

FOREWORD

The 2011 Annual Print Collection from Cape Dorset is dedicated to Kananginak Pootoogook, who passed away November 24, 2010. His final six images are included here; all except one - *Starboard Wind* (2011-04) - have been signed posthumously by Kananginak's son, Johnny. These images capture Kananginak's stylistic range and great popular appeal as a graphic artist. Here he is as historian, storyteller, naturalist and even abstractionist, closing his remarkable life and career with the poignantly titled, *Last Caribou* (2011-08).

The work of the Kinngait Studios proceeded vigorously this year, producing another strong collection of thirty-three images by eleven studio artists. Most are familiar to the Inuit art audience but we do have one newcomer - Malaija Pootoogook. Malaija did her first drawing in 1994, inspired by the work of her great-grandmother, the late Pitseolak Ashoona. She eagerly participated in the etching studio workshop conducted by Paul Machnik and Bess Muhlstock this winter, and we are pleased to include two affecting images of one of her favourite subjects - the Arctic owl.

Kakulu Saggiaktok, Papiara Tukiki and Pitaloosie Saila are represented again in the annual collection after a few years hiatus. Papiara can still be counted on for her quirky sense of humour; yes, that is a lemming blowing a bubble in *Bubble Gum* (2011 - 27). And Pitaloosie's masterful drawing style still reigns with her rendering of two ravens dancing to a traditional whaler's reel (*Ravens' Reel*, 2011 - 28).

Inuit myths, stories and legends have always inspired Ningeokuluk Teevee. Here she gives us the *Legend of Qalupalik* (2011 - 19), a human-like sea creature who stalks the beach during the dangerous spring break up of the



"Each artist does what they can do, that is their talent. Everybody is different; they each put what is in their mind on paper."

ice, looking for wayward children who have wandered too close to the shore. If she catches you, she will put you in her amoutik and adopt you as her own.

Tim Pitsiulak also incorporates Inuit cultural heritage into his work, represented here by a prehistoric mask (2011 - 33). Deceptive in its simplicity, the intense spirit of the shaman emanates through. In direct contrast, the sea goddess Sedna shows off her smooth, untangled hair, indicating her contentment and state of repose (2011 - 32).

Shuvinai Ashoona has used the symbol of the egg in many of her original drawings over the years. In *Sea Shell* (2011 - 31), the egg shell becomes the umiak, fragile yet functional, transporting a group of happy-looking people to their next destination - perhaps another world. Shuvinai's worlds are multiple and overlapping, captured literally in *World View* (2011-30), a technically challenging lithograph printed by Niveaksie Quvianqtuliaq.

Niveaksie and the other lithography studio printers benefited this year from a two-week training session given by Jeff Sippel, Master Printer and Professor of Art at the University of Missouri in St. Louis. Jeff was "amazed" at the accomplishment and dedication of the Dorset staff, and we'd like to thank him again for his valuable input. Our only regret is that Master Printer, Pitseolak Niviaqsi, was not able to partake as he has been on an extended leave of absence for health reasons. We look forward to Pitseolak's return in October.

The studios also hosted Toronto-based artist, Shary Boyle, who spent three weeks in Cape Dorset. Inspired by the work of Shuvinai Ashoona in particular, Shary's visit was a much needed break from the hectic contemporary art scene for collaboration, quiet contemplation and creativity.

This has been a banner year for the stonecut studio. Under the creative direction of Studio Manager, Bill Ritchie, printmakers Qiatsuq Niviaqsi, Qavavau Manumie and Cee Pootoogook have pushed the limits of the medium, creating some of the most spectacular images in the collection. Papiara's *Blue Sharks* (2011 - 26) and Ningeokuluk's *Moon Dance* (2011 - 21) combine a dark paper background with metallic inks to create a luminous atmosphere. Kenojuak's *Six-Part Harmony* (2011-16) may be the most ambitious print ever undertaken in stonecut, given its complexity, size and the decision to use eight colours! It is truly monumental and a fitting tribute to Canada's preeminent Inuit artist.

Kananginak's passing marks the end of an era, but he would be the first to rise to the challenges that the new era presents. We say farewell to him in the firm belief that the legacy continues and the contributions made by him and his peers will inspire another generation of Inuit artists to create their own vision of this unique place and time.