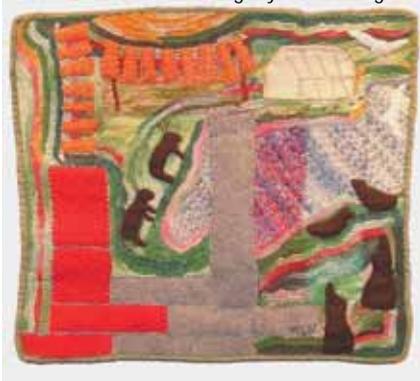


The Fabric of Community

A Culture on Cloth Exhibit

"Inukshuk Crossing" by Janet Nungnik

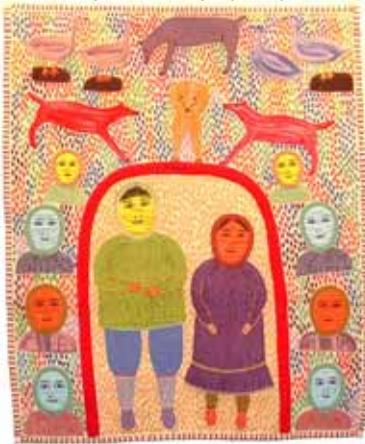


June 3 - 30, 2010

The Morin Gallery at The Arts Center In Orange



"Inside our Igloo Thinking" by Mary Kuutsiq



Irene Avaalaqiaq

(Left) The red figure is a water bird changing into a human to escape the wolves. The other figures are scared of her and are changing their forms. The blue and green creatures are wolves changing into birds. The blue and black birds started to change into humans, but as humans they became scared of the wolves and changed back into birds.



"Spirit Transformations" by Irene Avaalaqiaq

A recurrent theme in Inuit art is the relationship between humans and the wilderness . . . the artwork blurs boundaries between the physical and spiritual worlds.



As one of the last surviving hunting cultures native to North America, the Inuit are a vigorous, yet sensitive, people who inhabit the northern reaches of Arctic Canada. They possess a character so strong and vibrant it enables them to celebrate the joys of life, even in the face of adversity. For centuries, continually threatened by a harsh Arctic environment, these incredibly resourceful people, so close to the rhythms of nature, carved out a life dependent upon fishing and hunting. Adapting to seasonal cycles, the Inuit lived in snow houses, or *igloos*, during the long winter, fashioning skin tents from caribou hides for the short summer season. Nothing could be more dramatic than the vast stretch of darkness that spanned the winter months, or more enlightening than the season of the midnight sun. With this change in seasons came a change in the nature of survival. Winter camps near the sea were left behind, as families travelled to summer camps farther inland. To most, this formidable Arctic environment would be inhospitable, yet to the Inuit, it is poignantly referred to as *nunatsiag* - the beautiful land - and continues to be reflected in the artwork produced by contemporary Inuit artists.

The application of women's traditional sewing skills to the production of textile art first started in the settlement of Baker Lake, in the 1960s. Baker Lake is the only inland community in Nunavut. Originally part of the North West Territories, Nunavut is the name of the territory that was given back to the Inuit people by the Canadian government on April 1, 1999. After making wool duffie clothing, seamstresses used the leftover multi-coloured pieces of fabric to make art to hang on the walls. In embracing a foreign artistic medium, the women of Baker Lake made their wall hangings a vehicle for expressing centuries-old Inuit traditions, and gave birth to a uniquely Canadian art form.



In the Morin Gallery, wall hangings by the women of Baker Lake, Canada. In the classroom, wall hangings by the children of Gordon-Barbour Elementary and The Boys and Girls Club of Orange, Virginia. Culture on Cloth is an international initiative connecting artists, children, and communities around the world. Learn more at www.arcticinuitart.com/biography/arctic_studies.html

Curator: Judith Varney Burch
Exhibit and Community Outreach Sponsors: Flossie Fowlkes and Bridget Bryant

The Arts Center in Orange
129 East Main Street, Orange, VA 22960
Ph. (540) 672-7311,
www.artscenterorange.org
Hours: 10 am - 5 pm, Mon - Sat



"Nunavut Our Land" by Fanny Avutute



"Making Tea" by Hannah Oklaga



"Owls" by Mary Haqpi



"Over Here are the Caribous" by Elizabeth Quinanagnaq Angrnagangrniq

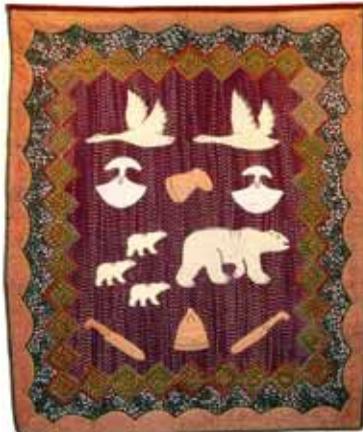
"Canada Geese Flying over the Tundra" by Tobbi Tookoome



"Tundra" by Ruth Qualliarialik Nulliak



"The North" by Fanny Auvitute



"Food Chain" by Ruth Qualliarialik Nulliak

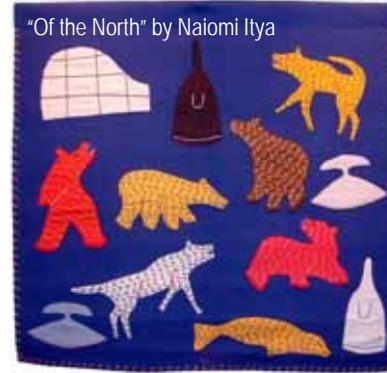
The Fabric of Community is an exhibit of twenty tapestries created by Inuit women in the Nunavut hamlet of Baker Lake, Canada. Crafted of wool duffel and incorporating appliqué and embroidery techniques, the tapestries use strong blocks and lines of color to depict traditional Inuit hunting scenes and enigmatic symbols of significance to Inuit culture. With no written tradition, the Inuit used tapestries such as these to convey their history and beliefs.



Irene Avaalaaqiaq sharing traditions with Baker Lake children



"Multi Aboriginal" by Tobbi Tookoome



"Of the North" by Naiomi Itya

"Kiviuq" by Eva Qirniq Noah



"30 People" by Elizabeth Angrnaqqaq



Janet, Victoria, Mary, Irene

"My Father's Carvings" by Annie Anowtalk



"Dog Teams" by Victoria Mamnsualuak



"Bears" by Victoria Mamnsualuak



Judith Varney Burch fell in love with Inuit art more than two decades ago. Motivated to educate people about Inuit art because it represents a fragile and disappearing way of life, Burch organized "Culture on Cloth," a traveling exhibit that began in Washington, then headed to locations in Mongolia, China, India, Mexico, Latvia, Russia, Japan, Korea, France and Mexico, and will continue to locations throughout Central and South America. In addition to giving lectures, Burch also conducts workshops with local children, who craft their own culturally specific art after viewing and learning about the Nunavut artists. Creating direct connections through art, and preserving and sharing living symbols of the Inuit people is what matters to her most, she says. Burch serves as a research collaborator for the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, and her collections have been used for university core curricula. Her hope is to inspire others to preserve works of art as educational resources.