

## Exhibition of Inuit Drawings at Burnaby Art Gallery Captures a Time of Change



Image: Cornelius (Kooneloosee) Nutarak, 1924, Clyde River, Nunavut – 2007, Pond Inlet, Nunavut  
Celebration and Drum Dancing (detail), 1964, Graphite on paper, © Canadian Museum of History, IV-C-6955  
Inscription on back: "Just like they did in very old times, he is dancing. They are also singing... The women are singing 'Ayaya, Ovanga, Oya, Ayaya.' The person dancing is saying 'Eya.'"

Burnaby, BC — From November 16, 2018 to January 13, 2019, the Burnaby Art Gallery will present the travelling exhibition, **Picturing Arctic Modernity – North Baffin Drawings from 1964**, developed in partnership by the Canadian Museum of History and the Agnes Etherington Art Centre at Queen’s University, with the assistance of the Pond Inlet Archives, Ilisaqsivik, Ittaq and Piqqusilirivvik.

Through 50 original drawings — created in 1964 by Inuit men and women of North Baffin Island — this exhibition explores a transformative era for the people of Canada’s Eastern Arctic. The drawings offer rare first-person perspectives on daily life, history and memory during a time when Inuit communities were transitioning from traditional nomadic hunting camps to permanent settlements.

“We are honoured to bring this important exhibition to the Metro Vancouver community. We hope that local audiences will take this unique opportunity to learn more about Inuit stories, through their own words and drawings. I invite everyone to join us for the opening reception, Curator’s tour and free family programs during the course of this exhibition,” says Ellen van Eijnsbergen, Director/Curator at the Burnaby Art Gallery.

“These drawings are a priceless record of the sweeping changes that reshaped Inuit society on North Baffin Island in the 1960s,” said Mark O’Neill, President and CEO of the Canadian Museum of History. “The people who created these illustrations understood that their way of life was changing dramatically, and that it was important to preserve their knowledge and memories. As a museum committed to preserving and promoting the history of Canada and its peoples, we are proud to share these uniquely important cultural treasures with the citizens of Burnaby.”

The entire exhibition (text, videos, website and in-gallery booklet) is presented in Inuktitut, French and English. The exhibition also features 42 video clips of the artists, their families, and community members who provide their interpretations of the drawings. “**Picturing Arctic Modernity** is an exhibition of powerful stories that speak equally through the economical expression of the graphite

drawings made in 1964, and the voices of Inuit recorded in North Baffin communities in 2016,” remarked Jan Allen, Director of Agnes Etherington Art Centre at Queen’s University. “To create this project, curator Dr. Norman Vorano worked closely with collaborators at Piqqusilirivvik Inuit Cultural Learning Facility in Clyde River and Pond Inlet Archives and the people of North Baffin, including the artists, their families and friends, translators, editors and videographers. Together, they have achieved a profound and moving record of cultural change in the Arctic.”

The 50 drawings are part of the Terrence Peter Ryan Baffin Island Drawing Collection, which the Canadian Museum of History acquired in 2014. Terry Ryan was resident art advisor at the famous Cape Dorset print studio for almost 40 years. In 1964, fearing the disappearance of traditional Inuit culture, he journeyed by plane and dogsled to Clyde River, Pond Inlet and Arctic Bay, where he distributed paper and pencils to Inuit men, women and youth, and invited them to draw anything they wanted. More than 150 people completed 1,842 drawings, which Ryan purchased at his own expense.

The exhibition was presented at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre in Kingston, Ontario, from January 7 to April 9, 2017, and at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec, from February 16 to September 3, 2018. Satellite exhibitions toured Clyde River and Pond Inlet in the summer of 2017 while a portion was displayed at the Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum in Iqaluit, Nunavut, between August 26 and October 8, 2017.

**Picturing Arctic Modernity** is in Burnaby from November 16, 2018 to January 13, 2019.

## **PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

### **Opening Reception**

**Thursday, November 15, 7:00 PM**

**Free, everyone welcome**

Join us for the opening of *Picturing Arctic Modernity - North Baffin Drawings from 1964* at the Burnaby Art Gallery. The evening will feature opening remarks, followed by a reception.

### **Lecture: Diversity, Inclusion and Source Communities in the Gallery**

**Friday, November 23, 1:00 PM**

**Free, everyone welcome**

Join contemporary Inuit art curator Dr. Norman Vorano for a special discussion on bringing voices from diverse communities to the forefront in non-conventional learning environments. This is a great professional development opportunity for educators, museum professionals and interested individuals from the general public.

### Curator's Tour

**Sunday, November 25, 2:00 PM**

**Free, everyone welcome**

Special guest, contemporary Inuit art curator, Dr. Norman Vorano, walks visitors through the exhibit, *Picturing Arctic Modernity - North Baffin Drawings from 1964*.

### In the BAG Family Sundays

**Sunday, November 18 & December 16, 1:00-4:00 PM**

**Free drop-in, all ages welcome**

Come and make art! Get your minds humming with a visit to the gallery and then into the studio for family-friendly art projects. On November 18, Decorate Your Day and on December 16 learn all about Visual Journaling. This program is sponsored by ABC Recycling.

### What We Do to Make a Sealskin Drawing

**Saturday, January 5, 2019, 1:00-4:00 PM**

**Free drop-in, all ages welcome**

Inspired by the drawing *What We Did to Make a Sealskin Tent*, artist Mark Igloliorte leads an informal, family-friendly drawing workshop using sealskin as a subject. Participants draw with a variety of graphite pencils to create depictions of sealskins from observation. Artistic skills of shading and gradient are introduced while guests are invited to work with sealskin.

## GALLERY INFORMATION

### About the Burnaby Art Gallery

*Since 1967, the Burnaby Art Gallery (BAG) has been dedicated to collecting, preserving and presenting a contemporary and historical visual art program by local, national and internationally recognized artists. The BAG acts as a leader in the collection, preservation and exhibition of artists who choose to work on paper—the only public art museum in Canada dedicated to works of art on paper. Through our collection and exhibition practices the BAG endeavours to represent the best and most promising Canadian artists. The BAG cares for and manages over 5,800 works of art in the City of Burnaby's Permanent Art Collection.*

### About the Canadian Museum of History

*Located on the shores of the Ottawa River in Gatineau, Quebec, the Canadian Museum of History welcomes over 1.2 million visitors each year. The Museum's principal role is to enhance Canadians' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the events, experiences, people and objects that have shaped Canada's history and identity, as well as to enhance Canadians' awareness of world history and culture. Work of the Canadian Museum of History is made possible in part through financial support of the Government of Canada.*

### Agnes Etherington Art Centre at Queen's University

*Agnes Etherington Art Centre is a research-intensive art museum located on the historic campus of Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. A space of display, innovation and exchange, the Agnes offers experiential learning for diverse disciplines at Queen's, and serves as the public gallery for the region and beyond. Its collections — numbering over 17,000 works — include contemporary art, Canadian historical art, Indigenous art and artifacts, and material culture including Canadian Historical Dress and the Lang Collection of African Art. The Bader Collection, focusing on Rembrandt and his school, centres on more than 200 paintings from the Dutch Golden Age.*

## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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High-resolution images are available upon request.

**Website:** [www.burnabyartgallery.ca](http://www.burnabyartgallery.ca)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/BurnabyArtGallery](https://www.facebook.com/BurnabyArtGallery)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/bbyartgallery](https://www.instagram.com/bbyartgallery)

**Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/BurnabyArtGall](https://www.twitter.com/BurnabyArtGall)

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