Constructing the Image of Canada as a Nation: The International Presentation of Aboriginal Art Exhibitions (1969-1990)

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by

Linda Loraine Angela Grussani, B.A.

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Abstract

This thesis presents a study of four Aboriginal art exhibitions organized with federal sponsorship and exhibited abroad from 1969 until 1990: *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada* (1969-1970); *Sculpture/Inuit* (1971-1973); *The Inuit Print* (1978-1981); and *In the Shadow of the Sun* (1989-90). Employing Benedict Anderson's theory of "imagined communities" and Eric Hobsbawm's notion of "invented traditions", this thesis explores the link between the exhibition of Aboriginal art outside of Canada, and the formation of a distinct international image of Canada. This thesis assumes the position that exhibitions of Aboriginal art can be viewed as forming an integral component of the development of Canadian nationalism. The evolution of exhibition and curatorial practices during this period is also explored.

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I. Introduction

Since the mid-twentieth century the Canadian government has engaged in a number of cultural and economic developmental programs in order to assist in the promotion of the arts of Aboriginal people in Canada. One result of these efforts has been the relatively high visibility that Aboriginal art has been afforded through international exhibitions. This thesis will examine the extent to which the Canadian government has participated in the aggressive promotion of Inuit, First Nations and Métis art, especially during the period spanning from the 1960s to the 1980s, and how this exposure, mostly reinforcing stereotypes, was out of proportion to the marginal position of Aboriginal people in Canada's political, economic and cultural life.

This thesis explores the link between Canadian nationalism in post-war Canada and the motivation behind the federal government's initiatives to exhibit Aboriginal art abroad. The connection between growing nationalistic sentiment, political motivations and the popularity of state organized exhibitions of Aboriginal material culture travelling abroad during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s will also be revealed.

This thesis aspires to demonstrate that the Canadian government, through various public policies from the 1960s to the 1980s, made use of Aborignal material culture to assist in establishing an internationally distinctive image of Canada. The arguments presented in this thesis seek to define the type of image sought and evaluate the role that exhibitions of Aboriginal art have played

in the reinforcement of this image. Further this thesis will plot the history of federal government involvement in the international promotion of visual arts stemming from the 1960s and identify possible political motivations.

The scope of this thesis addresses a selected number of Inuit and First Nations art exhibitions, which have toured internationally with the support of various Canadian government agencies and programs from the 1960s to the end of the 1980s. Exhibitions discussed in-depth include *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada* (1969-1970); *Sculpture/Inuit* (1971-1973); *The Inuit Print* (1978-1981); and *In the Shadow of the Sun* (1989-90). These exhibitions were all sponsored and financed in varying degrees by various federal government departments and related agencies including the National Museums of Canada, the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (formerly External Affairs), and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (formerly the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development [1966-71], or the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs [1971-78]). The thematic content, presentation and reception of these exhibitions will be examined critically with respect to ideas of Canadian nationalism and the invention of a national image.

The findings of this thesis are organised into four chapters followed by a conclusion. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the theoretical approach that will be used. I will draw upon the theories of nationalism advanced by Benedict Anderson and Daniel Frances. The notion of establishing a national identity and

the promotion of symbols with which to convey it through art and culture will be introduced by examining E. J. Hobsbawm's theories of "invented traditions". This will provide some varying perspectives before investigating the general sentiments advocated by the political and cultural elites at the time, such as, Canadian nationalism, the development of an independent distinctive national identity, and an increased interest in Aboriginal culture beginning after the end of World War II. [1] The outcome of the advocacy resulted in national policies and programmes informed by the *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, 1951* and the *Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, 1982* to develop, share and promote Canadian arts and culture at home and abroad.

Chapter 3 presents an introduction to four major exhibitions that travelled abroad through assistance given by the various federal departments from the late 1960s until the late 1980s. This chapter describes, the origins of each of the exhibition ideas; the government departments and individuals involved in producing the exhibition; funding allocations from the federal government; the thematic approaches of the exhibition; and the supporting materials produced in conjunction with the exhibits. The cities where these exhibitions toured and duration of the exhibit are also identified.

Chapter 4 provides thematic and content analysis of the exhibitions as well as an overview of the national and international reception of the exhibitions.

Chapter 5 explores how the exhibitions have contributed to the creation of a distinctive image of Canada with reference to the literature and historical analysis set out in Chapter 2. Several graphs created from an analysis of data taken from the exhibitions will inform a discussion of the evolution of exhibition practices over two decades.

A short conclusion summarizes the findings of the thesis and address more recent developments in the international exhibition of Canadian Aboriginal material culture, including for example, *Transitions: Contemporary Canadian Indian and Inuit Art*, 1997 and *Transitions II: Contemporary Indian and Inuit Art of Canada*, 2001; both of which were intended to tour internationally.

Scope of Thesis

The scope of this thesis is limited to exhibitions developed from the late 1960s to 1990. Expo '67 marked a pivotal moment in the development of Canadian nationalism. The late 1980s represents an exciting period for the development of Aboriginal art history in Canada. The controversy surrounding the 1988 exhibition, *The Spirit* Sings, presented in conjunction with the 21st Winter Olympiad in Calgary resulted in the subsequent recommendations advocated by the *Task Force on Museums and First Peoples.* The 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in North American provided yet another forum for Aboriginal artists' activism.

In this thesis, all of the works of material culture produced by Aboriginal artists in Canada will be called *art*. The titles of the exhibitions examined in this thesis refer to the works presented therein as "*art*" and this paper will follow suit.

Throughout this thesis different terminology will be used to address the Aboriginal people of Canada depending on the context in which the reference is made. The terms *Aboriginal, Native, First Peoples* and *Indigenous* are used as general terms to collectively describe three distinct cultural groups known as the *Inuit, Métis* and *First Nations*.[2] Each of these groups are distinguished by their own historical background, cultures and political goals.

The popularity of Inuit art outside of Canada has its origins midway through the 20th century. In *Inuit Art: A History*, Richard Crandall cites five factors involved in fostering the appeal of Inuit art in the South after 1949. One of the first factors was that Canadian government officials began to envision support for Inuit art as a form of "welfare." Initially the "industry" was supposed to be self-supporting within two years, but that estimate, appears to have been quickly dismissed as too optimistic, because subsequently, in lieu of "welfare" the government placed considerable funding into the promotion of Inuit art. [3] A second factor encouraging the appeal of Inuit art occurred during the post-World War II era, when Canadians were looking for a unique national identity. Inuit art was a unique art form, which distinguished Canada from the United Kingdom and the United States. A third factor was the effective presentation by Inuit art enthusiasts James and Alma Houston, through southern marketing events (such

as radio and newspaper interviews), to legitimize Inuit art as an art form. The fourth factor deals with the publications that appeared following World War II. For a relatively "new" art form there were numerous publications, which repeated the same twelve messages[4] about Inuit art.[5] The publications served to further present Inuit art as a legitimate art form.[6] A fifth factor was the attempt made by government organizations to legitimize the "art" through exhibitions. After its creation late in 1953, the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources started an active program of purchasing and exhibiting Inuit art.[7] Criticism and debate concerning the legitimization of Inuit art was at the centre of a discussion between two anthropologists in the mid-1980s.

The Graburn – Vastokas Debate, 1986-1987

The winter 1987 issue of *Inuit Art Quarterly* sparked off a debate between anthropologists Nelson Graburn and Joan Vastokas over an article Graburn had written entitled, *Inuit Art and Canadian Nationalism* with the underlying question, *Why Eskimos? Why Canada?*[8] In his article, Graburn suggests several factors that led to the "particularly favoured and endowed" manner in which the state has treated Inuit arts.[9] Among these factors, Graburn cites the following conditions leading to the introduction of Aboriginal art onto the Canadian art scene: the maturation of the country at the end of the 19th century and its search for a distinctive national identity; the opportunities for artists during World War II; and

the release of the *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences* in 1951.

Graburn acknowledges that "some cynics" may claim that this increased attention in Canada may be "merely advertising to promote the sale of Inuit art in order to support a people for whom the state cannot find jobs," but maintains that the state's promotion of Eskimo (Aboriginal) art is derived from Canada's need to carve out an identity in the post-World War II world. Graburn sympathizes with the obstacles the state faced in establishing a distinctive identity, in stating, "For an ex-colonial nation such as Canada, there are special difficulties in establishing a national identity and in promoting the symbols to convey it. To succeed, the nation must differentiate itself from the mother country and secondly, from any neighbouring countries having a common background."[10] In closing, Graburn concludes, the appeal of Inuit art stems from many factors, including the favourable image of the Inuit during the past century, the titillation of something new and different, its lack of competition from mainstream art and the fact that these arts are the products of "natural" Canadians. Many of these statements may be applied to First Nations' art as well.

Though not in disagreement with Graburn's comments heralding the importance of the economic, political and nationalistic factors involved in contributing to the popularity of Inuit art, Joan Vastokas argues that a fourth factor should have been addressed: the "single most important factor accounting for the appeal of contemporary Inuit art," lies in "the intrinsic aesthetic appeal of

the works themselves."[11] Vastokas also disagrees with Graburn's view of the Canadian public's perception of Inuit as something "primitive" and his perception of a lack of competition with mainstream art: "Inuit art forms are appealing in themselves and *this* explains their wide acceptance by the Canadian and international public. It is not because they have 'primitive' quality". Vastokas goes on to claim that Canadian public perception has not been informed by 'primitivism' for a "long time."[12]

In his response to Vastokas, Graburn claims that while Vastokas is "provocative" she "misses the point in several ways". He defends his position and initiates a discussion to define the audience for Inuit art. Vastokas' reply to Graburn's follow-up continues to defend her position. Outlining the complexities in the study of Aboriginal art, Vastokas calls upon anthropologists and art historians to "raise the stakes of native art scholarship to an analytical level that would address the various traditions of native art as integral with world art history with all its fascinating cross-cultural as well as intra-cultural complexities."[13]

More recently, in the recent catalogue for the exhibition, *Celebrating Inuit Art: 1940-1970,* Governor General Adrienne Clarkson identifies Inuit art as an "art that has successfully transcended artistic and cultural boundaries that it has come to represent the very essence of Canada. I remember a time – not so long ago – when the only art that seemed to identify Canada without question was either by the Group of Seven or by Inuit artists like Kenojuak Ashevak, Peter Pitseolak, Pitseolak Ashoona, Lucy Qinnuyuak, and others."[14] Clarkson states

that this revelation should surprise us, considering the current position of Aboriginal peoples in Canadian society:

> for the Inuit are not part of the Canadian mainstream. Relatively few in number, their homes lie far to the north of major population centres, and for many decades they were virtually cut off from the rest of Canada... And therein, perhaps lies another face of Inuit art's appeal. For it is an art that wrestles something sublime out of a life-and-death struggle for survival. It is an art that explores humankind's relationship with nature. It is an art that evokes the spiritual essence of a country like Canada – and our intrinsic loneliness in the face of the landscape that is vast, often empty, often unknowable. It might be this, above all, that makes Inuit art so evocative of what it means to be Canadian – and perhaps, at heart, what it means to be human.[15]

Clarkson suggests that it is the very difference of the experience that makes Inuit art distinctively Canadian, appealing to both a national and international audience. The same can be argued for all Aboriginal art in Canada.

The exhibitions examined in this thesis occur in a period which corresponds to the second generation of exhibitions of Canadian Aboriginal material culture as art in large-scale exhibitions. The first generation is represented by an early exhibition such as the *Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art: Native and Modern* (1927), in which objects previously regarded as ethnographic were exhibited alongside conventional fine art objects. This was a singular instance and First Nations material culture continued to remain the object of study by ethnologists and anthropologists without exception until museum director Dr. William E. Taylor, Jr. [16] insisted that many objects were indeed "art", and hired a Curator of Indian Art for the National Museum of Man in 1977.[17]

Exhibition practices during the 1960s were impacted by the recommendations of the *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences* (1951), and as a result demonstrated an increased urgency to exhibit the distinctive art of Aboriginal peoples. Echoing this sentiment, Sylvia Bashevkin has acknowledged in *True Patriot Love: The Politics of Canadian Nationalism* that, "[t]hrough the prism of the world view, Canadian nationalists since the late 1960s have tried to influence federal public policy in diverse ways."[18]

This second generation of exhibitions has set the stage for the types of exhibitions that would follow beginning in the early nineties. A third generation of exhibitions benefited from the recommendations of both the *Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee* (1982) and the *Task Force of First Peoples and Museums* (1992), the participation of a generation of Aboriginal activist artists and initiatives by agencies like the Canada Council to develop Aboriginal curatorial capacity.

Endnotes

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[1] Individuals such as former Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson (1897-1972), former Cabinet Minister (National Defence) and lawyer, Brooke Claxton (1898-1960), former Governor General, Vincent Massey (1887-1967) and former Director of the International Programme Division and the International Economic Relations Division between 1946-1953, John Deutsch (1911-1976), actively advocated the importance of art and culture.

[2] "Organization of Words First." Words First: An Evolving Terminology Relating to Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. Communications Branch, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/wf/index_e.html, January 1, 2003.

[3] Richard C. Crandall. Inuit Art: A History. Jefferson: MacFarland & Company, Inc., 1999. p. 106.

[4] Ibid. p. 107. The 12 messages outlined by Crandall, in brief, were: 1) contemporary Inuit arts has roots in the past; 2) the tools used for carving in the past and the present are the same; 3) there is a division of labour between men and women; 4) Inuit carvers do not copy their own or others' carvings; 6) there was no teaching of art method or technique; 7) the supply cannot meet the demand; 8) contemporary Inuit art is similar to recognized art forms; 9) the Inuit have inner motivation to produce art; 10) the Inuit excel artistically because they have not wasted their time or energy in warfare; 11) art does not change the Inuit; and, 12) the production of art will release the Inuit from government relief.

[5] Ibid. p. 107.

[6] Ibid. p. 107.

[7] Ibid. p. 106.

[8] The article and subsequent responses took place in four issues of *Inuit Art Quarterly* during 1986 and 1987: vol.1, no. 3; vol. 2, no.1; vol. 2, no. 2; and, vol. 2, no. 3.

[9] Nelson H. H. Graburn. "Inuit Art and Canadian Nationalism: Why Eskimos? Why Canada?" *Inuit Art Quarterly*. Fall 1986. p. 5

[10] Ibid. p. 5

[11] Joan Vastokas. "Commentary: A Reply to Graburn," *Inuit Art Quarterly*. Winter 1987, p. 15.

[12] Ibid. p. 15.

[13] Joan Vastokas. "Commentary: A Reply to Graburn," *Inuit Art Quarterly*. Summer 1987. p. 14.

[14] Maria von Finckenstein. Celebrating Inuit Art: 1940-1970. Gatineau: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1999. p. 8.

[15] Ibid. p. 9.

[16] William Ewart Taylor was a renowned archaeologist and proponent of public education. In the 1960s, he headed the Archaeology Division at the National Museum of Canada and helped found the Canadian Archaeological Association.

Between 1967 and 1984, he was Director of the National Museum of Man (a precursor of the Canadian Museum of Civilization) and oversaw the renovation of the Victoria Memorial Museum Building. Later in his career, he spent five years as President of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. He died in 1994.

[17] Robert Houle was the first Curator of Indian Art at the National Museum of Man from 1977 to 1980.

[18] Sylvia Bashevkin. True Patriot Love: The Politics of Canadian Nationalism. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1991. p. 61.

II. Aboriginal Art in Canada and Abroad: Inventing the Image of a Nation

In this chapter I discuss recent theoretical notions of nationalism to support the argument that the Canadian government, in an attempt to invent a distinctive international identity for a late twentieth century nation through art, chose to use the material culture of Aboriginal peoples. Evidence of the desire to use Aboriginal art in this manner can be found in government reports, commissions and public records concerned with the development of Canadian art and culture.

Drawing on the theoretical discussion of nationalism by Benedict Anderson and Eric J. Hobsbawm and Daniel Francis' study of the representation of the Indian, it can be demonstrated that the Canadian government sought to establish a distinctive international image of Canada using symbols conveyed through the art and material culture of Aboriginal people. This "invention of tradition" and the promotion of symbols with which it is conveyed through art and culture will be defined.

In the search for a distinctive presence as an independent and modern nation, Canada has internationally promoted art that can be identified as uniquely Canadian. This initiative of the Canadian government contributed to the concerted postwar effort to project a Canada independent from Great Britain. The decision to exhibit art abroad can be seen as a natural development of the country's growing confidence and its will to strengthen the image of its independence and distinctiveness internationally, both politically and culturally.

The art of the nation's Aboriginal peoples, seemingly free of Eurocentrism, served this purpose admirably, differentiating Canada from Britain, France and America.

Understanding Nationalism

On the subject of nationalism Benedict Anderson has observed that, "Nation, nationality, nationalism – all have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone analyse. In contrast to the immense influence that nationalism has exerted on the modern world, plausible theory about it is consciously meagre."[1]

The term 'nationalism' is generally used to describe two phenomena. The first describes the attitude that the members of a nation have when they care about their national identity, and the second describes the actions that the members of a nation take when seeking to achieve (or sustain) some form of political sovereignty. While the first definition raises questions about the concept of nation, the second raises questions whether sovereignty must be understood as the acquisition of full statehood with complete authority for domestic and international affairs, or whether something less is required.[2] Nationalism has been defined as loyalty and devotion to a nation – *especially* a sense of national consciousness exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations or supranational groups.[3] The term 'nationalism' is used to refer to

political movements seeking or exercising state power and justifying such actions with nationalist arguments.

The roots of Canada's mid-twentieth century nationalist agenda can be found in the country's post-war need to achieve full political and legal sovereignty. During a period of sustained economic growth during the 1950s and 1960s, Canada's sense of social and political presence matured in an attempt to differentiate itself from that of the United States and Great Britain. Immigration, social reorganization, and international obligations all contributed towards the continuing development of a single overarching national self-identity. The cultural contributions to the creation of a distinctive national identity, promoted by the federal government and political and cultural elites, arguably led to the development of an "imagined community," as defined by Benedict Anderson.

In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* Anderson proposes a more adaptive definition of nationalism in that the condition of nationalism is an imagined political community both inherently limited and sovereign. Anderson continues by explaining that the notion of the nation:

> is imagined because members will never know most of their fellow-members, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion ...The nation is imagined as *limited* because... it has finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations... It is imagined as sovereign because it came to maturity at a stage of human history when freedom was a rare and precious ideal. Finally it is imagined as a community because it is conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.[4]

According to Anderson, cultural imagery in nations of vast geographical proportions such as Canada is bound to be imagined, because their sheer size restricts citizens from ever knowing everyone in their community. The development of strong symbols of nationhood assist in forming bonds, which in turn, link these "imagined communities."

Nationalism in this context should be understood not in relation to self-consciously held political ideologies, but in relation to the large cultural systems that precede it. Anderson explains that, historically, nationalism arose at a time when three other cultural sectors were decreasing in importance. First, there were changes in the religious community. Nationality represented a secular transformation of fatality into continuity and contingency into meaning. The unselfconscious coherence of religion declined after the Middle Ages due largely to the impact of the effects of the explorations of the non-European world and the gradual demotion of sacred language itself. Second, there were changes in the dynastic realm. During the pre-modern period, centres defined states, borders were porous and indistinct, and sovereignties blurred into one another. However, in the seventeenth century, the automatic legitimacy of the sacral monarchy began its decline and people began to doubt the belief that society was naturally organized around such centres. Third, a new conception of temporality emerged, in which cosmology and history were indistinguishable. These three changes led to a search for a new method of linking fraternity, power, and time together.

Historian Eric J. Hobsbawm's theory of 'invented traditions' complements Benedict Anderson's theory of imagined communities by attempting to define these linkages. For Hobsbawm, the term 'invented tradition' is used in a broad, but not imprecise sense. It includes both 'traditions' actually invented, constructed and formally instituted, and those emerging in a less traceable manner within a brief and dateable period.[5] In the introduction to *The Invention of Tradition*, Hobsbawm offers the following definition of the 'invented tradition':

> 'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past ... However, insofar as there is such reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of 'invented' traditions is that the continuity with it is largely fictitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition.[6]

It is these 'invented traditions' that help to develop the strong symbols of nationhood, which assist in forming the bonds linking the members of these "imagined communities."

Of the three overlapping types of 'invented traditions' Hobsbawm defines, it is the first type which functions to establish or symbolize social cohesion and collective identities, which can most closely be associated with the Canadian initiative to use the material cultural production of one social group to assist in the development and creation of effective symbols of a distinctive Canadian national identity. Aspects of the second type, "those establishing or legitimizing institutions, status or relations of authority" and of the third type, "those whose

main purpose was socialization, the inculcation of beliefs, value systems and conventions of behaviour"[7] are also evident, in the state's appropriation of Aboriginal art.

The theory of an 'invented tradition' can be applied to the reversal of the role maintained by Aboriginal peoples in Canada throughout history. In her studies of Australian Aboriginal art, Susan Hiller notes a similar phenomenon also applicable to the display of Canadian Aboriginal material culture, in that "modern nations, particular former colonies, use the myth of primitivism whenever they display the arts of their decimated, indigenous minorities as symbols of a national identity."[8]

In *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture*, historian Daniel Francis describes the relationship between Europeans and Aboriginal peoples. He argues that:

> [f]rom the first encounter, Europeans viewed aboriginal Americans through a screen of their own prejudices and preconceptions. Given the wide gulf separating the cultures, Europeans have tended to imagine the Indian rather than to know Native people, thereby to project onto Native people all the fears and hopes they have for the New World.[9]

Francis continues his analysis of the early relationship between Europeans and Aboriginal peoples in the early years of Canadian history, following European contact and colonization, writing that: "At this point Whites set themselves the task of inventing a new identity for themselves as Canadians. The image of the Other, the Indian, was integral to this process of self-identification. The Other came to stand for everything the Euro-Canadian was not."[10] Francis also

addresses the use of images of Aboriginals as a symbol of Canada, especially in advertising, concluding that: "[t]he advertising image is based on stereotypes of the Imaginary Indian already abroad in the culture. In turn, advertising reinforces the stereotype by feeding back into the mainstream culture in a self-repeating loop."[11] Francis looks at past and present usage of Aboriginal material culture by the Canadian government, in looking at the totem pole as "just one aspect of Native culture that has been adopted by non-Native Canadians as a symbol of their own."[12] He continues with the example of the federal government's appropriation of Northwest Coast material culture:

> In 1991, the federal government unveiled a huge sculpture at the entrance to the new Canadian embassy building in Washington, D.C. 'The Spirit of Haida G'waii' is a five-ton bronze statue depicting a canoe spilling over with Haida myth figures, carved by reknown West Coast artist, Bill Reid, who is part Haida himself. Reid and his work are acclaimed worldwide. He ranks among the top monumental artists in Canada. However, it must be assumed that a sculpture in such a prestigious public location is intended to be not only a work of art but more than that, a symbol for Canada itself. The choice of a giant Haida canoe is an interesting attempt by government to absorb Haida mythology into a more general mythology of relevance to all Canadians.[13]

The promotion of Canadian Aboriginal art internationally is closely linked to the rise of modern Canadian nationalism at the end of the Second World War. In her essay, *Modernism, Nationalism, and Beyond*, Diana Nemiroff, Curator of Modern Art at the National Gallery of Canada, identifies the Modern period, as the period of the emergence of the nation-state, in which almost all societies have come to perceive themselves in these terms and as a result seek to promote a national art, as a required expression of national self-consciousness.[14]

In supporting this argument, Nemiroff cites anthropologist Daniel Miller's position that:

> This is particularly significant when countries are formed by colonial authorities within arbitrary boundaries and have been left with the task of forging a national image from often competing groups. A new national art may be preferable to the invidious selection of the products of one particular ethnic group.[15]

In the case of Canada, distinctive Native cultures pre-date the modern nation. Aboriginal material culture has been being utilized by the government to accelerate the nationalist development, by the promotion of Aboriginal art as a uniquely Canadian symbol.

In his 1987 essay titled, *The Relevance of Canadian History*, historian W.L. Morton isolated four permanent factors in Canada's history that have shaped its development: a northern character, a deeply ingrained historical dependency on Britain and later on the United States, an embracing of the monarchy, and a committed national destiny characterized by special relations with other states.[16] The second characteristic, Canada's most recent alliance in world affairs with the United States, one of the world's most powerful nations, presents a challenge to the preservation of Canada's integrity.[17] Consequently, this last factor can also be viewed as one of the motives fuelling the Canadian government's quest for symbols of an independent and distinctive national identity.

The presentation of Aboriginal art in the 1969 exhibition, *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art* in 1969 did not mark the first time a Canadian institution

had sent examples of Aboriginal works abroad. In 1938, *A Century of Canadian Art* was opened at the Tate Gallery in London. Featuring an array of Canadian art from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the exhibition included a display of Aboriginal material culture alongside non-Aboriginal works. In a review of the show for *Saturday Night*, Graham McInnes described the Aboriginal art as providing motifs for contemporary painting.[18] His premise situates the role of the Aboriginal art included in the exhibition at the Tate as a source of appropriated motifs and not as a product of a living culture.

Distinguishing Canadians from Americans

The quest for a national identity has also been spurred by the need to distinguish Canadians from our neighbours to the south. Columnist, Richard Gwyn has made the following observation:

> A century earlier, 1887, Goldwyn Smith made an identical prediction: Canadian nationality being a lost cause, the ultimate union of Canada with the United States appears now to be morally certain.' One primal definition of Canadianism has to be that we are among the few peoples in the world who, given a chance to become Americans, have chosen not to.[19]

Throughout the last half of the twentieth century, there have been various initiatives by the state to establish and amplify to the world a unique image of Canada. One major initiative assumed the form of a federal inquiry, *The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences*. This is the first of two federal commissions that I will introduce with regard to the promotion of Canadian art, and more specifically to Aboriginal art abroad.

The Massey Commission and the "Projection of Canada Abroad"

The *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences* (1951), often referred to as the "Massey Commission"[20], certainly generated an increase in both public and state interest in the arts in Canada. The commission, appointed by Privy Council Order on April 8, 1949, was chaired by the Honourable Vincent Massey (1887-1967), High Commissioner in London, who later became the first Canadian-born Governor General.

The establishment of the commission marked the first time a broad study of the arts, letters and sciences in Canada would be undertaken by the Canadian government. The commission was specifically mandated to investigate and make recommendations to the federal government in the funding of broadcasting, federal cultural institutions, government relationships with volunteer cultural associations, and higher education. The findings of the commission, handed-down in the spring of 1951, offered a keen diagnosis of Canada's cultural predicament and a number of bracing remedies.[21] The recommendations made by the Massey Commission were "based on the conviction that federal action was essential at the time, and on all fronts, to make Canada a great and united country."[22]

One of the firmest recommendations outlined in Chapter XVII of the report – "The Projection of Canada Abroad" – called attention to the need for a greater Canadian cultural presence abroad. The Commissioners observed that "the promotion abroad of knowledge of Canada is not a luxury but an obligation, and

a more generous policy in this field would have important results, both concrete and intangible. Information about Canada as a nation serves to stimulate our international trade, and to attract tourists and desirable immigrants."[23]

Artist and university teacher, Charles Comfort, anticipated aspects of this overarching recommendation in his essay entitled *Painting: The Interpretation of a Canadian Spirit in Canada* published in the *Royal Commission Studies: A selection of essays prepared for the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters & Sciences 1949-1951*.[24] In his view, he wrote,

> The time has come in our complex but limited economy, in our diverse lives, where a greater stimulus must be offered to ensure standards and production of the visual arts in the interest of national consciousness and unity. This visualizes an increase of federal concern in cultural matters, a condition already implied by the appointment of the commission.[25]

Comfort also supported his position with historical precedents:

> History points out that the arts have in the past been exploited, not only for the aggrandizement of the state, but as an instrument of national publicity (Italy and Germany). If the enlightened modern state will concern itself with the arts as an agency for promoting national unity through public spiritual welfare, there would appear little justification for concern, and no conflict with the principles of democratic freedom.[26]

In her study of the Massey Report's role in Canada's involvement in the 1952 XXVI Biennale di Venezia, Sandra Paikowsky, professor of Art History at Concordia University, sees the Report's recommendations for the "projection of Canada abroad" as a strategy to "attempt to 'catch up' culturally, and create an identity comparable to its status in the international political arena."[27] Paikowsky also makes reference to the Commissioners' conclusion noting that "The Director of the National Gallery did good service to the cause of painting in Canada by

pointing out that exhibitions held in Canada do not produce such satisfactory results as exhibitions of Canadian painting held abroad"[28] and that these exhibitions "not only brought to the artist an increased prestige, but also gave him an opportunity to sell abroad certain of his works; art exhibitions which are held in Canada do not produce the same happy results."[29]

The Commission's hearings also demonstrated that Canadian cultural development would have to come to terms not just with biculturalism, but with multiculturalism as well. Ethnic groups were demanding recognition as post-war immigration was adding to their size and variety. At the same time, the significance of the Holocaust was beginning to emerge, making discriminatory attitudes of the past publicly intolerable. The Commission also heard a great deal, especially from the Western provinces, about the need to preserve the culture of Canada's Native peoples.[30] Although the report included a few pages on 'Indian Arts and Crafts,' no direct recommendations emerged from this discussion.[31]

One chapter of the Report addressed the subject of Native art, specifically acknowledging that the commissioners had "heard much ... of the Indian peoples who once played such an important part in the history of Canada and who still maintain to some degree separate communities and a distinct way of life brought to our attention in *sixteen briefs and presentations.*"[32] The report demonstrates the growing importance of Aboriginal culture at the time by continuing: "[w]e also received an authoritative study on the subject to which we were indebted for

much valuable information. We were interested in this matter for its own sake and because it affects the well-being of an important group of Canadian people."[33]

Again, several suggestions, but no recommendations were made about the ways that might encourage the production of Native arts and crafts. Point 11, specifically names the National Gallery of Canada in providing co-operation in preserving and publicizing Indian designs; travelling exhibitions of Indian work; special instruction; and a study of marketing problems for the different kinds of products.[34] The Commissioners continued that:

> There is general agreement that help, though essential, must be given with much care; otherwise it may do harm, rather than good. High standards of quality must be maintained through interest and encouragement. The Indians should be reminded of the value of their own traditions and the beauty of their traditional designs but should be free to work in the form and pattern which they prefer. In these ways they may be persuaded to avoid the slavish copying of novelties which attract them, or which they think may be better only because they come from the white man.[35]

The exhibition of Aboriginal art abroad satisfied two of the suggestions made by the Massey Commission: first it builds upon the need to promote Canadian art abroad; and second, it serves to promote and preserve the traditions of Aboriginal material cultures.

In her 1970 essay, *Yes, Cultural Imperialism Too!*, Gail Dexter, identifies the Massey Commission Report "as one of the sternest warnings to Canadians about the danger of Americanization of our culture."[36] According to her, Canada's reputation in the arts, both nationally and internationally, rests mainly on its painted visual culture. "Painting, then, is generally regarded as the most

advanced and at the same time as the most immediately communicable expression of the spirit of Canada." [37]

Dexter decries that in the promotion of 'Canadian culture' the commissioners were, in great part, defending their own cultural interests against the American intrusion." She also warns, "as long as the Canadian economy is dominated by the United States, Canadian culture will be submerged and Canadian painting will bear the hallmark of the imperial style."[38] Continuing she states, "this is surely not surprising when most of the great international styles of western culture have been the adaptation by European countries of the style innovated for the use of the ruling class in the most powerful cultural metropolis."[39] In conclusion she writes, "Canadians are no longer in the happy position described twenty years ago in the Massey report when we had the choice for or against a national culture. English speaking Canadians in particular face a situation in which our culture, especially painting, is completely submerged."[40]

Dexter calls for a new art to keep Canadian art from falling too close to being American and recognizes that doing so is an enormous task: "it means destroying an art that is propaganda for the American ruling class and replacing it with an art that is meaningful and functional for the Canadian people." Dexter cites artists emerging out of London, Ontario in initiating this task. Likewise, Michael Greenwood has described the art created during the 1960s by these artists in the article, *Some Nationalist Facets of Canadian Art*, as examples of

nationalist art. Greenwood asserts that, in art, the question of nationalism seems often to be confused with identifying the particular characteristics that distinguish one nation's art from another.[41]

Parallel to the nationalist art created during the 1960s and 70s by artists such as Greg Curnoe (1936-1992) and John Boyle (b. 1941), the Canadian government's appropriation of Aboriginal arts, though void of similar nationalist sentiment in the message of the work, served as a symbol of Canadian identity and assisted in answering Dexter's call for "a meaningful and functional" art for the Canadian people to further distinguish Canadian art from "American propaganda".

Understanding the Political Climate

At the end of the Second World War, the federal government began to pay more attention to the conditions under which Native peoples lived. Just as had occurred during the First World War, Native participation in World War II had been high. Consequently, an increase in the awareness of issues facing Aboriginal peoples occurred with the return of Aboriginal veterans at the end of the war,[42] so much so, that, a Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons held hearings in 1946-48, resulting in the comprehensive Indian Act of 1951. The Act contained revisions based on consultation with Native leaders, including limiting the powers of the Minister of Indian Affairs and increasing band control over local matters.[43] This last change spurred a sharp increase in

involvement in band elections. It was also in that same year that the report of the *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences* was released, which acknowledged the significance of Aboriginal art in Canada, helping to distinguish Canadian culture from its American counterpoint.

Nevertheless, parallel circumstances concerning Aboriginal peoples, and material culture specifically, have been observed in the United States. As Bruce Bernstein describes in his essay, *The Indian Art World in the 1960s and 1970s:*

> The shift in attitude toward Indian art in the 1960s and 1970s was the result of a broader international context that created the resurgence of interest in American Indian cultures, resulting in books, movies, and a new market for Indian-made and Indian-style jewellery, pots, and other art forms. Native American art history became an academic discipline in the 1970s. As Indian art scholar Ralph T. Coe recalls, 'The art had always been there, it was only a manner of calling attention to it.' Exhibitions and new galleries opened in order to feature Indian artists and to present their work as 'art'.[44]

The expanded awareness of Aboriginal issues in Canada soon brought recognition and promotion of Aboriginal contemporary artists beginning with Jack Pollock's solo exhibition of Anishnaabe artist Norval Morrisseau (b. 1931) in Toronto in 1962. Similar attention was also afforded to other artists such as Daphne Odjig (b. 1919) and Alex Janvier (b. 1935) through exhibitions and commissions.

Bernstein credits the shift in attention in the United States to an intense period of nationalism following the American involvement in the Second World War, and in the development of a strong counterculture in the 1960s:

> [W]hile the 1950s were reflexive, celebratory years dominated by the American dream, the 1960s began a turbulent era in which the American ideal of equality and representation for all Americans was severely tested

> through civil unrest and the Vietnam War. One reaction to this disillusionment was the 1960s counterculture typified by hippies who began searching for alternative modes of thought and living.[45]

Borrowing from Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr.'s views of the counterculture movement, Bernstein explains one result "was an elevation of the Indian in the eyes of many Anglos. The Indian's connection to the land, tradition and community was romantically appealing to the alienated and to the ecology-minded."[46] In further reference to the American condition, Bernstein notes:

> The intellectual and social climate in the United States was ripe for 'discovering' and embracing Indian cultures. Social service organizations, books and television focused on their health and economic plight, but despite poverty and inadequate healthcare, American Indians retained a semblance of their traditional lifestyles. Americans looked to Indian cultures for a means of recapturing a genuine American heritage.[47]

Similarly, in Canada during this period government officials looked towards its Aboriginal people and their material culture as representing something uniquely Canadian, and proceeded to capitalize on it through exhibitions of Aboriginal art abroad.

The 1960s brought further and more extensive changes in the relationship between the Canadian government and cultural affairs. Journalist Sandra Gywn examines the changes in the government sphere in her 1962 article, *On Government: Why is Canada Afraid of Art*? Providing an itemized approach, her critical examination of Canadian government and its responsibilities towards art and culture in Canada demonstrates that the extent of the federal government's involvement with the arts is best shown in the Department of External Affairs: "It is the cultural field for practical reason: to present a good image of Canada for

the world. In some respects this goal is being achieved, in others it falls somewhat short of the mark." [48] Gwyn's article, written a decade after the tabling of the 1951 report of the Massey Commission, reflected concerns that would later be addressed in the second Commission I will examine with regard to the promotion of Aboriginal art abroad.

Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, 1982

The Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, co-chaired by writer, publisher and senator, Jacques Hébert (b. 1923) and composer and arts administrator, Louis Applebaum (1918-2000), released its report in November 1982. Commonly known as the *Applebaum-Hébert Report* on Canada's cultural policies, it was markedly different from the Massey Commission Report, published 30 years earlier. The Committee's report recommended an increased community activity in art and culture and an increase of federal and provincial support of art and culture. The Report also represented a departure from the conventional Canadian cultural policy of the day, as it suggested involving the private sector in aspects of cultural production, especially in the "cultural industries".

The Report contains several recommendations for the promotion of Aboriginal material culture, both at home and abroad. Recommendation 18, concerns the material culture of the Northwest Territories:

> The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, as the federal department which administers the Northwest Territories, should review the existing

> Northwest Territories Archaeological Sites Regulations with the Archaeological Survey of Canada and the National Historic Parks and Sites Branch. It should proceed at once to develop a comprehensive heritage preservation act which clearly states the responsibilities and obligations of government, industry, special interest groups and individuals for the prehistoric and historic archaeological resources of the Northwest Territories, and gives recognition to the interests of Canadians in the Northwest Territories to retain such materials in the context in which they were found whenever possible.[49]

Recommendation 89, which calls for the establishment of the advisory committee delegated to review artists' applications for assistance in presenting their talents outside of Canada, specifically addresses the finding that "[m]any intervenors advanced the view that groups which present material reflecting the ethnic and multicultural culture of Canada should be assisted." The recommendation specifically targets Aboriginal cultural production by reminding readers that it not "be forgotten that there is great interest abroad in the traditions and artistic activities of Canada's indigenous peoples."[50] Acknowledging that exhibitions of Inuit prints and sculptures have been successfully toured abroad for many years by the Department of External Affairs the Report recommends that, in following this example, more opportunities could be given to Native artists. And finally, Recommendation 90 notes that Aboriginal artists should be given priority for the receipt of federal support for international tours and projects:

> Among the Canadian companies, groups or artists eligible to receive federal support for international tours and projects, the following should be given priority: Canadians who have received recognition in Canada and who will benefit materially and professionally by foreign experience; professionals, in the broadest sense, meaning not only those whose principal employment is the pursuit of their art but also those who have demonstrated excellence in performance; Canadian artists and performers representing the cultural traditions of Canada's Native peoples

> and ethnic communities who can introduce foreign audiences to their specialized art forms.[51]

Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored selected theoretical, historical and policy environments that provide a context for the state's appropriation of Aboriginal material culture to represent Canada's distinctiveness abroad in the last half of the twentieth century. In Chapter 3, I will examine the organization of four exhibitions of Aboriginal art that were toured abroad to international audiences from 1960 until 1990.

Endnotes

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[1] Benedict Anderson. Imagined Communities; Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. Revised edition, New York: Verso Editions, 1991. p. 3.
[2] "Nationalism." The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/nationalism/, January 1, 2003.
[3] "Nationalism." Merriam-Webster's Dictionary http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary, January 1, 2003.
[4] Benedict Anderson. Imagined Communities. p. 6-7.
[5] Eric Hobsbawm. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions." In Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. p. 1.
[6] Ibid. p. 2.
[7] Ibid. p. 9.
[8] Susan Hiller, ed. The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art. London and New York: Routledge, 1991. p. 283.
[9] Daniel Francis. The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture, Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992. p. 8.
[10] Ibid. p. 8.
[11] Ibid. p. 189.
[12] Ibid. p. 186.
[13] Ibid. p. 186 – 187.
[14] Diana Nemiroff. "Modernism, Nationalism, and Beyond." In Land, Spirit, Power. Diana Nemiroff, Robert Houle, and Charlotte Townsend-Gault. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1992. p. 33.
[15] Daniel Miller. "Primitive Art and the Necessity of Primitivism to Art," in Susan Miller, ed., The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art. London and New York: Routledge, 1991. p. 67.
[16] W.L. Morton. "The Relevance of Canadian History." In A Passion for Identity: Introduction to Canadian Studies. Eli Mandel and David Taras, eds. Methuen: Toronto, 1987. p. 37.
[17] David Tarras. "Introduction." In A Passion for Identity. p. 11.
[18] "The Tate very generously gave us six galleries, so that there was no risk of over-crowding, and every work was given a fair chance. You went through the exhibition clock-wise. In the first room two enormous Chilkat blankets surmounted a group of early French-Canadian woodcarving and some Indian argillite totem poles from the Coast, and works by Cornelius Krieghoff flanked these. This was a very good arrangement. Not only did it arrest your attention, but it pointed to our long craft tradition, it emphasized the fact that our native arts provide motifs for much contemporary painting, and it showed unmistakably that our landscape is quite different from that of Europe." Graham McInnes. *London Views Our Art*, in Toronto Saturday Night, November 19, 1938, No. 3. National Gallery of Canada Library, *A Century of Canadian Art*, EX 0288.

[19] Richard Gwyn. Nationalism Without Walls: The Unbearable Lightness of Being Canadian. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995. p. 17.
[20] Long referred to as the Massey Commission, it is also generally known as the Massey-Lévesque Commission in recognition of the commission's vice-chair, George-Henri Lévesque.
[21] Paul Litt. The Muses, the Masses and the Massey Commission. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992. p. 3.
[22] D. Paul Schafer and André Fortier. Review of the Federal Policies for the Arts in Canada. Ottawa: The Canadian Conference for the Arts, 1989. p. 8.
[23] Canada. Royal Commission on the National Development in the Arts, Letters & Sciences 1949 – 1951. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951 p. 253.
[24] Charles Comfort served as the Director of the National Gallery from 1960 to 1965.
[25] Comfort, Charles F. "Painting: The Interpretation of a Canadian Spirit in Canada." In Royal Commission Studies: A selection of essays prepared for the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters & Sciences, 1949-1951. Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1951. p. 414.
[26] Ibid. p. 415.
[27] Sandra Paikowsky. "Constructing an Identity, The XXVI Biennale di Venezia and 'The Projection of Canada Abroad'" in *Journal of Canadian Art History*, vol. 20, no. 1-2, 1999. p. 136.
[28] Ibid. p. 137
[29] Ibid. p. 137
[30] Paul Litt. The Muses, The Masses and the Massey Commission. p. 113.
[31] Ibid. p. 290.
[32] Royal Commission on the National Development in the Arts, Letters & Sciences 1949 – 1951. p. 239.
[33] Ibid. p. 242.
[34] Ibid. p. 242.
[35] Ibid. p. 242
[36] Gail Dexter. "Yes, Cultural Imperialism Too." In Close the 49th Parallel: The Americanization of Canada. Alan Lumsden, ed., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970. p. 159.
[37] Ibid. p. 159.
[38] Ibid. p. 161.
[39] Ibid. p. 161.
[40] Ibid. p. 166.
[41] Michael Greenwood. "Some nationalist facets of Canadian art," in *artscanada*, no. 232-233, December 1979/ January 1980. p. 69.
[42] www.archives.ca/02/02012001/20_e.html, January 1, 2003.
[43] www.archives.ca/02/02012001/20_e.html, January 1, 2003.

[44] Bruce Bernstein. "The Indian Art World in the 1960s and 1970s." In Native American Art in the Twentieth Century. W. Jackson Rushing III, ed. New York, Routledge, 1999. p. 58.
[45] Ibid. p. 58.
[46] Ibid. p. 59.
[47] Ibid. p. 58.
[48] Sandra Gywn. "On Government: Why Ottawa is Afraid of Art," *Canadian Art*, vol. 19, no. 3, May/June 1962. p. 218-221.
[49] Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee (Canada). Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee. Ottawa: Information Services, Department of Communications, Government of Canada, 1982. p. 109.
[50] Ibid. p. 321.
[51] Ibid. p. 322.

III. Examination of Aboriginal Exhibitions 1969-1990

In this chapter I examine four major exhibitions of Aboriginal art that travelled abroad under various forms of federal government sponsorship and assistance between 1960 and 1990. The exhibitions presented are chosen for the manner in which Aboriginal art is presented (these are all exhibitions which present Aboriginal material culture as high art, not ethnology). The exhibitions are analyzed to examine the origin of the exhibition idea, the parties involved in producing the exhibition, funding allocated by the federal government, thematic approach, promotional material, where the exhibitions travelled outside of Canada and when.

In looking at the exhibitions it becomes clear that several government departments and agencies were involved in the organization of more than one of these exhibitions. They are the Department of External Affairs,[1] the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs[2] and the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council.[3] The primary mission of the Department of External Affairs is to implement the foreign policy of the federal government. The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DINA) is a highly decentralized organization that responds to the varying needs of a culturally, economically and geographically diverse clientele of Aboriginal communities and groups. DINA addresses issues relating to the visual arts through two Aboriginal art programmes, the Inuit Art Section[4] and the Indian Art Centre.[5] The Canadian Eskimo Arts Council's (CEAC) role was to set the

standards in the selection, promotion, and marketing of Inuit art, from its establishment in 1961 until its dissolution in 1989.

Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada (1969-1970)

The first international exhibition of Aboriginal art of considerable significance to take place during the period under study (1960-1990) was a joint production involving the National Museum of Man[6] in Ottawa with the Musée de l'Homme in Paris. *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art From Canada* was exhibited at the Paris museum under its French title "Chefs-d'Oeuvre des arts Indiens et Esquimaux du Canada" from March 25, 1969 until September 1969. The exhibition then went on to be displayed at the National Gallery of Canada for an additional three months, from November 1969 through January 1970.[7] The decision to present the exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada rather than at the home of the exhibition's co-organizer, the National Museum of Man, lay in the practicality of providing suitable exhibition space as the museum was undergoing extensive renovations.[8] At the time, Dr. William E. Taylor, Jr., the director of the National Museum of Man commented that, "the museum has no 'respectable hall' in which to hold such an enormous show and that is the reason it will be at the National Gallery when it comes here."[9]

The invitation to organize an exhibition of Canadian Aboriginal art with the expressed purpose of presentation abroad was proposed by the Musée de l'Homme to the National Museum of Man in 1967. It was Marcel Evrard,

Commissioner of Exhibitions at the Musée de l'Homme, who initiated the concept of the exhibition. The important international focus upon little known works of Aboriginal art was developed from an earlier exhibition held at the Musée de l'Homme, in 1967. Evrard, a specialist in "primitive" art, "documented the continued interest of twentieth century artists – even those of widely divergent aesthetic persuasion – in these non-Western art forms in an exhibition titled *Arts Primitifs dans les Ateliers des Artists*."[10]

The exhibition was organized with the assistance of the Department of External Affairs, the Société des Amis du Musée de l'Homme and the National Museum of Man, and presented under the aegis of a Franco-Canadian cultural agreement.[11] The Department of External Affairs contributed administratively to the organization of the exhibition through its Cultural Affairs Division[12] in Ottawa and its Embassy in Paris.[13]

Taylor described the relationship and motivation to proceed in the one-way cross-cultural exchange as, "a joint project, but the Musée had the funds, capacity, interest and expertise to initiate it."[14] However, in a press release issued by the Department of External Affairs, it is stated that most of the expenditures related to the organization and display of the exhibition were underwritten by the Department of External Affairs with a total of $65,000 coming from its cultural exchange budget.[15]

In the press release for the opening of the exhibition in France, Taylor noted that "this will be an event of major importance for Canadian Indian and

Eskimo art … While this art, particularly that of the Northwest Coast Indians is widely represented in museums around the world, this is the first time it is being presented on an international scale."[16]

Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art, featuring 186 works of Aboriginal art originating from cultures located across Canada, was structured into four sections, culturally and geographically. They were titled: *the Eskimos*; *the Indians of the Northwest Coast; the Indians of the Plains* and, *the Indians of the Eastern Region*. None of the First Nations works were from the contemporary period. The earliest piece dated from 400 B.C.E., with the latest dating from the 1930s. The Inuit pieces included in the exhibition were all from the prehistoric period and included carved objects from the Dorset and Thule culture.[17]

Lenders to the exhibition included: Archives de la Province (Québec City, Québec); British Columbia Provincial Museum (Victoria, British Columbia) [18]; Eskimo Museum (Churchill, Manitoba); Glenbow-Alberta Institute (Calgary, Alberta) [19]; McCord Museum, McGill University (Montréal, Quebec); Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature (Winnipeg, Manitoba); National Museum of Man (Ottawa, Ontario); Royal Ontario Museum (Toronto, Ontario); Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History (Regina, Saskatchewan); University of British Columbia, Laboratory of Archaeology (Vancouver, British Columbia) [20]; and Vancouver City Museum (Vancouver, British Columbia).[21]

An attractive bilingual catalogue (Illustration 1) was published by the Société des Amis du Musée de l'Homme for distribution in both Paris and

Ottawa. The catalogue contains black and white photos of many of the objects displayed with several of these reproduced in colour or life-size.[22] The publication is organized into four thematic sections paralleling the exhibition itself. Each section contains photo reproductions of the objects (many accompanied by descriptive entries) and essays by leading Canadian specialists of Aboriginal material culture of the time: William E. Taylor; Wilson Duff, Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia; Hugh A. Dempsey, Technical Director of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, and Rémi Savard, a Québec anthropologist.[23] Two maps of Canada showing the major geographical and cultural groups and the linguistic groups of Aboriginal groups in Canada are provided at the back of the catalogue. There was also a brightly coloured bilingual publication aimed at younger visitors to the exhibition. [24]

Sculpture/Inuit: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic (1971-1973)

In 1971, *Sculpture/Inuit: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic* opened at the Vancouver Art Gallery on November 10, 1971 and ran until December 10, 1971. In the next three years the exhibition would travel extensively to eight other cities, appearing in some of the world's greatest museums: the Grand Palais in Paris (1972); the National Museum of Copenhagen (1972); the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad (1972); the Pushkin Fine Art Museum, Moscow (1972); the British Museum, London (1972); Philadelphia Museum of Art (1973); and the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts (1973), before coming to a close in Ottawa at the

National Gallery of Canada (1973).[25] Originally, the exhibition was planned to be displayed at the National Museum of Man, but due to ongoing renovations an alternative site needed to be found. Consequently, exhibition organizers decided that the final destination for the exhibition would be the National Gallery of Canada. In correspondence with a western Canadian institution wishing to host the exhibition, Sharon van Raalte explains how the decision was arrived at:

> Both the Montreal Museum of Fine Art, and the National Gallery of Canada, at the same moment, offered space to the exhibition. By splitting the time period, slotted for the final showing, we were able to add a third Canadian city to the itinerary.[26]

The organization of the *Sculpture/Inuit* exhibition required five years of planning. Doris Shadbolt, a member of the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council (CEAC) and the curator of the Art Gallery of Vancouver, first presented the concept for the travelling retrospective exhibition to the CEAC in 1968. After approving the concept, the CEAC submitted a proposal to Jean Chrétien, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs. After the proposal was approved, Shadbolt became the chair of the exhibition.[27] In 1970, Sharon Van Raalte[28] of the CEAC became the exhibition coordinator.

Sculpture/Inuit was "organized by the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council under the auspices of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Department of External Affairs. The National Museum of Man [was] involved only inasmuch as it has provided the Council with working space for gathering, photographing and generally coordinating the exhibition."[29]

Additional support was provided by the Canada Council and the Government of the Northwest Territories, with the assistance of the Department of National Defence for certain vital airlifting operations.[30]

The proposal submitted to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs included a request for a $150,000 budget for planning, implementing, travelling, and disbanding the exhibition.[31] Initial funding of $10,000 came from a Canada Council Grant. Additional funding came from the Department of External Affairs, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Department of Northern and Indian Affairs. A variety of factors increased the final cost of the exhibition to approximately $375,000.[32]

James Houston[33] and George Swinton,[34] leading authorities on Inuit art both acted as consultants for the exhibition. Their collective role was to search both public and private collections for works to include in the exhibition. As *Sculpture/Inuit* was designed to be a travelling exhibition, the displays were made to be portable and to adapt well to a number of exhibition locations. The exhibition consisted of eight three-wing freestanding groups, 11 show cases, and four wall panels. It packed into 88 wooden crates and 40 cardboard cartons, all-together weighing 25,000 pounds.[35]

The exhibition featured 405 sculptures ranging from exquisite tiny ivory pieces to massive soapstone carvings. The oldest piece included in the exhibition was a *Dorset Culture Maskquette*, c. 700 B.C.E. (Illustration 2)[36], while the most

recent work was Osuitok Ipeelee's[37] sculpture, *Kneeling Caribou*, 1970 (Illustration 3).

The exhibition was divided into eight sections – the prehistoric and historic works were grouped together; and the contemporary works were organized into thematic groupings: *Hunters and Animals; Birds; Camp Life; Mothers and Children; Spirits;* and, *Faces and Figures.*

The Vancouver Art Gallery opening of *Sculpture/Inuit: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic* proved to be an important affair and was attended by Jean Chrétien, then Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development; George Elliott, Chairman of the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council; James Houston, consultant for the exhibition; Doris Shadbolt, senior curator of the Vancouver Art Gallery and chairman of the Masterworks Committee; and Professor George Swinton, consultant for the exhibition.[38]

The Canadian Eskimo Arts Council produced an attractive catalogue to accompany the exhibition reproducing each work from the exhibition in duotone with 12 full colour photographs.[39] The catalogue begins with a single map identifying over 30 art-producing Inuit communities and eight of the cities to which the exhibition travelled.[40] A foreword, written by George Elliott, Chairman of the CEAC, was reproduced in English, French, and Inuktitut in both Roman orthography and syllabics. The remainder of the catalogue is bilingual featuring essays contributed by William E. Taylor on Arctic archaeology and by the exhibition consultants George Swinton and James Houston on aspects of

contemporary Inuit sculpture. A Cape Dorset sculpture, Kiawak Ashoona's *Howling Spirit (Tornak) and its Young*, 1962 (Illustration 4) is illustrated on the front cover. The overleaf to the catalogue reads:

> *Sculpture/Inuit* draws together masterworks of Eskimo carving in a full and definitive recognition of the culture of the Inuit, the Eskimos of North America. Here in one magnificent volume is a complete visual reproduction of an exhibit organized by the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council to bring the sculpture of the Arctic to the great museums of the world.[41]

The catalogue is considered by the Inuit art publication, *Inuit Art World*, to be a milestone in research and writing and was included in their list "Milestones in Research and Writing", published in 1991. The editors called it "an important photographic document of the predominant themes, aesthetics and spirit of the sculpture from the early contemporary period," [42] acknowledging the process of historization now ongoing.

In 1972, six works from the exhibition were reproduced on postcards[43] as a result of overseas inquiries testifying to the success and benefit of the international exposure. In correspondence with one of the lenders to the exhibition Sharon van Raalte has written: "We have received queries from individuals and from some of the participating European museums about the possibility of having postcards produced for sale in conjunction with the Exhibition. This would be good for several reasons, the most important being that it would supply a small but important revenue that could be returned to the Eskimo producers."[44]

While organizing the 1971 exhibition, *Sculpture/Inuit: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic*, the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council recognized that such a large exhibition featuring only sculpture misrepresented the overall scope of Inuit art production in the North. To resolve this issue, CEAC acknowledged that future exhibitions presenting other types of Inuit art, namely prints and crafts, were needed.

The Inuit Print (1978-1981)

In 1974, an exhibition of 292 Inuit craft objects, *Crafts from Arctic Canada*, was organized by CEAC and opened at the Toronto Dominion Centre. The exhibition demonstrated the Council's awareness of its responsibility in the area of craft. The intention of the exhibition was to increase the production of crafts in the north and to stimulate interest in crafts in the south.[45] The exhibition did not tour internationally.

In acknowledgement of the enormous marketing success of the annual collections of Inuit prints, *The Inuit Print* was conceived by one of *Sculpture/Inuit's* organizers, William E. Taylor.[46] The purpose of the exhibition was to present a comprehensive history of printmaking in the Canadian Arctic.

Organized by the National Museum of Man and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs,[47] the Department of External Affairs also closely co-operated in the exhibition development of *The Inuit Print.*[48] The projected budget over five fiscal years for the exhibition in 1976 was $228,500.[49]

The exhibition presented 155 prints from the five Arctic printmaking areas: Arctic Quebec, Baker Lake, Cape Dorset, Holman Island and Pangnirtung. The aim of the exhibition was to present a representative collection of works using all techniques from all of the producing co-operatives to highlight 20 years of printmaking in the Canadian Arctic.

The exhibition *The Inuit Print* officially opened in January 8, 1978 at the Musée du Québec in Québec City.[50] After a tour of four more art galleries and museums in Canada: the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto); Memorial University of Newfoundland (St. John's); New Brunswick Museum (St. John); and the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (Victoria), the exhibition then travelled to four institutions in the United States: Atlanta College of Art (Atlanta, Georgia); Everson Museum of Art (Syracuse, New York); Lowie Museum of Anthropology (University of California at Berkley, California); and the University Museum of Art, University of Michigan (Ann Arbour, Michigan). The exhibition then went abroad travelling to galleries and museums in France[51], Denmark,[52] the Netherlands[53], and Sweden[54] before returning to North America for exhibit at the Museum of Indian Archaeology (London, Ontario) and the Newark Museum (Newark, New Jersey).[55]

Like *Sculpture/Inuit*, the catalogue for *The Inuit Print* was also considered by the editors of *Inuit Art World* to be one of the "milestones of research and writing" on Inuit art.[56] It is described as "the first comprehensive survey of Inuit prints, with accounts of the development of process and technique in each

printmaking community."[57] *The Inuit Print* catalogue features a foreword by William E. Taylor and essays by Helga Goetz.[58] The bilingual catalogue illustrates all 155 prints featured in the exhibition, all in duotone, with twelve prints reproduced in colour.[59] The catalogue is structured by community, prefaced by a short history of printmaking in that area. All prints are accompanied by iconographic and technical information. The catalogue also features a map indicating the major printmaking communities; statistics pertaining to the numbers of prints released each year by each printmaking community; and historical information about the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council, contributed by Virginia Watt, Chairperson of the CEAC. Pangnirtung artist Ananaisee Alikatuktuk's print *Taleelayu and Family,* 1976 is reproduced in colour on the cover (Illustration 5).

In the Shadow of the Sun (1988-1990)

In the Shadow of the Sun, an exhibition featuring the work of contemporary Indian and Inuit artists, opened in Dortmund, West Germany on December 9, 1988 under the German title, *Im Schatten der Sonne: Zeitgenössiche Kunst der Indianer und Eskimos in Kanada.*[60] The exhibition represented the first major survey exhibition of contemporary Canadian Indian and Inuit art to be shown in both Canada and in Europe, outlining historical developments, stylistic variations, idiosyncrasies, and current trends.[61] After closing in Germany on February 27, 1989, the exhibition returned to Canada

where approximately 50 per cent of the artworks were presented as the inaugural exhibition in the Indian and Inuit Art Gallery at the new Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, on June 29, 1989. Following this, approximately half of the exhibition travelled to the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in Halifax, for presentation in the spring of 1990. The exhibition completed its tour by travelling back to Europe in the fall of 1990 for presentation at two Dutch museums: the Rijksmusem Voor Volkenkunde in Leiden and the Museon in the Hague.[62]

Like the exhibition *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada*, the inspiration for *In the Shadow of the Sun* came from abroad. Dr. Gerhard Hoffmann, a professor of American studies at West Germany's University of Würzburg, first proposed the project to the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Dr. Hoffman previously had organized the successful touring exhibition, *20th Century American Indian Art*. Gerald McMaster[63], Indian Art Curator at the Canadian Museum of Civilization and co-curator of the exhibition affirmed European interest in Aboriginal art in his foreword to the exhibition catalogue: "The people of Europe ... have an ardent interest in the Native North American, and an exhibition of their artistic heritage would no doubt advance an existing interest."[64]

In an article appearing in the Spring 1989 issue of *Inuit Art Quarterly*, Maria Muehlen[65] of the Inuit Art Section and the Indian Art Centre of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs is quoted: "We [officials at INAC and CMC] had been saying for years that we should do something about Europe, but the hurdles of sending an exhibit to Europe always seemed insurmountable – an

unknown audience, high costs of shipping and crating, and a lack of contacts in potential receiving institutions." Marybelle Myers observed that the solution to the problem of what could be done concerning European exposure of Aboriginal art presented itself unexpectedly in 1985 when Dr. Gerhard Hoffmann, proposed that the West German university, INAC and the Canadian Museum of Civilization collaborate to mount an exhibition of Aboriginal art which could travel to Europe. A comprehensive publication containing essays by Inuit and Indian art specialists in Germany and Canada would be devised for the exhibit.[66]

In the Shadow of the Sun involved the joint efforts of: the Canadian Museum of Civilization; the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs though its Inuit Art Section and Indian Art Centre; museums and galleries; corporations; and academics and specialists from across Canada.[67] The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs made financial contributions to the German publication of the catalogue. Lufthansa German Airlines covered the transportation costs for the Dortmund showing of the exhibition.[68]

In the Shadow of the Sun was undertaken by the Museum of Civilization to complement (and continue) the story presented in the highly acclaimed and much criticized exhibition *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First People's* (1988). [69] As well the show provided an impressive inaugural exhibition for the museum's new home in Gatineau, Québec. In a press release distributed by the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the exhibition is described as "the first large-scale exhibition designed by the Canadian Museum of Civilization for travel

outside Canada" as well as "the first extensive exhibition of artwork by Indian and Inuit Peoples together."[70]

The exhibition presented approximately 275 objects by 80 contemporary Aboriginal artists working in painting, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, jewelry, appliqué and mixed media.[71] Divided into Indian and Inuit sections, the sheer size of this extensive exhibition presented the receiving institutions with display issues. In the German showing of the exhibition, the Indian portion was exhibited at the Museum am Ostwall and the Inuit portion exhibited at a separate institution, the Museum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte.

Accompanying the exhibition, the CMC produced a massive catalogue/reference book of high quality. The 650-page German-language catalogue *Im Schatten der Sonne: Zeitgenössiche Kunst der Indianer und Eskimos in Kanada,* was edited by Dr. Gerhard Hoffman, and published by German book publisher Cantz and the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 1988. The impressive catalogue contains full-colour reproductions of all of the works featured in the exhibition with reproductions of sculptural pieces by Northwest coast artist Art Thompson and Pivirnituq artist Joe Talirunili on the front cover and paintings by Norval Morrisseau on the back cover (Illustration 6). Several essays, many contributed by leading Aboriginal art historians, give an excellent overview of the most important issues in the field.

The same impressive catalogue was originally planned to be produced in French and English and made ready for the Gatineau showing of the exhibition

but this was not possible due to funding constraints. The English publication was delayed until 1993, when many[72] of the essays included in the German-language volume were translated and published under the Canadian Museum of Civilization's Mercury Series in 1993. This collection of essays, *In the Shadow of the Sun: Perspectives on Contemporary Native Art*, did not include photo reproductions of the artworks exhibited in the show or artist biographies.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the range of large exhibitions of Aboriginal material culture that travelled abroad in art exhibitions through government assistance from the late 1960s to 1990. This demonstrates a long history of committing federal resources to the presentation of Aboriginal art nationally and internationally as an integral symbol of Canadian identity.

Prominent in its involvement in varying degrees in each of the exhibitions discussed is the National Museum of Man/Canadian Museum of Civilization. In the first exhibition presented, *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art From Canada*, the National Museum of Man's role can be described as the institutional liaison and lending institution for the exhibition held at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris. For the exhibition *Sculpture/Inuit*, the role of the National Museum of Man was quite minimal, in that the museum provided space for exhibition planning and direction, but did not undertake an organizational role, as this was an exhibition conceived and developed by the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council. In

The Inuit Print the Museum took on a more active role in the conceptualization and organization of the exhibition in that William E. Taylor, then director of the National Museum of Man, conceived the idea of the exhibition. And again with *In the Shadow of the Sun*, the Museum of Civilization took on the role of co-conceiver and primary co-organizer.

The Museum of Man's growing involvement with traveling exhibitions is summed up in a letter written by Taylor in 1978:

> In 1969, we co-operated with the Musée de l'Homme in Paris to mount the celebrated "Masterworks of Canadian Indian and Eskimo Art" and then, shortly after, became a main force in the international travelling show "Sculpture/Inuit". At that time Barbara Tyler[73], now Assistant Director (Public Programmes), was the only staff expert on such matters. In 1972 we were, like the other three component institutions of the Corporation, accorded four man-years and $125,000 per annum to fund and staff a travelling exhibit programme under the National Museum Policy.[74]

Federal funding was given to all of the museums under the National Museums of Canada Corporation to create exhibitions for travel nationally and internationally.

In the next chapter I will present a content analysis and review of criticism concerning the exhibitions discussed in this chapter.

Endnotes

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[1] In 1995, the Department of External Affairs acquired a new name. It is now the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.
[2] Created in 1966 by an act of Parliament, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DINA), is now known as the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND).
[3] The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs at the request of the West Baffin Co-operative created the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council, under the name of the Canadian Eskimo Art Committee in 1961.
[4] The Inuit Art Centre of DIAND has an advisory and facilitating role related to the production, promotion and marketing of Inuit art in the Northwest Territories, Quebec and Labrador in conjunction with the respective provincial/territorial governments.
[5] The Indian Art Centre of DIAND is a federal cultural program that supports and promotes the visual arts of First Nations in Canada. The Centre was created in 1965 to support the development of Aboriginal artists working in traditional art forms, as well as those working in the contemporary fine arts including painting, drawing, print making, sculpture and photography.
[6] The Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) was formerly known as the National Museum of Man and was one of four federal museums comprising the National Museums Corporation (NMC). The NMC, which also included the National Gallery, the National Museum of Natural Sciences and the National Museum of Science and Technology, was dismantled on the recommendation of the Task Force on National Museums (1986). The CMC in its present state operates under its own board of trustees.
[7] See Appendix 1 for exhibition itinerary.
[8] During the summer of 1969 the Department of Public Works decided upon the complete renovation of the interior of the Victoria Memorial Museum Building, in part to meet the requirements of the Dominion Fire Commissioner. In consequence, the building, the sole exhibit facility of the National Museum of Natural Sciences and the principal display areas of the National Museum of Man, was closed to the public on November 15, 1969.
[9] National Gallery of Canada Library files. Exhibition: Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art of Canada. "Paris Museum Stages Show of Canadian Art." *Hamilton Spectator*, March 20, 1969.
[10] Ronald L. Bloore. "In the Mainstream ..." a*rtscanada*, no. 138/139, December 1969. p. 38.
[11] On November 7, 1965, Canada and France signed the first cultural agreement to develop exchanges between the two countries in culture, science, technology and the arts, and to promote the establishment of close ties between Canadian and French institutions such as cultural institutes or centres. These agreements lead to the creation of the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris, officially

inaugurated on April 2, 1970, the first of many Canadian centers to be established abroad. This took place against the backdrop of Québec's initiatives to establish direct cultural relations with France and the infamous visit of French President Charles de Gaulle in 1967 when he rallied a crowd to the call "Vive le Québec libre."

[12] The Cultural Affairs Division was initialized in 1966 "to formulate and execute Canada's cultural policies for foreign countries in accordance with directives of the Government and in co-operation with Canadian cultural institutions and agencies." http://www.archives.ca/04/042411_e.html. January 1, 2003.

[13] National Gallery of Canada Library files. Exhibition: Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art of Canada. Press Release, Department of External Affairs, Canada, March 20, 1969.

[14] National Gallery of Canada Library files. Exhibition: Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art of Canada. "Paris Museum Stages Show of Canadian Art," Hamilton Spectator, March 20, 1969.

[15] National Gallery of Canada Library files. Exhibition: Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art of Canada. Press Release, Department of External Affairs, Canada, March 20, 1969.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Richard C. Crandall. Inuit Art: A History. London: McFarland and Company, 1999. p. 180.

[18] Now Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, British Columbia.

[19] Now Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta.

[20] Now housed in the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver, British Columbia.

[21] See Appendix 2 for a breakdown of loans by institution.

[22] Reproduced in colour are a Tsimshian Shaman's Charm, a Blackfoot Man's Shirt, and a Naskapi Hunter's Summer Coat.

[23] William Taylor, Wilson Duff, Hugh A. Dempsey and Rémi Savard contributed a total of four essays: "Prehistoric Canadian Eskimo Art", "The Northwest Coast", "Primitive Arts of the Indians of the Canadian Prairies" and "The Indians of Eastern Canada and their Art", respectively.

[24] The preface to the catalogue: "The National Gallery and the National Museum of Man join together in publishing this booklet for young people to keep the exhibition MASTERPIECES OF INDIAN AND ESKIMO ART alive." National Gallery of Canada and National Museum of Man. Art of the Canadian Indians and Eskimos. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1969.

[25] See Appendix 1 for complete exhibition itinerary.

[26] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ 2000 – I-0024 Box no. 2/3 I-53B File: Lenders – ACQ 2000-I0024, Letter from Sharon van Raalte, coordinator, Masterworks Exhibition to Ms. Karen Wilkin, Curator, The Edmonton Art Gallery, March 16, 1973.

[27] Richard C. Crandall. Inuit Art: A History. p. 190.

[28] Sharon Van Raalte holds an M.A. in Transpersonal Psychology from the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in Palo Alto, CA and has been a student of shamanism for many years. She is presently on the teaching faculty of the Foundation for Shamanic Studies and also conducts workshops on themes of nature wisdom in Ontario and Quebec.
[29] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ 2000 – I-0024 Box no. 2/3 I-53B File: Lenders – ACQ 2000-I0024, Letter from Sharon van Raalte to Mr. Eugene B. Power, lender to the exhibition, March 9, 1971
[30] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, Ottawa/Masterworks. Press Release: Sculpture/Inuit: Master Works of the Canadian Arctic Climaxes International Tour at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, May 9, 1973.
[31] Richard C. Crandall. Inuit Art: A History. p. 190.
[32] Ibid. p. 190.
[33] James Houston is a Canadian artist and writer who played an important role in the development of Inuit art in the late 1940s and 1950s.
[34] George Swinton was an artist and professor of Inuit Art. He authored the seminal Inuit sculpture publication Sculpture of the Eskimo (1972).
[35] Richard C. Crandall. Inuit Art: A History. p. 191.
[36] This work was also featured in the *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art* exhibition, under the title "Miniature Mask".
[37] The artist is included in the catalogue under the name Oshooweetook 'B'.
[38] "The Opening of Sculpture of the Inuit: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic." *artscanada*, no. 162/163, December 1971/January 1972. p. 121.
[39] The works produced in full colour included one object from the prehistoric period, one object from the historic period and ten contemporary sculptures.
[40] Montréal is absent from both the map and the list exhibition cities.
[41] The overleaf to the catalogue continues: "Each of the 405 carvings on display is beautifully photographed; most of them are shown singly on a page, and the highlights of the collection are presented in full colour. Essays by George Swinton, James Houston, and William Taylor trace the evolution of this art form and provide an understanding basic to the appreciation of the sculpture." "Never before have the beauty and intense vitality of Eskimo sculpture been presented so skillfully in book format. This volume is not simply a vivid re-creation of the exhibit; it is a work of art in itself – a beautiful presentation of the sculpture of the Inuit." Canadian Eskimo Arts Council, Sculpture/Inuit: Sculpture of the Inuit: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, c1971.
[42] "Milestones in Research and Writing," *Inuit Art World*, Fall/Winter 1990/1991. p. 102.
[43] The six works reproduced on postcards were five contemporary pieces: Joe Talirunili, *The Migration*, Povungnituk 1964, Kiawak, *Howling Spirit, (Tornak) and its Young*, Cape Dorset 1962, Syollie, *Mother and Child*, Inoucdjouac (Port Harrison) 1957, Manno, *Bear on Ice*, Cape Dorset 1964, Kabubawakota, *Spirit*,

Cape Dorset 1967-1968, and one prehistoric piece: Dorset Culture, *Comb with Face*, Maxwell Bay, south of Devon Island. Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ 2000 – I0024, I-53, Box 1 of 2, File: Masterworks Postcards

[44] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ 2000 – I0024, I-53, Box 1 of 2, File: Masterworks Postcards, Letter from Sharon van Raalte to Mr. J.D. Furneaux, lender to the exhibition and other lenders, December 9, 1971.

[45] Richard C. Crandall. Inuit Art: A History. p. 206.

[46] As a new member to the CEAC in 1967, Taylor was responsible for the establishment of the beginnings of a national collection of Inuit art. Virginia Watt, *Appendix III*, The Inuit Print. Ottawa: National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada, 1977. p. 264.

[47] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, Box I1104, File: ACQ2000-10116 Travelling and Temporary Exhibitions – Inuit Publicity, (correspondence; 1978-1979) News Communiqué, National Museum of Man, Jan 3, 1977. "The Inuit Print."

[48] William E. Taylor, Jr. "*Foreword.*" In The Inuit Print. Ottawa: National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada, 1977. p. 26.

[49] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ2000-10116, File: Travelling and Temporary Exhibitions – Inuit Print Selection Committee (correspondence, 1976-1986) Memorandum from Barbara Tyler, Directorate, NMM written to W.E. Taylor, Jr., Director, NMM, February 2, 1976.

[50] "The Inuit Print," Inuit Art World, Fall/Winter 1990/1991. p. 77.

[51] In France, *The Inuit Print* was exhibited at the Musée St. Rambert-sur-Loire in St. Rambert, the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Caen, and the Musée de l'Homme in Paris.

[52] In Denmark, *The Inuit Print* was exhibited at the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen.

[53] In the Netherlands, *The Inuit Print* was exhibited at the Museum voor Land-en Volkenkunde in Rotterdam.

[54] In Sweden, *The Inuit Print* was exhibited at the Etnografiska Museet in Stockholm.

[55] See Appendix 1 for complete exhibition itinerary.

[56] "Milestones in Research and Writing", *Inuit Art World*, Fall/Winter 1990/1991, p. 102. The publication describes the catalogue, "the first comprehensive survey of Inuit prints, with accounts of the development of process and technique in each printmaking community."

[57] Ibid. p. 102.

[58] Helga Goetz is the former head of the Inuit Art Section at the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

[59] Prints by Cape Dorset artists reproduced: Niviaksiak, Kenojuak, Pitseolak, Pudlo, Ulayu; Povungnituk artist: Alassie Audla; Holman artist: Mark Emerak; and Baker Lake artists: Victoria Mumngshoaluk, Simon Tookoome, Myra Kukiiyaut, Luke Anguhadluq and Irene Avaalaqiaq.

[60] Curator Gerald McMaster uses the term "Indian" in the organization and discussion of the exhibition *In the Shadow of the Sun* and this thesis will follow suit where applicable.
[61] Gerald McMaster. In the Shadow of the Sun: Perspectives on Contemporary Canadian Art. Mercury Series Paper 124, Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1993. p. viii
[62] Ibid. p. xi. See Appendix 1 for complete exhibition itinerary.
[63] Gerald McMaster (b. 1953) is currently the Deputy Assistant Director for Cultural Resources at the National Museum of the American Indian in Suitland, Maryland.
[64] Ibid. p. vii.
[65] Now Maria von Finckenstein, Curator of Contemporary Inuit Art, Canadian Museum of Civilization.
[66] Myers, Marybelle. "In the Shadow of the Sun opens in West Germany." *Inuit Art Quarterly*. Vol. 4, No. 2 Spring 1989. p. 36.
[67]Canadian Museum of Civilization, Odette Leroux Collection, *In the Shadow of the Sun*, Box: 4287. f. 10, p. 1. Draft Press Release "Canadian Museum of Civilization Exhibition on Contemporary Native art Opens in Germany," December 9, 1988.
[68] Canadian Museum of Civilization, Odette Leroux Collection, *In the Shadow of the Sun*, Box: 4287. f. 10, p. 3. Draft "Remarks for Dr. George MacDonald, Director, Canadian Museum of Civilization on the occasion of the opening of *In the Shadow of the Sun / A L'ombre du Soleil / Im Schatten der Sonne* in Dortmund, West Germany, Friday, December 9, 1988."
[69] Canadian Museum of Civilization, Odette Leroux Collection, *In the Shadow of the Sun*, Box: 4287. f. 10. Press Release, "The Canadian Museum of Civilization Exhibition of Contemporary Art Opens in Germany."
[70] Ibid.
[71] Different numbers have been given for the total number of works included in the exhibition for its inaugural showing in Germany. The exhibition catalogue, Im Schatten der Sonne: Zeitgenössische Kunst der Indianer und Eskimo in Kanada, lists 273 works, while exhibition curator Gerald McMaster, in his introduction to In the Shadow of the Sun: Perspectives on Contemporary Native Art, p. ix, lists the number 275. 275 will be the number recognized by this thesis as it is cited in the more recent of the two publications.
[72] Only three of the articles in the German edition were not published in the English edition and one article by Viviane Gray, Chief, Indian Art Centre, was added.
[73] Barbara Tyler joined the National Museum of Man (now *Canadian Museum of Civilization*) in 1969 as Curator of Interpretation, where she was subsequently promoted to Assistant Director of Public Programs. She then became the first Director of Policy, Planning and Evaluation at the *National Museums of Canada Corp.*, prior to becoming Assistant Director of Programs for the *Glenbow-Alberta*

Institute, Calgary and later, Executive Director and CEO of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Kleinburg.

[74] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ2000-I0116 Travelling and Temporary Exhibitions – Inuit Print Catalogue (correspondence; 1978-1985.) Letter written by W.E. Taylor, Jr., January 24, 1978 with "Copy of this letter went to members of the Board of Trustees and M.C.D. Hobbs along with a copy of "The Inuit Print" Catalogue.

IV. Content Analysis and Reception of Exhibitions Travelling Abroad

In this chapter I provide content analysis along with an overview of the reception experienced by the four travelling exhibitions of Aboriginal art introduced in the previous chapter: *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada, Sculpture/Inuit, The Inuit Print,* and *In the Shadow of the Sun*. The intent of this chapter is to demonstrate the determined effort by the federal government to tour Aboriginal art abroad and how it was viewed critically both at home and abroad. The information is presented chronologically to best show the gradual change over time in curatorial practices that placed more and more emphasis on displaying material culture as art rather than artifact, as well as a demonstration that works from the past and the present represent the continuous achievements of living cultures.

Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada

The first of the four exhibitions I will examine is the French and Canadian co-production, entitled *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art*. The exhibition was displayed at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, France's national museum of anthropology and ethnology, in the summer and fall of 1969 and at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa through the winter of 1969.

There was much excitement for those individuals and institutions involved in organizing the exhibition, as the exhibition would be the first of its kind. The background information released with the press release for the Paris opening

stated: "This will be an event of major importance for Canadian Indian and Eskimo art, while this art, particularly of the Northwest Coast Indians, is widely represented in museums around the world, this is the first time it is being exhibited on an international scale."[1]

The goal of the organizers of *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art* was to assemble an exhibition, which would group masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo art borrowed from Canadian museum collections.[2] The exhibition featured 186 artworks, dating from prehistory to the 1930s, selected not only for their "great ethnographic and archaeological value but also for their aesthetic qualities and originating from several Canadian regions and recently excavated sites."[3] In the introduction to the exhibition's catalogue, Professor Robert Gessain, director of the Musée de l'Homme, highlights the impressive nature of the collection of works by describing them as "prestigious objects." [4] William E. Taylor called upon institutions in large and small cities across Canada to loan objects for the exhibition.

The exhibition featured a variety of artwork that represented a large scope of material culture produced by Canadian Aboriginal cultures up until the 1930s. The exhibition presented an array of masks, pipes, bowls, spoons, clothing, headwear, combs, etc., organized by their general cultural groups. The "Eskimo" portion of the exhibition, entitled "The Eskimos", was restricted to 21 prehistoric works sculpted from a limited variety of media including ivory, stone, animal antler and animal bone. The "Indian" portion of the exhibition was divided into

three sections. The first and largest section, *The Indians of the Northwest Coast,* featured 104 Northwest Coast objects ranging in date from the prehistoric period to the 1930s and representing the largest of the Northwest Coast cultures: the Haida, Tsimshian, Kwakiutl (Kwakwak'wakw), Nootka (Nuu-chah-nulth), Tlingit, Bella Coola (Nuxalk), and Cowichan. Two other sections, *The Indians of the Plains* and *The Indians of the Eastern Region*, contained a total of 60 works originating from the Plains and Central Canada.[5]

The object entries in the exhibition catalogue reveal that none of the artworks in the exhibition were created by known artists, even though there were a handful of known artists creating works during the time frame encapsulated by the exhibition. Given the exhibition's concentration of Northwest Coast objects, the exclusion of artists such as Charles Edenshaw (1839 - 1920), a Haida master metalsmith, painter and sculptor and Frederick Alexcee (1853 - 1944), a Tsimshian sculptor and painter, were major oversights reinforcing the conventional stereotypes and notions that contemporary Aboriginal cultures are neither vital nor alive within the contemporary context. Both of these artists had their works included in the 1927 National Gallery of Canada's *Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art: Native and Modern* .[6] Also absent from the exhibition were any artworks to represent the material culture produced by eastern Canadian Aboriginal cultures, revealing the organizer's narrow view of the scope of Aboriginal art in Canada and further emphasizing the exhibition's bias in representing the widely known and collected Northwest Coast Native art.

The launch of an exhibition of Canadian 'masterpieces' in Paris was a major point of criticism in Canadian publications; most reports emphasized this slighting of the Canadian audiences. An article in the *Hamilton Spectator* reported, "Parisians will soon have a decided advantage over Canadians when it comes to appreciating our own aboriginal art."[7] Another point of contention revealed in the article concerned the inequalities in display time for each exhibition city: "The Musée de l'Homme (Museum of Man) in Paris has spent the last two years organizing the world's first major exhibition of Indian and Eskimo art and it will open there next week for a six-month stay ... Canadians will have to wait until late November to see the exhibition, when it will be at the National Gallery for a little over six weeks."[8]

Though the National Museums of Canada reported in their 1969-1970 Annual Report, that the exhibition was "[e]njoyed at the Gallery through the courtesy of the National Museum of Man, it made every Canadian who saw it proud of the heritage bequeathed by Canada's two indigenous cultures,"[9] there was also much criticism expressed over the choice of venue for the only Canadian stop for the exhibition. William E. Taylor explained the aforementioned issues of the national precedence and venue. When asked by a reporter "if such an exhibition had ever been attempted in Canada," Taylor replied: "Oh God, no. Canadians are not really interested in their own aboriginal art." He continued by stating that the museum, which was undergoing extensive renovations, had "no respectable hall" in which to hold such an enormous show and that was the

reason the exhibition was displayed at the National Gallery when it returned to Canada in 1969.[10] Despite the extensive renovations made, and with regard to the exhibitions presented in this thesis, it appears that it would not be until 1989, when the museum moved to its present location in Gatineau, Québec that the Museum would obtain such a "respectable hall."

In contradiction to Canadian reviews, French reception of *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art* was quite positive. Parisian headlines read, "Les Art Une Révélation," and "Plaisir de Voir," with critics calling the show "a revelation," "of rare quality," "great artistic refinement," and "by far the most unusual of the exhibits at the Musée de l'Homme."[11] French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss represented much of the Paris reaction by making comparisons to Western art, calling the art of the Northwest Coast artists "a phenomenon" and the equal of that of Greece and Egypt.[12]

When it came time to present the exhibition in Canada, the overseas acclaim was cited often in promotional materials for the Ottawa showing of the exhibition. This can be viewed as a measure to respond to Taylor's prior observation concerning Canadian disinterest in Aboriginal art, and thus as an attempt to validate the display of Aboriginal material culture in Canada. The Levi-Strauss comparison to Western art and the following comment were reprinted in an Ottawa entertainment guide with the following testimonial: "The exhibition had such an impact on Paris crowds and critics that 65,000 people flocked to see it this past summer at the Musée de l'Homme."[13]

An article written by the Toronto painter, Ronald L. Bloore, highlighting the *Masterworks* exhibition, *In the Mainstream ...,* was published in the December 1969 issue of *artscanada* after the exhibition was shown in Paris, and preceding its showing in Ottawa. The article describes the origin of the exhibition as a development from an earlier exhibition mounted at the Musée de l'Homme in 1967, *Arts Primitifs dans les Ateliers d'Artistes*. In his article, Bloore comments on the Ottawa destination of the exhibition writing that, "this selection of nearly two hundred works *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art*, will open late in November at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa because the National Museum of Man does not have sufficient space." [14] This statement implies that the works in the exhibition would be more properly shown in an ethnographic museum setting rather than that of an art gallery.

Bloore goes on to criticize the concept and organization of the exhibition observing that:

> [E]xhibitions inevitably raise aesthetic, theoretical and practical problems; overseas exhibitions naturally involving questions of national prestige require special thought and care. This was not an exception yet as selected and displayed in Paris it appeared as a curious mixture of archaeology, ethnology and primitive arts. The initiative for the show came entirely from France and its nature and character were determined by the tradition and the collection of the originating institution.[15]

Bloore feels that the Musée de l'Homme, as France's national ethnology museum, had an impact on the resulting exhibition and its leanings toward an archaeological and ethnographic model. Bloore applauds the scope of the show but admonishes the presentation of two distinct cultures together in one exhibit,

suggesting that "perhaps the breadth of the show was admirable but the cultures involved could have sustained greater in-depth study. Canadian authorities apparently did not question the original concept. The inclusion of unrelated fields: Eskimo and Indian, and a mixture of major and decorative art forms should have been avoided".[16]

Bloore also criticizes the show for including only Aboriginal works loaned from Canadian institutions: "It was a 'Canadian' show – loans were made only from Canadian collections consequently qualitatively fine works from American and other collections which would have enriched were ignored."[17]

Ironically, the National Gallery of Canada ran an advertisement in the same issue of *artscanada* in which Bloore's article was printed. It featured one of the prominent works in the exhibition, a nineteenth century Haida wooden mask (Illustration 7). The caption reads, "This painted ceremonial mask is one of 185 items in the exhibition *Masterpieces of Canadian Indian and Eskimo Art* at the National Gallery of Canada until 11 January 1970. Canada's aboriginal art was acclaimed as 'one of the great art forms of the world' when this exhibition was shown in Paris earlier."[18] Through this statement the conclusion is clear. International positive reception of Aboriginal art legitimates it for Canadians who, as Taylor noted, did not regard it as highly.

Sculpture/Inuit

The Canadian Eskimo Arts Council committed itself to the promotion of Inuit (Eskimo) [19] art since its creation in 1961[20] by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs at the request of the West Baffin Co-operative.[21] The Council's role was to set the standards in the selection, promotion, and most importantly, the marketing of Inuit art that were to be followed for many years, until its dissolution in 1989. The Council also acted as an independent arts advisory council, evaluating the aesthetic rather than the commercial value of Inuit prints from the various northern print making communities. Through a formal jurying process, the Co-op determined which drawings were to be rendered into prints for the annual "collections" when communities presented their collections to the Council for approval before final editioning and marketing by Canadian Arctic Producers (CAP). To promote Inuit art, the Committee organized several exhibitions aimed at introducing both Canadian and international audiences to Inuit art.[22] The first of these exhibitions designed for an international audience was the 1971 exhibition, *Sculpture/Inuit.*

Sculpture/Inuit was a multi-institutional, collaborative exhibition made possible through the co-operation of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, the Cultural Division of the Department of External Affairs, the Museum of Man in Ottawa, the Canada Council and the Government of the Northwest Territories, with the assistance of the Department of National Defence for certain

vital airlifting operations.[23] The exhibition required five years of planning and toured extensively after its launch at the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1971.[24]

It is significant that, unlike the *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada*, the first venue for *Sculpture/Inuit* was an art gallery and that the exhibit was shown in nine public galleries in Europe, Russia, the United States and Canada. Inuit sculptors were present at all these showings. This further demonstrates the organizers' goal of exhibiting Aboriginal art as a living art, distinguishing it from ethnographic artifacts.

In an article published in the *Arts & Culture of the North Quarterly*, Bert Witt signaled the importance of the exhibition:

> Those 450 pieces of stone and bone stunned large audiences not only in Canada and the U.S.A. but also in Europe and the Soviet Union. Housed in major museums, 'Sculpture/Inuit,' more than any other single happening, introduced millions into the world of fine modern Eskimo art, hitherto the somewhat offbeat collecting-grounds of a small though feverent [sic] group.[25]

This reaction was exactly what exhibition organizers were hoping for. To the media, George Elliott, chairman of the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council, proclaimed: "This exhibition is the world saying to the Eskimo culture: 'My God, do you ever exist!'[26] William E. Taylor, exhibition advisor, predicted that: "In 20 or 30 years, people concerned with art history in Canada will look back at this interval and see it as one of the most remarkable in the history of Canadian art".[27]

George Elliott outlines the objective of the exhibition, in the foreword to the exhibition catalogue:

> The exhibition would be for people in other countries who are accustomed to seeing, owning, and living with the arts of the great cultures of the world. It would give to the artists of the Canadian Arctic that world recognition which is always drawn – inexorably and magically – to the creators of the non-verbal parts of our aesthetic environment.[28]

The exhibition featured sculptures by artists from a number of sculpture producing communities, including Kangiqliniq (Rankin Inlet), Taloyoak (Spence Bay), Inukjuak (Inoucdjoauc), Qamanittuaq (Baker Lake), Sanikiluaq (Belcher Islands), Arviat (Eskimo Point), Pangnirtung, Purvirnituq (Povungnituk), Tikirarjuaq (Whale Cove), Naujaat (Repulse Bay), Ikpiarjuk (Arctic Bay) and Kinngait (Cape Dorset) with the largest representation at 29 per cent.[29]

Almost 50 private lenders and 18 public collections including the American Museum of Natural History (New York), the Royal Ontario Museum (Toronto), the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), and the National Museum of Man (Ottawa) loaned works to the exhibition. The National Museum of Man contributed heavily to *Sculpture/Inuit*, lending approximately one-third of the sculptures from its collection.[30]

Sculpture/Inuit presents works from the archaeological, historical and aesthetic points of view. The distinctive phases of pre-historic Inuit art from the late-pre-Dorset period (before 800 BCE to CE 1000), to the Thule period (CE 1000-1700), are demonstrated. The majority of artworks in the exhibition date from the contemporary period until the year before the exhibition opened (1948 - 1970). Twenty-seven hundred years separate the oldest and most recent works. A Dorset culture miniature maskette dates from 700 BCE and the most recent

object in the exhibition, a green stone and bone sculpture by Cape Dorset artist Osuitok Ipeelee, dates from 1970.

Similar to the recycling of comments made by Claude Levi-Strauss with regard to the *Masterpieces* exhibition in Paris, several London and Canadian reviews of the exhibition cite comments made by one prominent reviewer. Christopher Drake, art critic at the *Tatler*, a British news publication, was quoted in the *Victorian Times* praising the "brilliance of workmanship" and "[t]he awareness of shape, form and line and understanding of the precise nature of materials [which] sets these artists on the very highest level technically."[31] Drake also observed that: "the first thing to strike a European is the gentleness of most Eskimo images, in contrast with some other "primitive" art."[32] The *Owen Sound Sun Times* reported that Drake who had hailed the exhibition as one of the "most important events of the year," also felt the works possessed a remarkable "universal appeal" not only found in the contemporary works that might be understandable, but in the earliest as well.[33] Concerning the quality of the works, Drake observed that: "The animal studies are extraordinarily fine and it would be difficult to find comparisons in western art to match them."[34]

Echoing Levi-Strauss' comparisons of Northwest Coast art to Western art forms in *Masterpieces,* Drake also compared the Inuit sculptures with those of British sculptor Henry Moore (1898 - 1986) and the German sculptor Ernst Barlach (1870-1938). Drake also mentioned the effect of apparent western

influences that has made the Eskimo artists' production more commercially and widely accepted.[35]

In addition to Drake's comments, those made in other British publications covering the exhibition were quite positive.[36] However, if the exhibition's goal was to "bring the sculpture of the Arctic to the great museums of the world," they had all but forgotten to include examples of Northern Québec. Other limitations of the exhibition were discovered in its preparatory stages when it was realized by those involved that the exhibition was not a complete survey of all Inuit art forms, giving a false representation of the full production of all Inuit art. The equally important areas of printmaking and craft had been neglected. To address this, further exhibitions including *The Inuit Print,* were planned by the organizers.

The Inuit Print

The Inuit Print was a travelling exhibition of 155 Inuit prints organized by the National Museum of Man (NMM), National Museums of Canada (NMC), and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DINA). Surveying the first twenty years of Canadian Inuit print production, the organizers envisioned it as a companion exhibition to the *Sculpture/Inuit* when it was being conceived in the early 1970s. In the foreword to the catalogue for *The Inuit Print*, William E. Taylor writes, "when the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council was planning that show [*Sculpture/Inuit*], I realized that its sister, a survey of prints, must follow."[37]

The selection criteria for the exhibition were set by Taylor and relayed to a three-member selection committee. Choosing 155 prints from the more than 2,700 catalogued prints was a difficult task. The exhibition selection committee was unique in that one of its three members was Cape Dorset artist and printmaker, Kananginak (b. 1935), prefiguring the collaborative model advocated by the *Task Force on Museums and First Peoples* (1992).[38] The artist was the first Inuk to become significantly involved in the organization of an exhibition of Inuit art.[39] The selection committee included two other members, Mary Craig, Fine Arts Director of La Fédération des Cooperatives de Nouveau-Quebec and marketer with Canadian Arctic Producers, and prominent contemporary artist Kenneth Lochhead (b. 1926). This selection committee was charged with producing a survey that would feature at least one print from each of the print-producing communities – Arctic Quebec (including Inukjuak, Port-Nouveau-Quebec and Pivirnituq), Qamanittuaq, Kinngait, Holman and Pangnirtung – but also in each medium (stone-cut, stencil, serigraph, etc.). Selection criteria were intended to achieve a representative selection – all producing co-operatives, all time periods (from 1959 to the then-present), all techniques, to recognize individual artistic and technical merit, while presenting a balanced and representative sample based on a list of four content criteria: images relating to myth and legend; images of a descriptive and documentary nature; images reflective of the personal and imaginative world of the artists; and, images that embody symbolic concepts.[40]

The Steering Committee consisted of: William E. Taylor; Carleton University Professor, and author and authority on Inuit sculpture, George Swinton; and Gunther Abrahamson, Chief of the Social and Cultural Development Division within the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

Plans to tour the exhibition internationally were not firmly established until after the exhibition had begun its tour of Canadian museums. In a review of the exhibit's Canadian tour, Bert Witt voiced his disappointment that at the time (in 1978) there were no plans to tour the exhibition in the United States and Europe. This oversight by the exhibition organizers resulted in less interest in the exhibition. "[E]ven in Canada, there appears to be less general excitement, media exposure and public response than to the sculpture show seven years ago."[41] This statement recalls that the National Gallery of Canada used the positive international reception of *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada* in its promotion to Canadian audiences.

Witt's observation that the exhibition did not generate the excitement or the crowds of the earlier exhibition, *Sculpture/Inuit*, led to speculation that it might have been due to the way the prints were displayed, in "jumbled layers, doing a great disservice to both the artists and viewers."[42]

The exhibition addresses some areas of the Arctic ignored in the earlier *Sculpture/Inuit* exhibition. Where the earlier exhibition all but excluded sculptures by Arctic Québec artists,[43] Arctic Québec artists were found to be well

represented in *The Inuit Print* with prints by 17 artists and printmakers from Povungnituk (Pivirnituq), Port-Nouveau Québec and Inoucjouac (Inukjuak).

In the Shadow of the Sun

The exhibition *In the Shadow of the Sun* was the first major retrospective of exclusively contemporary Canadian Aboriginal art to be shown in Canada and Europe, outlining historical developments, stylistic variation, idiosyncrasies and current trends.[44]

Dr. Gerhard Hoffman of the University of Würzburg in West Germany approached the Museum of Civilization in 1987 with a proposal to participate in a joint project that would endeavour to produce a major exhibition of Canadian Aboriginal art that would tour to several museums in Europe and Canada with a substantial publication. Dr. Hoffman reminded officials at the Canadian Museum of Civilization that "the people of Europe have an ardent interest in the Native North American, and an exhibition of their artistic heritage would no doubt advance an existing interest."[45] The proposed project was intended to be a complement to an earlier exhibition[46] of 20th century American Indian art organized by Hoffman and drawn from collections in the United States that also toured in Europe. This connection was also acknowledged by George MacDonald, Taylor's successor as the Director of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, in his opening remarks for the exhibition's opening in Dortmund, Germany: "[T]he art assembled for *In the Shadow of the Sun*, complements that

U.S. exhibition and brings the additional thoughts and ideas of the people who live in the north of the continent."[47]

Acting as a "complement" to a German-American organized exhibition was only a minor incentive for the Museum of Civilization as it had its own agenda to fulfill by launching a major exhibition of contemporary Aboriginal art. The Museum of Civilization was eager to participate, as they saw this as an opportunity to "complement (and continue) the highly acclaimed and criticized exhibition *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First People*, whose emphasis was on pre-twentieth century Native Canadian art."[48] The exhibition followed close on the heels of an exhibition which elicited from Georges Erasmus, the former national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, the following observation: "The Spirit Sings sparked a fair amount of controversy[49] in Canada. It raised questions that museums had to deal with and a lot of questions that Native people had to address."[50] *In the Shadow of the Sun* would also become the inaugural exhibition for the museum's new home in Gatineau, Québec.

The international version of the exhibition included 275 artworks: 121 were by 29 known First Nations and Métis artists dating from 1925 and 134 artworks by 47 known Inuit artists. The exhibition also included 18 objects by unknown Inuit artists, a small selection of which were from the Prehistoric[51] and Historic[52] periods to provide a historical perspective on the development of certain styles and on choice of subject matter for the contemporary Inuit works displayed.[53] *In*

the Shadow of the Sun included a wide variety of art forms and media including, paintings, sculpture, prints, ceramics, jewelry, appliqué and mixed media works.

Curatorial responsibilities were divided amongst teams of curators selected for their specialization in the field of contemporary Indian and Inuit art. The Indian art team was led by Gerald McMaster[54], Indian Art Curator at the Canadian Museum of Civilization and was made up of Tom Hill (Woodlands Indian Museum, Brantford), Elizabeth McLuhan (York University Art Gallery, Toronto), Ruth Phillips (Carleton University, Ottawa), Alan Hoover (Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria), Carol Podedworney (Thunder Bay Art Gallery), and Karen Duffek (University of British Columbia, Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver). The Inuit art team, lead by Odette Leroux, Inuit Art Curator at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, consisted of Maria Muehlen and Ingo Hessel of the Inuit Art Section (DIAND), and Marie Routledge of the National Gallery of Canada. Each curatorial team was responsible for the organization and selection of works from their respective cultural group that was to be exhibited independent of the other. Having the exhibition sections team-curated allowed the selected works to reflect a variety of viewpoints from the cultural groups and museum professionals from across Canada.[55]

Contemporary First Nations and Metis artists featured in the exhibition were from across Canada with a notable exception of any artists from eastern Canada. Forty-five per cent of the artists presented were from the Northwest

Coast, with another 40 per cent originating from Central Canada and 15 per cent from others areas in Canada.

The exhibition presented artwork by artists from the major art producing communities in the North. Examples of printmaking came from the following printmaking communities: Kinngait (Cape Dorset), Purvirnituq (Povungnituk), Holman, Qamanittuaq (Baker Lake), Frobisher Bay, and Pangnirtung. Thirteen communities involved in producing sculpture were represented; these included Kinngait, Purvirnituq, Inukjuak, Labrador, Baffin Island, Keewatin, Kangirsuk, Salluit (Sugluk), Kangiqliniq (Rankin Inlet), Arviat (Eskimo Point), Qamanittuaq, Salt Spring Island, Taloyoak (Spence Bay), Gjoa Haven, Naujjaat (Repulse Bay), Aqvilikjuaq (Pelly Bay), and Paulatuk. The only community producing wallhangings to be included was Qamanittuaq and the only community to produce watercolours was represented by Kinngait artist Peter Pitseolak.

In the introduction to *In the Shadow of the Sun: Perspectives on Contemporary Native Art*, Gerald McMaster acknowledged that two factors offered restrictions as to where *In the Shadow of the Sun* could be exhibited — "its relatively large size, and the two distinct statements the exhibition would make (Indian and Inuit)." [56]

The exhibition opened in Dortmund, Germany, in December 1988 and was shown until February 1989. It had two hundred and seventy-three works. Artists Pauta Saila and Pitaloosie Saila attended the opening, as did Maria Muehlen,

head of the Inuit Art Section at the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.[57]

For the Dortmund showing of the exhibition, the Indian art portion of the exhibition was exhibited at the Museum Am Ostwall, and the Inuit art portion at the Museum Fur Kunst Und Kulturgeschichte. Paying attendance was roughly 30,000 with considerable media coverage; and extremely vigorous public programming assured the exhibition's popular success.[58] A German reviewer of the exhibition wrote: "The exhibitions, which reflect adversity between two aesthetic worlds, are certainly informative, instructive and exciting in some fields."[59]

The exhibition opened at the Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Québec on June 29, 1989. The exhibition was then sent back to Europe in September 1990 for its final presentation at two Dutch museums. The Indian art portion was located in the Rijksmuseum Voor Volkenkunde, an ethnographic museum in Leiden and the Inuit art portion was located in the Museon, "a conglomerate of types" in the Hague.[60] In the Introduction to the English edition of the catalogue, Gerald McMaster notes that located next to the Museon in the Hague was a museum of contemporary arts that did not wish to become involved with the exhibition of *In the Shadow of the Sun*. He explains that their attitude to non-Western arts continued to reflect the attitudes of mainstream art museums.[61] In a German review of the exhibition, the reviewer takes issue with the exhibition of First Nations and Métis art at the Ostwall Museum, a museum of contemporary

art, but also asks the question of "which known artist would like his works to be exhibited in an ethnological museum?"[62]

This discussion of the content analysis and selected reception of four major traveling exhibitions of Aboriginal artworks closes with a discussion concerning curatorial practices and the display of Aboriginal art and material culture. In looking at this group of exhibitions there is an obvious change occurring over time with regard to the manner in which the Aboriginal material culture is curated and displayed. In the first exhibition, *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo* Art, the objects are presented as static objects frozen in time without any complementary contemporary works to demonstrate a living Aboriginal culture. The following Inuit art exhibition, *Sculpture/Inuit*, included contemporary Inuit sculpture being made by known artists. Sculptures of the recent and distant past found a place along side the contemporary works. In the exhibition, *The Inuit Print*, the prints were presented without any supporting objects from the past and in *In the Shadow of the Sun,* Contemporary Aboriginal art is presented with a very small selection of prehistoric and historic Inuit works that were included to inform the viewer on the development of certain styles and on choice of subject matter for the contemporary Inuit works displayed. In these last two exhibitions, many of the works are by known artists. The 'status' of the objects in the exhibitions shifts from that of 'artefact' to 'art masterpiece'. In her essay, *Collecting as Medium and Message*, Susan Pierce has identified artefact and masterpieces as an opposed pair in her analysis of the creation of values in

material culture.[63] How this shift occurs has been the subject of study in recent years. Diana Nemiroff, curator of Modern Art at the National Gallery Canada recognizes this shift as a recent phenomenon, which sees the "passage of so-called primitive art from ethnographic specimen to work of art" occurring in the first part of the twentieth-century as primarily connected to "the desire of modern artists to break with the tired tradition of Western naturalism."[64]James Clifford identifies the classifications of Non-Western sources in two major categories – the cultural artefact and the work of art. Clifford posits that since the turn of the nineteenth century objects collected from non-Western sources have been designated as either scientific or aesthetic works of art. Basing his analysis on A.J. Greimas's 'semiotic square', he has described this phenomenon on how objects move from one category to another in his essay "On Collecting Art and Culture"[65] (Illustration 8).

Clifford divides his 'semiotic square' into four zones: 1) the zone of authentic masterpieces; 2) the zone of authentic artefacts; 3) the zone of inauthentic masterpieces; and, 4) the zone of inauthentic artefacts. In his discussion on how these zones operate, Clifford explains the phenomenon of how an object of cultural significance, located in a national museum, may become regarded as a work of art, to be displayed in an art museum. He identifies that an area of frequent traffic in the system is a pathway linking zones 1 and 2. Traffic along this route is two-way rather than unidirectional, allowing for "things of cultural or historical value to be promoted to the status of fine art."[66]

According to him, this movement is typical in art museums engaged in displaying works of cultural or historical value. The cross-over is apparent in the evolution of the four exhibitions explored in this thesis.

In the following chapter I will link the exhibitions presented in this and the preceding chapter to notions of nation, imagined communities, and the invention of tradition.

Endnotes

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[1] National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, EX 1365, *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo art from Canada.* Background paper, Department of External Affairs *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art of Canada*, March 20, 1969.
[2] Marcel Evrard, Introduction to exhibition catalogue. Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada. Société des Amis du Musée de 'l'Homme, Paris, 1969.
[3] National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, EX 1365, *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada*. Press Release, Department of External Affairs, *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo art of Canada*, March 20, 1969.
[4] Professor Robert Gessain. "Preface." In Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada. Société des Amis du Musée de 'l'Homme, Paris, 1969.
[5] See Appendix 3, for a breakdown by section.
[6] It can be presumed that Edenshaw was represented in this exhibition, as he is included in the catalogue under the entry for slate [argillite] carvings as one of the best sculptors in this medium. Freddie Alexcee is represented in the exhibition with two paintings. From the exhibition catalogue: "One of the two pictures here exhibited represents a battle between the Haidas and Tsimsyan at Port Simpson, about 1840; and the other, native houses and totem poles of Port Simpson." National Gallery of Canada. Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art. Ottawa: 1927.
[7] National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives. EX 1365, Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art of Canada. "Paris Museum Stages Show of Canadian Art." *Hamilton Spectator*, March 20, 1969.
[8] Ibid.
[9] National Museums of Canada. Annual Report, National Museums of Canada, April 1, 1969 to March 31, 1970. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1970. p. 4.
[10] National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives. EX 1365, Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art of Canada. "Paris Museum Stages Show of Canadian Art." *Hamilton Spectator*, March 20, 1969.
[11] National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives. EX 1365, Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada. "Paris Embraces Native Art." *The Globe and Mail*, August 2, 1969.
[12] Ibid.
[13] National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives. EX 1365, Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada. "Art for the Masses and the Medicine Man" in *What's on in Ottawa,* December 1969. p. 11.
[14] Ronald L. Bloore. "In the Mainstream ..." *artscanada*, no. 138/139, December 1969. p. 38.
[15] Ibid. p. 38.
[16] Ibid. p. 41.
[17] Ibid. p. 41.

[18] *Advertisement* in *artscanada*, December 1969, issues no. 138/139. Inside cover page.
[19] Since Inuit has superceded the term Eskimo, I will use it throughout except in names of organizations and quotations.
[20] The Canadian Eskimo Arts Council began operations as the Canadian Eskimo Art Committee until it was renamed in 1967.
[21] Virginian Watt. "Appendix III." In The Inuit Print, Ottawa: National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada, 1977. p. 264.
[22] The CEAC's first national exhibition *Sculpture* was held in 1970 on the occasion of the centennial of the Northwest Territories, and toured eighteen Inuit communities. Ibid. p. 264.
[23] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ 2000-I0024 Jan. 2001, File Masterworks/Ottawa. Press Release, May 9, 1973.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Bert Witt. "A Look at the "Inuit Print" Retrospective: Good Show!" In *Arts & Culture of the North Quarterly*, vol. 2, no. 3, May 1978. p. 92.
[26] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives. ACQ 2000 – I0024, I-53, Box 1 of 2, File: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic, Press Comments. Susan Becker. "Masterworks go on Tour." The Saturday Citizen, October 30, 1971.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Canadian Eskimo Arts Council. Sculpture-Inuit: Sculpture of the Inuit: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971. Foreword. p. 9.
[29] See Appendix 4, for a chart of the 214 works by known artists in the exhibition divided by community.
[30] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives. ACQ 2000 – 10024, I-53, Box 1 of 2. File: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic. London Masterworks. Letter Barbara Tyler, Chief, Communications Division, NMM to Martin Rewcastle, Advertising, August 31, 1972.
[31] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ 2000 – 10024, I-53, Box 1 of 2. File: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic. Press Comments. "Eskimo Carving Praised in London." Victoria Times, October 6, 1972.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ 2000 – I0024, I-53, Box 1 of 2, File: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic, Press Comments. Linda Randal, "London Critics Enjoying Canadian Eskimo Art Work" in Owen Sound Sun Times, October 24, 1972.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] The *Victoria Times* printed: "Canada House officials here say the response from British press, TV and radio has been the best yet." Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ 2000 – I0024, I-53, Box 1 of 2. File: Masterworks of

the Canadian Arctic. Press Comments. "Eskimo Carving Praised in London." October 6, 1972.
[37] William E. Taylor. *Foreword.* In The Inuit Print. p. 22.
[38] The Task Force on Museums and First Peoples was a national group made up of over 25 individuals from the Aboriginal and museum communities. The report, "Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples," tabled in Ottawa in 1992, contains recommendations resulting from two years of consultations and deliberations between Aboriginal and museum communities conducted by the Task Force and was jointly sponsored by the Assembly of First Nations and The Canadian Museums Association.
[39] Bert Witt. "A Look at the "Inuit Print" Retrospective: Good Show!" p. 92.
[40] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, Box I104, File: ACQ2000-I0116 Travelling and Temporary Exhibitions – Inuit Print Selection Committee (correspondence, 1976-1986). Letter to Kenneth Lochhead, member of the selection committee from W. E. Taylor, Jr., director, NMM, April 23, 1976.
[41] Bert Witt. "A Look at the 'Inuit Print' Retrospective: Good Show!" p. 92.
[42] Ibid. p. 92.
[43] Richard C. Crandall. Inuit Art: A History. London: McFarland and Company, 1999. p. 188.
[44] Gerald McMaster. In the Shadow of the Sun: Perspectives on Contemporary Canadian Art. Mercury Series Paper 124, Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1993. p. viii.
[45] Ibid. p. vii.
[46] The exhibition was simply titled *20th Century Native American Indian Art.*
[47] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, Odette Leroux Collection "In the Shadow of the Sun" Folder: [In the Shadow of the Sun: correspondence, Memos, Press Clippings... 1986 –1992]. Box 4287, f. 10.
[48] Gerald McMaster. In the Shadow of the Sun. p. vii.
[49] *The Spirit Sings* was the object of a vocal boycott by the Lubicon Lake Cree of Northern Alberta on two points: the exhibition's lack of contemporary First Nations voice and presence; and, the sponsorship of the exhibition by Shell Canada, an oil company drilling on lands that are the subject of an ongoing land claims dispute.
[50] George Erasmus' comments were published in the *Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples.* p. iv.
[51] Eight works (four each) dating from the Dorset and Thule cultures.
[52] Six works from 1880-1930 and 4 works by unknown artists dating from 1950-1955.
[53] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, Odette Leroux Collection "In the Shadow of the Sun" Folder: [In the Shadow of the Sun: correspondence, Memos, Press Clippings... 1986 –1992]. Box 4287, f. 10.
[54] McMaster's First Nations affiliation is Nehiyaw (Plains Cree).
[55] It is worth noting that the Inuit team had no "Inuit" representation.

[56] Gerald McMaster, In the Shadow of the Sun. p. ix.
[57] Richard C. Crandall. Inuit Art: A History. 308.
[58] Gerald McMaster. In the Shadow of the Sun. p. ix.
[59] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, Gerald McMaster collection, "In the Shadow of the Sun" Office Translation, Canadian Embassy, 17 February 1989.
[60] Gerald McMaster. In the Shadow of the Sun. p. xi.
[61] Ibid. p. ix.
[62] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, Gerald McMaster collection, "In the Shadow of the Sun" Office Translation Canadian Embassy, 17 February 1989.
[63] Susan Pierce. *Collecting as Medium and Message,* in Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, ed. Museum, Media, Message. London and New York: Routledge, 1995. p. 18.
[64] Diana Nemiroff. "Modernism, Nationalism and Beyond" in Land Spirit Power. Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada, 1992. p. 21.
[65] James Clifford. "On Collecting Art and Culture." In The Cultural Studies Reader, Simon During, ed. Routledge: London and New York, 1993. p. 49-73.
[66] Ibid. p. 57.

V. Exhibitions, Imagined Communities and the Invention of Tradition

In this chapter, I will examine the success of the four exhibitions examined in Chapters 3 and 4 that were organized or travelled abroad under state sponsorship to various European and North American cities during the late 1960s to the late 1980s, and how, as a group, they have contributed to the state's invention of a Canadian national identity. This will be achieved by referencing Chapters 2 through 4 of my thesis and discussing several appended graphs that have been created by analyzing data taken from the four exhibitions. The graphs present the scope of artists and works selected for display abroad in a clear and concise manner. The analysis also assists in demonstrating a transition in exhibition style from a limited and stereotypical presentation to a more inclusive and vital display of contemporary Aboriginal art as part of living and evolving cultures.

Reflecting on the Chapter 2 of this thesis, I return to the argument that the Canadian government consciously chose to invent a distinctive international image for Canada through the exhibition of the material culture of its Aboriginal peoples. To this end, the Canadian government through its agencies and ministries exercised its role as a shaper of a distinct Canadian identity by sending major exhibitions of Aboriginal material culture abroad as well as making them available to audiences at home.

In Chapter 2, theories of nationalism proposed by Benedict Anderson and Eric J. Hobsbawm are explored. Anderson's notion of the "imagined community"

provided a departure point to explore how and why the material culture of Canada's Aboriginal people came to play such an important role in the promotion of Canada's national identity abroad beginning in the late 1960s. Hobsbawm's theory of the "invented tradition" highlights the potential artificiality of national symbols and the extent to which the symbolism of nationalism may be invented and not be historically rooted. It is through these invented traditions that strong symbols of nationhood are developed; they are effective in forming the bonds that link the members of these "imagined communities." Theories of Daniel Francis were also examined to further explain the use of the Aboriginal stereotype as a symbol of Canada. The examination of the theoretical notions of nationalism were then followed by a review of the major cultural commissions released by the federal government in the early 1950s and early 1980s and how recommendations made therein, either directly or indirectly, advocated the notion of touring Aboriginal art abroad.

It can undoubtedly be said that the exhibitions of *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art From Canada, Sculpture/Inuit, The Inuit* Print and *In the Shadow of the Sun* responded to the 1951 Massey Commission's call for a "projection of Canada abroad" presenting to an overseas audience an art unique only to Canada. Well received in their host cities, these exhibitions were displayed in some of the largest and most influential art museums in Europe, Great Britain and the U.S. and helped to disseminate an image of Canada that distinguished the nation from United States, France and Britain.

The examination of the social and political environments from which these exhibitions developed reveals a duality in the manner in which the state has elevated Aboriginal material culture to high art to contribute to a distinctive Canadian identity abroad while, coincidentally, the same state had and continued to employ various policies of assimilation. The introduction of various policies by the federal government over the last century and a half with the intention of assimilating Aboriginal populations provides an ironic contrast to the prominence of Aboriginal material culture (art) in the image of Canada being projected abroad by the Canadian government through the exhibitions examined in this thesis. Through participating in the development of these exhibitions, the state "imagines" the long pre-contact history of Aboriginal cultures as part of the "national" community and their history is used to extend in time Canada's historical roots. Nevertheless Canada pursued policies over the decades since Confederation which undermined - and almost erased – the distinctive Aboriginal cultures and identities[1].

In June of 1969, as the final preparations were being made for the exhibition *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada,* a White Paper was tabled by Jean Chrétien, the then-Minister of Indian Affairs. The proposed plan to revamp the 1876 Indian Act upset many Aboriginal groups, particularly the National Indian Brotherhood.[2] The White Paper called for the advancement of individual rights of Aboriginal people with the intention of integrating Aboriginal peoples into the rest of Canadian society rather than treating them as a separate

group previously determined by the Indian Act. The changes proposed by the White Paper included the elimination of the special protection granted under the Indian Act, the abolishment of the Department of Indian Affairs, and the transfer of responsibility for services to Native people from the federal government to the provincial government. In response to the public outcry that was generated by these suggestions, the Trudeau government withdrew the White Paper in 1971.

Canada's Centenary

Any discussion concerning Canadian cultural development in the 1960s must acknowledge the occasion of Canada's centenary and events that marked it. The first of the exhibitions examined in this thesis, *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada,* displayed for six months in Paris, France in 1969, followed closely on the heels of the 1967 World Exhibition or Expo '67, in Montréal, Québec. The celebratory year was marked by several commemorative projects promoted as a means of inspiring nationalist pride and a sense of Canadian identity both nationally and internationally. One of the national projects was the realization of Arthur Erickson's distinctive building, funded largely by the federal government, for the Museum of Anthropology (UBC). With its rich collection of Northwest Coast Aboriginal material culture, this museum became the premiere permanent showcase of Aboriginal art in Canada, albeit focused Northwest Coast production.

In looking back at this period Barbara Tyler and Jean Trudel[3] recall that "travelling exhibitions were in abundance; museums set the standards while government supplied much of the funding – up to 80 [per cent] during the 1970s. In retrospect it was a glorious time."[4] It was in this context the four exhibitions were organized and could be toured so extensively abroad. And similar to the growth of the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) in the 1960s, the exhibition, *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art* and the exhibitions that followed benefited from being organized in an environment that strove to celebrate its cultural identity. John McAvity, Executive Director of the CMA in 1992, identified the CMA's growth as the result of three ingredients: professionalism, public policy and the Canadian thirst for its own cultural identity and cites Canada's Centennial in 1967 together with the exuberance of Expo '67 in Montréal that year to have rekindled a cultural revolution throughout the country.[5]

The exhibition of Aboriginal art abroad, beginning in the 1960s, satisfied several conditions troubling some of the political and cultural elite in Canada at the time. The Canadian government was facing pressure from strong advocates in the persons of Vincent Massey and Lester B. Pearson who understood that the development of the arts could contribute to a distinct cultural identity that would distinguish the modern state of Canada from its British and French founding, as well as from its neighbour to the south, the United States.

The following analysis shows how the series of exhibitions of Aboriginal art contributed to the foundation of this distinctive image.

The first graph (Appendix 2), illustrates the various cultural institutions that made loans to *Masterworks of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada*, demonstrating that 30 per cent of the loans were provided by the exhibition's organizational institution. The National Museum of Man is matched by percentage of loans only by the Glenbow Museum in Alberta, which loaned 31 per cent of the artworks. The restriction of exhibiting works from only Canadian collections can be read as a measure of the "national" agenda being promoted by the exhibition organizers.[6] A point not missed by the artist Ronald Bloore', when he expressed his reservations about the "all Canadian show," excluding works from collections outside Canada that would have enriched the show. These omissions did, however, help to establish the nationalist credentials of the show, displaying distinctive "Canadian" art from Canadian institutions.

The second graph (Appendix 3), demonstrating the representation of works by a geographical region, shows the exhibition organizers' reliance on well-known and stereotypical artefacts of Northwest Coast cultures with 56 per cent compared to the other geographic areas represented: Plains, Eastern Regions and Inuit for a total of 44 per cent. In addition, the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal groups across Canada through ancient artworks presents an image of a dead culture, frozen in time, disconnected from any contemporary living culture.

This type of static portrayal of Aboriginal cultures aspired to show Aboriginal groups as part of the Canadian community and history. It recalls

Anderson's theory that a nation "is imagined because members will never know most of their fellow-members, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion." This presentation of Aboriginal history as part of Canada's history extends Canadian historical roots in time for an international audience for the benefit of the state. Through the display of material culture the state projects an image of Aboriginal peoples, which includes their history as a positive component of an overarching Canadian historical narrative, ignoring the contradictions of assimilation and subordination. By projecting abroad an image that implies Aboriginal history and culture is a respected and legitimate part of the Canadian experience, the nation state has invented a tradition to achieve a distinctive international presence. The Canada being projected abroad is represented by an "invented tradition" created by the government in order to promote an image that is distinct from other nations. Locally, in Anderson's argument, this community is imagined since most Canadians do not know or appreciate the members of the imagined community. It also recalls William E. Taylor's comment concerning the lack of Canadian appreciation for Aboriginal art cited in Chapter 4.

The third graph (Appendix 4), presents a breakdown of the communities of origin for known artists with works included in the exhibition *Sculpture/Inuit*. Kinngait (Cape Dorset) has the strongest representation followed by Arviat, Qammanituaaq (Baker Lake), and Inukjuak, respectively. Roughly two-thirds of the sculpture included in this exhibition was made by known artists, signalling an evolution of the exhibition from the static display of a culture, "frozen" in time, and

no longer vital and living, as seen in the *Masterpiece of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada* exhibition to the presentation of a living culture, albeit one that is appreciated in the South and internationally for its representation of "traditional" life.

Further changes in exhibition style and organization are evident in *The Inuit Print*. The fourth graph (Appendix 5), gives a breakdown of the communities of origin for artists included in the show. Significantly, all of the artists are contemporary and most are living. Approximately half of the prints are by artists living in Kinngait (Cape Dorset), followed by one quarter of the works by Qammanituaq (Baker Lake) artists. One factor contributing to this is the inclusion of Inuit artist Kananginak on the selection committee. Most significantly, the inclusion of an Aboriginal curatorial contribution abides by the collaborative model of Aboriginal and museum community interaction advocated by the *Task Force on Museums and First Peoples* (1992). This collaborative model becomes more evident in the exhibition *In the Shadow of the Sun*, where one of the curators, Gerald McMaster, is of Aboriginal ancestry.

The fifth graph (Appendix 6), demonstrates the distribution of works by First Nations and Métis artists and Inuit artists in *In the Shadow of the Sun*. The distribution is almost equitable as 44 per cent created by First Nations and Métis artists and 56 per cent of the works in the exhibition were created by Inuit artists.

The sixth graph (Appendix 7), shows a disproportionate relationship with regard to the age of the artists involved in the exhibition and the number of works

included by artists in those age categories. The number of Inuit works in the exhibition dramatically decreases as the age of the artist decreases. The reverse is true with First Nations' works with the number of works increasing with the age of the artists' represented. In comparison to the first exhibition, the artworks exhibited in *In the Shadow of the Sun* are non-stereotypical created by activist contemporary artists working within a living culture. This change is attributed to the increased involvement of the Aboriginal community through the organization and curatorship of the exhibition and precipitated by the events throughout the decade, most famously, responses to the exhibition *The Spirit Sings* and several on-going land treaty negotiations.

In the Shadow of the Sun reflects the contemporary changes in Inuit art by the mid-nineteen eighties: in printmaking the images were changing from "traditional" images to one addressing contemporary issues. Artists were also exploring new images and media in sculpture. The availability of grants enabled artists to travel to exhibitions, participate in workshops and seminars, and produce art which broadened the artists' exposure to new imagery and techniques. The Inuit Art Foundation, governed by Inuit artists, can take a large share of credit for these changes.[7] According to Crandall:

> The first generation artists were either dead or had undergone thirty-plus years of acculturation, and they were being replaced by second- and even third-generation artists who had their own culture, legends and stories to present through their art. Certainly there had been change in the other stages of contemporary Inuit art, but their magnitude of change is the dominant theme of this stage.[8]

Nemiroff notes that the 1980s presented a shift in the exhibition of Aboriginal visual culture. The Native artist had become politicized, assisted by Native activism. This raised questions of identity, both individual and collective, defined by "a definitive shift from modernism to postmodernism, and with it the breaking down of institutional canons, an emphasis on pluralism, and an interest in exploring questions of difference, which weakened the ethnocentrism of the art establishment."[9] In developing his concept of hybridity from literary and cultural theory, Homi K. Bhabha's view of hybridity reflects the creation of culture and identity within conditions of colonial rule and the creation of a "Third Space" which allows these other positions to emerge.[10] The activist artists are creating an art which engages the colonial power, the dominant society, as opposed to traditional art forms of the past. They are participating in the negotiation of a hybrid space, an "imagined space" in which Bhabha references Anderson's theory of "imagined communities" stating: "Nations, like narrative, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye."[11] This metaphor is highly appropriate to the role of visual cultures in the imagining of a distinctive international image of Canada.

Endnotes

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[1] http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/rpt/wrd_e.html. June 21, 2003.
[2] The National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) was formed in 1969. In 1982, the NIB made the transition to become the current Assembly of First Nations.
[3] In 1992, Barbara Tyler was Director and Chief Executive Officer of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. Jean Trudel, Professor and Director of the M.A. in museum studies program at the Université de Montréal. Both are past presidents of the Canadian Museums Association.
[4] Barbara Tyler and Jean Trudel. "The State of the Canadian Museum Community." *Muse*, vol. X, no. 2 and 3 (Summer/Fall 1992). p. 2.
[5] John G. McAvity. "Working Together to Create a Strong Community." *Muse*, vol. X, no. 2 and 3 (Summer/Fall 1992), p. 17.
[8] It is one of the great tragedies of Canadian Aboriginal history that the most significant examples of Native culture are in European and American collections.
[7] The Inuit Art Foundation is a federally registered non-profit foundation, established in 1985. The foundation, operated and controlled by Canadian Inuit artists, provides professional development opportunities for artists overseas and promotes Inuit art worldwide.
[8] Richard C. Crandall. Inuit Art: A History. London: McFarland and Company, 1999. p. 265.
[9] Diana Nemiroff. "Modernism, Nationalism and Beyond." In *Land Spirit Power:* Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1992. p. 35.
[10] Homi K. Bhabha. On the Location of Culture. London and New York: Routledge, 1994. p. 38.
[11] Homi K. Bhabha. "Introduction: Narrating the Nation." In Nations and Narrations, Homi K. Bhabha, ed. London and New York: Routledge, 1990. p. 1.

VI. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis, as stated in the Introduction, is to examine the extent to which the Canadian government has participated in the aggressive promotion of Aboriginal art, especially during the period spanning from the 1960s to the 1980s, to contribute to a distinctive international image of Canada, thus satisfying the growing Canadian nationalist sentiment of the time. The motivation behind the conceptualization and organization of the exhibitions is fuelled by a strong desire for the state to create symbols that define it as a nation distinct from Great Britain, France and the United States. The symbolism presented by the exhibitions discussed in this thesis can be read as contributions to an "invented tradition" intended to bind members of an "imagined community" together.

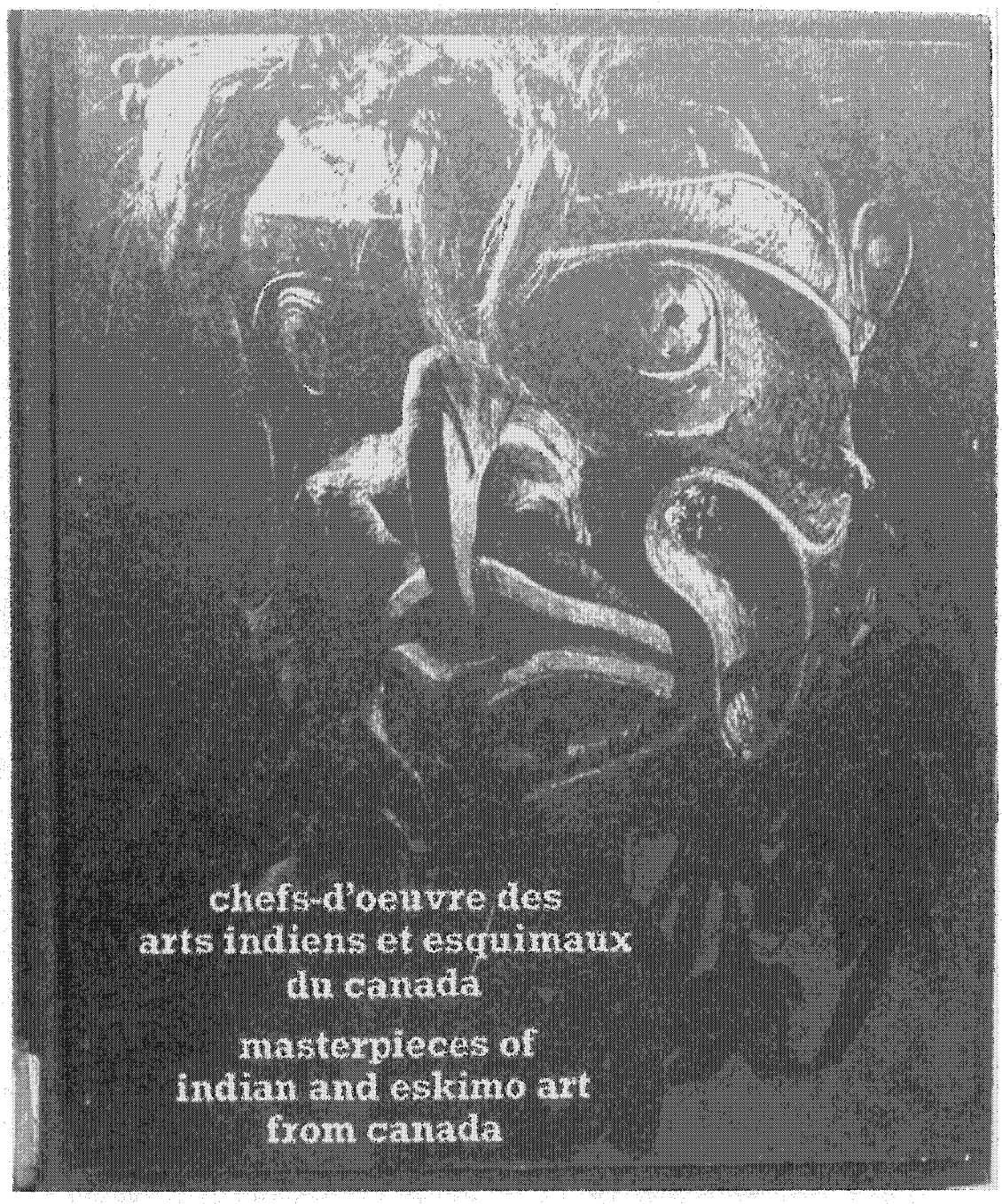
This initiative of the state took place against the backdrop of deliberate policies of assimilation intended to destroy the distinctive Aboriginal languages and cultures. This study also reveals shifts in exhibition and curatorial practice, including early initiatives to include Aboriginal input and achieve a degree of collaboration, now considered the accepted and required practice.

In the course of writing this these several opportunities for further research came to my attention: 1) The role and contribution of exhibitions produced by government departments since the recommendations of the *Task Force On Museums and First Peoples* were published in 1992; 2) The significance of Indian and Inuit Art Centre exhibitions such as *Transitions I* and *II*; 3) the role and

purpose of the Canadian Embassy Art Gallery in Washington, D.C. as a venue for the exhibition of Aboriginal art; and, 4) Comparative studies of exhibitions of Aboriginal art and exhibitions of art by non-Aboriginal artists to evaluate the respective contributions to the creation of a distinctive image of Canada abroad.

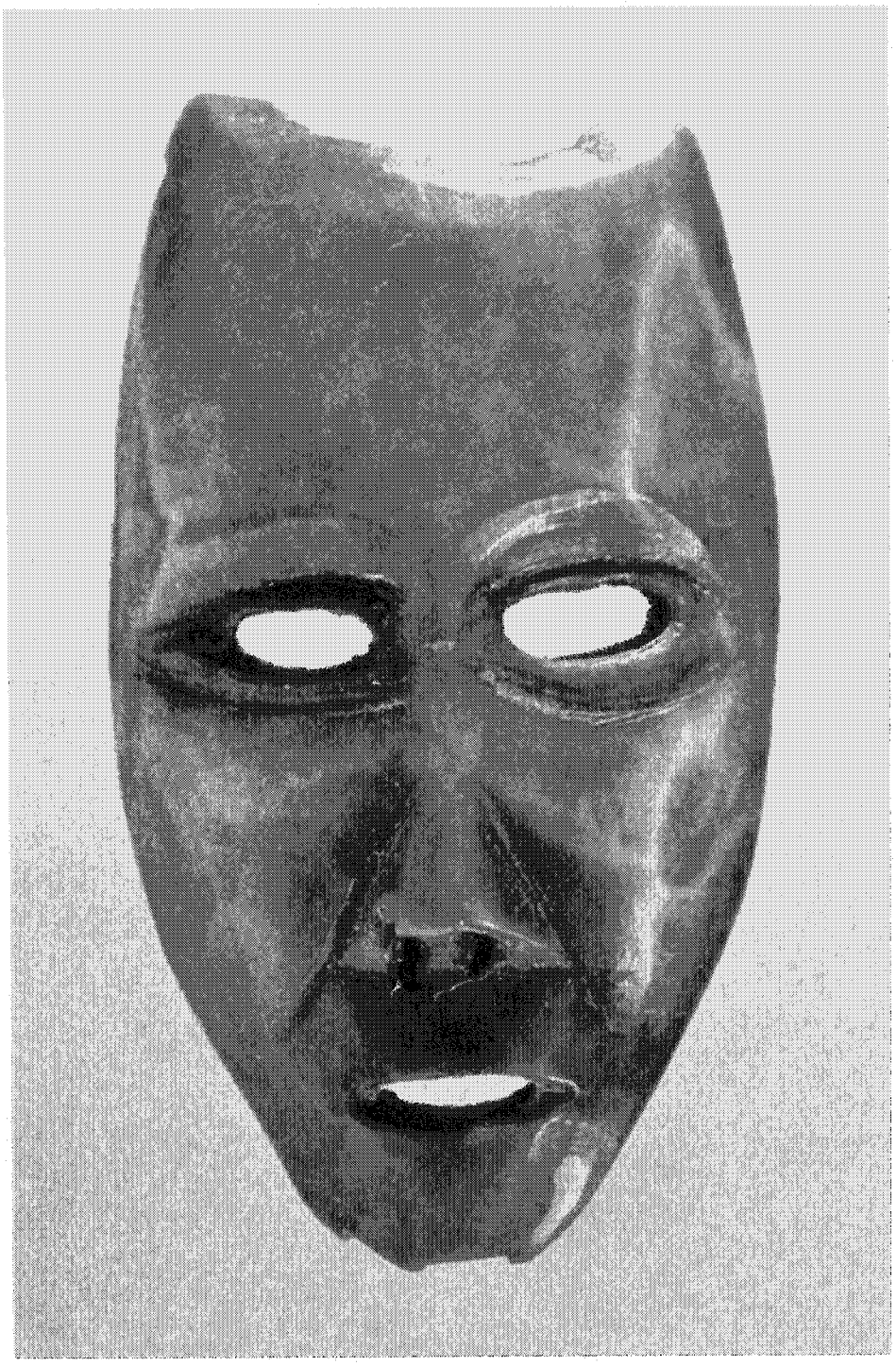
By focusing this thesis on four exhibitions of art by Aboriginal artists it is intended to demonstrate how the Canadian government has, through the appropriation of Aboriginal material culture for display abroad, contributed to an imagined Canadian community. There is a clearly indicated change demonstrated by these exhibitions. They have evolved, like the cultures creating the art displayed and not remained static through time. From the display of a static, dead culture, the curatorial practice, and the organizing forces behind it, has changed to present artists as participants in a "third space," to best reflect the dynamic nature of Aboriginal cultures in Canada and in the Canadian community.

Illustration 1



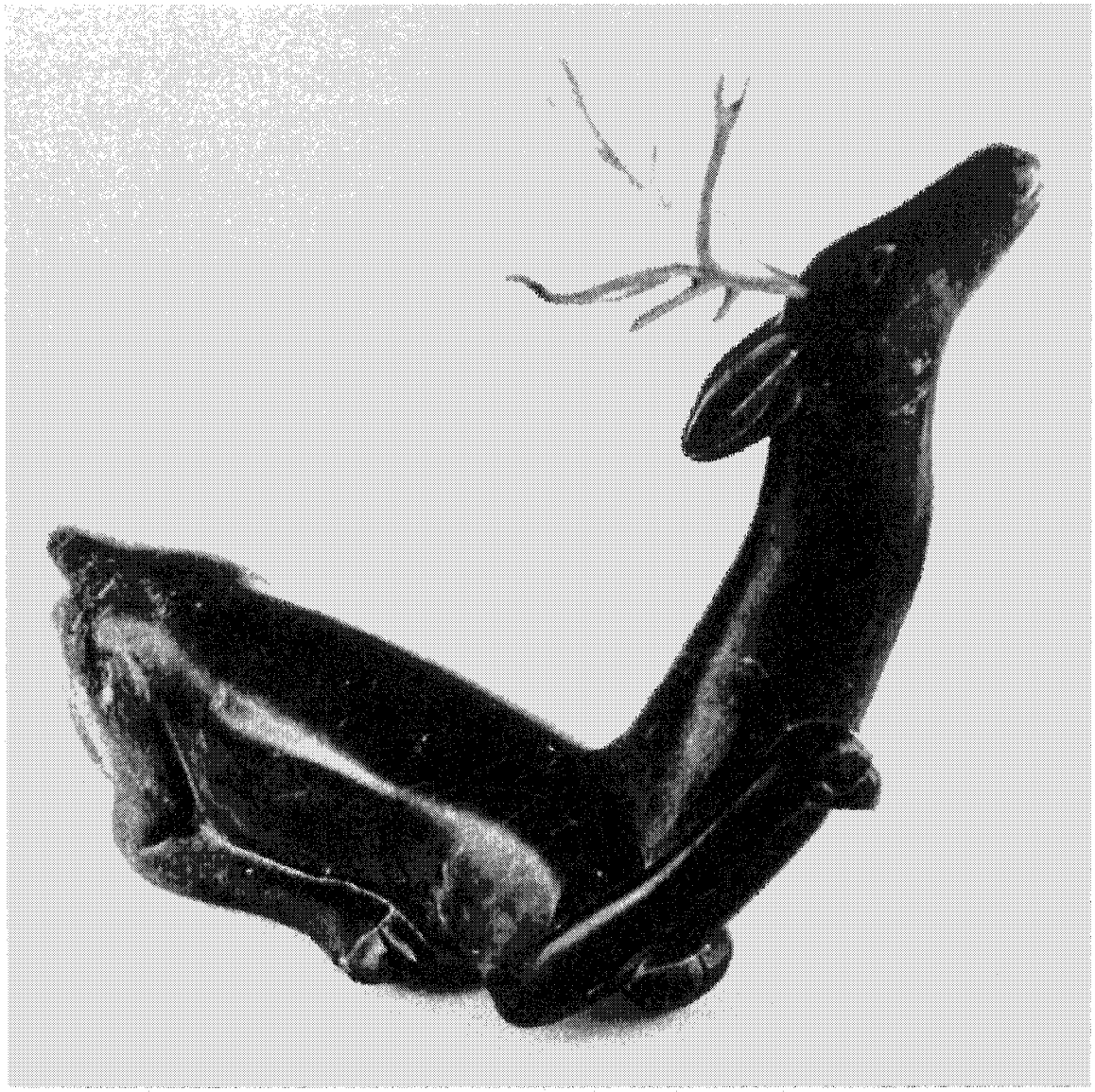
Cover, Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada, 1969

Illustration 2



Miniature Mask,
Ivory
Tyara site, Sugluk Island, N.W.T.
Dorset culture, early phase. Circa 700 BCE

Illustration 3

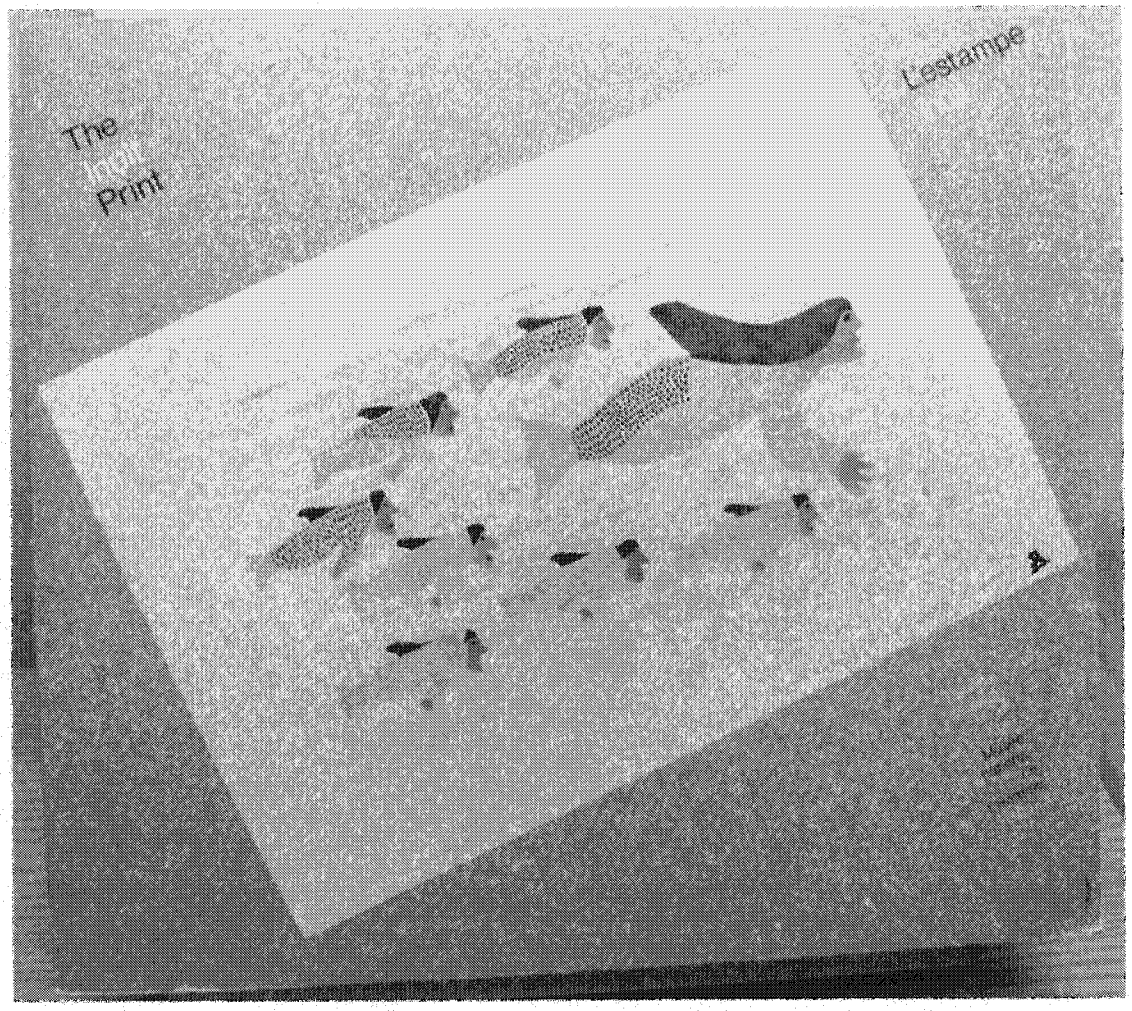


Kneeling Caribou,
Osuitok Ipeelee (b. 1923)
Cape Dorset
1970
green stone and bone
37 x 44 x 29 cm

Illustration 4

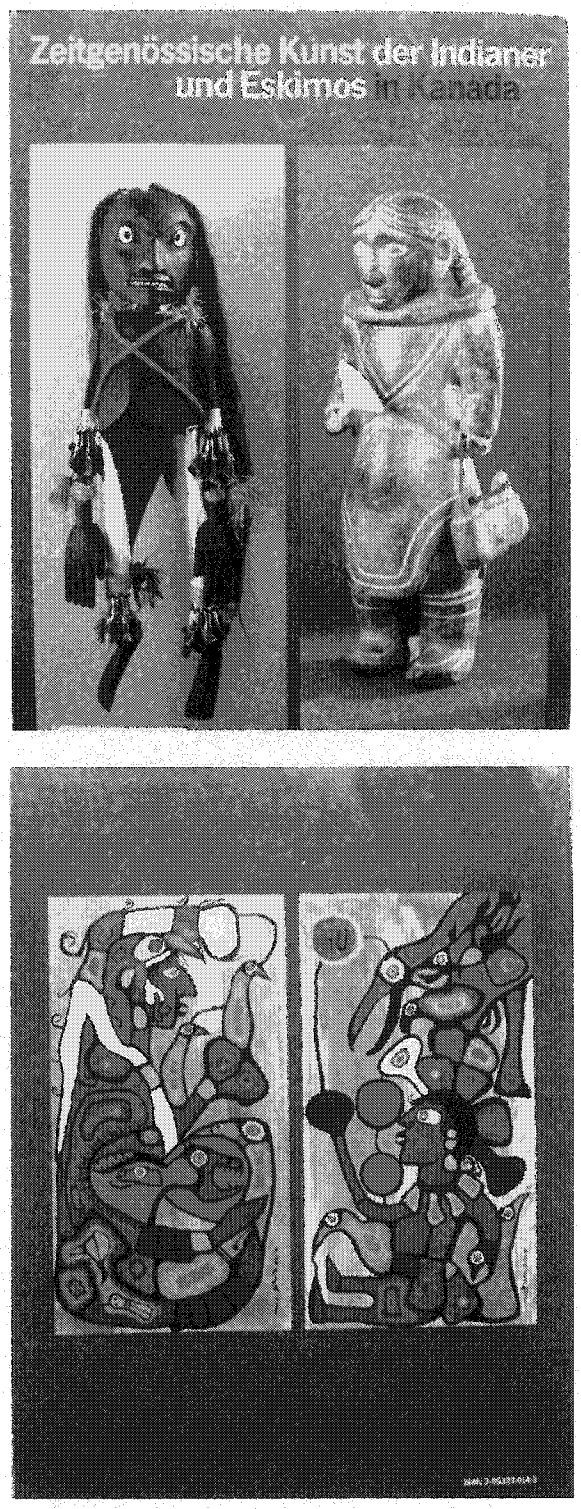
Cover, Sculpture/Inuit: Sculpture of the Inuit: Masterworks of the Canadian Arctic, 1971.

Illustration 5



Cover, The Inuit Print, 1977.

Illustration 6



Cover (front and back), Im Schatten der Sonne: Zeitgenössiche Kunst der Indianer und Eskimos in Kanada, 1988.

Illustration 7

Moon Mask
Haida, 19th century
Wood, height 30.5 cm.
National Museum of Man, Ottawa

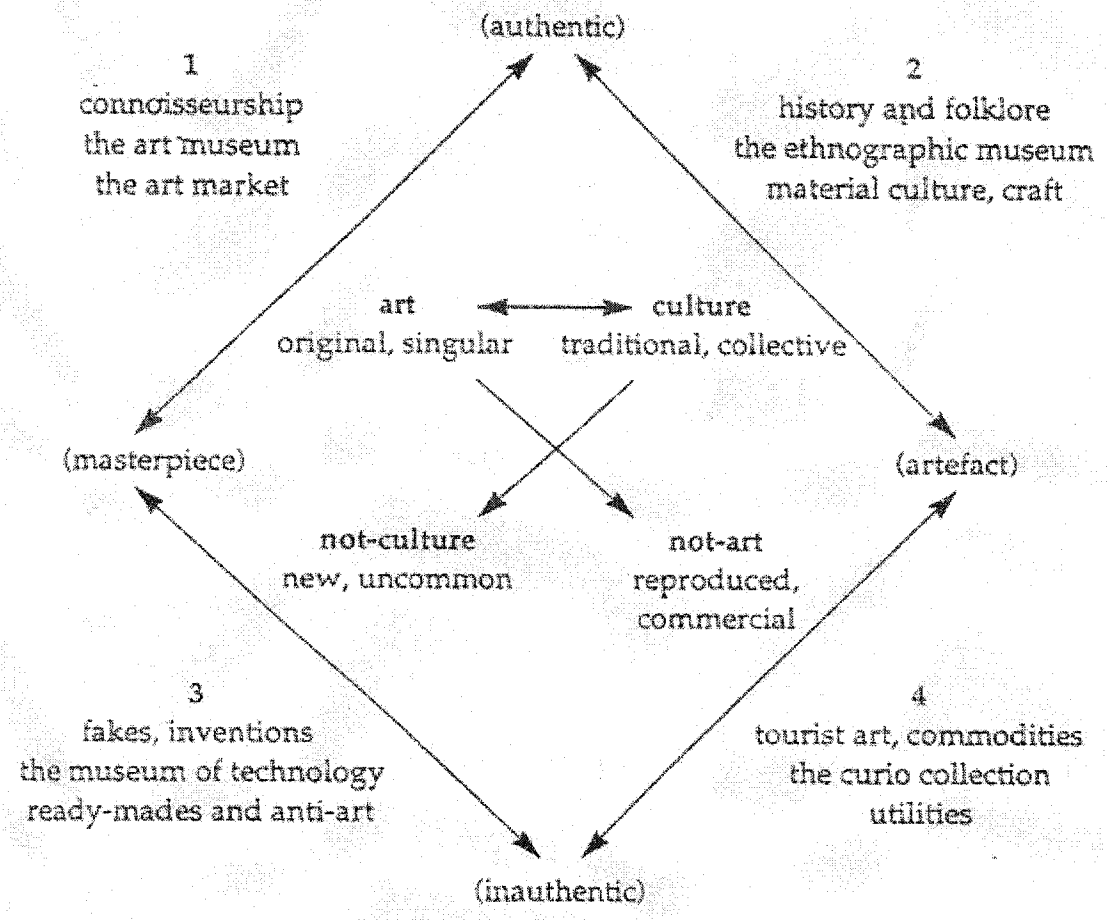
this painted ceremonial mask is one of 185 items in the exhibition *Masterpieces of Canadian Indian and Eskimo Art* at the National Gallery of Canada until 11 January 1970. Canada's aboriginal art was acclaimed as "one of the great art forms of the world" when this exhibition was shown in Paris earlier this year

The National Gallery of Canada
Elgin St, Ottawa 4

Open 10 am to 6 pm; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 am to 10 pm; Sundays and public holidays, 2 pm to 6 pm. Open Mondays for the duration of this exhibition. Admission free.

Advertisement, *artscanada*, December 1969, no. 138/139.

Illustration 8



James Clifford's *Semiotic Square.*

Appendix 1
Exhibition Itineraries

Masterpieces of Indian and Inuit Art Exhibition Itinerary[1]

Country	Institution	Dates
France	Musée de l'Homme, Paris	March 25 - September 1969
Canada	National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa	November 1969 - January 1970

Sculpture/Inuit Exhibition Itinerary[2]

Country	Institution	Dates	Attendance
Canada	Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver British Columbia	November 9 – December 9, 1971.	35,000
France	Le Grand Palais, Paris (1972	February 10 – April 2, 1972	24,000
Denmark	National Museum of Copenhagen, Copenhagen	April 26 – May 28, 1972	9,000
Russia	Hermitage Museum, Leningrad	June 29 – July 23, 1972	100,000
	Pushkin Fine Art Museum, Moscow	Aug 10 – September 10, 1972	100,000
England	Museum of Mankind, British Museum, London	October 5 – December 10, 1972	25,000
United States of America	Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia	January 24 – March 4, 1973	110,000
Canada	Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal	March 23 - April 22, 1973	35,000
	National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa	May 17 – June 17, 1973	62,000

[1] National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, EX 1395 *Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada.*
[2] Richard C. Crandall. Inuit Art: A History. p. 191.

The Inuit Print Exhibition Itinerary[3]

Country	Institution	Dates
Canada	Musée de Québec, Québec, Québec	January 9 – January 29, 1978
	Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario	February 18, 1978 – April 2, 1978
	Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland	April 14 – May 9, 1978
	New Brunswick Museum, Saint John, New Brunswick	June 1 – July 31, 1978
	Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia	August 20 – October 09, 1978
United States of America	Atlanta College of Art, Atlanta, Georgia	March 5 – 25, 1979
	Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse New York	April 12-May 13, 1979
	Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, California	May 30 – August 15, 1979
	University Museum of Art, University of Michigan, Ann Arbour, Michigan	September 16 – October 14,1979
France	Musée St. Rambert-sur-Loire, St..Rambert, France	November. 21, 1979 – January 6, 1980
	Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen, France	January 15 – March 2, 1980

[3] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives, ACQ2000-I0116 Traveling and Temporary Exhibitions – Inuit Print Travel Schedules (correspondence, schedules: 1978-1985)

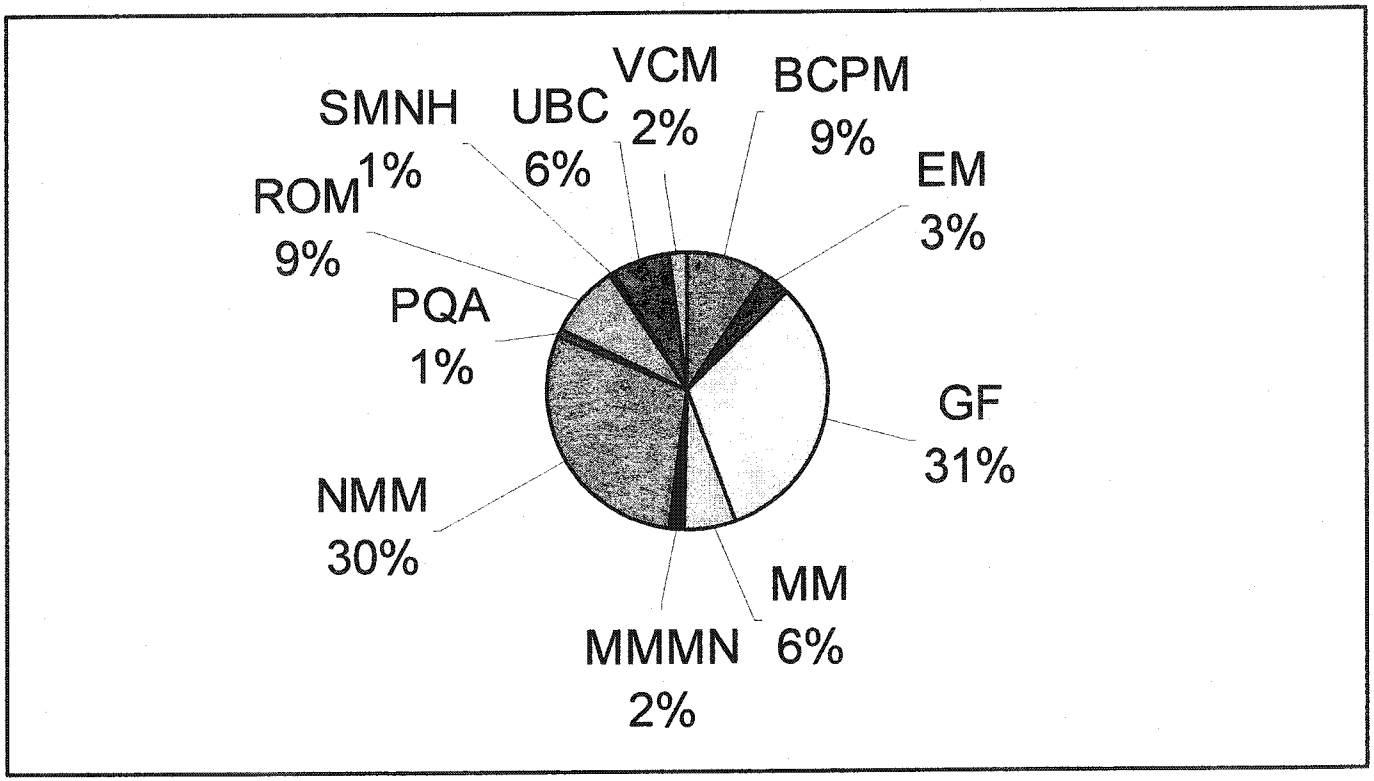
The Netherlands	Museum voor Land-en Volkenkunde, Rotterdam	March 28 – May 2, 1980)
France	Musée de l'Homme, Paris	May 30, – July 31,1980
Denmark	National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen	September 15 – October 5, 1980
Sweden	Etnografiska Museet, Stockholm	November 18 – March 30, 1981
Canada	Museum of Indian Archaeology, London, Ontario	May 21 – August 21, 1981
United States of America	Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey	April 10 – June 10, 1981

In the Shadow of The Sun Exhibition Itinerary[4]

Country	Institution	Dates
Germany	Museum am Ostwall and Museum für Kunst und Kultugeschichte, Dortmund	December 9, 1988 – February 27, 1989
Canada	Museum of Civilization, Gatineau, Québec	June 29, 1989 – January 2, 1990
	Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax	April 20, 1990 – June 24, 1990
The Netherlands	Rijksmusem Voor Volkenkunde, Leiden and Museon, the Hague	August 30 – October 28, 1990

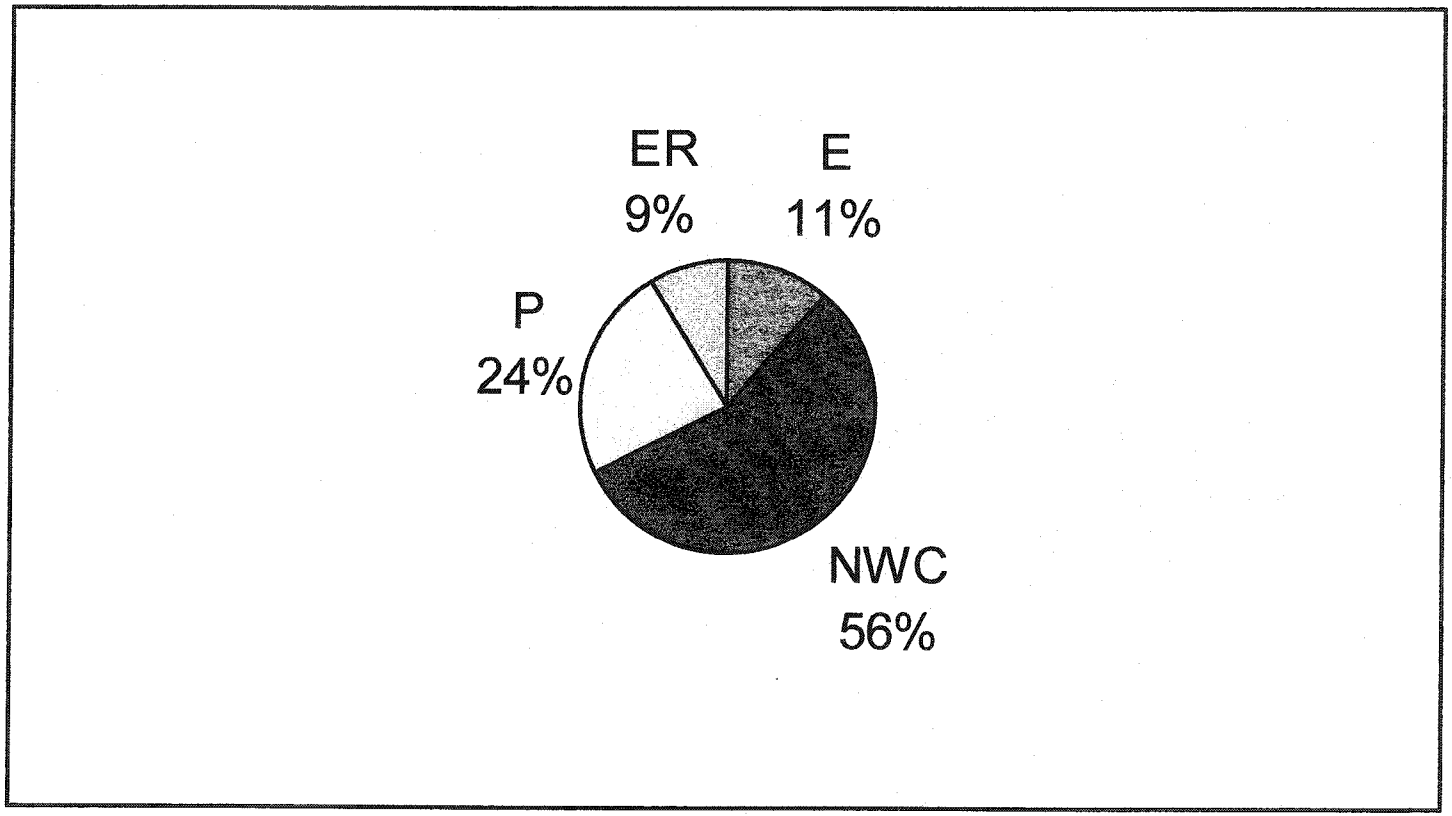
[4] Canadian Museum of Civilization Archives' listing of Travelling Exhibitions, updated January 28, 2003.

Appendix 2 – Contribution by Lending Institution: *Masterworks of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada*



BCPM: British Columbia Provincial Museum
EM: Eskimo Museum
GF: Glenbow Foundation
MM: McCord Museum
MMMN: Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature
NMM: National Museum of Man
PQA: Province of Québec Archives
ROM: Royal Ontario Museum
SMNH: Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History
UBC: University of British Columbia (Laboratory of Anthropology
VCM: Vancouver City Museum

Appendix 3 – Content by Regional/Cultural Groups: *Masterworks of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada*

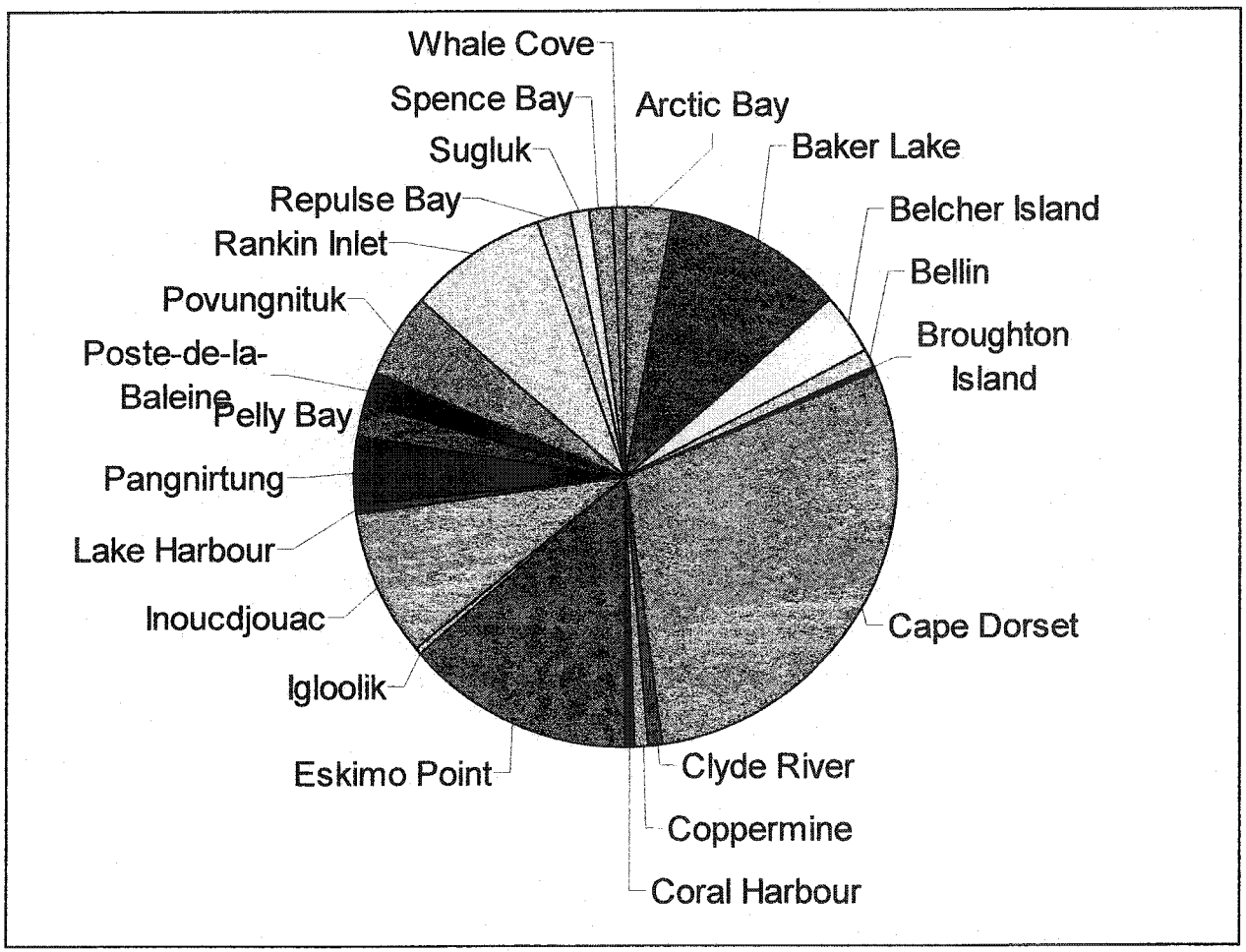


E: "The Eskimos"
NWC: "The Indians of the Northwest Coast"

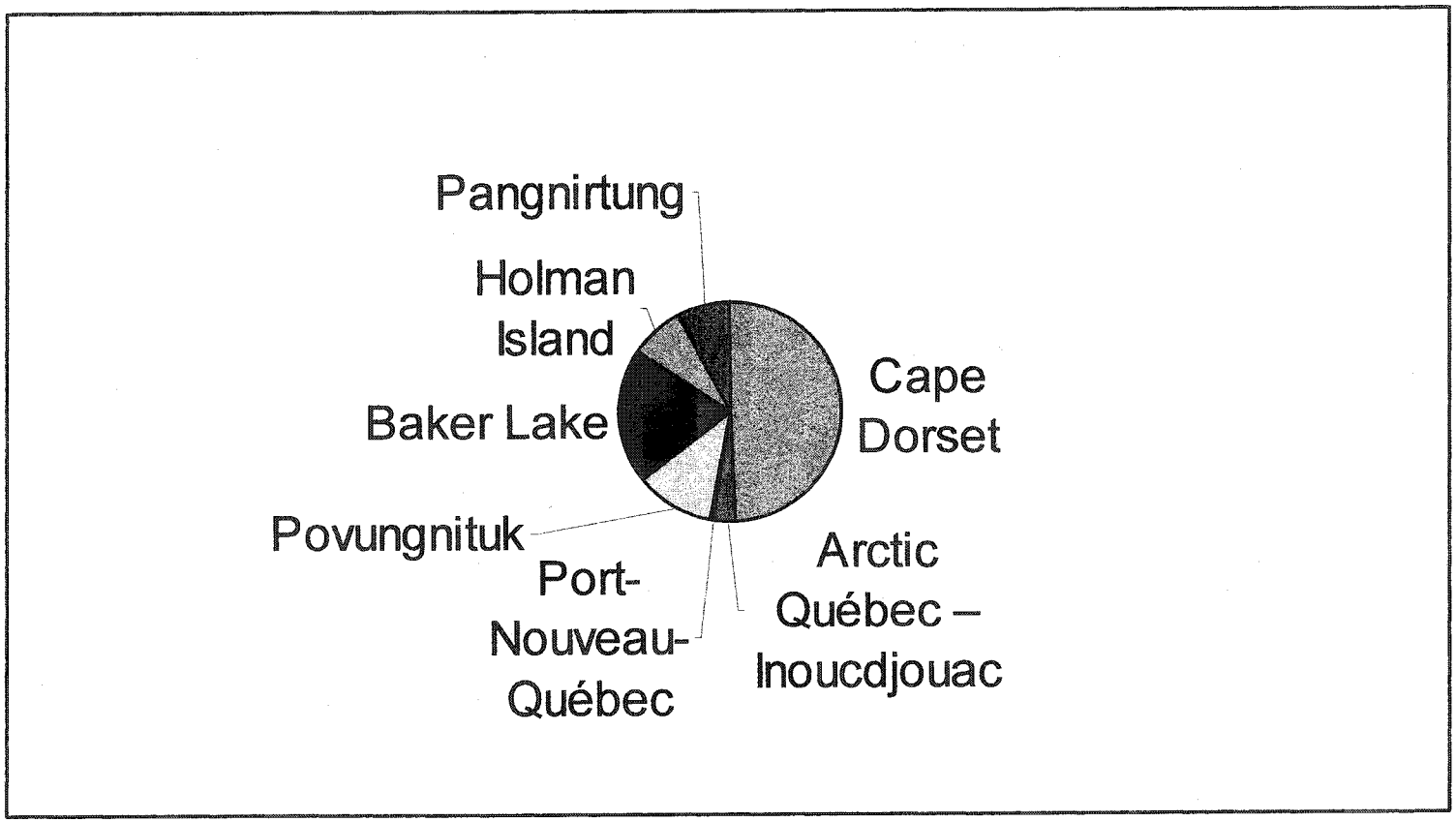
P: "The Indians of the Plains"
ER: "The Indians of Eastern Region"

Appendix 4 – Content by Community: *Sculpture/Inuit*

Arctic Bay: Ikpiarjuk
Baker Lake: Qamanittuaq
Belcher Island: Sanikiluaq
Bellin: Kangirsuq
Broughton Island: Qikiqtarjuaq
Cape Dorset: Kinngait
Clyde River: Kangiqtugaapik
Coppermine: Kugluktuk
Coral Harbour: Salliq
Eskimo Point: Arviat
Igloolik
Inoucdjouac: Inukjuak
Lake Harbour: Kimmirut:
Pangnirtung
Pelly Bay: Aqvilikjuaq
Poste-de-la-Baleine: Kuujjuaraapik
Povungnituk: Purvirnituq
Rankin Inlet: Kangiqliniq
Repulse Bay: Naujaat
Sugluk: Salluit
Spence Bay:Taloyoak
Whale Cove: Tikirarjuaq



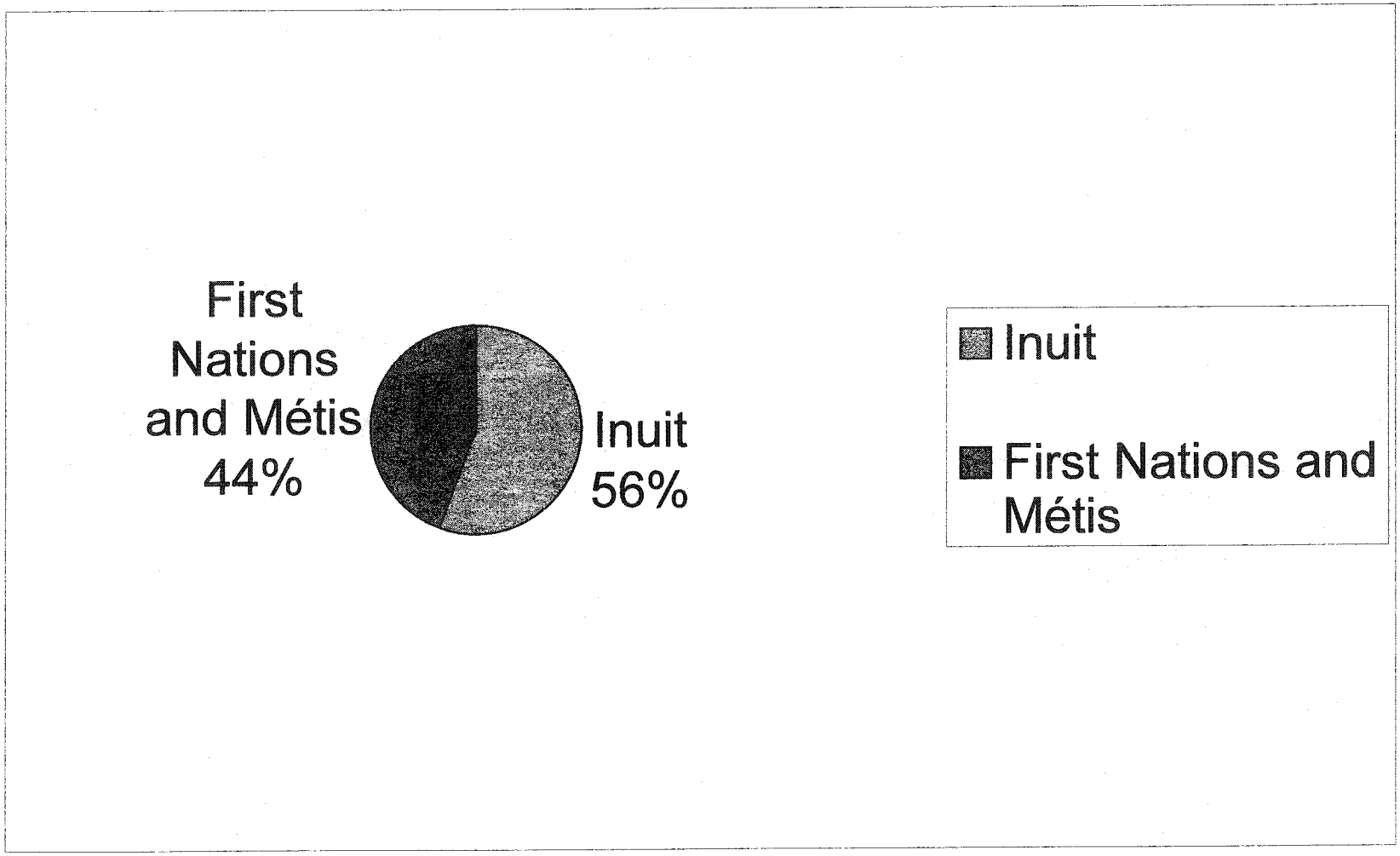
Appendix 5 – Content by Community: *The Inuit Print*



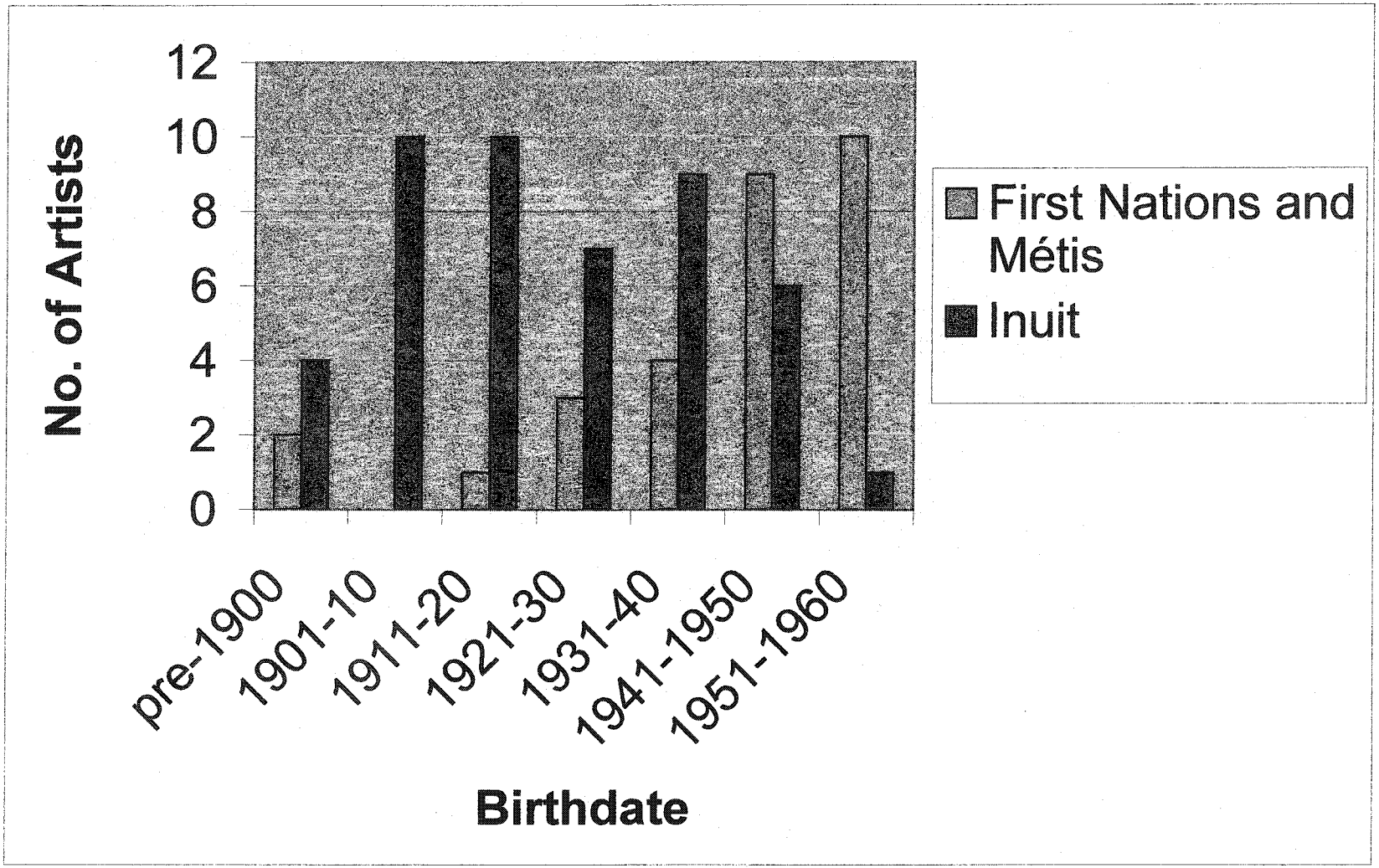
Baker Lake: Qamanittuaq
Cape Dorset: Kinngait
Holman Island:
Inoucdjouac: Inukjuak

Pangnirtung
Port-Nouveau Québec
Povungnituk: Purvirnituq

Appendix 6 – Inuit/First Nations and Metis: *In the Shadow of the Sun*



Appendix 7 – Age Distribution by Artists: *In the Shadow of the Sun*



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National Archives of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, RG22 Vol. 954 File: 84-8-3 Vol. 3 – Canadian Government Exhibition Commission International Trade Fair, International Trade Fair, International Trade Fair News, Century 21 Exhibition

National Archives of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, RG22 Acc: 1995-96/693 13 File: 40-8-5 Part 21 – Eskimo Art

National Archives of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, RG22 Acc: 1995-96/693 13 File: 40-8-5 Part 22 – Eskimo Art

National Archives of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, RG22 Acc: 1995-96/693 13 File: 40-8-5 Part 23 – Eskimo Art

National Archives of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, RG22 Acc: 1995-96/693 13 File: 40-8-5 Part 24 – Eskimo Art

National Archives of Canada, National Defence, RG24 Acc: 1990-91/217 197 File: 230-50 44 Vol.2

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