



AULAJIYAKKA (*Things I Remember*)

Kananginak Pootoogook

This suite of linocuts were done by Kananginak in the late 1970's as part of a typography project introduced to the artists of Cape Dorset by the Kinngait Studios. The shining example of that project and time is "The Inuit World", a limited edition, hand-bound book about Inuit culture, printed and set by hand in Cape Dorset and published by Kinngait Press. Kananginak also created the linocut that formed the illustrative template for "The Inuit World".

These images were done at the same time, but given the ultimate demise of the typography project, they never made it into book form. Wrapped and carefully put away, they became part of the studio archive. Unwrapped in 2010, we decided to edition them. Beautifully cut by Kananginak and expertly printed by the stonecut printers, their purity and subtlety perfectly captures Kananginak at his most masterful. He was able to sign two of the editions before his death in December, 2010, and the rest were signed posthumously by his son, Johnny.

Several images in this folio represent aspects of Kananginak's personal history. Not long before his death, he provided brief explanatory captions. This is what he had to say about his early memories and, in particular, his relationship with his father, Pootoogook.

1. "We were sliding using a qamutik that did not belong to my father and when the top strip broke, my father gave me heck. I felt so bad I was crying."

6. "When I became a teenager, I went trapping with my father. He was teaching me how to trap and how to set up overnight camps."

10. "I was taught how to build an igloo by a person other than my father. I was trying to build a small igloo when a man approached me and taught me how to build an igloo."

15. "The people used to celebrate the arrival of the Nascopie as they were happy that they were going to drink tea when they got to the ship. Then in 1947, the ship got grounded and lots of Inuit people got food from the ship - stock that was meant for the store."

16. "When my father was building a qamutik I would help out and learn how to make them in the process."



THE LEGEND OF THE BLIND BOY AND THE LOON

Kananginak has also illustrated several scenes depicting the Legend of the Blind Boy and the Loon. Also known as the Legend of Lumack and Lumaajuuq, this is one of the most important and well known Inuit legends. Passed down through generations of oral history, Kananginak and his generation are likely the last to have heard it from their parents and grandparents.

The story involves a blind boy, his sister and an evil step mother. The blind boy was a good hunter and provided much of the family's food. One day a bear attacked their igloo and the blind boy was able to kill it. The greedy mother, however, wanting all of the food for herself, told the boy that he had killed the dog instead and banished him to another igloo, leaving him to starve. His sister takes pity on him and feeds him secretly.

As the blind boy is walking by the lake, he is approached by a loon who asks about his strange eyes. The boy explains that he is blind, and then tells the loon his whole sad story. The loon, seeing far and wide, promises to give him back his sight if he will trust him. Many loons come and carry the boy underwater, where the clear water refreshes his eyes and he finds that he can see like a loon.

When his mother again instructs him to find food, the boy, pretending he is still blind, travels with her and his sister to the sea. Spying many white whales, the boy ties a rope around his

mother's waist, asking her to help brace as he harpoons the closest and smallest whale. The boy aims his harpoon at the largest and farthest whale instead, and his step mother is dragged out to sea. She is transformed into the first narwhale and as she is going under she cries, "lumack, lumack, lumack". It is said that her cries can still be heard.

The following images in this suite deal with aspects of this legend.

This is what Kananginak had to say about them.

3. "There is a legend regarding a blind boy. His mother asked him to harpoon a small whale, as the boy had tied a rope around her waist."
4. "When the bear died, the mother butchered it making sure her son wasn't aware. She told her daughter not to tell her brother."
5. "They were the only ones at the camp when a bear approached so the mother asked the blind boy to shoot at the bear through the air hole."
11. "The son harpooned the large whale and he was using his mother as a float. The whale started dragging her down and every time she came up for air she cried "lu, lu!". Therefore she was named Lumaajuuq."