't any good, so I decided to go on with something else. Some of the carvers here make their living out of carving and they can make a good living from it."[57]

Many artists look at carving as a job, and commit so many hours or days (per week or per month) to be spent carving. Clyde River sculptor Andrew Iqalukjuak estimated that he produces "three carvings per month."[58] Instead of estimating the amount of time spent carving, Andrew's focus was on the end result: his efficiency in terms of carvings produced. Igah Hainnu (also of Clyde River) is a

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[57] Ben Hannak, Salesperson at Lumber Supply Ltd. Personal communication, Arviat, October 3, 1998

mother of four children and works full time as a teacher at the local school. When asked how often she carves, Igah replied "in the summertime, when school is out."[59] In this way, Igah, like other carvers who have found other employment will carve as time permits for extra cash and possibly for enjoyment.

In Cape Dorset, half of the young carvers interviewed said that they carved at least every other day. In contrast, many young Arviat and Clyde River carvers said that they would carve more often if they knew they could sell their work. Maggie Qayaq of Clyde River said "I used to carve everyday, but I slowed down because the Northern store is not buying now."[60]

An important and uncontrollable influence is brought to light by the comments of these young carvers, particularly in Clyde River. The Southern market has recently ebbed which in turn effects the local economy; the buying power of the co-ops or the North West Company/Northern stores is reduced, and the young unknown carvers are the first to be turned away.

At times like these[61] when the Southern market has slowed down, a back-log of inventory creates a "bottle neck" effect in the Southern warehouses. Since the

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[58] Andrew Iqalukjuak, Personal Interview, Clyde River, September 7, 1997

[59] Igah Hainnu, Personal Interview, September 7, 1997

[60] Maggie Qayaq, Personal Interview, September 6, 1997

[61] The early 1980s saw a drastic lull in sales of Inuit sculpture, as has 1997-1998

buying power of the wholesalers becomes limited, a list of "major" or well-known artists whose work is currently in demand is drafted at the WBEC co-op in Cape Dorset and the Northern stores in all three communities. From such a list, only carvings made by those designated as "popular" artists are purchased because carvings by established artists are still in demand in the Southern market, but unknown, or uncelebrated carvers pose a financial risk for the buyers. Unfortunately, this predicament now occurs more often, leaving many young carvers few alternatives for selling their sculpture.

This situation may not necessarily be different from the downturn of the market in 1980-82 when the second-generation carvers were struggling to make a living for themselves. If this is in fact the case, a recurrent economic cycle may be in operation but with more well-known second generation artists gaining or maintaining popularity, the competition is stiff and the outcome for many young carvers is dire.

In Arviat there are several options where young carvers may sell their work. These include: local individuals, Kiluk Ltd. the sewing shop that purchases some carvings, Arctic Traders Inc. and the Co-op store, but none are consistent enough that young carvers can rely on them as purchasers. In Cape Dorset there are more individual buyers, the WBEC, Northern stores and the Polar Supply to which young carvers may sell their carvings. But when WBEC *and* Northern store limits

its purchases to a list of "well known" carvers (which was the case during my visit in 1997) many young carvers are left with few places to turn. With the exception of artists such as Toonoo Sharky and Kingwatsiak Jaw, very few young carvers appear on this list. In Clyde River, the situation is much more desperate for young carvers when the Southern market reaches a saturation point. The department that purchases carvings at the Northern store shuts down indefinitely (until such time as a renewed demand recurs in the Southern warehouse). In 1997 in Clyde River, the Northern store had closed its doors to all but a few well known carvers, thus eliminating all possibilities for young carvers to sell their art locally. While most artists stopped carving entirely, others continued to carve, preparing for the indeterminate day when the Northern store would purchase their art once again. Some of the artists in the community expressed a deep resentment toward the Northern store because they hold a great deal of power and control over artists trying to support their families. To struggling young artists, it is discouraging to work productively when they are not always able to sell their work. When they do sell their work, young artists are not certain they are receiving a fair price since there are not many alternatives. Frustrated by the inconsistency of the Northern store, one Clyde River carver took the initiative to contact Southern galleries or collectors and attempt direct sales.[62] However,

[62] In the summer of 1997 while working at the Inuit Art Information Centre of Indian and Northern Affairs, I received a request from Clyde River artist Esa Qillaq for a selected listing of Inuit art galleries to whom he wished to sell his carvings directly. Other artists claim to have received commissions and are able to sell directly to collectors.

many of the young artists whom I interviewed had stopped carving soon after the Northern store closed its doors to them.

Although this situation is true for many art-producing communities, it does not seem to be improving with time. Terry Ryan, manager of the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative predicted that a consignment strategy might be forced upon them in the near future if the market continues to drag.

> "...[Some] young carvers don't have realistic ideas about the market. The Northern store shut its doors to carvers - they weren't buying so they come [to the WBEC] but it is only buying from a select list of carvers right now - even Kiawak [Ashoona] was turned away! The carvers are very upset... there is the feeling among the co-op that desperate times call for desperate measures. The word no artist wants to hear is 'consignment', but the bottom line is inventory control. It's the inventory that doesn't move that hurts the business." [63]

The manager of the Northern store in Clyde River confirmed much of what Ryan had lamented. Northern ceased purchasing carvings in the spring of 1997 and resumed in January of 1998, only to stop indefinitely once more in April. With a selected list of five well-known carvers, the situation for young carvers in Clyde River seems bleak indeed.

However, in the face of such discouraging circumstances, some young carvers continue to carve, remaining hopeful and seeking the advice of those with experience to help them succeed in today's tough market. In Arviat, young artists

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[63] Terry Ryan, Personal communication, August 27, 1997

have benefited from the support and advice of Nick Lebessis, former resident (of 25 years) and owner of several commercial art galleries located in Alberta and British Columbia. Wanting to give young carvers much needed exposure in the Southern market, Lebessis initiated two exhibitions entitled Arviat: Artists of the Past Present and Future and Treasures to Behold[64] which included a selection of sculpture by third generation Arviat artists. Lebessis articulated the young artists' predicament in Arviat:

> "Young people [in Arviat] are capable of creating different kinds of art - there is what they're able to sell for consumption to the local market, and what they can create when they're not trying to please anyone but themselves - what they can identify with personally. ...Art for art's sake is a luxury they do not have - they are under a lot of pressure, and there is a lot of unemployment. The other problem is that there is no infrastructure to promote the art - there is a promising young group of artists ...[but the art] needs some nurturing...."[65]

Indeed, Lebessis has had a positive effect in Arviat on the third generation and their art. Lebessis has encouraged them to create work - not to please anyone - but to create something they can identify with personally. He contends that once these artists are given the freedom to please themselves, they will (and do) create something "truly inspired." [66] Arviat artists seem to agree; many of the young carvers identified Lebessis as their main source of encouragement to continue

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[64] Arviat: Artists of the Past Present and Future was held in Vancouver at the Inuit Gallery of Vancouver in 1997 and Treasures to Behold was held in Lake Louise at Northern Art Impressions in 1997. Both exhibitions published illustrated catalogues.

[65] Nick Lebessis, Personal communication, July 12, 1998

[66] Nick Lebessis, Personal communication, July 12, 1998

carving. Third generation carver, Daniel Alareak commented:

> "I think it's harder for young carvers today to sell their work, because the new generation has no market for their work. There are a few elders here who are well known [for their sculpture]. The Northern store buys from them because only the well-known [carvers] are eligible to sell there. It's hard to find a buyer in this small town, and the co-op is [too] cheap. But when Nick comes to town, it seems like there are more carvers. That's when we [young carvers] are all busy carving."[67]

While young Cape Dorset carvers seem to receive some support and constructive criticism from the staff at the WBEC, young Clyde River carvers seem to rely more heavily on pointers from their (Inuit) mentors. In Cape Dorset, assistant manager of the WBEC Jimmy Manning has been buying art for the co-operative since 1972. He offers advice to encourage young artists to reach their potential and ultimately receive a higher price for their carvings. In a 1996 interview, Jimmy declared:

> "...it's very important now that we're trying to give the message to the younger people that they [should] do good work – quality – and that they're not just rushing for Friday and getting a little bit of money for [the weekend]. Sometimes a younger carver will come in and I will tell the person 'You started real good, too bad it's Friday,' you know. 'Could you work it more and bring it [back] on Monday?' That happens."[68]

At the same time, some of the older artists themselves seemed to think that selling their work to the co-op has become more difficult when only famous

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[67] Daniel Alareak, Personal Interview, Arviat, October 5, 1998

[68] Jimmy Manning in an interview with Shannon Bagg, June 12, 1996 in "Without Carving How Would I Survive?: Economic Motivation and its Significance in Contemporary Inuit Art", unpublished M.A. thesis (Ottawa: Carleton University, 1997) p. 42

carvers' work is accepted. Renowned second generation Cape Dorset sculptor Kananginak Pootoogook contended:

> "I think there is a big change right now for the younger artists. Back then it seems like [the co-op] would buy the young people's carvings. They aren't buying the work of the young people now even though they are well made. It's a lot different now. The younger artists are having a harder time than we did."[69]

Similarly, second generation artist Paulassie Pootoogook who is also a renowned sculptor in his own right, reflected upon how the increased exclusivity of the co-op affects young carvers:

> "I have seen younger people carving (not only my own kids) who try to do a good job because they know it is important.... Back when we first started carving the carvings weren't polished and [they] looked like unfinished art. Today the younger people from the ages of fourteen to nineteen do detailed carvings. ...young people who carve try to make [their work] perfect. I do see a difference. Today carvings are shinier and more polished than what we used to work on."[70]

It is interesting that Paulassie sees the younger artists' work as being *better* than the older generation's art because it is "shinier and more polished" - what Swinton refers to as "skill overtaking the art."

One might also reflect on both Kananginak and Paulassie's testimony to the changes that they have observed on the youths' behalf. Both artists commented

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[69] Kananginak Pootoogook in an interview with Shannon Bagg, June 13, 1996 in "Without Carving How Would I Survive?" 1997, p. 45

[70] Paulassie Pootoogook in an interview with Shannon Bagg, June 19, 1996 in "Without Carving How Would I Survive?" 1997, p. 47

on how the art as well as the market have changed and how this affects struggling young carvers. Could it be that the first and second generation carvers have developed and established a precedent of high quality in the co-op as well as in the expectations of retailers and collectors alike? With such expectations upon them, young artists might find themselves faced with these demands early in their artistic careers as they attempt to "measure up" to their predecessors, and to attain the same sense of worth, be it economic or social. Famous second-generation sculptor Kiawak Ashoona (born 1933, son of Pitseolak Ashoona) touched on this point when he remarked:

> "Young people are carving today and although the co-op hardly buys from young people (especially [those starting out]), there are other stores...that buy from young people and that is helping them get money. It makes them satisfied when they have their carvings bought."[71]

Here, Kiawak recognizes the sense of self worth that can be derived from selling ones carvings. Indeed, having renown in the Southern art market (and getting paid well for ones work) and being well respected in the community are usually synonymous. Interestingly, when I asked young carvers if they could remember *when* they sold their first carving, most could not identify a specific year. However, in an attempt to answer the question some recalled *what* they carved (a seal or a walrus for example) and more significantly, some artists even

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[71] Kiawak Ashoona in an interview with Shannon Bagg, June 20, 1996 in "Without Carving How Would I Survive?" 1997, p. 47

remembered *how much they were paid* for that first carving.[72] Furthermore, some artists could even recall *who* purchased that first carving from them (whether it was a tourist, the co-op or a specific person such as an art advisor). It seemed that with this latter response came a cheerful expression. Perhaps these artists were remembering that first moment that they felt the self-satisfaction of selling their work - receiving positive reinforcement for their efforts - of which Kiawak Ashoona spoke.

The self-affirmation and financial rewards of selling ones work are an apparent impetus for young carvers. However, Darlene Wight has suggested that the Inuit art marketing system and its emphasis on consumer tastes is restrictive for artists:

> "Although arts and crafts provide much-needed income in the North, Inuit artists must recognize the goals of self-expression and communication as valid, and they must look outside the marketing system for the furtherance of their aesthetic goals. They must establish links with each other and with knowledgeable experts who can provide wise and stable support for individual development and experimentation."[73]

To respond to this point, young artists in communities such as Clyde River lack feedback from such "knowledgeable experts" and yet they seem less restricted in their art, producing imaginative, whimsical pieces. One need only consider, for

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[72] Of the 34 young artists interviewed, eleven young carvers (32%) remembered the subject of their first carving as well as what they were paid for it. Another ten artists (29%) recalled only the subject of their first carving. Seven artists (21%) remembered the year (or their approximate age) when they sold their first carving. The remaining six artists (18%) could not recollect when they sold their first carving.

[73] Darlene Wight, "Inuit Tradition and Beyond: New Attitudes Toward Art-Making in the 1980s," Inuit Art Quarterly Spring 1991, p. 15

example, the work of Clyde River brothers Isaac and Saitukie Tassugat (Figures 25 and 26) or Goola Paneak (Figure 12) to witness the freedom with which they express their imagination in their work.

On the other hand, one might consider that many of the "knowledgeable experts" (such as co-op managers and art advisors) are actually *part* of the marketing system that the young artists take their cues from. In Cape Dorset, young artists seem to have more support and constructive input from the co-op, yet many tend to work modestly, not daring to experiment with new materials or subject matter, concerning themselves in most cases with a "sure sell". In Arviat, however, young artists seem to flourish when sensitive guidance is available.

Second generation artists have also had a major impact on the aesthetic development of young artists. The innovations of the second generation - aspects such as inventive new subject matter, the use of different materials and new carving techniques - have inspired third generation artists who admire the success and bold creativity that the second generation have cultivated.

Consequently, one is left wondering what *is* limiting third generation carvers: is it merely an economic downturn that has stifled their growth/success in the Southern market, or are there simply too many first and second generation artists that are already in demand today? Since their famous elders have overshadowed these young artists, is it because of "quality" issues or a question of "authenticity"

in the minds/preferences of the Southern market? The Southern Inuit art market has become a competitive "connoisseur's market" in which the age of the work and the renown of the artist largely dictates the value of the work. Third generation artists generally work modestly in smaller scale sculpture; this factor, coupled with their relative anonymity in the Southern market means that their work does not command a high price.

The greatest difficulty for many young artists is their geographic separation from the market. While their exposure to Southern influences is far greater than what previous generations have experienced, young artists' aesthetic direction is still taken mostly from their own world, in their own community and often in their own home. By watching and learning from mentors (often elders), the fledgling artists persevere in hopes of learning the secrets of success for which their mentors are admired.

However, one cannot subscribe to the false assumption that *everything* Inuit produce is art. Indeed, expectations of quality and artistic merit must apply to Inuit of all generations. The frustrations of the third generation are directly related to the contemporary reality of the Southern art market. Terry Ryan contended:

> "Young artists have a limited view of the art market. So much of the frustration among the youth arises from a false assumption that there should be a market for all their efforts."[74]

Indeed, what the sculpture produced by the first generation lacked in technical perfection it made up for in freshness and naiveté. The sculpture of the second generation has demonstrated a notable mastery of form and technical prowess. Now third generation artists are faced with the challenge to find new solutions to appeal to an increasingly unresponsive Southern art market.

The socio-economic influences and circumstances that both limit and motivate young carvers to carry on the carving traditions that their elders have pioneered are evident so attention can now turn to the art itself. The talent, imagination and overall aesthetic statement that the sculpture of the third generation represents may be illustrated in selected examples of their work.

How important is carving to young artists now? Some of the practical motivations to carve are apparent, but what actually *inspires* them? How is their art different from or similar to older-generation sculpture stylistically? Chapter 5 will attempt to illuminate such an inquiry.

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[74] Terry Ryan, Personal communication, November 19, 1998

Chapter 5

CARVING TO ESTABLISH AN IDENTITY: THE THIRD GENERATION

Simultaneous forces affect the lives of third generation artists and their art reflects these influences. On the one hand, the third generation retain many elements of their traditional culture; they speak Inuktitut at home; they enjoy recreational outings on the land and learning the traditional ways of their elders. On the other hand, they are more acculturated than their predecessors; they have grown up watching television, playing video games and shopping at the local store for food, clothing and/or tools. Third generation artists are working toward their own identity as they build their future, finding their place in history. Most have not reached the social status of a respected sculptor and do not enjoy the comforts of that success.

Third generation artists are struggling for recognition within their community and in the outside world where their carvings are marketed. At a young age many carvers strive to be keenly aware of the demands that exist in the Southern

market. While each community in this study has Arctic College campuses available to them for formal training many young artists have learned more about carving in their own homes. Many learn directly from their grandparents and parents how and what to carve. They are literally given the tools to earn a living and find their own creative expression through carving, but the rest is up to the individual. Whether they work diligently or occasionally, mimic the work of their teacher(s) or develop a unique style, the materials and subject matter they choose reflect environmental and social factors as well as personal preference and capability.

Carving Materials

It has been noted in Chapter 2 that environmental factors usually determine the materials available to carvers. Preferred carving styles and materials are specific to the individual artist but availability of materials and tools affects productivity. The introduction of electrically powered tools allowed artists to work more rapidly but they also opened a world of possibilities, giving artists more freedom to create larger or more intricate sculpture. Unlike their elders, however, young artists rarely work in larger scale sculpture. Some have dared to carve new materials such as marble (indigenous to Cape Dorset and Clyde River) which is known for its hard and brittle qualities. The young artists must become accustomed to the mediums and learn to understand their properties. While learning technique from

their elders, they develop dexterity with the tools available to them and learn to manipulate the medium. It is at this point that young carvers develop a preference for a particular carving material - be it antler, stone, ivory or bone.[75]

Artists expressed definite preferences for their favourite carving mediums based on their experience. In Arviat, the young carvers' medium of preference was stone. In Cape Dorset, most artists interviewed expressed satisfaction with the local stone, usually serpentine, as their carving medium of choice. Kakee Peter claimed that he had "never carved anything else [but local stone]".[76] Johnny Pootoogook preferred the local stone because it is softer, easier to work with and does not emit a smell when it is carved, as ivory often does.[77] In Clyde River, carvers are more apt to use a variety of materials. Perhaps because of the unreliable supply of stone, some artists have learned to become flexible in more than one medium. Third generation Clyde River carver Silas Natanine likes to carve in marble but says that he usually carves antler because it is more accessible.[78] Another young Clyde River carver, Iola Aulaqia, has worked in stone,

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[75] Of the 34 young artists interviewed, 88% had worked with stone, 59% worked with antler, and 56% worked with ivory or whalebone. In Arviat, 100% carved stone, 80% carved antler, 70% carved ivory, and 20% carved whalebone. In Cape Dorset, 92% carved stone, 16% carved antler, and 8% carved whalebone; no one carved ivory. In Clyde River, 75% carved stone, 83% carved antler, 42% carved ivory, and 33% carved whalebone.

[76] Kakee Peter, Personal Interview, Cape Dorset, August 28, 1997

[77] Johnny Pootoogook, Personal Interview, Cape Dorset, September 2, 1997

[78] Silas Natanine, Personal Interview, Clyde River, September 8, 1997

antler and ivory, but prefers to make sculptures in antler because "they turn out [better]."[79] In this way, artists use what is available to them in their respective communities. While there is no generational difference between materials or tools used, successful artists can afford to purchase larger blocks of stone and better tools with which to carve. Since young artists often cannot afford to purchase tools or large stone blocks, this may account for the smaller scale works that the third generation produces. However, several young artists expressed a desire to create larger-scale work, and looked forward to such an opportunity.[80]

Subject Matter

When deciding what to carve, young artists generally follow the direction the medium suggests. All artists interviewed expressed a preference as to favourite subject matter. Their preference may be linked to which subject matter they are most confident carving (that which they have been carving the longest, or were taught to carve), or subject matter they believe to be the easiest to carve, or which subjects they know will fetch the highest price. For example, when third generation Arviat carver Frank Akammak was asked what was his favourite subject to carve he responded eagerly, "I like to make all different things. I could

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[79] Iola Aulaqia, Personal Interview, Clyde River, September 7, 1997

[80] Third generation Cape Dorset artists Markoosie Papigatok, Johnny Saggiatok, Qiatusq Shaa and Toonoo Sharky expressed an interest in making larger scale sculpture during personal interviews. See each artist's biography in Appendix 1 for details.

carve anything - any subject in any size that someone wants me to."[81] When asked what was her favourite subject to carve, Igah Hainnu of Clyde River replied. "Sedna. I have made over a hundred Sednas. Nurses in Iqaluit ask for them all the time."[82] When Cape Dorset carver Pudlalik Shaa was asked the same question, he explained modestly that he enjoyed carving drum dancers because "they turn out good sometimes."[83] Mosesie Pootoogook replied that dancing bears were his artistic theme of choice because "they're easy to make, and I can get good prices [for them]."[84]

The techniques, style and subject matter that are evident in the carvings of third generation artists have largely been taught and observed through watching their elders. While it is difficult to ascribe a particular style or trend to an entire generation, some characteristics can be loosely applied.

First Generation Sculptural Characteristics

First generation sculpture was created by artists who had lived a traditional life out on the land, so it follows that many of their carvings contained a narrative quality, principally conveying information - describing the life they new best.

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[81] Frank Akammak, Personal Interview, Arviat, October 5, 1998

[82] Igah Hainnu, Personal Interview, Clyde River, September 7, 1997

[83] Pudlalik Shaa, Personal Interview, Cape Dorset, August 28, 1997

[84] Mosesie Pootoogook, Personal Interview, Cape Dorset, August 29, 1997

Their sculpture characteristically told of the spiritual world, the natural world of indigenous animals, or described scenes of everyday life such as a mother with her child in the hood of her amautiq or a man hunting. The first generation carvers worked with a limited range of tools that were often hand made (such as hatchets) which restricted fine detailing, and their work was rarely polished. But it was the first generation whose names became recognized and exalted in the Southern market and with that success came the ability to afford power tools and the confidence to work in large-scale sculpture.[85] First generation artists were the pioneers; their success and mastery of their medium inspired the second generation, who have continued to move forward in the development of Inuit artistic expression, styles and carving techniques.

Characteristics of Sculptures by Second and Third Generation Artists

Some second-generation carvers seem less concerned with describing traditional life in the Arctic than with exploring new artistic pursuits. Even though the second generation artists have become considerably "more acculturated" than their parents, those who are dedicated to following the styles and subject matter of the first generation essentially create a bond with their ancestry and preserve their traditional culture.

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[85] First generation Arviat artist Henry Isluanik, Cape Dorset sculptors Osuitok Ipeelee and Pauta Saila, and Clyde River artists Peter Paneak and Peter Kuniliusie originally carved with hand tools and eventually switched to power tools.

A good example of this is the closeness in style and subject matter of second generation Arviat artist Lucy Tutsweetok, well known for her sensitive portrayals of mother and child and family groups in sculpture. While her sculpture reflects the "minimalist" style that her predecessors (such as John Pangnark and Elizabeth Nutaraluk) pioneered, Lucy has developed her own trademark style that has made her one of the most sought-after sculptors in Arviat today. Lucy taught her daughter how to carve in hopes of passing on the legacy. In an interview with Bernadette Driscoll, Lucy declared, "I would just like to say that I do not want anyone else to copy my style of carving except my daughter. I have taught her to carve so that when I die she can keep on carving."[86]

Using a full range of sculptural conventions and techniques, second generation works are characteristically large scale, highly detailed and polished. Indeed, some sculptures by second-generation artists have indicated underlying political statements or messages in the art that often shocked the Southern Inuit art market. First generation artists did not often use their art as a forum for social commentary, or at least not in a visually explicit or pointed way.[87]

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[86] Lucy Tasseor (Tutsweetok) in an interview with Bernadette Driscoll, in Eskimo Point/Arviat (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Art Gallery) exhibition catalogue, 1982, p. 29

[87] Jean Blodgett, Grasp Tight the Old Ways (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario) 1983, p. 228

While some second-generation carvers continue to follow the style and subject matter their parents created, others have broken this formula and strive to concentrate on innovative and contemporary themes. That is to say, the diversity that can be seen in that of the second generation differs from the "culture-bound" carving style of the first generation. The second generation has displayed a noted interest in portraying aspects of modern life (depicted works by Ovilu Tunnillie) as well as conceptual or symbolic imagery (illustrated in work by George Arluk and Adamie Paneak). Their creative innovations and resultant success have had a direct impact on young artists from within the community.

Cape Dorset artist Ovilu Tunnillie (born 1949) is a notable example of a well-known second-generation innovator. Some of Ovilu's sculpture has spoken honestly about aspects of the modern experience that have affected many Inuit lives. *Woman Passed Out*, 1987, (Figure 5) makes reference to alcohol abuse, and *This Has Touched My Life*, 1991-92 recalls Ovilu's experiences when she was sent to a southern sanatorium for treatment of tuberculosis. Such works were "legitimized" when they were featured in the 1994 landmark exhibit at the Canadian Museum of Civilization entitled Isumavut (meaning "our thoughts").[88] Other works by Ovilu such as *The Skier* and *Football Player* (Figure 6) were inspired by what she had seen on television. Such works immediately caught the

[88] See also the exhibition catalogue entitled Inuit Women Artists: Voices from Cape Dorset (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre) 1994.

attention of the Southern media and made some in the general public aware of their misconceptions and outdated views of how Inuit lived and what Inuit sculpture was supposed to express.

Perhaps because the sculptures produced by many second-generation artists actually reinforce Southern misconceptions and outdated views by repeating the "formula for success" pioneered by the first generation, such innovative and modernistic artistic expressions stand out as the exception and are unsettling to the Southern market. However, innovators like Ovilu Tunnillie of Cape Dorset and George Arluk of Arviat have attained international acclaim and are well respected within their communities for their success.[89]

The adoption of Westernized subject matter in Inuit art was inevitable and predictable as it is an increasingly large part of the Inuit experience. This conscious departure from the conventions of the first generation's subject matter was welcomed and promoted by progressive Inuit art curators, dealers and collectors, thereby quickly elevating such artists to "star status".

[89] To date, Ovilu Tunnillie's work has been featured in 6 commercial solo exhibitions that were held in Canada, the United States and Germany. George Arluk has had 10 commercial solo exhibitions held in Canada, the United States and Germany.

The success and acclaim of Ovilu's contemporary imagery has resonated throughout the community of Cape Dorset and inspired some young artists to explore modern themes. For example, third generation Cape Dorset carver Pootoogook Jaw (born 1959, son of Joe Jaw 1930-1987) has depicted a contemporary scene with meticulous detail in a sculpture entitled *The Musician* (Figure 7). In this work, a longhaired Inuk with an amplifier and electric guitar by his side happily plays an accordion. One cannot help but notice the bottle and cups that are positioned close to *The Musician* and wonder why the artist has chosen to include them in this sculpture. Is this a scene of merriment or social commentary? Is the fact that *The Musician* has chosen to play the accordion (an instrument introduced by the whalers in the 1800s) instead of the modern guitar in fact reminiscent of days when the Inuit knew a simpler and happier way of life? Is this a statement of cultural discontinuity or cultural continuity?

The work of second generation Arviat artist George Arluk is notable for its conceptual imagery. Having attained a level of artistic distinction in the South, George Arluk has moved from the North and has settled in Winnipeg, but his success and his unique sculptural style is still remembered in Arviat. In fact, George Arluk's celebrated abstract, highly polished style can be seen reflected in the work of two admiring third generation carvers: Peter Atatsiak and Willy Mukyungnik.

For example, a comparison of George Arluk's *Untitled* sculpture (Figure 8) with Peter Atatsiak's *Untitled* (Figure 9) and Willy Mukyungnik's *Drum Dancer* (Figure 10) will illustrate this point. Comparing these works, one can quickly see how Peter's and Willy's stylistic approach is derivative of Arluk's abstract approach to the human figure. While Arluk's work is significantly larger, Peter's and Willy's works echo Arluk's trademark style by including "holes" in the sculpture symbolizing the drum, as well as the smooth, undulating, polished curves.

Second generation Clyde River carver Adamie Paneak (born 1952, son of Peter Paneak) has found his own unique form of symbolic expression in his sculpture. *Spring Man* (Figure 11) is a figure that Adamie has carved repeatedly, because it is his trademark design. Adamie created this figure from his own imagination, but the *Spring Man* holds a deep, personal significance for him. Adamie explains:

> "A long time ago before there were rifles, Inuit used to go hungry when the ice was breaking up. That's when it was difficult to hunt for food on the ice. Even though they were hungry and skinny they were still happy because you can't live on food alone. If you really want something and you don't give up, you will reach your goal."[90]

Adamie takes as his inspiration the strength and tenacity of traditional hunters who faced different hardships. When the spring arrives, the ice will break which

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[90] Adamie Paneak, Personal communication, Clyde River, September 5, 1997

will make hunting easier and there will be an abundance of food again. For Adamie, *Spring Man* symbolizes transition as it applies to traditional life as well as the modern life experience. In this way, Adamie has sought an element of cultural continuity as it relates to the day-to-day struggle that he sometimes feels, and witnesses in his family members and throughout his community.[91] While the *Spring Man* may represent a universal message of hope and perseverance, it may also reflect the long economic depression that the carvers in the community of Clyde River have endured like a harsh winter.

When one compares the *Spring Man* to a sculpture made by Adamie's son, third generation artist Goola Paneak, similar stylistic approaches can be noted. Although Goola's *Man* (Figure 12) does not have the symbolic significance that his father has attached to *Spring Man*, the standing figures are remarkably similar in their elongated limbs and accentuated facial features. The hooked nose and stylized hat worn by Goola's *Man* gives this figure a comical tone, while Adamie's *Spring Man* has a more tragic element in its symbolism.

Second generation artists are more aware of themselves as artists than their elders and have the confidence and the curiosity to discover new subject matter and carving materials with which they find artistic expression. Their sculpture can

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[91] Adamie Paneak, Personal communication, Clyde River, September 5, 1997

concentrate on expressive, aesthetic properties rather than conveying information, to serve aesthetic rather than representational ends and they are often prepared to sacrifice naturalistic accuracy for an overall poetic effect.[92]

Traditional Imagery and Popular Subject Matter in Sculpture

Traditional cultural imagery is alive and well in the sculpture of the third generation. Creative spirits and creatures from ancient legends and myths are a popular choice, as are drum dancers, shamanic transformations, mother and child themes, and naturalistic representations of indigenous animals. Carving such "traditional imagery" might simply be a reflection of an established cultural expression. As third generation Arviat carver Billy Kuksuk aptly put it, "...the elders carved from their experience - things like legends - it's from before, but [we] still carve it."[93] Why have many third generation carvers not embraced new, innovative trends in subject matter? Perhaps because they have not yet reached a level of personal maturity that would give them this perspective. Another factor that may play a role in why young artists have not defied established trends may be that they have not yet attained a level of security in the market place with their sculpture or developed a sense of confidence as artists. Whatever the reason,

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[92] Marion Jackson, "Baker Lake Inuit Drawings: A Study in the Evolution of Artistic Self-Consciousness" (Michigan: University of Michigan), 1985, p. 187

[93] Billy Kuksuk, Personal Interview, Arviat, October 5, 1998

young artists often stay with subject matter that is "safe", familiar and sure to get a good price.

The concept of "safe" sculpture surely needs further explanation. Young artists have responded to the preferences of the Southern art market by choosing to create works that are popular: images that are in demand are certain to fetch a good price. For example, it is common knowledge among carvers in the Arctic that images of polar bears (whether dancing or naturalistic) are a "sure sell" when carved with skill and ingenuity. First generation Cape Dorset artist Pauta Saila (born 1916) is internationally renowned for his whimsical *Dancing Bear* sculpture, and is well respected for his commercial success throughout the community. Paulassie Pootoogook, born 1927, a second-generation sculptor in Cape Dorset who has also achieved considerable acclaim, is known for his naturalistic portrayals of polar bears. One can note how these first and second generation artists have influenced, in different ways, the work of third generation carver, Mosesie (Moe) Pootoogook - son of Paulassie.

At the time of the interview, Moe was twenty years old, and had been carving since he was eleven. He claimed to have learned to carve directly from his

father.[94] When asked why bears are his preferred subject matter, Moe responded plainly that he knew he was able to get a good price for them.

When one compares examples of the father and son's typical styles it is evident that Moe's carving style seen in *Diving Bear* (Figure 2) has a dynamic, fluid, abstracted element not found in his father's representational style visible in *Polar Bear* (Figure 16). Hence, one may assume that after learning principles of design such as proportion, balance and form from his father (and choosing the same subject matter), Moe has developed his own work to include a more whimsical and abstract flair. In this way, Moe's work reflects the popular motif of the dancing bear, whose spirited forms are typically seen in Pauta's *Dancing Bears* (see Figure 3) that have always appealed to the Southern market. In this way, the work of (first generation artist) Pauta and (third generation artist) Moe are good stylistic examples of the fondness for "mixing naturalism with theatrical twists" for which Cape Dorset artists have come to be known.[95] In both of these sculptures the bear's movement is central to the composition; as one balances on one hind leg, the other is poised on a front paw. The bear's extremities are reduced to simple, smooth, rounded forms giving each bear a light, fluid, weightless quality. In contrast, Paulassie's naturalistic representation of the polar bear celebrates the

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[94] When asked, Moe identified his father as having taught him how to carve. Mosesie Pootoogook, Personal interview, Cape Dorset, August 29, 1997

[95] Ingo Hessel, Inuit Art (Vancouver: Stewart & McIntyre) 1998, p.37

solid, powerful presence of the mighty animal as it can be observed traversing the land. Realistic details such as the pigeon-toed manner in which the front paws turn in when polar bears walk are observed in this work, and the texture of the fur is delineated with short lines that are etched into the stone. These techniques enhance the massive and majestic character of a creature sensitively observed in its natural environment.

In Arviat, an example of a third generation artist breaking with an established "formula for success" can be seen in the work of Thomas Nibgoarsi, grandson of the famous Arviat sculptor John Pangnark (1920-1980). In contrast to his grandfather's characteristic "minimalist" style featuring an economy of detail and solid, angular forms (Figure 17), Thomas' sculptural approach to figures include fine, delicate detailing and a uniquely complex composition, as seen in the example of a recent *Untitled* work (Figure 18). The spiralling composition of this *Untitled* group of figures gives the group a unified direction, as if in a swirling movement, while each individual face juts out at different points forcing the viewer to move around the work. The coarsely etched texture of flowing hair contrasts with the tangle of smooth, polished and rounded faces and limbs. Fascinated with intricate detail and complex compositions, Thomas' unique artistic expression is an individual pursuit:

"John Pangnark is my mother's father. I am told his art is now very respected. I can't carve like him - I want my images to be seen."[96]

In Clyde River, an example of how traditionalism can be stronger than the desire to appeal to the mass market can be seen in the work of third generation Clyde River artist Billie Kuniliusie. *Hunter*, by Billie, (Figure 19) can be compared with *Two Walrus* by his father Tommy Kuniliusie (Figure 20) and an untitled sculpture of a *Hunter and Bear* by Billie's grandfather, Peter Kuniliusie (Figure 21). In this case, Peter Kuniliusie (born 1930) taught both his son (Tommy) and grandson (Billie) to carve.[97] A second-generation carver, Tommy (born 1952) creates only the standing walrus because this subject matter is his signature carving. Tommy doesn't sign his carvings because his style and subject matter have been consistent since 1974.[98] However, Billie has chosen a style that is similar in naturalism and subject matter (hunting) to his grandfather's work, suggesting a strong traditional influence.

Billie's work is carved from antler and Peter's from stone. Although different mediums have been used in these examples, each sculpture depicts figures that are in motion, capturing the moment when the hunter is about to make his

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[96] Thomas Nibgoarsi, quoted in Arviat: Artists of the Past Present and Future (Vancouver, Inuit Gallery of Vancouver) 1997, p. 12 (figure 17)

[97] Billie Kuniliusie, Personal interview, Clyde River, September 5, 1997

[98] Tommy Kuniliusie, Personal interview, Clyde River, September 5, 1997

conquest - an intense moment and a question of survival. Will the hunter triumph over the animal? Will his skill serve him well? In Peter's carving, the hunter is faced with a polar bear that threatens to attack as it towers over the poised Inuk, but in Billie's carving, the predator (or the prey) is unknown to the viewer. The swift movement in both of these works can be contrasted with the static nature of the *Two Walrus* by Tommy, and also with the stylized, abstracted nature of their anthropomorphic depiction. With a representational style, both Peter and Billie's figures are placed upon a base, enhancing the descriptive, narrative quality of the work as if setting a stage to complete the scene.

Both Peter's and Billie's sculpture display attention to detail and demonstrate mastery of their medium. In Peter's sculpture, dark stone was chosen for the base and the figure of the hunter, while ivory was elected for the stark, looming bear and the hunter's spear, creating sharp contrasts in the composition of the sculpture. The dark, horizontal base echoes the parallel spear, while tension is created between the dark and light vertical figures on the base. In Billie's *Hunter*, contrasts are explored within the singular medium. The dark and light properties that naturally occur in antler are worked ingeniously to create highlights around the hunter's facial features, the etched lines delineating fur around the hood of the parka, and on the edges of the extremities, giving the effect of a light source shining down upon this timeless hunter in action. Darker contrasts of the figure's

clothing are achieved through carving away the light surface of the antler to expose the darker, more porous "marrow" under the surface, which adds a textured effect and contrasts with the smooth, light surface areas.

Some of the artists interviewed in all three communities left me with the impression that the traditional skills practised by the elders while living out on the land are now practically extinct, yet they live on in the sculpture of the third generation. The youth are not tied to the land like their elders were, and many seem to be firmly rooted in their communities. While many young artists do enjoy hunting, fishing or camping out on the land, others rarely leave the confines of the community. Such young artists were not interested in living that way, yet their carvings describe and preserve such traditions in detail.

Female Clyde River carver Igah Hainnu had just completed this traditional *Camp Scene* in 1997 at the time of the interview (see Appendix 1 for illustration of *Camp Scene* in artist's biography). When asked if she would prefer living on the land she said, "...it's too dirty. I would miss my shower."[99] Eli Qillaq (also a third generation Clyde River artist) responded to the same question with "Why would I want to [live on the land]? I live here."[100] Of course, not all young artists actually

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[99] Igah Hainnu, Personal Interview, Clyde River, September 7, 1997

[100] Eli Qillaq, Personal Interview, Clyde River, September 6, 1997

prefer modern life to life out on the land, but they are bound to their community more by financial constraints than their desire to live "traditionally" (excursions out on the land prove costly when one factors the cost of gas, ammunition, transportation, etc.). In fact, many young artists felt that they could think more clearly or had fewer "worries" out on the land when they were able to get away.

Third Generation Sculpture and Its Influences

Now that I have established the first generation carvers as the "pioneers" in sculpture, and the second generation as the "innovators" to a greater or lesser extent, I now turn to focus on third generation artists. At this point in their young artistic careers, the third generation has learned the best of both worlds and, to a great extent, has been able to incorporate traditional *and* innovative elements into their own form of artistic expression. At this stage of their development, the third generation might be collectively named the "apprentices." Most third generation carvers do not enjoy the recognition that their elders have earned, and are struggling to find their own niche. Their work is usually not as valuable monetarily, which in turn reflects upon their overall economic and social standing within their community. While their young lives have been inundated by the Western world more extensively than previous generations, much of their art tends to have its base in traditional subject matter. The innovation can often be

noted in technique - the proficient use of power tools - and often working their sculpture to a high polish or smooth finish.

Nevertheless, tradition often supersedes innovation among young carvers. As apprentices, perhaps traditional imagery must be mastered before one can gain the confidence to carve from ones imagination rather than "typical" Inuit imagery (such as naturalistic bears, hunters, etc.). Indeed, many young carvers start out attempting a small-scale, simple likeness of a seal or bird and after a certain amount of experience and confidence is gained, move on to create larger, or more detailed work.

Third generation Arviat carver Mary Tutsweetok is an excellent example of an artist who began carving small simple pieces and has found a confident, signature style that reflects the style of her mentors. Mary has only been carving for a few years, but the dramatic evolution in her sculptural style can be seen in the examples of *Seal*, *Seal with Faces*, and *Kneeling Mother and Child* (Figure 13). The carving of the small *Seal* (far left in Figure 13) was created in 1996, and is the first carving Mary ever made. It is modestly-sculpted and self-contained within the stone with only a few surface details to define the eyes, mouth, flippers and some circular designs along the back of the seal to delineate the naturalistic appearance of sealskin. *Seal with Faces* (middle in Figure 13) was created later in the same year

(1996) and demonstrates more detail and creative use of space with composition. The seal stretches across the top of the composition, with faces emerging from the stone that almost seems like negative space below the seal. The "minimalist" faces of this work reflect the sculptural style of her mother-in-law, Lucy Tutsweetok, born 1934 (Figure 14). However, when one compares one of Mary's more recent works such as *Kneeling Mother and Child* (far right, Figure 14 and centre, Figure 13) a striking similarity to her mother's patent style is also apparent. Mary's mother Alice Akammak (born 1940) is known in Arviat for her minimalist figures sporting a colourful collar of hanging beads, a practice that Mary has adopted. Skilled in both sculpture and fabric arts, Mary learned to carve and to sew by watching her mother when she was growing up. Later, she watched and learned from her famous mother-in-law, Lucy.[101] By viewing Mary's work alongside examples of her two mentors (Figure 15), one can see the stylistic influences that have shaped Mary's development and how she has incorporated specific elements from both in her own work. The simplified forms and the juxtaposition of the faces of the *Kneeling Mother and Child* have the strength and "monumentality" for which Lucy is renowned, but the adoption of Alice's inventive use of bright and colourful beads lightens the mood and gives warmth and life to the sombre stone.

[101] Mary Tutsweetok, Personal Interview, Arviat, October 12, 1998

While there is a definite correlation between style and subject matter of sculpture produced by the first and second generation and their influence on the subsequent artistic expression of the third generation, some young artists serve as inspiration to their peers. Young artists tend to influence and learn from each other, often from older siblings in their family who carve. One of the few third generation carvers to be internationally recognized, Toonoo Sharky of Cape Dorset has found an individual expression through the use of spiritual iconography in *The Spirit Within* (Figure 22). Toonoo's younger brother, Alasua Sharky who is not as experienced or well known, has taken more risks with his subject matter, seen in the example of *Drunk /Man with Bottle*, 1997 (Figure 23). Alasua learned to carve by watching his brother Toonoo, whose work he greatly admires.[102] While Alasua's work is highly polished and detailed (note the surface details such as pockets in the jeans and the collar of the button-down shirt to indicate a contemporary male), it is not as sophisticated in form and not as ambitious in scale as Toonoo's sculpture. Indeed, Toonoo is a more experienced carver, having had opportunities to work with different tools and materials, which is reflected in the detail and larger scale of his work. It seems that there is a direct correlation between the artist's level of experience and the actual size of sculpture produced. As young artists gain experience, confidence and economic security, their work increases in scale.

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[102] Alasua Sharky claimed to have learned how to carve by watching his brother (Toonoo) at work, and also identified Toonoo as his favourite artist. Personal Interview, Cape Dorset, August 27, 1997

Another brother of Toonoo and Alasua, Napatchie Sharky has employed an imaginative sense of humour with an unsophisticated technique. *Man Carrying his Mistake* (Figure 24) portrays a small scale image of a distressed carver raising his broken creation over his head, while also displaying an inexperienced technical capability with his tools and materials.

Similarly, Clyde River brothers Isaac and Saitukie Tassugat show tremendous skill and imagination working almost exclusively with antler and bone, while retaining very individualistic expressions. At the age of twenty-one and more than ten years younger than Isaac, Saitukie has been carving since he was thirteen years old. Both artists employ a delightfully abstracted approach, but Isaac's work seems to be based more on tradition than spirituality. Isaac's work *Man with Snowgoggles* (Figure 25) while obscured within the natural shape of the whalebone, is slightly more representational than the haunting *Mask* (Figure 26) of his younger brother's design. Isaac credits his parents for teaching him the art of carving, while Saitukie claims to have taken many pointers from his older brother Isaac.[103] Perhaps the fact that Saitukie's mentor is more of a contemporary plays a role in Saitukie's tendency to draw more from his imagination than from traditional imagery.

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[103] Saitukie Tassugat, Personal Interview, Clyde River, September 6, 1997

Isaac, on the other hand, has a full-time job and only carves in his spare time.[104] Many artists confessed that if they had a steady job they would not continue to carve, and all of the artists interviewed who had found other employment had virtually stopped carving while they were employed.[105] However, for many young artists carving is a job, their sole source of income, and if it pays well it's a *good* job. But as few young artists are able to establish themselves in today's competitive market, many third generation artists struggle to support themselves and their families through the sale of their carvings as their sole source of income.

Third generation artists are aware of the demands of the Southern market place, and translating their art into economic independence is a prime objective. Young artists' carvings are generally smaller in size, yet usually reflect their mentor's work in style and/or subject matter. The youth see and admire contemporary work done by their renowned elders, but many are not yet willing to depart from a style or subject matter that they know will sell, perhaps because they do not want to jeopardize the final price. While young carvers take pride in developing their own unique style, they are ever conscious about making these skills translate into a higher price for their carvings. When asked if they felt Inuit art was important,

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[104] Isaac Tassugat, Personal Interview, Clyde River, September 7, 1997

[105] Young artists interviewed such as Billy Kuksuk, Thomas and David Nibgoarsi of Arviat, Igah and Jukeepa Hainnu and Silas Natnine of Clyde River stopped carving while they were employed.

many young artists likened its general significance to the economic importance of carving as it applied to them personally.

However, most young artists believed that the production of Inuit art is important because they feel it is a distinct expression of their culture. This aspect of their art has been passed down to them from their mentors, the elders whose knowledge, skills and success they admire and strive to emulate. In this way, the sculpture of the third generation straddles two worlds simultaneously by catering to the demands of the Southern market, while also reinforcing aspects of traditional heritage. The dilemma of third generation artists has been largely one of identity; they have not yet been recognized in the South. Nor have they been able to reap the financial rewards of such recognition or find a comfortable social position of respect within their own communities.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

In the body of this thesis, it has been shown that an identifiable third generation of Inuit sculptors has emerged and is indeed carrying forward the artistic work of the two generations of Contemporary Period Inuit sculptors whose work is familiar in the Southern market. Young artists and their sculpture have been introduced and included in discussions pertaining to Inuit traditions, contemporary life and the Southern market.

The query as to why we are not familiar with the artists or their work was examined but not easily answered. There may be many factors involved in young artists' relative anonymity in the Southern arts arena. Artists' relative lack of experience or maturity, the downturn of the Southern market, or perhaps what Kubler calls a "bad entrance" or late appearance in the Inuit art continuum may factor in why many young artists are struggling for success and recognition.

The difficult yet exciting aspect of this study is its provisional quality - because it takes place in the present, one can only document this period of development of third generation artists and speculate on what the future holds for them.

In each chapter of this thesis, third generation artists and aspects of their art were introduced and discussed in light of historical and theoretical perspectives as well as contemporary issues. Chapter 2 discussed the history of carving in the communities of Arviat, Cape Dorset and Clyde River and examined each community's unique carving traditions and styles. Situating each community in its historical past, recent history and present-day issues prepared the reader for Chapter 3 in which contemporary issues and theoretical approaches were discussed. Issues of authenticity, quality and artistic motivation arose in the 1960s when scholars and experts attempted to situate, categorize and promote Inuit sculpture. Many of these issues have persisted to affect the way in which young artists' work is received by Southern audiences today. Perhaps resistance to change of established traditions has prevented the recognition of young artists in the South. As James Clifford aptly stated, "it is easier to register the loss of traditional orders of difference than to perceive the emergence of new ones."[106] Even though third generation artists have not yet developed an artistic expression that breaks with the traditional imagery of the first generation or have built upon

[106] James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture (Cambridge: Harvard University Press) 1988, p. 15

the innovations developed by the second generation, their sculpture can be seen as a response to both traditional and contemporary influences. Caught between the pressures of tradition and innovation in Inuit art, young artists have neither the maturity as artists nor have they been acknowledged as artists of consequence at this point in their development. Both of these factors have conspired to prevent young artists from "making it" in the Inuit art market, which in turn affects their economic security and their social standing within the community.

Chapter 4 examined the state of the contemporary Inuit art market and discussed the socio-economic predicament of third generation artists. The third generation is now faced with the challenge to find new solutions to remedy their situation. It is difficult to conjecture whether the demand for their work will increase as young artists mature and build a body of work over time, or whether they must now find new solutions to compete in a contemporary market. In this computer age, perhaps young artists will be able to market themselves more effectively by establishing personal web sites.[107] In this way, young artists could market themselves and their work more directly while making information about themselves more accessible to a wider Southern audience.

[107] Rankin Inlet artist Theresie Tungilik (daughter of well-known first generation artist Marc Tungilik) has established a web site to promote her wallhangings at nunavut.nu/tungilik/index.html.

Finally, Chapter 5 illustrated examples of how sculptures produced by third generation artists are influenced by many simultaneous influences: availability of materials, traditional or contemporary styles and techniques learned from their mentors, and popular imagery that "sells" in the South are factors that shape the art produced by young artists.

As this is previously uncharted territory, future research on third generation artists has great potential as a fertile area of study. Artists from other Inuit or southern Native Canadian communities could be examined to provide a greater contrast or scope to the study of young indigenous artists. Various mediums of artistic pursuit could also be explored, as well as statistical information gauging and comparing the actual sale of third generation Inuit sculpture in relation to older generation artists.

Only history will reveal what will become of third generation artists. Their art and their success or continued anonymity will ultimately affect future generations of Inuit sculptors. One cannot assume that with the passing of first generation artists and their conscious association with the traditional Inuit way of life, the art will deteriorate into a "pseudo-Inuit" expression. In 1965, Terry Ryan affirmed:

> "As long as the Eskimo remains associated with his own land, whatever medium he chooses in which to express himself will not only be valid but worthy of serious concern and study. There remains among the younger generation, that generation facing the full brunt of confusion and change

> brought on by our interest in the north, a talent in both carving and drawing that is refreshing and rewarding to see. With this talent and given the sincere encouragement that is also lacking in many areas of the north, we shall see a continuation of a culture that is able to express its environment with the lack of falseness and the directness that has always characterized the best of Eskimo Art."[108]

Like the then-young second generation artists about whom Ryan wrote so optimistically thirty five years ago, third generation carvers now occupy a unique and precarious artistic position in Inuit art. While young artists may not have the same sense of connection with their land that their elders have experienced in the past, they have maintained a strong connection with their culture by watching and learning from their elders which is evident in the expression of their art.

Their sculpture is a response to many simultaneous forces that inspire, motivate and affect the artists. Influences such as established traditional imagery pioneered by the first generation, or the exploration of innovative and contemporary imagery by second generation artists has informed the work of young artists. Other powerful forces are the expectations of the Southern market which may have precluded advancements or new directions in Inuit art, or the availability of materials and economic pressures, which may all play a significant part in the individual expression of third generation artists. The voices of the third generation must be heard before they can shape the future of Inuit sculpture. Hopefully, they are visionaries whose era has just now arrived.

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[108] Terry Ryan, "Eskimo Pencil Drawings: A Neglected Art", Canadian Art, Vol. 22, No. 1, January/February 1965, p. 63

Appendix 1

Third Generation Artists' Biographies

Unlike first and second generation artists from the communities of Arviat, Cape Dorset and Clyde River, many of the third generation remain relatively unknown in the South. Information about these young artists is difficult to find perhaps because of their youth, relative inexperience as sculptors, or the fact that they may be "overshadowed" by their famous elders in the Southern Inuit art market.

To remedy this, a single page biography has been prepared for each artist interviewed during research trips conducted by the author in 1997 and 1998. Unless otherwise noted, the information presented and quoted in each biography is derived from these personal interviews with the artists, gathered from the questionnaire used, which has been included in Appendix 2. Each artist has consented to the publication of his or her responses to the questions as well as the photographs reproduced in this project. The author took the photographs of the artists that appear in the top-right corner of each biography at the time of the interview.

It is my hope that these biographies will serve as a reference to others who are interested in researching contemporary Inuit art. The promotion of these talented artists and their inspired sculpture is important to the future of Inuit art. The third generation of sculptors seem to be unsuspecting contemporary visionaries whose era has just now arrived, and it is my hope that this legacy will be left for many future generations.

In keeping with the rest of this project, the artists' biographies are divided by community and appear in alphabetical order: Arviat, Cape Dorset, Clyde River. Individual biographies are organized in alphabetical order by surname.

One page can hardly do justice to the diverse complexity of the individual lives of the artists interviewed. However, the questionnaire used was eleven pages long and to simply record the transcripts of all thirty-four interviews would be a tedious endeavour involving hundreds of pages. While some artists were forthcoming and willing to expand upon questions, others were not as comfortable with the questions or the interview process, which was reflected in their short responses. Artists were free to respond to any, all or only some of the questions and some artists exercised this freedom.

Frank Akammak

Born: October 27, 1961

Resides: Arviat

Interviewed: October 5, 1998

Frank was born and raised in Arviat. Although Frank first learned to carve when he was eleven years old, he didn't sell his first carving until five years later. "I watched my uncle, Thomas Arviak who used to carve a lot. He used an axe and file. Now that I use power tools my work has changed a lot from when I first started. Carving is easier with power tools, but sometimes hand tools are the best." Frank carves mostly in stone, and some antler.

Frank believes that it is harder for young carvers today to make a living from carving. "It's not like it was for the first [generation] carvers - there's a big difference. For me sometimes, it's like I'm carving a model [of traditional subject matter]. But young carvers are trying to carve and sell their work. Sometimes they just quit if they can't sell their work."

In the springtime and in the early fall Frank likes to go hunting out on the land. He prefers life on the land to community life because "it's better - much more peaceful on the land."

Frank believes that Inuit art from Arviat defines the local culture. "White people ask what kind of Inuit we are. When they see our art they know who we are."

Daniel Alareak

Born: November 11, 1964

Resides: Arviat

Interviewed: October 5, 1998

Daniel was born in Arviat. He lived at Lynne Lake Manitoba for two years as a child when his father was employed at a mine, and in Rankin Inlet for three years.

Daniel learned to carve by watching his grandmother, Eva Talooki Aliktiluk. "I think I picked up carving from my grandmother. For ten years I worked as a custodian at the school so I didn't have time to carve before, but I started carving about two years ago. I remember that I made [a carving of] a man jigging in a fish hole and Nick [Lebessis] bought it. I like to carve figures, like a drum dancer or a man with a harpoon. I don't think my carvings are like anyone else's. I tried to copy someone else's style before but it was too difficult - I think it's good that everybody is different." Daniel carves with stone, antler and ivory. His carvings are generally about one foot in height, but Daniel recalled that his largest work was about five feet high.

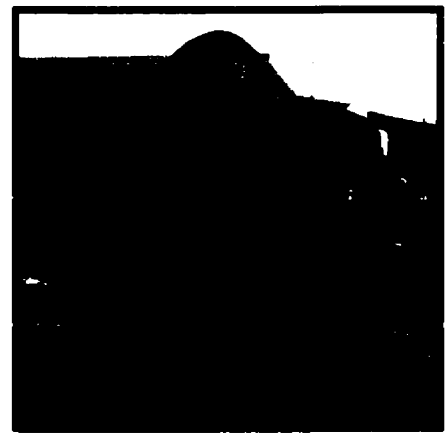
Daniel feels that Inuit art is important "somewhere, somehow." "I carve now when I need money. I can provide for my family [with money from carving] and put food on the table. I've been more into carving and making jewellery since I quit my job. I think I'm getting better but I'm not sure. Carving is a full-time job, and it can be very tiring."

John Alikut

Born: March 7, 1963

Resides: Arviat

Interviewed: October 8, 1998



John was born and raised in Arviat. He learned to carve by watching his mother, Leonie Alikut. John said he also learned a lot about how make antler carvings from his cousin, Daniel Alareak (see artist's biography).

John started carving when he was fifteen years old. John remembers that his first carving was that of a man skinning a seal, and it sold for one hundred and twenty five dollars. John feels that his work has improved since he first started carving because, "when I started I don't think my carvings were too good." John works with stone and antler for sculpture and he also carves jewellery out of ivory.

In the summer, John works as a guide to sport hunters. He prefers life on the land to community living. "A couple of years ago my family and I lived out on the land for about a year. I liked it. We were close to the stone quarry so we could carve when we weren't busy hunting. I like life on the land better because there are less worries out there compared with living in town."

When asked who is his favourite Inuit artist, John replied, "John Pangnark. He has really helped Inuit people through his carving. Inuit art is well known because of him - even in Japan! He is my inspiration. When he was alive, I used to watch him when he carved."

Peter Atatsiak

Born: February 14, 1971

Resides: Arviat

Interviewed: October 12, 1998

Peter was born in the hospital in Churchill, Manitoba and has lived his whole life in Arviat. Although Peter remembers selling his first carving - a small seal - to the co-op in 1988, he believes that he began carving seriously in 1990. Now a father of two children, Peter carves as often as he can to support his family. Peter prefers to carve stone but also carves antler and ivory. Peter carves outside in a carving shack beside his house. "My favourite time to carve is during a blizzard - the wind whips through the cracks between the boards of my carving shack and blows the dust from the stone away as I carve!"

A self-taught carver, Peter learned about carving by watching others. "I learned mostly from my aunt, Eva Talooki Aliktiluk. I also watched my father, Tony Atatsiak, and sometimes other carvers too." Peter feels that his carvings have improved since he started, "My carvings were funny the first time, but now I like to do more modern carvings with more detail. I'm proud of them now."

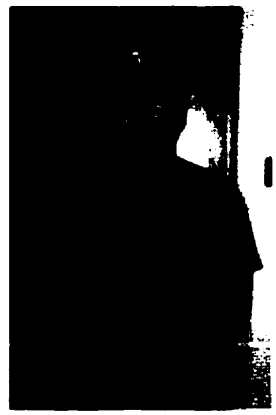
Peter has attended the Northern Arts Festival in Inuvik four times and enjoyed meeting artists from communities such as Cape Dorset and Pangnirtung. In fact, Peter was so impressed with the work of Pangnirtung artist Jacoposie Tiglik whom he met at one of the Festivals, that Peter named him and an Arviat contemporary Billy Kuksuk (see artist's biography) as his favourite Inuit artists.

Joe Aulatjut

Born: January 29, 1969

Resides: Arviat

Interviewed: October 14, 1998



Joe was born in a hospital in Churchill, Manitoba and has lived all his life in Arviat. Joe began carving in 1992. He remembers selling his first carving - a small beluga whale - in the same year. When he carves, Joe prefers stone. He feels that his carvings have not changed much since he first started because he has concentrated most of his efforts on jewellery making. Joe is currently enrolled in a third year jewellery course at the local Arctic College. "If the weather is good, I will carve outside but I work on jewellery everyday since I've been in school."

As is customary Inuit practise, Joe was adopted out as a new-born. In fact, his adoptive parents are his maternal grandparents. However, Joe remains close with his twin brother Willy Mukyungnik (see artist's biography) who lives in the community and they sometimes share carving tools. "I carve outside near my house or at my brother Willy's house."

Joe learned to carve by watching his adoptive mother, Elizabeth Aulatjut. Joe identified his mother as his favourite artist "because she taught me how to carve."

Joe feels that Inuit art is an important vehicle for Inuit to communicate to the rest of the world. " When we sell our art, it goes further out of Arviat and reaches people in other parts of the world - maybe in the United States and Europe."

Billy Kuksuk

Born: September 28, 1962

Resides: Arviat

Interviewed: October 5, 1998

Billy was born near Arviat and has lived his whole life in the community. Although he "carved a little before", Billy became more interested in carving around 1988 when he sold his first carving. Today, Billy works seasonally in heavy equipment construction, so he usually only carves when he is not working.

"I learned to carve by watching a lot of older people, then I just picked up some stone and started chipping away. When I first started I didn't use power tools until some of my friends did, so I started using them too. Now I use power tools all the time. But I think I carve better with standard tools."

Billy is one of the few young artists interviewed that didn't learn the art of carving directly from a family member. "My uncle, Donald Uluadluak does oil paintings and drawings, and my [younger] brother Steven [Kuksuk] used to carve. I have seen a picture in a book of a carving made in 1967 by my father, but I only remember him carving hunting tools."

When asked if he thought Inuit art has a place in modern culture, Billy explained, "art is art - whether it is Inuit or not. Inuit art reflects our culture but it's for everybody. People carve all over the world. My favourite artist is Michelangelo. He carved a long time ago but I can still appreciate his work. It stands to reason that Inuit art is probably going to be about our animals or our life because its who we are - just as natives in the South do art that reflects their culture."

Leo Mukyungnik

Born: December 12, 1961

Resides: Arviat

Interviewed: October 14, 1998

Leo was born in Whale Cove, but has lived most of his life in Arviat. Leo started carving in 1991 and remembers when he sold his first carving. "It was a couple years later, maybe 1993. The carving was a small stone seal or a bear that I sold to the co-op for twenty dollars." Leo has continued to carve "about once or twice a month" and prefers to carve with stone because, "I see that there are more possibilities for shape and size with stone. Before I start to carve I look for stone that makes me imagine something - like a walrus or a bear, or a woman - and I decide what to carve depending on if the stone is soft or hard. If it's too soft or has too many cracks I can't work on it. I carve with antler sometimes, and I'd like to try whalebone someday."

Leo remembers watching his mother, Eva Mukyungnik as she carved, as well as others in the community as he was growing up. Leo recalled watching other family members as they carved such as his aunt, Mary Anowtalik, and his grandmother, Elizabeth Aulatjut whom he named as his favourite Inuit sculptors.

As Leo maintains seasonal employment in construction, he only carves when he has time. " I think Inuit art is important as a part of our culture. It's like a hobby for me, but I also do it for extra financial support."

Willy Mukyungnik

Born: January 29, 1969

Resides: Arviat

Interviewed: October 5, 1998

Willy was born in the hospital in Churchill Manitoba and has lived his whole life in Arviat. He started carving when he was twenty and remembers selling his first carving the same year. "My first carving was a small polar bear and I sold it for seventy five dollars. That seemed like a lot of money at the time." Willy carves every week when he has time. Willy frequently works as an English/Inuktitut interpreter and he is also a radio announcer for the local radio station.

Willy believes he learned a lot about carving from watching others as they worked. "I used to go watch George Arluk carve. I like his work; he does good abstracts. I used to help my grandmother Elizabeth Nootaraloo finish her carvings. She'd always call me to help her and I also learned by watching her."

In the spring and summer, Willy enjoys hunting on the land. "I wouldn't want to live on the land, I just go to hunt. I like it out there - especially the view - but I grew up here [in Arviat] so it's my hometown."

"I think Inuit art is important for me and for future generations. In life when you finish something - like a job or maybe school - then someone else takes your place. It's the same with carving. It's a tradition that carries on - I hope."

David Nibgoarsi

Born: August 17, 1972

Resides: Arviat

Interviewed: October 12, 1998

David was born in the hospital in Churchill, Manitoba and has lived in Arviat all his life. He learned to carve at the age of nineteen. He sold his work for the first time that year "I remember that I made a pair of ivory earrings. One spelled 'Arviat' and the other said 'NWT'. I used to carve with ivory a lot. I think I like ivory as much as stone when it comes to carving - they're both easy to work with. When I can get tools and stone I carve everyday."

David claims that his brother Thomas taught him to carve. Although he feels that his carvings are improving with time, David admires the work of others. As David perused an exhibition catalogue that I presented to him which contained illustrations of works done by Arviat sculptors including one of his pieces, he commented, "I am seeing people whose carvings are better than mine."

Every year David works for a construction company to lay foundations for new buildings, and stops carving during that season, "when I work I never carve."

When asked if he felt Inuit art had a place in modern culture, David replied, "the modern culture now makes more modern carvings. Carvings are nicer and more detailed now. They are different from the more simple carvings of the elders."

Mary Tutsweetok

Born: July 20, 1972

Resides: Arviat

Interviewed: October 12, 1998

Mary was born and raised in Arviat. She has only been carving for "a couple of years" but she is also a talented seamstress who makes wallhangings, dolls and other sewing crafts. As a mother of two young children, Mary only carves when she has time.

The strongest artistic influences in Mary's work are those of her mother, Alice Akammak, and her mother-in-law, Lucy Tutsweetok. She learned by watching them as they worked. Mary has great admiration for Lucy's work and her success as a carver, "I know my mother-in-law's work is exhibited in the South. I think she is good."

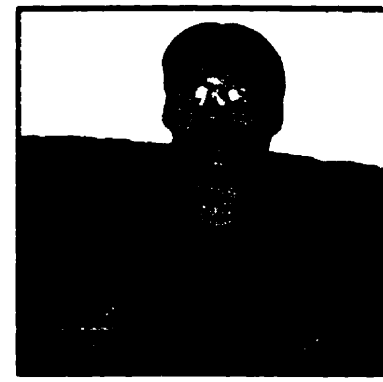
Mary prefers to carve with stone and does not use power tools when she carves, but uses only a file. "I enjoy carving. I like to make a person or a seal. It's hard to decide what to make sometimes - how to shape the stone." Mary feels that what makes her carving style different from those of other people is the introduction of beadwork to her work. "I put beads around my carvings to make them look pretty."

Kingwatsiak "King" Jaw

Born: March 20, 1962

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: September 2, 1997



Born at Keatuuq, about five miles west of Cape Dorset, King has lived most of his life in Cape Dorset. He spent two years in Iqaluit for high school and over two years working in the Nanasivik mines, where he apprenticed to become an industrial mechanic. King is seasonally employed as a certified carpenter for the Nunavut Construction company. Carving is another way that King supplements his income to raise his family of four children.

King began carving at the age of nine but was more committed to his education and subsequent jobs before he took up carving on a regular basis in 1995. Since then he has been carving once or twice a week. "I like to carve but sometimes I have to carve to support my family - it's not only for pleasure."

King's mother, Melia Jaw, used to carve but King learned most about carving from watching his older brother, Pootoogook Jaw. King's oldest brother Mathew Saviadjuk is also a sculptor in Cape Dorset.

Having experimented with different types of stone, King prefers to carve black marble. His works are often naturalistic scenes that have a base or "landscape." Not wanting to "take away too much" stone, King carves a variety of subject matter including bears, drum dancers and whales. "I like to create a realistic image - realistic animals. If it's a bear, I want to show it doing what bears do, like prowling on a seal, or walking on four legs. I've never seen a dancing bear."

Pauloosie Joanasie

Born: April 4, 1962

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: September 2, 1997

Pauloosie has lived his whole life in Cape Dorset. He began carving when he was twelve years old. He remembered that his first carving was an owl for which he was paid thirty dollars, which encouraged him to continue. Now carving is his main source of income, and Pauloosie carves "almost every week". He feels that his carving skills continue to improve with time, and, like most Cape Dorset sculptors, he prefers to carve the soft green stone indigenous to the area.

Pauloosie's subject matter of choice is polar bears. Pauloosie has also found that his carvings have increased in size since he has developed a sense of confidence and proficiency with the stone, his power tools, the subject matter and his own skill.

A self-taught carver, Pauloosie learned by watching others in his family. Pauloosie's uncle was the late sculptor Namoonai Ashoona. Pauloosie identified Namoonai as the artist whose work he admires most, and that his uncle's creative talents were a great inspiration to Pauloosie when he began carving. Pauloosie's younger brother Mathew Kellypalik is also a carver.

Mary Oshutsiaq

Born: November 5, 1972

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: August 29, 1997

Mary has lived in Cape Dorset all her life, and she was a mother of two at the time of the interview. Although she has no formal training in arts or crafts she identified her mother, Omalluq Oshutsiaq, as her mentor and said that she learned a lot about carving through watching her mother. When asked whose work she admires most, Mary named her mother first, and Toonoo Sharky, an acclaimed sculptor who is one of her contemporaries (see artist's biography). Mary's brothers, Ipeelee Oshutsiaq and Pitseolak Oshutsiaq (who now resides in Iqaluit) are also carvers. Mary's late uncle, Pudlo Pudlat, and her late grandfather, Oshutsiaq Pudlat were both well-known Cape Dorset artists.

Mary began carving at the age of thirteen. She sold her first carving that same year and she recalled that that first carving was a bird. Since that time, she feels that her carving technique and style have changed and improved; she carves every other day now, and no longer carves animals. She prefers to carve in stone, and concentrates on human figures, her favourite being the mother and child theme.

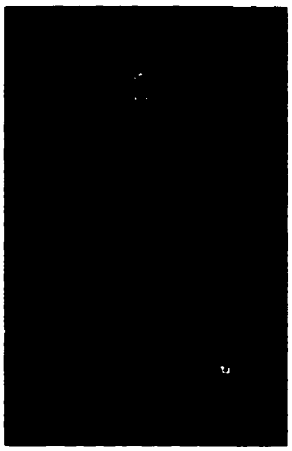
"I enjoy carving, but sometimes I think it's the hardest work. It can be tiring, but I have to make a living, and there are no other jobs. I tell everyone to try to carve a mother and child so they'll know how hard they are to make."

Markoosie Papigatok

Born: May 27, 1976

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: August 27, 1997



Born in Povungnituk, and having lived in Sugluk, Arctic Quebec for the first eight years of his life, Markoosie moved to Cape Dorset with is family around 1982. Although his father is from Northern Quebec, his mother, Komajuk Tunnillie, is the daughter of renowned sculptors Kabubuwa and Tayara Tunnillie. When asked who taught him to carve, Markoosie identified his uncle, Ashevak Tunnillie who is also a well known Cape Dorset sculptor. Markoosie feels that he learned much by watching his uncle as he carved.

Markoosie began carving at the age of fourteen, and usually carves everyday. Although his works are generally small scale and intricately detailed, he often thinks of carving larger works. Indeed, Markoosie's proficiency in carving a wide range of subject matter is impressive - from mother and child themes to transforming shamans, and men riding muskoxen. He decides what to carve by observing the stone. Markoosie enjoys carving "very much" and has taught his younger brother, Johnny Papigatok to carve.

Kakee Peter

Born: April 12, 1973

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: August 28, 1997

Although Kakee was born in Iqaluit and spent the first year of his life there, and spent the following three years in Arctic Bay, he has lived in Cape Dorset since 1977. Although Kakee's first language is Inuktitut, and he speaks only "a little" English, he signs his name on his carvings in Roman. He began carving when he was eighteen, and was encouraged to continue when he was able to sell his first carving. Since then Kakee carves as often as he can, and tries to create unique sculpture. When asked whose work he admired most, Kakee said that he held Kiawak Ashoona's sculpture in high regard for its intricate detail and unique subject matter. Kakee works with stone, "I have never carved anything else but stone." He enjoys making bears, whales, birds, and Peterhead boats.

Although he is a self-taught artist, Kakee's father, Ningeosiak Peter and mother, Parnee Peter are also carvers. Kakee feels that he learned about carving through watching his father and others in the community as they worked. Kakee's grandfather, the late Jamasie Teevee was a well-known graphic artist.

Kakee feels that Inuit art is important. He has taught others how to carve, and said that he would be happy to teach his own children if they wanted to try it when they get older. Kakee's message to people in the South was to thank those who have bought his carvings.

Johnny Pootoogook

Born: December 19, 1970

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: September 2, 1997

Johnny was born in the hospital in Iqaluit and has lived his entire life in Cape Dorset. His father, the internationally acclaimed graphic artist and sculptor Kananginak Pootoogook has had a tremendous impact on Johnny as an artist. In 1991, Johnny began creating both drawings and sculpture. Johnny says he learned to draw when he attended a seminar that his father taught at the local co-op. Although he is a self-taught carver, Johnny learned a lot by watching his father carve. The artist whose work he admires most is his father's, but Johnny admits, "I don't think I have ever looked at anyone else's art [in the community]".

Johnny began carving when he was 14 years old. Although Johnny could recall a childhood memory in which he "finished" a carving of a beluga whale that his father had started for him, he did not begin carving "seriously" until 1991. At the time of our interview, Johnny liked to carve inukshuiit or polar bears, and he worked at carving every other day. Johnny takes great pride in his work and believes that Inuit art is important for "expressing [Inuit] life." Johnny feels that the key to a good carving is to take "...more time and effort. I think my carvings are slightly different [from other people's carvings] because of the time taken on them. I try to have more details in my work and I try to get stone that looks like what I want to carve".

Mosesie (Moe) Pootoogook

Born: June 16, 1977

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: August 29, 1997

Moe Pootoogook was born in Iqaluit hospital and has lived in Cape Dorset all his life. Moe has been carving since he was eleven years old and he learned by watching his father, the well-known sculptor Paulassie Pootoogook. "My father taught me to carve and sometimes we work together making carvings."[1]

Carving several times a week, Moe decides what to carve depending on the stone, but he likes to carve dancing bears or the figures in action, such as a man hunting. His carvings are usually small to medium sized, and Moe feels that his work has improved since he first began, as he is able to manipulate the stone to create different shapes.

An avid soccer player, Moe enjoys spending time out on the land as much as he likes living within the community. He has taught some of his friends how to carve and appreciates the opportunities for independence that carving can provide, as he regards it as a job and it is his soul source of income. Moe believes that Inuit art is important: "...it's for our culture."

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[1] Mosesie Pootoogook in an interview with Adamie Ashevak, Inuit Art Information Centre, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, July 1996.

Johnny Saggiatok

Born: December 11, 1964

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: August 27, 1997

Johnny was born and raised in Cape Dorset. He started carving around the age of nine, and remembers selling his work for the first time a year later. Johnny feels that his work has improved since then, "people tell me I'm an excellent carver." Johnny learned to carve by watching his father, Saggiatok Saggiatok. Although he was tempted to pursue drawing like his mother, graphic artist Kakuluk Saggiatok, Johnny has decided to concentrate on making sculpture.

Johnny carves both stone and antler. Although his favourite subjects to carve now are polar bears and seals with their pup, he appreciates "different and unique" work and admires the creativity of second generation Cape Dorset sculptor Mathew Saviadjuk. Inspired by ambitious sculpture that he has seen in his community, Johnny declared, "one day I'd like to make a carving of a person playing a musical instrument. I'd like to work with a larger pieces of stone too."

In the spring and summer, Johnny goes out on the land to fish and to hunt geese and ptarmigan. He likes life in the community and life on the land equally. Having been to the South once for a hospital visit, Johnny found it to be "too hot and too many people and cars."

"Inuit art is important. There is a lot of work involved in carving, and it's the only income you can depend on if you don't have a job. I would encourage people [in the South] to buy carvings, whether they are expensive or inexpensive works."

Pudlalik Shaa

Born: December 29, 1965

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: August 28, 1997

Pudlalik Shaa was born and raised in Cape Dorset. He learned to carve when he was around twelve years old. A self-taught carver, Pudlalik learned most about the art by watching his father, Axangayu Shaa, "and other carvers who used to use an axe [when they carved]." Pudlalik still uses hand tools like an axe or a saw when he carves, but he also uses power tools.

Now the father of four children, Pudlalik carves at least every other day. He works primarily with stone and his sculptures average about fourteen inches high. Pudlalik's favourite subjects to carve are human figures such as drum dancers. Although he finds it hard to decide what to make before he begins to carve, Pudlalik admits, "sometimes I know what I want to make immediately."

Pudlalik remembers forming a carving group with other peers in his community. "In the group, there was: Pitseolak Oshutsiaq who now lives in Iqaluit, Padlaya Qiatsuk and also Kooyoo Pudlat, who now lives in Saskatchewan. We started carving as a group and shared tools." Pudlalik also received a diploma for a carving course he attended at Arctic College in Lake Harbour.

Pudlalik travelled south in 1989 to Toronto with fellow Cape Dorset sculptor Ohito Ashoona for an exhibition opening. When asked what he thought of the South from that experience, he summated "It was big and polluted."

Qiatsuq Shaa

May 21, 1971 - November, 1997

Resided: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: August 27, 1997

Qiatsuq was born in the hospital in Iqaluit. Although he lived in an out post camp for three years when he was a child, Qiatsuq lived most of his life in Cape Dorset. He started carving at the age of eleven, and sold his first carving in the same year. "I enjoy carving very much. Even though it's tiring I carve everyday." A father of two small children, Qiatsuq supported his family with the money he made from carving.

Qiatsuq learned to carve by watching his father, Axangayu Shaa. "My father taught me to carve. I think my carvings are better now than when I first started." When asked what was his favourite subject matter to carve Qiatsuq answered, "right now I like to carve polar bears because I know people like to buy them. My carvings are usually small or medium size. I've never carved a large piece. I would like to try something that was six feet tall." When asked what kind of tools he used to carve, Qiatsuq responded "I use files and a grinder. When the grinder breaks I use an axe."

Although Qiatsuq liked to go out on the land as often as possible, he also liked life in the community. "I like the scenery and the wildlife out on the land, but I also like it here [in Cape Dorset]." Qiatsuq travelled south twice when he was in the army cadets. "The South was fun and kind of bizarre. There were a lot of people."

Alasua Sharky

Born: July 1, 1973

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: August 27, 1997

Alasua was born in the hospital in Iqaluit and has lived his whole life in Cape Dorset. He enjoys making drawings and carving, but has only made carvings for sale.

Although he has carved different materials such as antler and whalebone, Alasua prefers to carve with local stone because he finds that the stone is "better to work with". Although his favourite subject matter to carve is human figures, Alasua also likes to carve birds and seals, and decides what he will carve by observing the shape of the stone.

Alasua learned to carve at the age of fifteen. "I learned to carve by watching and helping my older brother, Toonoo Sharky". Alasua admires the work of his brother and identified Toonoo as one of his favourite Inuit artists.

Alasua tries to carve as often as he can. Although his works are generally small, Alasua likes to include fine details in his work. He feels that his work has improved since he first started to carve and Alasua hopes that his individual perspective will reflect in his work to make it somewhat different from the carvings of other people.

Toonoo Sharky

Born: June 5, 1970

Resides: Cape Dorset

Interviewed: September 2, 1997

Toonoo was born in the Iqaluit hospital and has lived in Cape Dorset all his life. At the age of nine, his father died and Toonoo was soon eager to learn how to carve as a way to support himself. Although he is a self-taught carver, Toonoo learned a lot about carving by watching his grandfather, Qupapik Ragee. "[My grandfather] never talked about it, I just watched - it is the traditional way."(Williams, 1998:49)

Toonoo is one of few third generation sculptors to be internationally renowned, and his work reflects his confidence. His willingness to embrace new challenges and learning experiences has permitted Toonoo to travel south many times. Toonoo feels his work has continued to improve over the years. He considers himself a "full-time" carver. When asked who are some of his favourite Inuit artists Toonoo replied, "I used to like Kiawak [Ashoona] but now I like my own."

Toonoo's favourite subjects to carve are birds such as a hawk with a fish or lemming, and animal/human spirit transformations. He decides what to carve by the shape of the stone, and prefers the light green serpentine quarried nearby at Markham Bay. Toonoo acknowledged that he was starting to work in larger-scale sculpture, and expressed an interest in undertaking a large commission someday.

Iola Aulaqia

Born: June 10, 1967

Resides: Clyde River

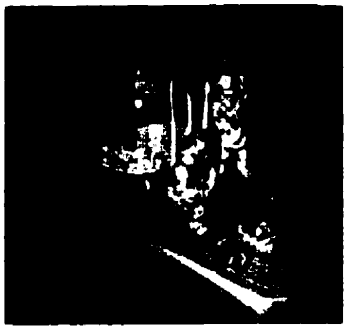
Interviewed: September 7, 1997

Iola (Natsiapik) Aulaqia was born on Broughton Island. He lived in Iqaluit for thirteen years, in Cape Dire (between Pangnitung and Broughton Island) for around six years, and moved to Clyde River in 1989. He began carving in 1989 when he attended a carving course at the local Arctic College campus. Although he carves stone, antler and ivory, Iola prefers antler. "When I carve with antler they turn out good. I don't carve too much away so I don't waste a lot of it. I try to carve six days a week"

Although Iola said that everyone in his family in Broughton Island are carvers, he credits the carving course as having been his main instructional influence. "I think Inuit art is important, so I have taught some of the younger people in Clyde River. I have even taught my six year old son how to carve."

Iola feels that his carvings have improved steadily as he continues to work. "This year I noticed that they are turning out pretty good. I like to try to make different carvings - not just stay with the same kind over and over again." It was this artistic sense of adventure that prompted Iola to travel to Iqaluit to participate in a jewellery course that was being offered in 1994."It is hard to find a job [in Clyde River] but I really enjoy carving. I think I would carve even if I had another job."

Igah Hainnu
(Photo of artist not available)
Born: February 21, 1962
Resides: Clyde River
Interviewed: September 7, 1997
Image on Right: *Camp Scene*, Stone, ivory, 8.75 x 11 x 9.5 inches, Clyde River, 1997



Igah was born and raised in Clyde River. She started carving in "early childhood" but today carving is only one of her many hobbies, "I don't only carve. I make other things too. Carving is just something I'm used to. I've tried everything from embroidery, sewing, mounting animals, knitting and carving. I always refuse to have my picture taken because I'm not only a carver. People here carve to make a living but I just do it when I'm asked to or when I have time. I do it because I grew up with it, but there are other things I like to do."

"I learned to carve when I was a kid by watching my father, Joanassie Hainnu, and my grandmother, Lydia Jaypoody. They helped me a lot. I would watch them carve for hours. I would try to make my own carving and they would end up finishing it! I used to do sloppy work, but now I try to make them detailed."

As a young woman, Igah worked at the Northern store and remembers being able to identify the artists' work by their individual style. "I could tell who did what carving. Everyone has his or her own style."

Now Igah is a full-time schoolteacher and a mother of four. When asked if she would like to see her children become carvers Igah replied "I don't think so. I'd rather see them get their education - maybe their Masters in something. My son talks about university. I don't talk him into it. But if my kids wanted to carve I would show them."

Jukeepa (Jochebed) Hainnu

Born: September 7, 1964

Resides: Clyde River

Interviewed: September 7, 1997

Jukeepa, also known as "Eepa", was born and raised in Clyde River. She began carving around at the age of seven and learned by watching her father, Joanassie Hainnu. "My father was a consistent carver. Everyday he would carve and I would watch him. He would get up at four o'clock in the morning and carve until 8 o'clock and then go to work for housing all day."

A mother of three, Jukeepa is a full-time schoolteacher. Jukeepa prefers to carve stone and likes to carve people with animals. "I like to make something that has a story. For example, a man sitting and cutting up a seal. It represents our life style and survival. In the South, they don't like to look at killing scenes, but to us it means we'll be well fed - that's why I like it. If I just make animals or people, the connection between them and the life cycle is lost - it's in our nature."

Jukeepa loves life on the land. "My whole family is here [in the community] and I think education is important, but otherwise I wouldn't live in the community. I love everything about being on the land - it's a peaceful, natural environment and there is less stress. With the modern way of living you have to worry about groceries, money etc. In the South it's even worse! I've been south lots of times. It is very time oriented there. It seems like no one is an individual there: you have to stand in line, you have to go to a machine or have access of something to get something, and you always have to abide by the rules. It's not for me."

Andrew Iqalukjuak

Born: May 13, 1969

Resides: Clyde River

Interviewed: September 7, 1997

Although Andrew lived in Pond Inlet for some time, he was born in Clyde River and has lived most of his life there. He started carving at the age of seventeen. Andrew has carved stone, antler, whalebone and ivory, but prefers to carve the local marble because "it's the only stone around here to carve." Andrew learned to carve by watching his grandfather, Levi Iqalukjuak. "I guess I have a very artistic family," Andrew smiles, "I would watch my grandfather carve for hours, and then he'd let me take it to the store to sell it. My father Jacopie and my mother Reepeeka Iqalukjuak both carve, and my mother used to make prints too. My oldest brother Moses carves as well."

Although he used to work as a First Air agent, he now supports his young family with two children by carving. "I sell my work locally, or send it to the Pond Inlet co-op sometimes. I usually make three carvings per month."

Andrew feels Inuit art is important to express Inuit culture and lifestyle. "I usually can tell what I'm going to carve by the shape of the stone. Sometimes I just pick an animal before I start. I like to carve animals - especially polar bears."

Billie Kuniliusie

Born: November 9, 1972

Resides: Clyde River

Interviewed: September 5, 1997

Billie was born in Iqaluit hospital and grew up in Clyde River. Although Billie said that he learned a lot about carving by watching other people in the community, he identified his grandfather, Peter Kuniliusie, as having taught him how to carve. Billie has also studied carving at the local Arctic College campus.

Although Billie did not remember how long he had been carving, he felt that his work has improved. "My carvings are now sometimes better than when I first started." A father of two children, Billie supports his family through carving; "it's my only source of income." Billie prefers to carve antler and usually borrows his father's tools to carve. "I enjoy carving very much. I like to make carvings that portray a hunting scene. I really like those. I used to carve every day, but there is nowhere to sell now."

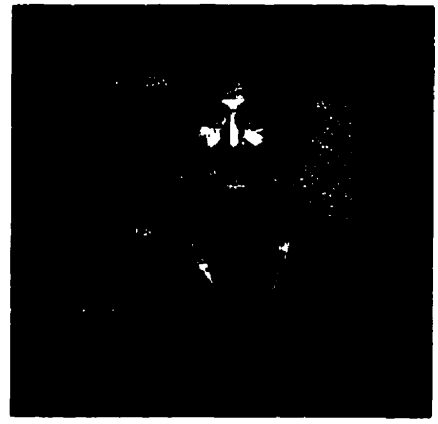
Billie enjoys playing video games and hunting. He has never been to the South and inquired if I had ever seen his work before. When asked if he felt that Inuit art is important, Billie quipped "I wish it were. I wish I could sell my work so I could keep carving."

Silas Natanine

Born: May 19, 1964

Resides: Clyde River

Interviewed: September 8, 1997



Silas was born and raised in Clyde River. Silas carved occasionally when he was young but began carving seriously around 1980. Although his parents, Moses and Mariah Natanine used to carve, Silas does not credit them as mentors. "I learned to carve by watching other people in town."

Silas favours antler as carving material. "I usually carve antler because it's available the most but I have also carved some marble. I would usually carve polar bears because I like them. I used to carve two or three times a week until I got a job as an apprentice mechanic. I haven't carved often since I started working but I would be carving if I didn't have a job."

Although Silas does not carve often now, he felt his work had improved from the time he first started. "I used to try to make them look different from other people's work, but then I just tried to make the best I could."

Silas likes life on the land and life in the community equally. "On one hand, I love going hunting and spending weekends out on the land at any time of the year. Hunting is the best. On the other hand, I'm used to my television, and I feel comfortable in my hometown. It's hard to decide which I prefer."

Goola Paneak

Born: June 2, 1978

Resides: Clyde River

Interviewed: September 5, 1997

Although Goola was born in the hospital in Iqaluit and lived in Pond Inlet for six months, he has lived all his life in Clyde River. Goola started carving when he was five years old, and sold his first carving when he was ten.

Now Goola carves three times a week, and only carves antler. "I've never tried to carve stone or marble." Goola attended a jewellery-making course at the local Arctic College campus, but said that he never sold the jewellery he had made.

Goola's favourite subjects to carve are figures and "sometimes walrus." Goola learned to carve by watching his father, Adamie Paneak and his grandfather, Peter Paneak. "My father taught me how to carve. I started carving animals, and now I do people. I like to make their faces. Usually, I make the face first and I make a sketch of how big the carving will be. I would like to have my own tools someday, but for now I use my father's electric tools."

"I think Inuit art is important to Inuit. If we don't have a job we make money from carving. I don't have a job, so it's the only way I can get money."

Maggie Qayaq

Born: May 28, 1972

Resides: Clyde River

Interviewed: September 6, 1997

Maggie was born in the hospital in Iqaluit, and has lived in Clyde River all her life. She learned to carve by watching her mother Lydia Qayaq. "I listened to my mother's advice on what to do to make my carvings better. Now I think I'm getting much better at carving. It seems like the first one was not worth selling now! I think my carvings are different from other people's because I prefer to make abstract figures and others seem to prefer a perfect likeness and shape."

Maggie prefers to carve antler because "it is softer and doesn't break as easily as stone. I can make lots of different kinds of animals depending on the shape of the antler or stone, but my carvings are always small. It's a lot of work!"

Working part-time as a janitor at the Manimiut grocery store, Maggie also keeps busy making sewn articles for sale. "I sew many different things but I am asked a lot to make amautiq[1] for people in the South."

In 1985, Maggie learned to carve and began selling her work. "I used to carve everyday, but I slowed down because the Northern store is not buying now." When asked if she had anything she would like to tell others (people who buy her work) she said, "please keep buying them. It helps a lot."

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[1] An "amautiq" is a traditional woman's coat with a hood for transporting a young child.

Sakiassie Qayaq

Born: October 17, 1957

Resides: Clyde River

Interviewed: September 6, 1997

Sakiassie was born in a camp near Clyde River at Sam Ford Fiord. He lived in Nanisivik for three years and spent another three years in Iqaluit to take an intensive jewellery course, but has lived most of his life in Clyde River.

Sakiassie has been carving since he was five years old. "I learned to carve from my father, Simeonie Qayaq. I usually carve often but I've slowed down now. I've carved different kinds of materials but I like to carve stone when I can get it." Sakiassie's favourite subjects to carve are figures and polar bears, and he enjoys creating various sizes. "I can carve any size."

"I went south to Ottawa once. It was too big for me. I enjoy going to different communities though. I went to Broughton in 1989 for a jewellery course and in 1993 I attended the Great Northern Arts Festival in Inuvik. I don't know if my work is in any galleries in the South, but I hope people keep buying Inuit art - it helps a lot of people because carvers make money. It's how we survive now."

Eli Qillaq

Born: June 17, 1970

Resides: Clyde River

Interviewed: September 6, 1997

Eli was born in the hospital in Iqaluit and has lived in Clyde River all his life. He started carving when he was around fourteen years old. "The first carving that I ever sold was a seal carved from whalebone. Now I carve with antler because it doesn't break as easily. My favourite thing to carve is an inukshuk[2] in antler. No one else carves inukshuit - that is what makes my carvings different and that's why I like to make them. The construction workers ask for cribbage boards, so I make them too sometimes."

Eli learned to carve by watching others in the community. "My friend [third generation artist] Judas Natanine is my favourite artist. I used to go to his place and help him finish sanding sculptures he was working on." Eli feels that his work has improved over time. "I was bad when I first started but now I'm better."

"Inuit art is an important part of our culture. I've been teaching my five-year-old son Joey how to carve. He has learned by watching me. I have showed him how to make an inukshuk, an airplane and a ski-doo."

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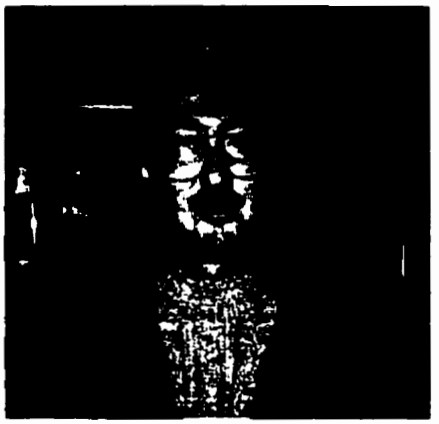
[2] Traditionally, an inukshuk was built from large rocks stacked upon each other to form the likeness of a person. In Inuktitut, inukshuk literally means "like a person". They were erected as beacons, cairns or as a camouflage device for hunting caribou. The plural of inukshuk is inukshuit.

Isaac Tassugat

Born: August 29, 1964

Resides: Clyde River

Interviewed: September 7, 1997



Isaac was born near Clyde River and has lived his whole life in the community. He carved when he was a teenager and remembers that his first carving was a seal that sold for fifteen dollars. "I learned to carve by watching my father Joseph and my mother, Mukpa [Tassugat] when I was young. I really started carving full-time in 1985. I've been working part-time at the school as a janitor, so now I only carve when I get a chance. I gave my little brother Saitukie (see artist's biography) some pointers on how to carve. He's getting to be pretty good."

Although Isaac has carved stone, antler and ivory, he prefers whalebone because "it's the easiest to carve. My favourite subject to carve is a person or people in action. I like my carvings to look like they are doing something. I don't copy anyone's work - they are my own ideas."

Isaac's favourite Inuit artist is Manasie Akpiliapik from Arctic Bay/Toronto. "I saw his work in the Inuit Art Quarterly. I like to see what's in magazines like that to keep me up to date on the carvings and it gives me great ideas. I went to Toronto once as an exchange student. It was ok."

Saitukie Tassugat

Born: July 20, 1976

Resides: Clyde River

Interviewed: September 6, 1997

Saitukie was born in the Iqaluit hospital and has lived in Clyde River all his life. He started carving at thirteen, and sold his first carving "around the same time."

Although Saitukie learned a lot about carving by watching his parents, he credits his older brother Isaac (see artist's biography) as having taught him how to carve. "I don't think my carving has changed much since I started. I haven't been carving very much since there is no where to sell my work. It takes a long time to make a good carving. Right now I'm too lazy."

Saitukie carves primarily stone and antler. "Stone is hard to get so sometimes I will walk along the beach to find pieces of bone to carve."[3] His favourite subject matter to carve is mermaids or human faces and masks. "Sometimes it's hard to decide what to carve. I think about it and figure out what it's going to be before I start carving. Sometimes it takes a couple of hours just to decide what to carve."

Saitukie likes life on the land a little more than life in the community. "I like everything about going out on the land, especially in the spring when the ice breaks. But life here in town is good too."

---

[3] Saitukie Tassugat in an interview with Adamie Ashevak, Inuit Art Information Centre, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, August, 1996

Appendix 2

QUESTIONNAIRE

Date of Interview:

Full Name:

Other Names or Spellings:

Date of Birth:

Marital status:
Number of Children:

Place of Birth:

How long have you lived in this community?

In which other communities have you lived? When?

Wife or husband's full name:

Language: Inuktitut/English/Other

Do you only make carvings?

How do you sign your work/Is the signature you use on your carvings in syllabics or roman?

Have you had any formal training in carving?

If yes, where?

Do you know if your work is in galleries or museums?

If yes, where?

Do you know if your work has been exhibited?

Have you seen your carvings in books or catalogues?

Carvings:

When did you first learn to carve?

When did you first sell a carving?

Do you make carvings now?
If no, why did you stop?

If yes, how often do you carve?

What materials do you carve? Stone/Antler/Ivory/Whalebone/Other

Which do you prefer? _____ Why?

How do/did you decide what to carve?

What is/was your favourite subject to carve?
Why?

What other things do you like to carve?

What size of carving do/did you like to make?

Do/did you enjoy carving?

How did you learn?

Did anyone teach you? Who?

Has your carving changed since you started?
How?

Do you feel your carvings are different from the carvings of other people?
If yes, How?

Other Artistic efforts:

Do you draw?
Have you ever sold a drawing?
Have you ever made other kinds of crafts (sewing, dolls, jewellery, etc.)?

Local Marketplace:

Where do you usually sell your work?

Where do you sell your work occasionally?

Did anyone ever tell you what kinds of things you should carve - ways you should carve - that would help you get more money for your carvings?

Did/Does anyone encourage you to keep carving?

Do you think it is harder for younger carvers today to make a living from carving?

Do you think there are more carvers today?

Is it hard for you to sell your work sometimes?
If yes, how often does that happen?

Is there anywhere else you can sell your work?

Do you think Inuit art has changed a lot over the years? What has changed?

Family and Community Life:

Does anyone else in your family carve?

Who (name & relationship) What do they make?

Have you ever taught others how to carve?

Would you like to see your children become carvers?

What kind of tools do you use?
How do you get them?

Have you won any awards or prizes for your work?

Who are your favourite Inuit artists and why?

Do you have anything else you would like to tell others (people who buy your carvings)?

Do you live out on the land sometimes - for part of the year?
When?

What do you like about life on the land?
What do you like about life in the community?

Do you have another job sometimes?
Part-time _____ Seasonally _____ Full-time ____ Other _____

Have you ever been to the South?
Where?

What did you think of the South?

Do you feel Inuit art is important?

Do you think Inuit art has a place in modern culture?

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Figure 3:
Mosesie Pootoogook
Diving Bear
Cape Dorset, 1997
Stone, 5.5 x 2.5 x 2 inches
Private collection

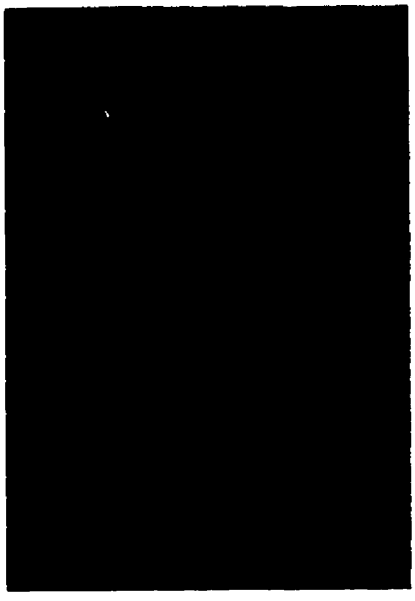


Figure 4:
Pauta Saila
Dancing Bear
Cape Dorset, 1964
Stone, ivory
height approx. 15 inches
Photo courtesy of the
Department of Indian and
Northern Affairs Canada

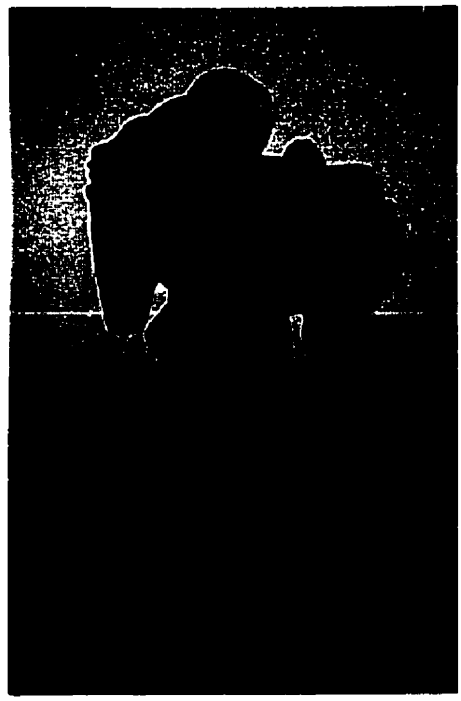


Figure 5:

Ovilu Tunnillie,
Woman Passed Out
Cape Dorset, 1987
Stone, 19 x 11 x 10 inches
Collection of Canadian
Museum of Civilization

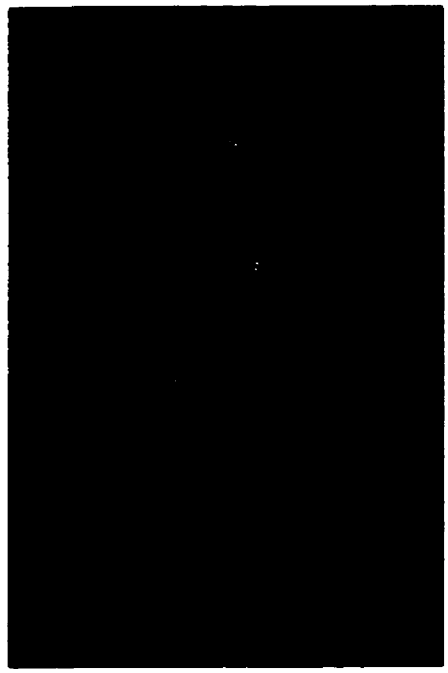


Figure 6:

Ovilu Tunnillie,
Football Player,
Cape Dorset, 1981
Stone
20 x 11.25 x 6.75 inches
Collection of Canadian
Museum of Civilization

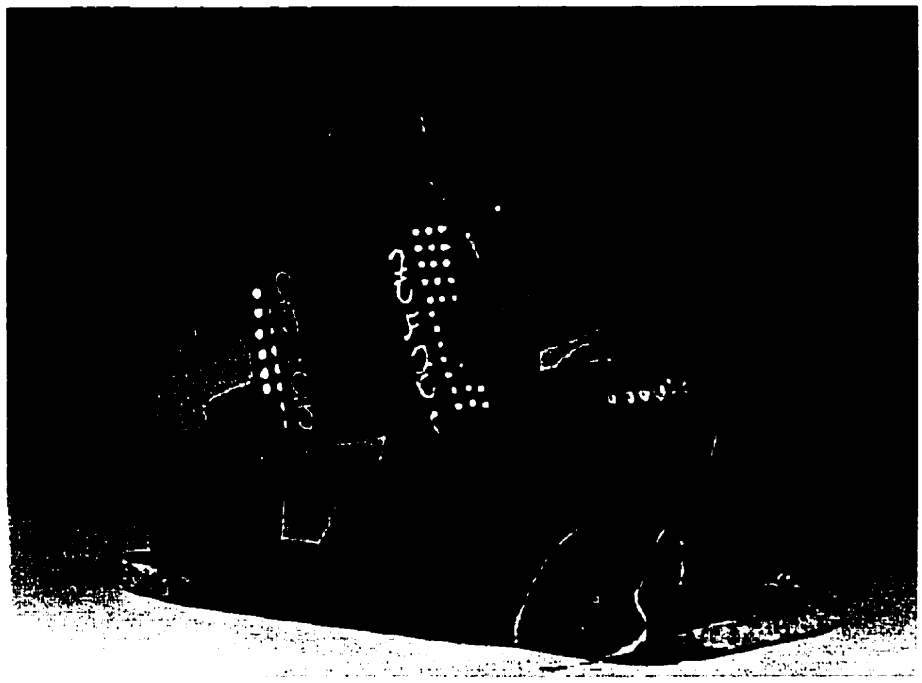


Figure 7:
Pootoogook Jaw
The Musician
Cape Dorset, 1996
Stone, ivory, sinew
9 x 10 x 3.5 inches
Photo courtesy of Spirit Wrestler Gallery, Vancouver

Figure 8:
George Arluk
Faces
Arviat, 1982
Stone, 7 x 5.5 x 3 inches
Department of Indian and
Northern Affairs Canada,
Internet web site

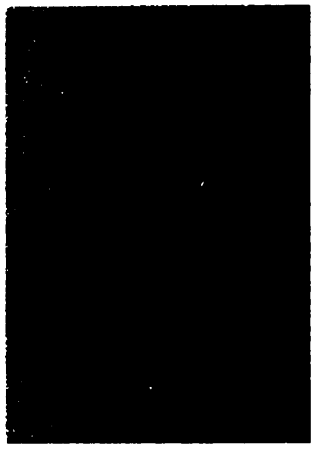


Figure 9:
Peter Atatsiak
Untitled
Arviat, 1998
Stone,
5.25 x 3.25 x 1.25 inches
Private collection

Figure 10:
Willy Mukyungnik
Shaman
Arviat, 1997
Stone, 10.5 x 8 x 5.25 inches
Private collection

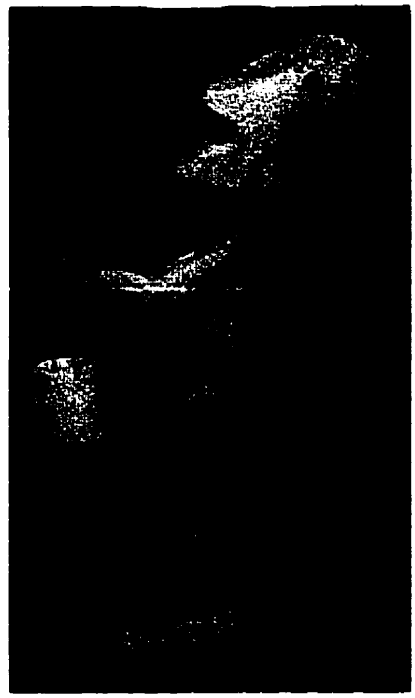


Figure 11:

Adamie Paneak
Spring Man
Clyde River, 1996
Antler, sinew
9 x 4.5 x 3 inches
Photo courtesy of the artist

Figure 12:
Goola Paneak
Man
Clyde River, 1997
Antler, 8 x 5 x 2.5 inches
Courtesy of the Northwest Company, Toronto

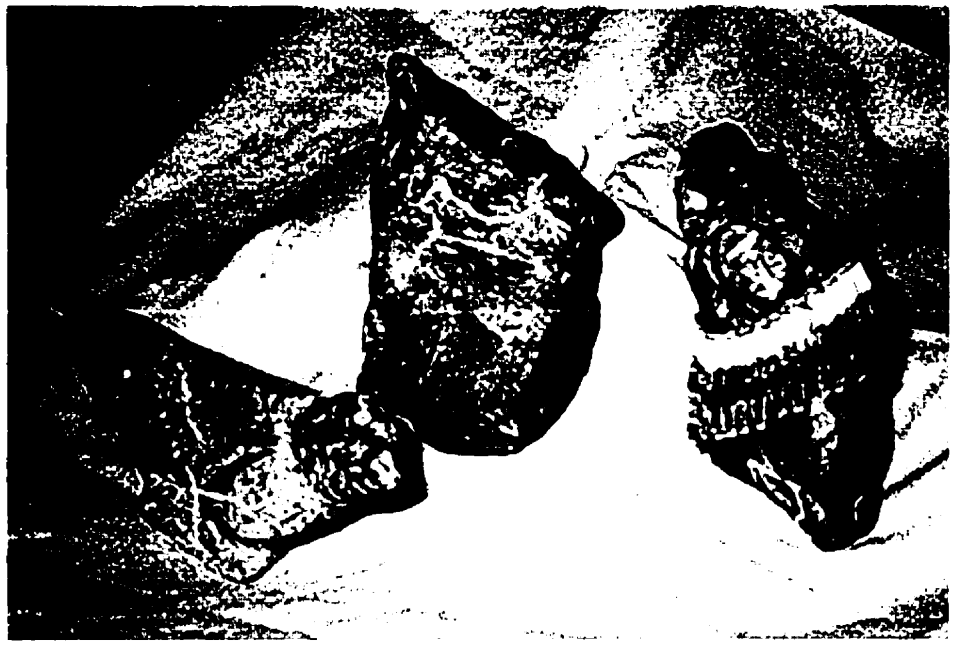


Figure 13
(All works by) Mary Tutsweetok, Arviat, Private Collection

Left:
Seal, 1996, Stone, 3 x 6.25 x 2 inches

Middle:
Seal With Faces, 1996, Stone, 6 x 5.5 x 3 inches

Right:
Kneeling Mother and Child, 1997, Stone, beads, 5.75 x 4.5 x 4.25 inches

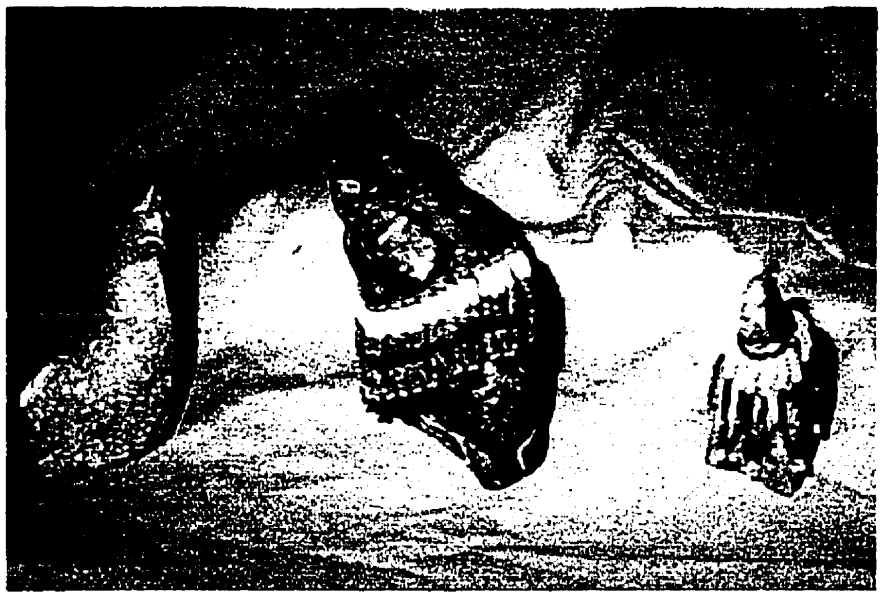


Figure 14:

Left:
Lucy Tutsweetok, *Untitled/Two Faces*, Arviat, 1995,
Stone, 4.5 x 4.5 x 2.5 inches, Private collection

Middle:
Mary Tustsweetok, *Kneeling Mother and Child*, Arviat, 1997,
Stone, beads, 5.75 x 4.5 x 4.25 inches, Private collection

Right:
Alice Akammak, *Untitled*, Arviat, 1994
Stone, beads, 3 x 2 x 1.5 inches, Private collection

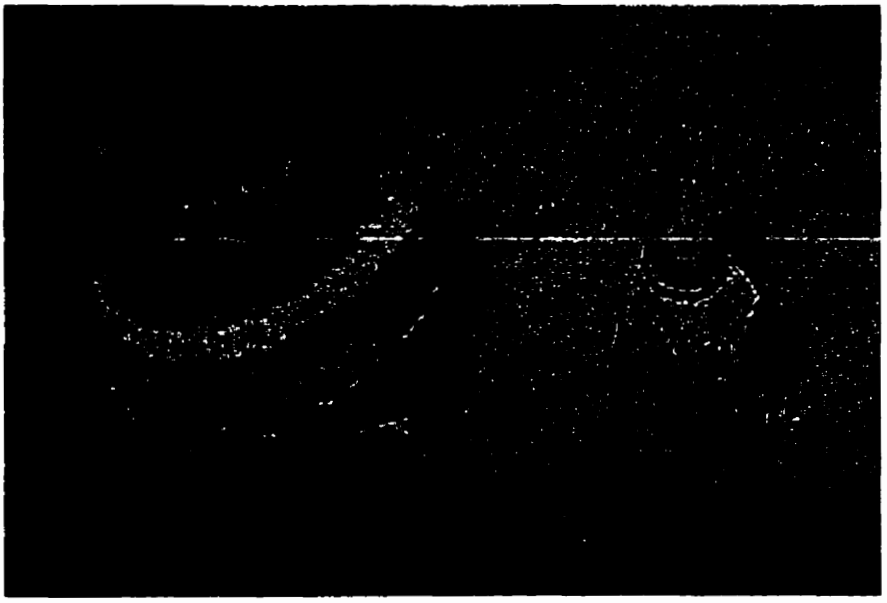


Figure 15:

Left:
Mary Tutsweetok, *Kneeling Mother and Child*, Arviat, 1997,
Stone, beads, 5.75 x 4.5 x 4.25 inches, Private collection

Right:
Alice Akammak, *Untitled*, Arviat, 1994,
Stone, beads, 3 x 2 x 1.5 inches, Private collection

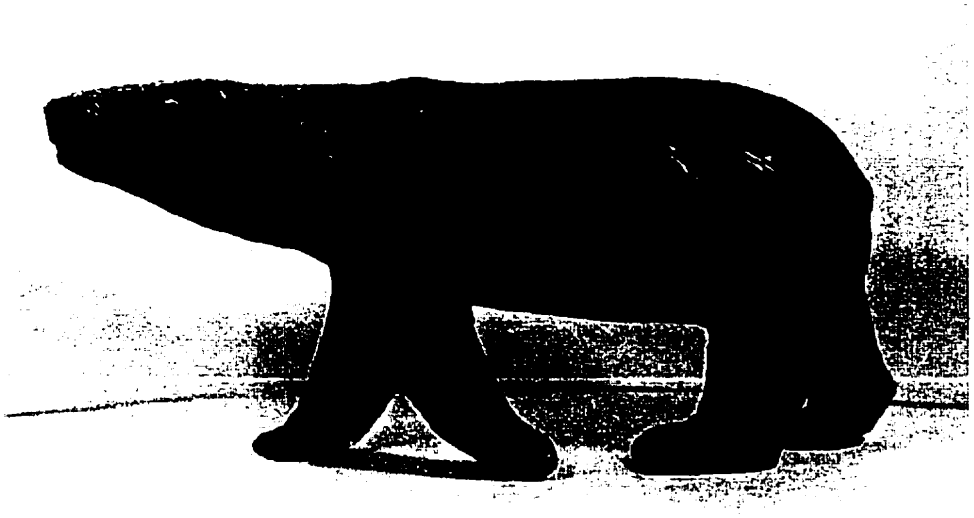


Figure 16:

Paullassie Pootoogook
Polar Bear
Cape Dorset, 1995
Stone, 8.5 x 19 x 5 inches
Photo courtesy of Dorset Fine Arts, Toronto

Top:
Figure 17:
John Pangnark
Kneeling Woman
Arviat, no date
Stone, 5 x 5 x 8 inches
Photo courtesy of the Inuit Gallery of Vancouver

Left:
Figure 18:
Thomas Nibgoarsi
Untitled
Arviat, 1997
Stone, 7.5 x 4.5 x 5 inches
Photo courtesy of Northern Art Impressions Inc., Lake Louise, Alberta

Figure 19:
Billie Kuniliusie
Hunter
Clyde River, 1997
Antler, string
8.5 x 7 x 7 inches
Private collection

Figure 20:
Tommy Kuniliusie
Two Walrus
Clyde River, 1980
(Largest) 6.5 x 4.5 x 3 inches
Photo courtesy of
Department of Indian and
Northern Affairs, Canada

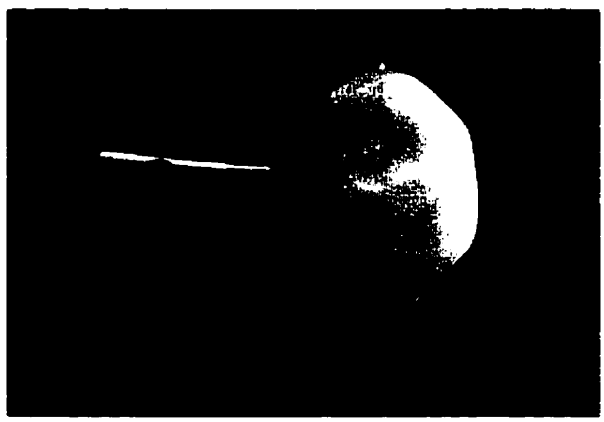


Figure 21:
Peter Kuniliusie
Untitled/ Hunter and Bear,
Clyde River, 1976
Stone, ivory
8 x 4.5 x 5.5 inches
Photo courtesy of
Department of
Indian and Northern
Affairs, Canada

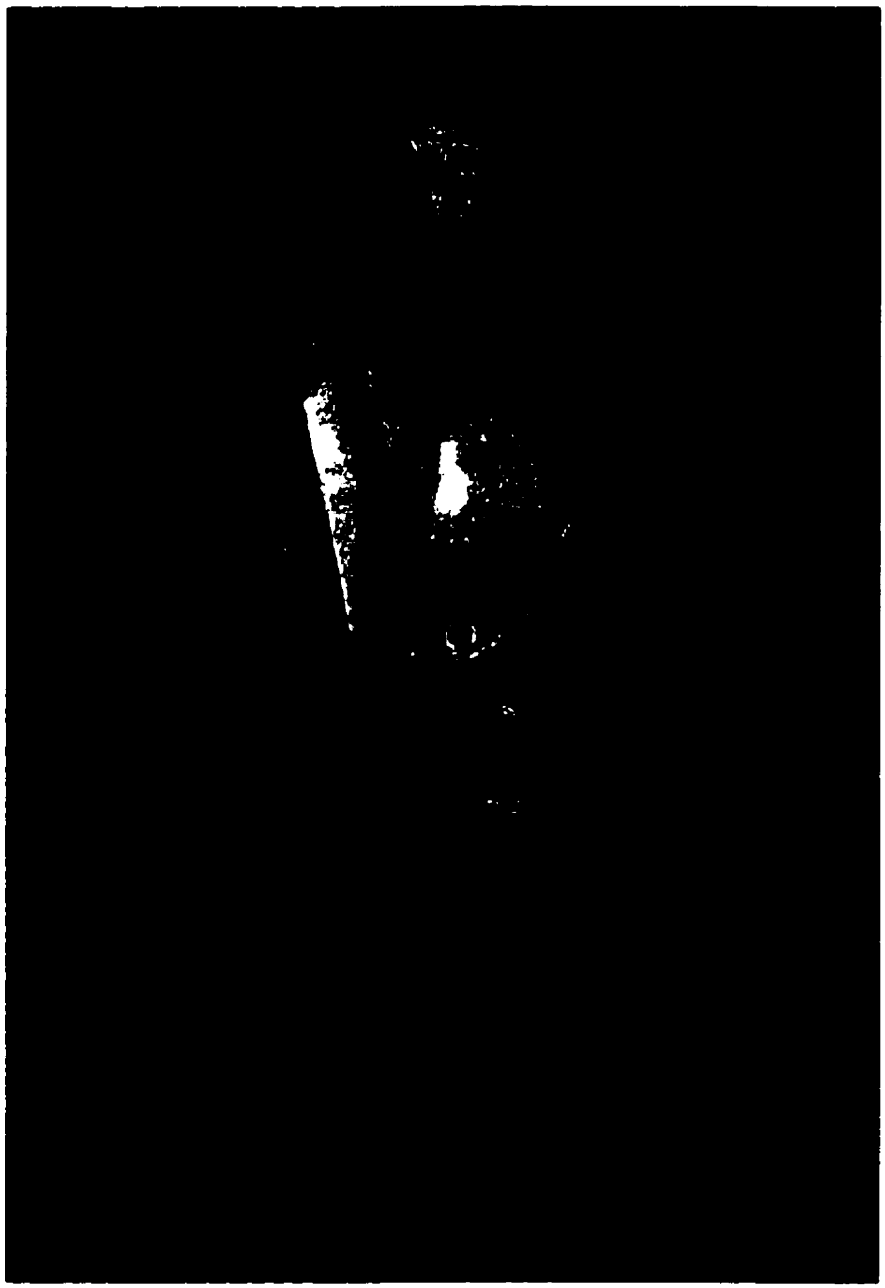
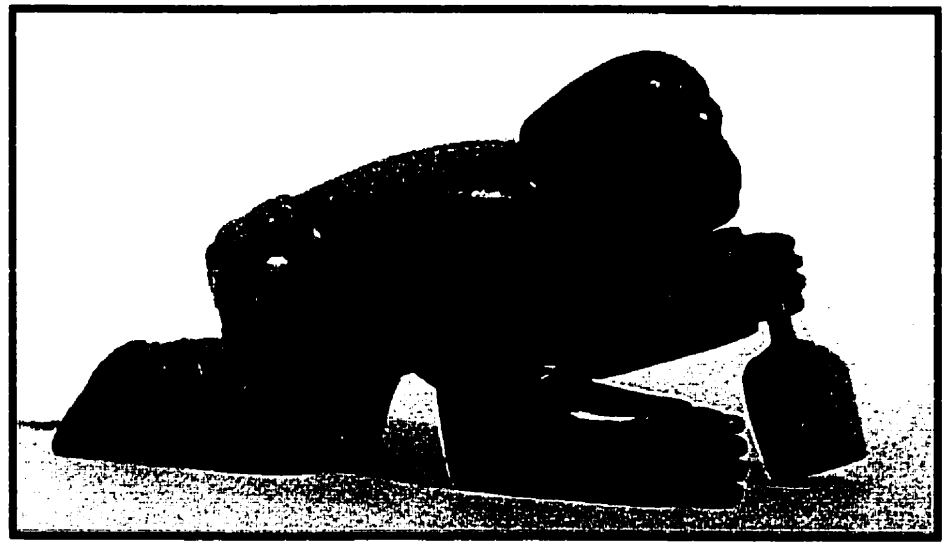
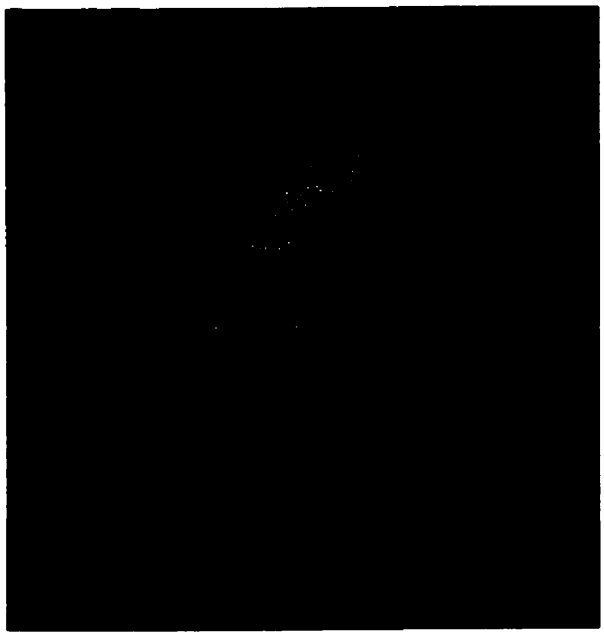


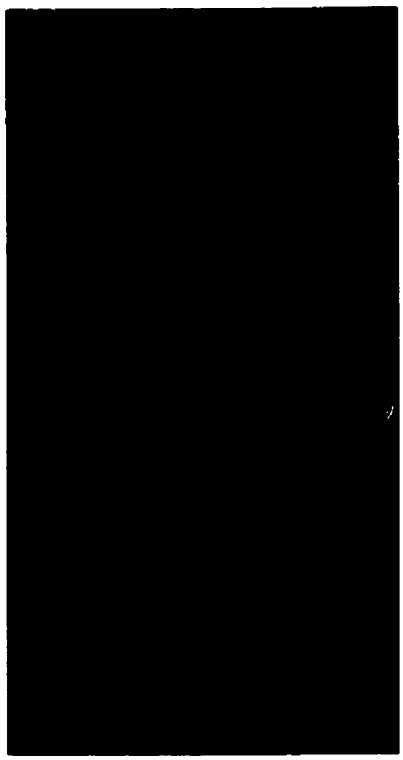
Figure 22:
Toonoo Sharky
The Spirit Within
Cape Dorset, 1997
Stone, 18.5 x 5.5 x 6.5 inches
Collection of Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Canada



Top:
Figure 23:
Alasua Sharky,
Drunk/Man with Bottle,
Cape Dorset, 1997
Stone, whalebone,
2.5 x 4.5 x 3 inches
Photo courtesy Dorset
Fine Arts, Toronto

Left:
Figure 24
Napatchie Sharky
Man Carrying his
Mistake
Cape Dorset, 1997
Stone,
5.5 x 5 x 3.5 inches
Photo courtesy Dorset
Fine Arts, Toronto





Top:
Figure 25:
Isaac Tassugat
Man with Snowgoggles
Clyde River, 1994,
Whalebone, antler,
13.5 x 11 x 6 inches
Photo courtesy of the
Northwest Company,
Toronto

Left:
Figure 26:
Saitukie Tassugat
Mask
Clyde River, 1997,
Ivory, stone (base),
6 x 3.5 x 2 inches
Photo courtesy of the
Northwest Company,
Toronto