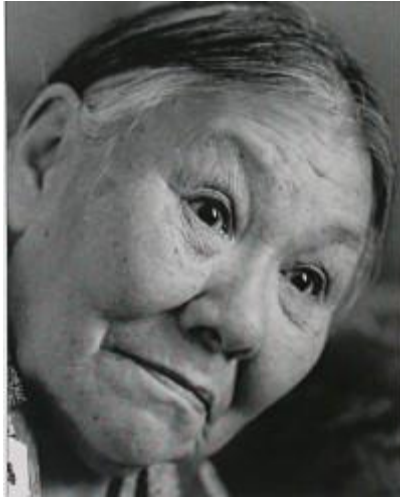


INUIT PRINTMAKERS

*Self Guided Tour of the
Power Family Inuit Gallery*

DENNOS
MUSEUM
CENTER



Kenojuak Ashevak

Date of Birth/Death: born in 1927

Community: Cape Dorset

Medium: Drawings, Prints, Sculpture, Crafts

Family connections: wife of Johnniebo and adoptive mother of Arnaqu.

Kenojuak is undoubtedly the most acclaimed Inuit artist working today. Kenojuak has been involved in the success of the art program at Cape Dorset since its inception in the late 1950s. Her prints are regularly chosen for the annual release, and she has made thousands of original drawings during an artistic career that spans a half-century. "My work has changed quite a bit since I started," she notes. "At first, it was just in pencil; there was no color." Her imagery revolves around birds, fish and female faces, always emphasizing motifs of nature and placing design above strict concerns for realism. Her steady hand traces a fluid line where positive and negative space interacts.

In addition to graphics, Kenojuak has worked as a sculptor over the years. "When I'm doing graphic work, sometimes I have to hold the paper and look at it and feel it, and then the work starts to come out," she explains. "It's easier to do the carvings because you can see the shape three dimensionally before it's formed. But I prefer to work on drawings; the stone can be hard, and you have to be outside carving."

Kenojuak is the recipient of two honorary doctorates and is the subject of several books and a film. She is a Companion of the Order of Canada, recipient of a Lifetime Aboriginal Achievement Award, and has a star on the Canadian Walk of Fame. In 2004 Kenojuak became the first Inuit artist ever to create imagery for a stained glass window, in a commission for the Chapel of Appleby College in Oakville.

Find Kenojuak's *Enchanted Owl*, 1960 and *Tikiniq (The Arrival)*, 2007:

- What is the subject of each print?
- How are these prints similar?
- How are these prints different?
- How has Kenojuak's style changed?



Annie Pootoogook

Date of Birth/Death: born in 1969

Community: Cape Dorset

Medium: Drawings

Family connections: the daughter of Napachie and Eegyvudluk Pootoogook, and the granddaughter of Pitseolak Ashoona

Annie began drawing in 1997. She prefers to work alone at home. She approaches each drawing systematically, beginning with outlines in graphite before working up details in black ink and finishing with increasingly bold areas of colored pencil. Her most recent drawings have begun to employ shading to render forms more solidly in space.

Annie's artworks challenge conventional expectations of 'Inuit' art. Her subjects are not Arctic animals or scenes of nomadic existence from a time before settlement life; rather, her images reflect her experiences as a female artist living and working in contemporary Canada. Annie is an instinctive chronicler of her times. She shares this sensibility with her mother and her grandmother, both of whom used their drawings to share their way of life with an outside audience. Taken together, the work of these three women reveals the profound changes that have taken place among Inuit in Canada's far north over the span of the last 50 years. Annie also fills her domestic interiors with details such as clocks and calendars, as well as graduation photos, inspirational quotes, and Inuktitut messages taped to the fridge in modern Inuit kitchens. Amongst meticulous depictions of modern outpost camp life and scenes peopled by local Cape Dorset personalities, Annie's graphics are peppered with images of ATM cash machines, Playboy-style eroticism, the social services office, spousal abuse and the Iraqi war on television. The death of her mother, Napachie, has recently led Annie to create a new series of soul-searching drawings reflecting on death and personal spirituality.

Find Annie Pootoogook's *Scissors* and her mother Napachie Pootoogook's print *Bird Spirits*:

- What is the subject of each print?
- How are they different?
- How are they similar?



Pudlo Pudlat, 1983

Barbara Lipton

Pudlo Pudlat

Date of Birth/Death: born February 4, 1915 died December 28, 1992

Community: Cape Dorset

Medium: Acrylic Wash, Colored Pencils, Prints, Sculpture

Pudlo began his artistic career as a sculptor, but soon realized that he wanted to devote himself solely to drawing, painting and printmaking. Pudlo used quite modest drawing materials: graphite pencils, colored pencils, felt-tipped markers and acrylic paints (acrylic paints were introduced to Cape Dorset in the 1970's by Kate Graham). Pudlo's mastering of the tools available to him, as well as his evocative power to depict relationships between the real and the imaginary, is where his extraordinary talent resides. Pudlo went beyond what the eye sees, transcending to an intimate and poetic universe of images of daily life which are maintained and enhanced by deep traditional and cultural understanding and knowledge. However, as connected as he was to his traditional culture, he was also fascinated by newer technologies. He was one of few Inuit artists to depict modern realities of the north such as air travel and power boats

Pudlo's art invites the viewer to explore the artist's imagination. Much of his work contains a semblance of humor. This quality combines with his ability to push boundaries of representation as well as linear and atmospheric perspectives. Pudlo was an artist who demonstrated an ability to adapt to the times in which he lived. This is made evident through his thematic approach and his serial variations of themes like transportation (airplanes, boats etc.), musk-oxen, community and landscape. These factors made Pudlo Pudlat a contemporary artist who looked upon his surroundings with vivacity and curiosity.

Find Pudlo's untitled drawing featuring an airplane and a loon:

- What forms of transportation are portrayed?
- What is being transported?
- How is it being transported?

Parr

Date of Birth/Death: born in 1893, died November 3, 1969

Community: Cape Dorset

Medium: Drawings and Prints

Family connections: husband of Eleeshushe, father of Nuna and Epirvik Parr,
Grandfather of Peter Parr

Parr, the old hunter, began drawing when he was in his late sixties at the encouragement of Terry Ryan. In the eight years between 1961 and his death in 1969, he made more than 2,000 drawings and at least six engravings. He has given us immediate, basic and direct records of life as he lived it. His creatures are not elaborate defined with markings or details, they are not even particularly well-proportioned, yet we have no trouble in recognizing what is taking place or understand what is important. His primitive and abstract style was not always appreciated by his peers.

Many of Parr's works are concerned with the hunt, and as an aspect of this, with animals. There are scenes of successful hunters bringing home their catch, or scenes with captured prey. People are the other important subject in his drawing- the hunters who pursue their game, the groups of Inuit as in *My People*, or the family snug in their dwelling as in *Day's End*. No matter that their faces are hidden we sense the relations and companionship.

Parr signed many of his drawing with pride and humor. His one-syllable name signified by the syllabic letter < appears in some unexpected places in his compositions.

Find Parr's *My People* from 1961:

- What types of animals are being hunted?
- How does the style of this print differ from Kenojuak's *Enchanted Owl*, created just one year before?



Kananginak Pootoogook

Date of Birth/Death: born January 1st, 1935

Community: Cape Dorset

Medium: Drawings, Prints, Printmaking, Sculpture, Jewelry

Family connections: son of Pootoogook, Shooyoo's husband

A prominent community leader, Kananginak was instrumental in the formation of the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative graphic arts program at Cape Dorset, and served for many years as President of its Board of Directors. An accomplished printmaker, Kananginak has been producing drawings and prints for the Cape Dorset Graphic Arts program since the late 1950s; his work has been included in almost every annual collection since that time. His first print, a collaborative image with his father, Pootoogook, was included in the first catalogued collection of Cape Dorset prints in 1959. Kananginak's work has also been featured in numerous exhibitions, in both public institutions and commercial galleries.

Kananginak is highly skilled at representing Arctic wildlife in his work. He is especially capable of drawing the many species of birds that frequent the Arctic. In more recent years he has focused on the material culture of the Inuit, producing realistic, narrative drawings of camp and hunting scenes.

In 1997 Romeo Leblanc, the Governor General of Canada commissioned Kananginak to construct an Inukshuk as part of a tribute to Native people in Canada. The Inukshuk, which was built in Cape Dorset, was disassembled and shipped to Ottawa where Kananginak and his son Johnny re-assembled it on the grounds of Rideau Hall.

Find Kananginak's *Bear with Fresh Kill*:

- How has Kananginak created depth in this image?
- How do we know that the kill is fresh?



Pitaloosie Saila

Date of Birth/Death: born August 11, 1942

Community: Cape Dorset

Medium: Drawings, Prints

Family connections: wife of Pauta Saila

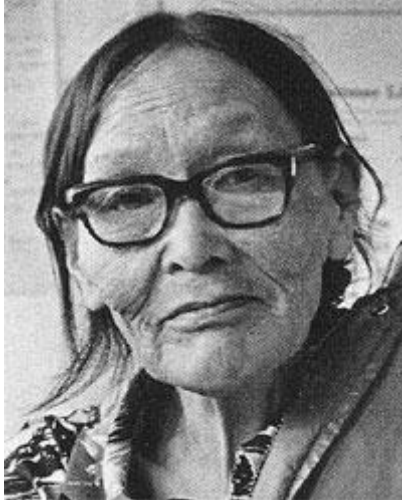
Pitaloosie spent her childhood years in various hospitals in Quebec and Ontario for treatment of tuberculosis. She learned English during this time, and recalls the difficulty she experienced in relearning her native language upon her return to Baffin Island in 1957. She is now one of the few of her generation who speak both English and Inuktitut fluently.

Pitaloosie began drawing in the early 1960's, and quickly established herself as a versatile and intelligent graphic artist. Over the years, she has become a familiar presence in the Kinngait Studios, and her work has been included in annual Cape Dorset collections since 1968.

Since the late 1960's, Pitaloosie has made frequent trips to southern Canada to attend exhibitions and conferences. Her work has been featured in solo drawing exhibitions, and in 1977, Canada Post issued a stamp depicting her print *Fisherman's Dream*. Her lithograph entitled *In the Hills* represented the Northwest Territories in the centennial celebration of the National Parks of Canada, 1985. Amnesty International, the international human rights organization, selected a drawing by Pitaloosie entitled *Mother and Child* to use for their 1990 Christmas card. She was also one of nine featured artists in the acclaimed exhibition *Isumavut: The Artistic Expression of Nine Cape Dorset Women*, which opened at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in the fall of 1994 and continues to travel to other venues.

Find Pitaloosie's *Woman and Snow Bird* and *Woman and Snow Bird II*:

- What is the subject of each print?
- How are these prints similar?
- How are these prints different?
- How has Pitaloosie's style changed?



Pitseolak Ashoona

Date of Birth/Death: born in 1904, died May 28, 1983

Community: Cape Dorset

Medium: Drawings, Printmaking, Prints

Family connections: Pitseolak was the mother of several Cape Dorset artists, the Ashoonas: Ottochie, Koomwartok, Kaka, and Kiawak; and Napatchie Pootoogook.

Born on Notingham Island in Hudson's Bay, Pitseolak was one of the best known Canada's artists. She lived the last twenty-five years of her life in the settlement of Cape Dorset, where she became one of the most famous, and certainly the most prolific Inuit graphic artist. Pitseolak produced more than 7,000 original drawings in her twenty-four-year artistic career

The subject matter of Pitseolak's prints and drawings is generally the traditional way of life of the Inuit before the coming of the Whites. Scenes of camp life, fording a river with dogs, or sewing a skin tent remind both the artist and viewer of what life was like for previous generations, before the appearance of airplanes, snowmobiles and satellite dishes. Pitseolak's narrative drawings serve as a means of recapturing these old ways and making them vivid for younger generations of Inuit.

Find Pitseolak's *Birds Feeding Chicks*:

- What is happening in this image?
- How does Pitseolak's depiction of the bear similar and different to Kananginak's bear?



Jessie Oonark

Date of Birth/Death: born in 1906 died in 1985

Community: Baker Lake

Mesium: Drawings, Prints, Wallhangings

Family connections: mother of: Janet Kigusiuq, Josiah Nuilaalik, Victoria Mamnguqsualuk, Miriam Nanerluk, Mary Yuusipik, Nancy Pukingnak and William Noah, all of whom became, at their mother's instigation, accomplished artists.

Oonark is widely recognized as one of Canada's most important artists. She was a prolific artist and a major force in the development of the arts and crafts program in Baker Lake where she had settled in 1958. She began drawing shortly after her arrival in the settlement, and was the first adult Inuk in Baker Lake to be asked to make drawings for sale. In her enthusiasm, she filled both sides of the paper!

Born and raised in the Back River area, Oonark was intimately familiar with the culture and traditions of the Utkuhikhalingmiut, as taught to her by her grandmother. The stories and legends of old, and the long-ingrained habits and skills of survival, were an integral part of her upbringing. Most importantly, she learned how to cut and sew caribou skins into warm, functional clothing: an essential task and test of womanhood. In the new settlement, she translated the skills used in making clothing onto paper and fabric, in her characteristically bold style which emphasized form, color and design.

Her early drawings, simply signed 'Una', appeared in the 1960 and 1961 Cape Dorset graphics collections. When printmaking began in Baker Lake, Oonark's work was included in each annual collection from 1970 to 1985. Her drawings and textile art quickly attracted the attention of southern galleries and collectors and have been featured in more than 100 national and international exhibitions and 15 solo exhibitions, the last mounted by the Winnipeg Art Gallery in 1986 as a major retrospective and tribute to the artist.

Oonark has received many awards. She was elected a Member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts in 1975 and named an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1984.

Find Oonark's Oopik (Uppik/Owl):

- Compare this Owl with other owls in the gallery, such as Kenojuak's *Enchanted Owl*. How does each artist use color, style and texture to create a bird with a different personality?



Helen Kalvak

Date of Birth/Death: born in 1901, died May 7, 1984

Community: Holman

Medium: Drawings, Prints

Born on Victoria Island in the northwest portion of Canada's Northwest Territories, graphic artist Helen Kalvak lived the traditional migratory life of most early twentieth-century Inuits for most of her life. After she moved into the settlement of Holman Island in 1960, Kalvak was given the opportunity to draw by Father Henri Tardy, an Oblate missionary who introduced graphic arts to the community. Kalvak made more than 1,800 drawings between 1962 and 1978, of which 154 were made into stencil prints and lithographs issued in the annual Holman Island print editions from 1965 to 1985.

Trained as an angakok (shaman), Kalvak knew magic words and chants. This training influenced the artwork she produced in her old age, long after her conversion to Christianity. Her works often depict women in the role of healer, sorcerer and shape shifter: 'Bird Tracks', 'Enchantress', and 'Dream'--all from 1973--represent this theme. Through her prints Kalvak became a well-known Inuit artist. She was elected to membership in the Canadian Royal Academy of Arts in 1975 and was made a member of the Order of Canada in 1979.

Find *The Swimmers* and *Arctic Char*:

- How does Kalvak's representation of arctic animals differ from artists like Oonark and Kanaginak?

Lucy Meeko

Date of Birth/Death: born November 29, 1929, died in 2004

Community: Great Whale River

Medium: Sculpture, Drawings, Prints, Crafts, Printmaking

Family connections: wife of Noah Meeko

Meeko was approaching middle age before a new creative outlet opened up for her, and with it, recognition as an artist. After studying various print techniques in Povungnituk she went on to be a prolific and important contributor to the Arctic Quebec print collections of the 1970s. Relying on traditional themes for subject matter, Meeko's prints are often stylized collages illustrating an almost spiritual relationship between Inuit and animals of the North. Among Meeko's other talents are sewing and carving. Here again she concentrates on the things she knows. Familiar images of mother and child, or walrus on an ice flow are naturally and simply depicted in her sculptures.

In 1989 Meeko was the guest of the McCord Museum of Canadian History in Montreal, where she demonstrated caribou skin tailoring and sealskin boot making. She is often called upon to conduct workshops in other communities.

Find Meeko's *The Mermaid and the Whale*:

- How does Meeko's use of color differ from other printmakers in the gallery?
- Find another Sedna (mermaid) in the gallery. How is this Sedna similar and different?