

P U C K E R G A L L E R Y • B O S T O N



INUIT ART
Form and Fantasy



1. WOMAN/KUDLIK, ELIJAH MICHAEL, KIMMIRUT, 8¹/₄ x 8¹/₂ x 12", IN373



unsure at best.

In 1949 James Houston saw the potential for Inuit carvings to become widely appreciated, and worked with the Canadian Handicrafts Guild to encourage many more Inuit to begin carving. One of Houston and the Guild's motivations was to try to stabilize the Inuit economy. Many of the Inuit were no longer hunters by this time, and there was little of their culture's old way of living left. However, in an effort to both sustain their culture practically and spiritually, the Inuit carvers continued to carve subject matter relating to their traditional life.

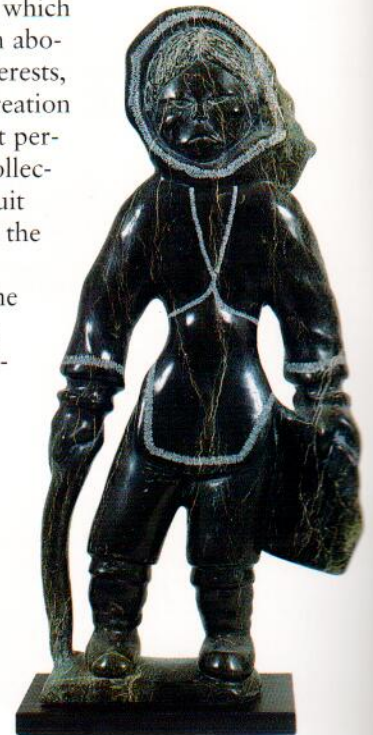
The Inuit are currently at the cusp of a new period in their culture. Their region, Nunavut, was confederated in April of 1999. Instead of their culture being on the threat of extinction, they are in the midst of a celebration of their land and culture. Although their way of life has become more Western, their pride in their traditional culture supports them in this current transition. As the Inuit take hold of their new place in the world, they have started many programs to increase their solidarity as a culture. Two of the major projects are the National Aboriginal Television Network, which focuses on aboriginal interests, and the creation of the first permanent collection of Inuit art within the Nunavut region. The formation of this collection

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Inuit art is captivating, evocative, at times playful, and for most of us, unfamiliar. It is this last part that proves problematic in the discussion of the work. It has always been difficult for one culture to discuss the art of another. With any exhibition of art by a large group of different artists, the problems of discussing the work are twofold. It is important to highlight the shared characteristics of the work as well as discuss the individual aspects of each work. With Inuit exhibitions the latter is too often slighted in hopes of categorizing the art. There is no doubt that the context of Inuit art is an important part of understanding it. Inuit history should act as an introduction to discussing Inuit art, instead of an explanation for it.

Carving has always been an important part of life for the Inuit. Their ancestors carved tools out of ivory, antler, and stone decorated with both two dimensional and three-dimensional forms. Although much less in number, they also created nonfunctional art objects. When Kablunait (traders, whalers, and explorers) entered the region, bringing new diseases and depleting the land, Inuit art carving waned and a struggle for survival ensued. Soon, the Inuit realized they could barter their artwork with the Kablunait. However, it was not until 1949 that carving began to become a major source of economic gain for the Inuit. By this time, the Inuit's lives had been forever changed by the course of history. Their survival as a culture was



2. WOMAN, KOV TAPAUNGA, CAPE DORSET, 23¹/₂ x 11¹/₂ x 3", IN405

COVER: BEAR, KOV TAPAUNGA, CAPE DORSET, 19¹/₂ x 17 x 5", IN422

attests to the cultural significance of Inuit art for the Inuit. In the past, the Inuit have lacked their own recorded music, literature, or historical writing, which makes Inuit art the only form of permanent, tactile communication about their culture.

Elijah Michael is an artist whose work is characterized by skillful, rounded forms (IN373 & IN431). The composition of his work *Kneeling Woman* (IN431) draws the attention of the viewer to the woman's face. The woman's head and skillfully carved face show both vulnerability and strength - a moving portrayal of humanity. The woman's face leads the viewer to the two other faces in the work. The child is situated on her back with outstretched arms in a position of comfort and trust. The face of the fish is quite interesting as well. Michael has carved the fish to be a presence in and of itself, rather than a food-object. The fish seems wise, in accordance with the Inuit reverence for animals. Michael's exquisite talent is also seen in the rounded forms of the woman's body, the bold folds of her clothing, and the high polish, which brings out the distinct qualities of the stone used.

Kov Tapaugnai has a tendency to stylize his animals and figures by reducing their three-dimensionality (IN405 & IN426). In his piece *Bear* (IN422), Tapaugnai has created an almost two-dimensional space for the bear, accentuating the type of stone used by creating multiple large flat surfaces, which emphasize the stone's rich colors and striations. Tapaugnai creates a bear of the imagination grounded in a physicality that could only be achieved by an artist closely familiar with his subject. It is a familiarity bred through generations



3. SHAMAN, Q. PALAYA, CAPE DORSET, 13 1/4 x 7 x 4 1/4", IN442

representational of actual fur. This technique is similar to that used on Simone Killiktee's *Musk Ox* (IN372). The differentiation of the two animals' fur in reality is mirrored in these two pieces. Killiktee's juxtaposition of polished and textured stone makes this work convincing and memorable.

Shaman (IN442) by Q. Palaya is a powerful piece. The expression on the pristine white face attracts the attention of the viewer and holds it almost hypnotically. The viewer bears witness to the transformation of the shaman from man to animal. Although many pieces of Inuit art represent shamanic presence and practices, this piece by Palaya is especially effective because it transmits something of the beauty and weight of the spiritual belief in shamanism that was a central part of the traditional Inuit life. All of the pieces are part of a wide selection of subject matter commonly seen in Inuit art: family relationships, animals, shamans, hunters, and drum dancers. Some of these subjects are treated with seriousness, others with a sense of humor. Inuit art shares a common past, but each piece is the unique personal statement of the artist.

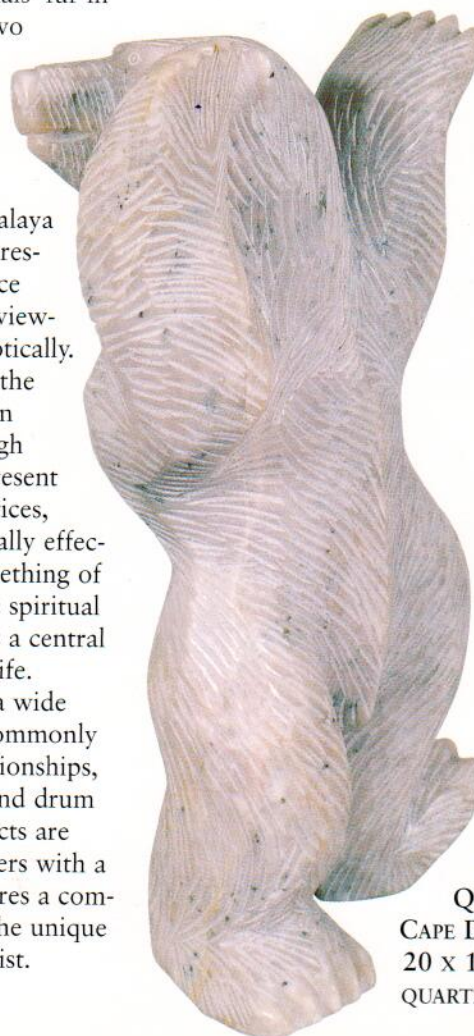
- ABC, 1999

of carvers and living alongside the polar bear, not from formal schooling.

Kelly Qimirpik's carving, *Bear* (IN421) is similar to Tapaugnai's *Bear* in its stylization, but the treatment of the surface is unique. Instead of the polished surface common to many Inuit pieces, Qimirpik has chosen to texturize this piece by incising lines in a dramatic pattern rep-



4. MUSK OX, SIMONIE KILLIKTEE, KIMMIRUT, 9 x 11 x 6 1/4", IN372



5. BEAR, KELLY QIMIRPIK, CAPE DORSET, 20 x 13 1/2 x 5 1/2", QUARTZ, IN421



6. MOTHER AND CHILD, KOV TAPAUNGAJ,
CAPE DORSET 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", IN451



7. MOTHER, CHILD AND FACE, POOTOOGOOK
IKARLIK, CAPE DORSET, 13 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", IN445



8. KNEELING WOMAN, ELIJAH MICHAEL, LAKE HARBOUR,
16 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 12 x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", IN431



9. *MOTHER AND CHILD*,
EEGEETSIK PETER, CAPE DORSET,
28½ x 10 x 15", IN403



10. *DRUM DANCER*, SOUDLOO JOSEPHIE, LAKE
HARBOUR, 10½ x 9 x 4", IN387



11. *MAN*, PETER
NINGEOOCHIAK,
CORAL HARBOUR,
10½ x 20½ x 4",
IN441



12. DRUM DANCER, TUCK NUNA, CAPE DORSET, 17 x 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 7", QUARTZ, IN414



13. MAN WALKING, QAUNAQ PALLUQ, CAPE DORSET, 12 x 7 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", QUARTZ, IN429



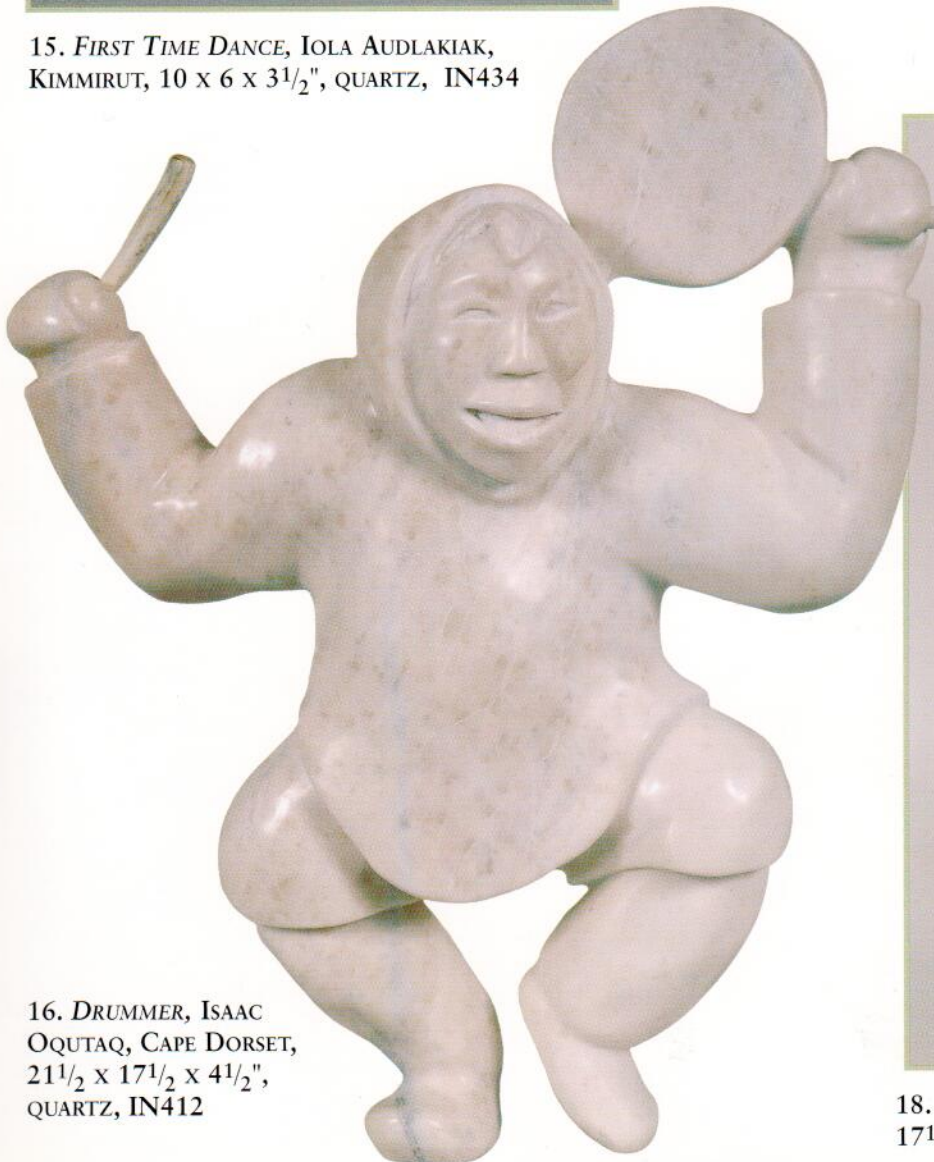
14. WOMAN, IOLA IKKIDULAK, KIMMIRUT, 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", IN380



15. *FIRST TIME DANCE*, IOLA AUDLAKIAK,
KIMMIRUT, 10 x 6 x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", QUARTZ, IN434



17. *MAN*, ISAAC OQUTAQ, CAPE DORSET,
8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 6 x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", IN391



16. *DRUMMER*, ISAAC
OQUTAQ, CAPE DORSET,
21 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ",
QUARTZ, IN412



18. *WOMAN*, QARPIK PUDLAT, CAPE DORSET,
17 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 6 x 5", IN406



19. MOTHER AND CHILD, TOONA IQULIK,
BAKER LAKE, 12 x 8 x 8", IN456



20. MOTHER AND CHILD, CAMILLA KAULIK,
BAKER LAKE, 7 1/4 x 7 x 6", IN370



21. HUNTER, THOMAS SEVOGA, BAKER LAKE,
11 x 8 x 3 3/4", IN346

22. HUNTER KNEELING,
PAUL TOOLOOKTOOK,
BAKER LAKE,
13 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 9", IN374



24. FIGURE, THOMAS SEVOGA, BAKER LAKE,
8 x 5 x 3", IN358



23. WOMAN, BARNABAS, BAKER LAKE,
8 x 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 5", IN362



25. MAN, LOUIS ARNARYUINNAQ, BAKER LAKE,
10 x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 3", IN379



26. MONSTER, KELLY QIMIRPIK, LAKE HARBOUR,
17½ x 11 1/2 x 4½", IN432



28. MAN IN BEAR SKIN, KELLIPALIK MUNGITOK,
CAPE DORSET, 13 x 11 x 3½", IN444



27. MOTHER AND CHILD, SANANGUATI
NALUNAR, LAKE HARBOUR,
16½ x 16 x 7", IN454



29. *WOMAN AND CHILD*, JOANIE IKKIPULAK, LAKE HARBOUR
17½ x 10 x 7", IN377



31. *DEPRESSED MAN*, JUTAI TOONOO, CAPE DORSET,
14 x 9½ x 7", IN399



30. *WOMAN*, KOV TAPAUNGA, CAPE DORSET,
11 x 8 x 2½", IN390



32. *BOY AND DOG*, NIVIAQSI PITSEOLAK, CAPE DORSET,
18 x 12¼ x 6¾", IN452



33. BEAR, PAULASSIE POOTOOGOOK, CAPE DORSET, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4", IN401



35. BEAR, ASHEVAK TUNNILLIE, CAPE DORSET, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 6 x 14", IN396



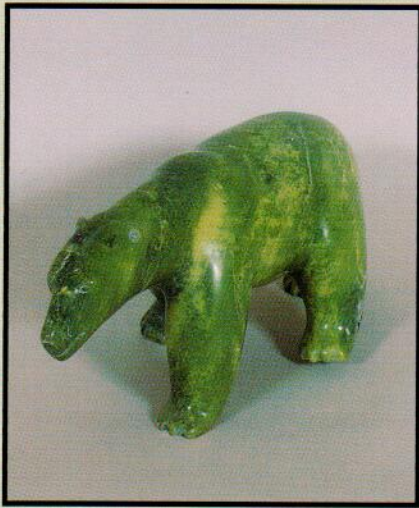
34. FIGHT READY, KOV TAPAUNGAI, CAPE DORSET, 19 x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", IN416



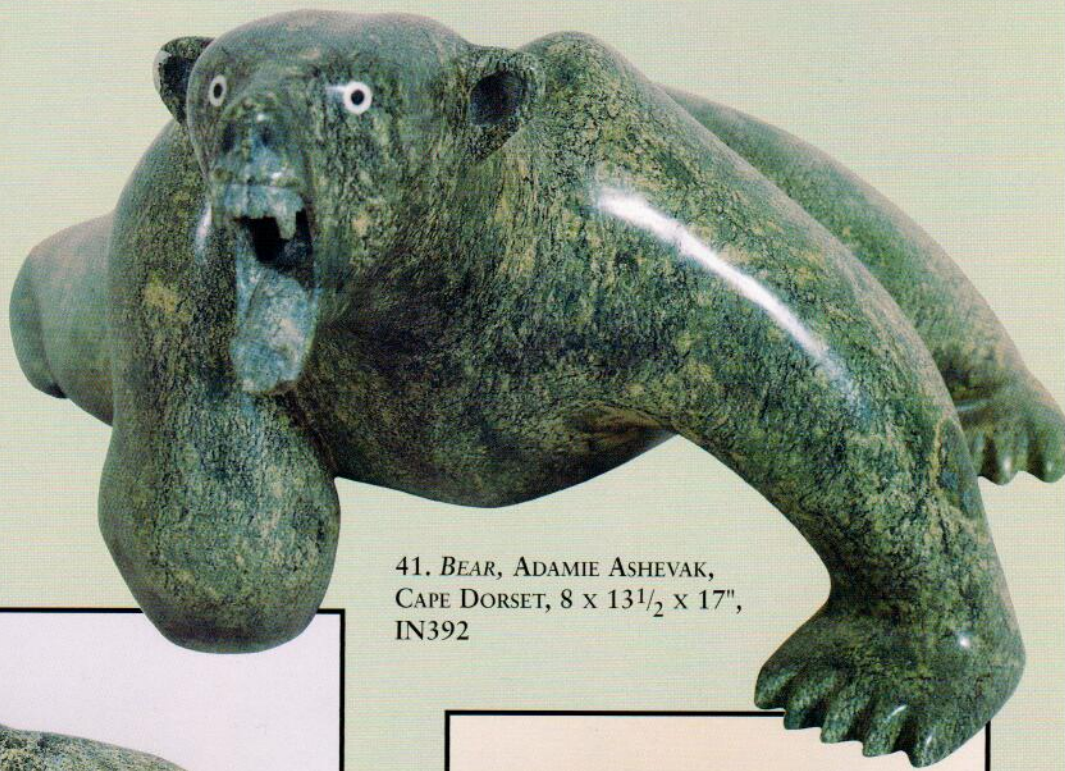
36. BEAR, JUTANI PARR, CAPE DORSET, 11 x 19 x 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", IN345



37. BEAR, ILKOO ANGUTIKJUAK, CLYDE RIVER, 5 x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", QUARTZ, IN351



38. BEAR, EJESIAK IKKIDULAK,
KIMMIRUT, 5 x 11 x 4³/₄", IN371



41. BEAR, ADAMIE ASHEVAK,
CAPE DORSET, 8 x 13¹/₂ x 17",
IN392



39. POLAR BEAR, TEMELA OKPIK, KIMMIRUT,
12 x 11 x 13¹/₂", IN393



42. BEAR, KOV TAPAUNGA, CAPE DORSET,
29 x 13 x 6¹/₂", IN402



40. BEAR, PETER EJESIAK, CAPE
DORSET, 7³/₄ x 8¹/₂ x 21", IN448



43. BIRD, JOSHUA AKAVAK, KIMMIRUT,
8 1/2 x 7 1/2 x 4", IN407



46. COMPOSITE, PUDALIK SHAA, CAPE
DORSET, 6 x 5 1/2 x 1 1/4" IN369



44. BIRD, PETER SALA, SANIKILUAQ,
8 1/2 x 10 x 2 1/2", IN367



45. DUCK, PAUL KAVIK, SANIKULAQ, 4 3/4 x 19 x 9 1/2", IN357



47. BIRD, KELLY QIMIRPIK, CAPE
DORSET, 12 x 6 x 2 1/2", IN349



48. *BIRD*, KOOTOO MUNNO, LAKE HARBOUR, 11½ x 7½ x 10½", IN455



50. *WOLF/DOG*, ETULU ETIDLOIE, CAPE DORSET, 4½ x 13 x 4", IN394



51. *SHAMAN'S HEART*, KIOWA ASHOONA, CAPE DORSET, 2½ x 17 x 8", IN415



49. *BIRD*, ETIDLOIE PETAULASSIE, CAPE DORSET, 11 x 6½ x 10", IN404



52. *BIRD*, KELLY QIMIRPIK, CAPE DORSET, 8 x 7½ x 3¾", IN356



53. WALRUS, PEA MICHAEL, KIMMIRUT, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 x 26", IN388



56. BIRD/SEAL, NALENIK TEMELA, KIMMIRUT, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", IN365



54. SEAL, EYEVADLUQ JOSEPHIE, KIMMIRUT, 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 7", IN364



57. WALRUS, IOLA IKKIDULAK, KIMMIRUT, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 x 23", IN384



55. WALRUS, EYETSIAQ IKKIDULAK, LAKE HARBOUR, 13 x 16 x 20", IN386



58. WALRUS, KELLIPALIK QIMIRPIK, CAPE DORSET, 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", IN446



59. *STONE TUSK*, PEA
MICHAEL, KIMMIRUT,
19 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 2", IN360



62. *READY TO FIGHT*, KELLY QIMIRPIK, CAPE DORSET,
9 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10", IN368



60. *WALRUS*, T. TEMELA, KIMMIRUT, 9 x 13 x 6",
IN378



63 *WALRUS*, AXANGAYU
SHAA, CAPE DORSET,
15 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ ",
IN447



61. *NARWHAL*, KELLY QIMIRPIK, CAPE DORSET,
2 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " IN353

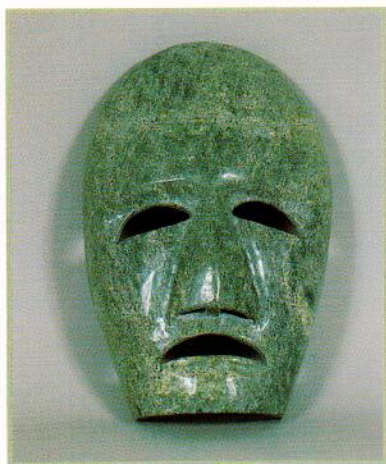


64. *NARHWAL*, JOHNNY TEMELA, KIMMIRUT,
3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 16 x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", IN359

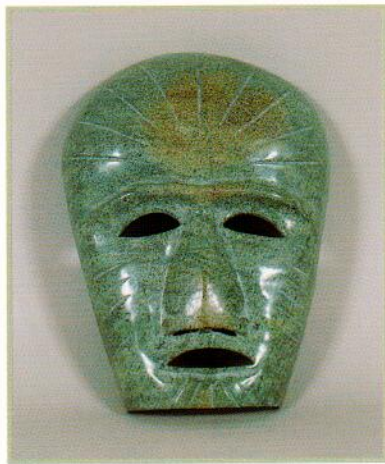
65. FACE, TURAQ RAGEE, CAPE DORSET, 8 x 7 1/2 x 2 1/2", IN352



70. COMPOSITE PIECE, TERRY PITSIULAK, LAKE HARBOUR, 10 x 2 1/2 x 10", IN385



66. MASK, TURAQ RAGEE, CAPE DORSET, 9 3/4 x 6 x 3", IN350



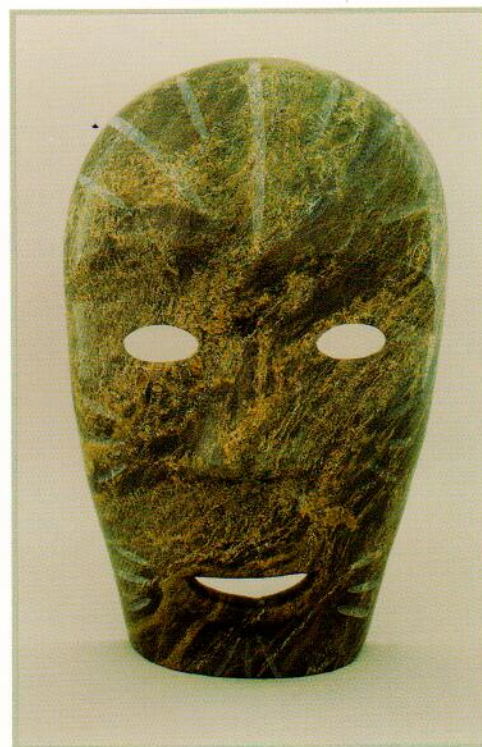
68. MASK, TURAQ RAGEE, CAPE DORSET, 9 x 7 1/2 x 2", IN354



67. MASK, TAQIALUK NUNA, CAPE DORSET, 6 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 2 1/2", IN397



69. MASK, TURAQ RAGEE, CAPE DORSET, 8 x 6 x 1 1/2", IN348



71. MASK, TAQIALUK NUNA, CAPE DORSET, 17 x 11 x 3 1/2", IN395



72. HEAD, LYPA PITSIULAK, PANGNIRTUNG,
10 x 11 x 9", IN381



74. FACE, JOHNNY TAPAUNGA, CAPE DORSET,
20 x 19 x 2³/₄", IN443



73. FACE, PAUL KAVIK, SANIKILUAQ, 13 x 7¹/₂ x 4", IN433



75. FACES - TOONOO SHARKY, CAPE DORSET,
12 x 9 x 7", IN375

INUIT ART

Form and Fantasy

8 January 2000 - 2 February 2000

Opening Reception: 8 January 2000, 3-6 P.M.
The public is invited to attend.
In cooperation with the Theo Waddington Gallery, Florida.

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76. WALRUS, KOV TAPAUNGAI, CAPE DORSET, 14 x 17 x 5",
IN426

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