

Nuvisi: Threading Our Beads at Qatiktalik

Curated by Krista Ulujuk Zawadski

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Part 1: Introduction



In this exhibition, I take a close look at Qatiktalik. Located on the northwest shore of Tasiujarjuaq (Hudson Bay), this region was and continues to be a vital hunting and traveling area for Inuit, as demonstrated in oral history and by the abundant tent rings and other features visible on the land today.

Many Inuit—including those living in communities on the western shore of Tasiujarjuaq, Southampton Island and Foxe Basin—draw connections to this place and stories about it are shared among Inuit today.

Qatiktalik's footprint extends far beyond Inuit Nunaat (Inuit homelands). It is a place shaped by many intertwining encounters between Inuit and outsiders. It was an overwintering site for American whalers at the turn of the twentieth century, and the location of a short-lived trading post and a Royal North West Mounted Police garrison.

I have special interest in Qatiktalik. I was raised in the closest contemporary community, Igluligaarjuk. The area around Qatiktalik is my home; it is where my grandparents established a traditional family camp and where I have spent extended periods of time throughout my life. Today, Qatiktalik is the focus of my PhD research at Carleton University.

My family continues to spend time at Qatiktalik and I bring my children there, so they can participate in traditional activities and experience many of the things I did while growing up. The importance of this is aptly stated by Jarita Greyeyes, Heather Igloliorte, Jaimie Isaac and Julie Nagam, who wrote in a recent article that, “land cannot be separated from all the gifts that nourish the peoples that live in relationship with it. To

acknowledge territory is also to acknowledge all the gifts of language, culture and ways of living.”¹

Nuvisi means “to thread something, to thread the needle with thread.” In this exhibition, I thread people, places and histories to one another, at Qatiktalik. Through photographs, cultural belongings, texts, artworks and stories, I explore how Inuit, including my family, engage with the place and the cultural material that comes from there. *Nuvisi* demonstrates the connections Inuit make with Qatiktalik, and how engaging with our living history is a powerful experience.

Krista Ulujuk Zawadski

1. “Indigenous Collaborations Through the Gallery as a Site for Self-Determination and Social Change,” in *Becoming Our Future: Global Indigenous Curatorial Practice* (Winnipeg 2020), 131.

Note to the reader

Nivisannaq is a name that is familiar in the Kivalliq region, where Qatiktalik is located. Many Inuit today trace their ancestry to her.

The name Nivisannaq, however, is a nickname given to her as a child. As Bernadette Miqquusaaq Dean pointed out on a tour of *Nuvisi: Threading Our Beads at Qatiktalik*, Nivisannaq's real name is Siusaarnaaq.

We are using the name Siusaarnaaq throughout this publication, except in a few cases to preserve the accuracy of historic interviews where Nivisannaq's name was mentioned.



Nuvisi: Threading Our Beads at Qatitkaiik

Curated by Krista Ulujuuk Zawadzki

In the heart of the Arctic region in the Northwest Territories, the Inuit community of Qatitkaiik is a vibrant and resilient one. It is a place where traditional Inuit culture and modern life coexist harmoniously. The community is known for its rich history of beadwork, a craft that has been passed down through generations. This exhibition, "Nuvisi: Threading Our Beads at Qatitkaiik," explores the art and significance of beadwork in Inuit culture. It features a collection of traditional Inuit beadwork, including jewelry, clothing, and home decor. The exhibition also includes a video that tells the story of the community and its people. Through this exhibition, we hope to provide a deeper understanding of the Inuit people and their culture. We invite you to join us in celebrating the art and heritage of Qatitkaiik.

Qatiktalik from the sky (2021)
Captured by Sukuluk Zawadski

This drone footage was captured at Qatiktalik in the summer of 2021 by my son, Sukuluk, who was then 14. The land is inaccessible to many Elders for several reasons, including mobility issues due to age. I felt it important to make the land and landscape accessible digitally for Elders who used to live in this area, specifically as a means for them to engage with the landscape through moving, as opposed to still, images.

Further, it is important for people to look beyond the archival, black-and-white photographs that are often shown to represent Qatiktalik (like the historical images presented in this exhibition) and see it as a vital, living place where Inuit families spend time and explore.







Map of northwest Tasiujarjuaq (Hudson Bay) (2021)

Created by Ezra Greene

Qatiktalik is located on the northwest shore of Tasiujarjuaq (Hudson Bay), about 120 km northeast of the nearest Inuit community, Igluligaarjuk. Surrounded by small islands, the area is primarily Shield bedrock and gneiss. With small coves and inlets, it offers a haven from weather and ocean waves, making it an ideal spot to make a pit stop for tea on your travels.

I am most familiar with Inuktitut place names, having grown up in this area navigating the land and hearing stories about the places in Inuktitut. This poses challenges in my research when I read non-Inuktitut literature about the place I call home, often forcing me to use two maps at the same time to situate Inuit stories and non-Inuit stories. The landscape is littered with Inuktitut place names, as shown in this map, and countless personal stories from the people who travel through here.



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Qatiktalik

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Igluligaarjuk
Chesterfield Inlet



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John Kaunak (b.1941)

Whaling Boat (1967)

Stone, string, antler, shoe polish

Collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery

Twomey Collection, with appreciation to the
Province of Manitoba and Government of Canada,

3045.71

Photograph by Ernest Mayer courtesy of the
WAG-Qaumajuq



Amauti (2016)

Cotton

Created by Kuutsiq Zawadski

Collection of Krista Ulujuk Zawadski

This amauti, the garment we use to carry our babies on our backs, was made for me by my ukuaq (sister-in-law) Kuutsiq Zawadski, when my daughter was 10 months old. To me, this particular amauti epitomizes the creativity of Inuit seamstresses, showing the adaptability of their pattern-making to make sure the piece fits the wearer and the baby well.

The way Inuit women sew clothing changed with the introduction of the sewing machine: applique-style sewing gradually replaced the technique of sewing designs into cut pieces of caribou or seal skin. Inuit women adapted their sewing methods with the introduction of new technology; this style of amauti came after the introduction of the sewing machine.

Kuutsiq is an outstanding seamstress. This amauti is a demonstration of the legacies of knowledge sharing among Inuit women on how to sew garments made from fabric, grounded in the first sewing machine brought on a whaling ship to our region and gifted to Siusaarnaaq in 1907.

Kuutsiq's choice of colours points to her unique style, designing something for the wearer based on what she feels would best suit the person. In this instance, she felt the bright colours of the trim highlighted the quirkiness of me and my daughter, who wear the amauti together. The choice of black is bold, as many older Inuit feel white is the more traditional choice, but Kuutsiq knew my favourite colour is black.



Mia Mitiarjuk Greene at Qatiktalik (2020)
Photographs by Krista Ulujuk Zawadski



Among many Inuit communities, the act of giving back to the land is an important protocol we must follow in order to display respect to the land; a cultural value that I have also integrated into my own research protocols by giving back to the community.

Further, we believe we must never remove belongings (such as grave goods or artifacts) that we find on the land, lest we anger Sila or Nuliajuk, powerful deities in our culture.

By leaving behind needles, Mia is giving back to the land we have visited many times, the place that has given us knowledge and gifts, including century-old beads dropped or left behind by our ancestors. Here, Mia has some fun placing the old beads on the needle before leaving them behind on the land.

Part 2: Whaling histories





Isuma (Norman Cohn and Zacharias Kunuk)
Arvik! (Bowhead!) 1998
From the *Unikaatuatiit (Story Tellers) Series*
Video, 52:00 min
Carleton University Art Gallery: Purchase, 2007

Arviit (bowhead whales) were almost depleted by commercial whalers in Tasiujarjuaq (Hudson Bay), where Qatiktalik is located, between 1860 and 1915. For a period of more than forty years, the Canadian government did not allow Inuit in Nunavut to hunt arviit due to their near extinction by non-Inuit.

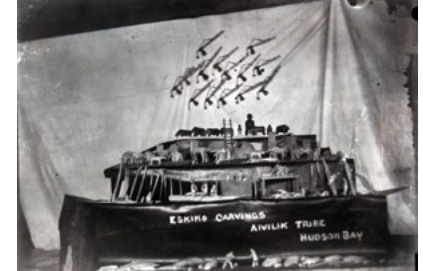
Through the reintroduction of arviq hunting in the 1990s, Inuit knowledge has been revitalized and an era of repatriation has begun. In the summer of 2021, the community of Salliq caught one whale, and Qamani'tuaq embarked on their own arviq hunt—a first for that community. Both communities were successful in their hunts, providing maktak to hundreds of households.

This film shows the first arviq hunt that Inuit were allowed to embark on, in 1996, after the government's ban on arviq hunting ended. It shows the impact that non-Inuit whalers, like the ones that once over-wintered at Qatiktalik, had on Inuit lives, stories, knowledge and society. Inuit have had to work hard to revitalize and wake up the knowledge about arviit that has been dormant for decades.

We are showing an excerpt of the film, which introduces arviit and the historic whaling era.







During the whaling era (the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries), families of the Inuit crew members who worked for the qablunaaq whalers would often converge at Qatiktalik and stay with the ship and its crew through the winter.

Inuit families offered several crucial services to qablunaaq crews, including sewing winter clothing and providing fresh meat and fish through hunting. They were an important factor in the crews' success and survival.

The impact of foreign whalers' presence in Inuit Nunaat is still felt among some Inuit families today. The whaling era saw the emergence of an early market for carvings made by Inuit, sold to and traded with the whalers, and the flourishing of sewing and beading practices that are practiced today.



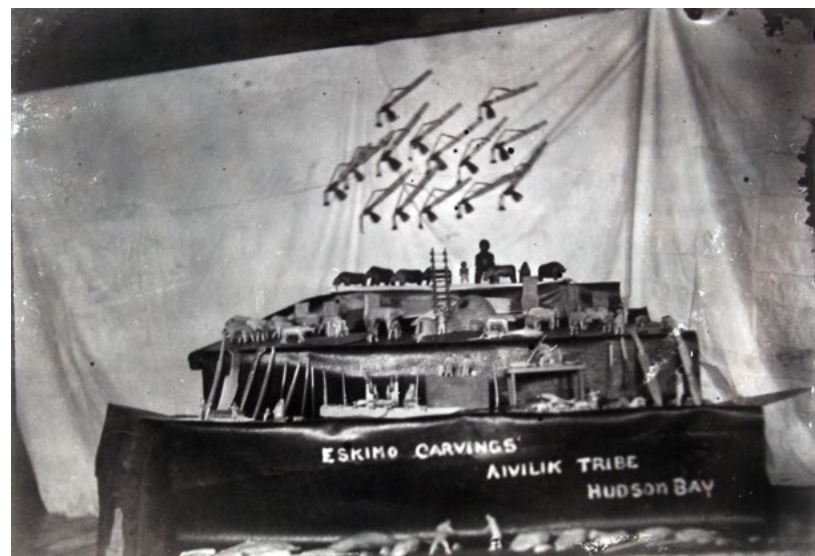
Taken around 1905, from left to right are Malaiya, her young son (Tom Luce), Audladnaaq (Ben Ell), John Ell and Siusaarnaq
Photograph by George Comer (1858-1937), contemporary print, © Mystic Seaport Museum, 1963.1767.216



Laurent Pameolik, aged 4 years old, looking through marine glasses on board the whaling schooner Era (c. 1897-1905)
Photograph by George Comer (1858-1937), contemporary print, © Mystic Seaport Museum, 1963.1767.118



Qairnirmiut Inuit from west of Tasiujarjuaq (Hudson Bay), taken c. 1897-1912, spending time at Qatiktalik in the summer while whalers are based there
Photograph by George Comer (1858-1937), contemporary print, © Mystic Seaport Museum, 1963.1767.70



Inuit carvings, called miniatures, are an example of early art made by Inuit at Qatiktalik for trade and sale with qablunaaq whalers. On display on the whaling schooners the Era or the A.T. Gifford (c. 1897-1912)
Photograph by George Comer (1858-1937), contemporary print, © Mystic Seaport Museum, 1963.1767.226

These carvings of hunters and animals are early examples of Inuit carvers documenting their ways of life for non-Inuit. In the Qatiktalik area, they were produced as souvenirs for trade with whalers and government officials who were in the Arctic in the early 1900s.

Today, these early carvings are invaluable sources of imagery of Inuit ways of life. Many are found in the collections of large museums, including the Canadian Museum of History (Gatineau), the American Museum of Natural History (New York) and the Pitt Rivers Museum (Oxford, UK).



Maker's name not recorded
Standing Hunter with Rifle (1903–04)
Ivory, black colouring
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-B-781 / Canadian Museum of History, IV-B-781



Maker's name not recorded
Standing Hunter with Harpoon (1903–04)
Ivory, black colouring
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-B-782 / Canadian Museum of History, IV-B-782



Maker's name not recorded
Nannok Krittangareit – Bear with Cub on the Back (1916)
Grey stone
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-C-1720 / Canadian Museum of History, IV-C-1720



Maker's name not recorded
Terringaniak – Fox (Plaything) (1916)
Ivory, black colouring
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-C-1419 / Canadian Museum of History, IV-C-1419



Maker's name not recorded
Caribou (1903–04)
Ivory, musk-ox horn, black colouring
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-B-799 / Canadian Museum of History, IV-B-799

Maker's name not recorded
Model Sled with Three Dogs (c. 1936)
Ivory, sealskin, black colouring
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-C-5576 /
Canadian Museum of History, IV-C-5576





Ippaktuq Tasiuq (Harry Teseuke) was a leader among Inuit around Qatiktalik. He worked closely with Captain George Comer and his whaling crew, who called him Harry. Tasiuq provided whaling and leadership services, as well as sharing Inuit knowledge that helped the qablunaaq crews live and hunt in the area.

Tasiuq also made carvings, which he traded with and sold to qablunaaq whalers, including Comer. He carved the polar bear, fish and musk ox sculptures in this exhibition.

The three carvings by Ippaktuq Tasiuq featured in *Nuvisi* show his engagement with the larger global economy.

Tasiuq's carvings of local wildlife, made for trade with whalers and government officials who traveled to Qatiktalik, are early examples of Inuit art made for the emerging cash economy and demonstrate entanglements with the non-Inuit world.



An Inuk working with a bow drill in front of a tent at Qatiktalik, c. 1897-1912
Photograph by George Comer (1858-1937), contemporary print, © Mystic Seaport Museum, 1964.1767.213



Ippaktuq Tasiuq (Harry Tesuke) using a bow drill to carve inside an iglu. Beside him is his wife Aatitaaq Tulugaq (Patty), who is sewing, c. 1897-1905
Photograph by George Comer (1858-1937), contemporary print, © Mystic Seaport Museum, 1966.339.40



Ippaktuq Tasiuq (Harry Teseuke) at centre, with a group of Inuit men tightening a drum inside the deckhouse of the whaling schooner Era, c. 1897-1905
Photograph by George Comer (1858-1937), contemporary print, © Mystic Seaport Museum, 1964.1767.96



Ippaktuq Tasiuq (Harry Teseuke) with an unaaq (harpoon), taken in April 1905.
Photograph by Geraldine Moodie (1854-1945), contemporary print, courtesy Glenbow Archives, PA-4033-80
Geraldine Moodie's caption: *Portrait of Inuit man, Shenuckshoo, Ivalik chief and whaler, Fullerton Harbour, Nunavut. April 1905*



Maker's name not recorded
Musk Ox (1903–04)
Stone, musk-ox horn
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-X-537 / Canadian Museum of History, IV-X-537



Ippaktuq Tasiuq (Harry Teseuke)
Polar Bear (1903–04)
Ivory, black colouring
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-X-551 / Canadian Museum of History, IV-X-551



Ippaktuq Tasiuq (Harry Teseuke)
Fish (1907–09)
Ivory, black colouring
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-C-56 / Canadian Museum of History, IV-C-56



Ippaktuq Tasiuq (Harry Teseuke)
Musk Ox (1907–09)
Ivory, musk-ox horn, black colouring
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-C-51 / Canadian Museum of History, IV-C-51



John Kavik (1897-1993)
People and muskoxen (1979)
pencil crayon on paper
Carleton University Art Gallery: Gift of Drew and Carolle Anne Armour, 2009
Photograph by David Barbour



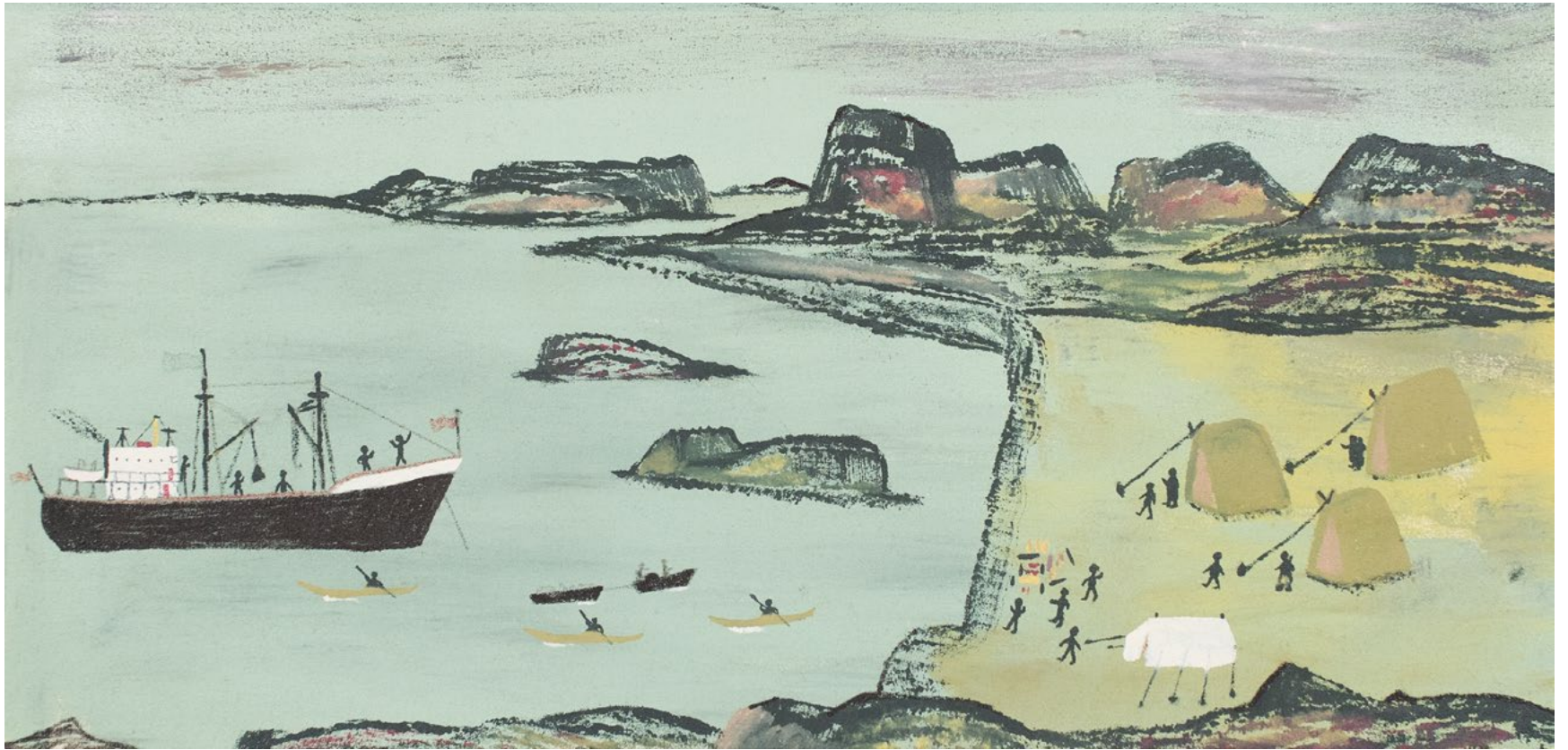
John Kavik (1897-1993)
Untitled (fish) (1979)
pencil crayon on paper
Carleton University Art Gallery: Gift of Drew and Carolle Anne Armour, 2009
Photograph by David Barbour

John Kavik and John Tiktak (who carved the sculpture *Figure with a Child on its Back*, featured in this exhibition) were Rankin Inlet artists, from the generation that really took to producing art for the Southern market. Typical of Inuit art from this period, their works depict the ways of life they had prior to settling in Rankin Inlet, exemplifying the connections people held, and still hold, to traditional land-based life.

People and muskoxen is an interesting drawing because umingmak (muskoxen) had almost been depleted during the whaling era, due to over harvesting by Inuit working for whalers. During the whaling era, Inuit mostly harvested umingmak for their fur, to trade with whalers; in 1904 there was a declaration by the Canadian government to make harvesting umingmak illegal. This had impact on Inuit beyond trading; in my own lifetime we did not harvest umingmak for subsistence, and only in the last decade has it become a common practice.



Maker's name not recorded
Model Boat with Four Paddles (c. 1936)
Ivory, cotton
Musée canadien de l'histoire, IV-C-5584 /
Canadian Museum of History, IV-C-5584



Pierre Nauya (1914-1977)
Summer Shipping (c. 1960-69)
oil on canvas
Collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery
Gift of Mrs. Jack Hildes in memory of her late husband, Dr. Jack Hildes, G-85-563
Photograph by Serge Gumenyuk courtesy of the WAG-Qaumajuq

Nauya's painting depicts a common scene in Rankin Inlet, near Qatiktalik, as well as other communities in Nunavut. There are no highways in or out of Nunavut, making the cargo ship's arrival a crucial annual occurrence in the summertime. Kaunak's boat is an example of a whaling vessel once used by Inuit and non-Inuit to hunt whales and walrus.

Created in the 1960s in the Kivalliq region, where Qatiktalik is located, Nauya's painting and John Kaunak's *Whaling Boat* carving (featured in the opening section of this exhibition) comment on the continued whaling and walrus hunting practices for Inuit subsistence, beyond the whaling era. Although arviit were no longer harvested by Inuit in the mid-twentieth century, ocean-going and the hunting of ocean mammals are important aspects of Inuit ways of life and subsistence today.



John Tiktak (1916-1981)

Figure with a Child on its Back (c. 1965)

Stone

Carleton University Art Gallery: Gift of Helen Webster, 2002

Photograph by Dieter Hessel

Part 3:
Sewing and beading legacies





Text panel on the left wall, partially obscured by the photograph.

I was very young and I was at a place called Qatitalk where there were some RCMP houses. A very big ship called there.

In return for work, [fruit] women were given some material to make themselves dresses. When... [some of us girls] saw this we became very envious and cried, thinking that we weren't going to get any dresses.

The [women] noticed this and told us we could come over to select some material, and they made dresses for us. We were scared to go but we chose some material anyways and they quickly made dresses for us. We put them on and they were our first dresses."

Leah Arnauld, in Recollections of Inuit Elders in the Days of the Whalers and Other Stories (Inuit Cultural Institute 1986), 33



Text panel on the right wall, partially obscured by the blue panel.

Trade articles brought to Qatitalk on the French Albat, 1801
 10 porcelain bowls (1/20, white)
 8 assorted rib glasses
 4 glass sets
 1 outfit for socks

Trade goods brought to Qatitalk on the Eve, 1803-05
 Domestic A-Dolls
 24 match boxes
 12 sets quillpens
 25 porcelain beads
 75 yards fabric
 8,000 needles
 5,000 gloves & needles
 74 accessories

Stores brought to Qatitalk on the A.T. Gifford, 1807
 Artifacts for Domestic Use
 1,007 yards calico
 175 yards osenite
 85 yards black
 103 yards brocade
 800 yards drilling
 476 Dutchman beads (black, chalk, lapis, coral, amber, green, lavender, pink)
 1,000 bead (swallows no. 12)
 2 boxes thread
 1 set tortoise
 900 spools thread
 340 spools cotton thread
 268 tin snips
 75,000 needles
 1 sewing machine (French)
 105 needles
 72 mirrors, Scotch
 72 scissors, 7-inch
 24 magnifying glasses
 88 pens
 94 combs

Source: M. Gifford, "History and Description of the A.T. Gifford," 1807, pp. 10-11.

Text panel on the right wall, partially obscured by the blue panel.

The lists of trade goods presented here are excerpted from the logs of ships who journeyed to Qatiktalik, selected to highlight the sewing and beading goods qablunaaq brought for trade with Inuit or as gifts to share. These lists show the introduction of many commodities into Inuit lives that made significant impacts and created longstanding legacies.

For example, the introduction of metal needles replaced miqqutiit (bird-bone needles) and more traditional kakpiit (needle cases) made from bone or ivory, created a gap in our Inuit knowledge today about the way to create bird-bone needles. The introduction of cotton fabric wove its way into Inuit life, paving the way for new styles of clothing introduced to and manufactured by Inuit, such as skirts and the modern-style amauti, which replaced the more traditional tuili-style garment. Both garments, however, are central to Inuit identity today, as we use them to carry our children on our backs.

By the early 1900s, Qatiktalik had become a favoured over-wintering area for qablunaaq whalers. Whaling ships were allowed to freeze into the ice for the winter, giving the whalers more time in the spring to hunt whales and exposing Inuit to qablunaaq for extended periods of time. This made the area a hotspot for trading, where Inuit women could acquire highly-sought-after items like beads.

Trade articles brought to Qatiktalik on the Francis Allyn, 1901

10 pounds beads (3/0, white)
6 assorted spy glasses
6 dozen awls
1 duffel for socks

Trade goods brought to Qatiktalik on the Era, 1903-05

Domestic Articles

24 match boxes
12 sets dominoes
25 pounds beads
731 yards calico
6,000 needles
5,000 glover's needles
74 scissors

Stores brought to Qatiktalik on the A.T. Gifford, 1907

Articles for Domestic Use

1,017 yards calico
117 yards denim
45 yards duck
117 yards ticking
800 yards drilling
475 bunches beads (black, chalk, lapis, coral, lemon, green, lavender, pink)
1,000 bead needles no. 12
2 boxes braid
1,152 buttons
192 spools thread
240 spools cotton thread
288 thimbles
15,000 needles
1 sewing machine (hand)

185 needles
72 scissors, 5-inch
72 scissors, 7-inch
24 magnifying glasses
48 mirrors
96 combs

Source: W. Gillies Ross, *Whaling and E*****s – Hudson Bay 1860-1915* (1975), pp. 140-42.



Singer sewing machine and case (c. 1930-35)

Metal and wood

Musée canadien de l'histoire, D-14819 a-d / Canadian Museum of History,

D-14819 a-d

Similar to the sewing machine on display here, the sewing machine that Captain Comer brought to Qatiktalik in 1907 for Siusaarnaaq was possibly the first one brought to the central Arctic. The impact the sewing machine has had on Inuit sewing practices has been monumental, influencing, for example, the ways Inuit engage with sewing patterns.

Older styles of clothing, specifically clothing made from caribou and seal skins that have particular shapes or curves sewn into them, have been replaced by cotton clothing carrying aesthetic elements that mimic earlier shapes or curves but are sewn differently. For example, different colours of caribou skin would have been used to trim a parka or amauti, sewn between cut pieces of caribou skin, whereas with cotton clothing the different colours of trim are appliqued into place on top of the fabric.

The rise of Inuit contemporary fashion design can trace its roots to the introduction of the sewing machine in the early 1900s, and to the adaptability and creativity of Inuit.

John James Needles (2020)
Size 5 Sharps Needles x 1000
Size 6 Sharps Needles x 1000
Size 12 Short Beading Needles x 1000
Collection of Krista Ulujuk Zawadski

When I first read the lists of trade goods brought by whalers to Qatiktalik, I saw the number of needles they brought. I was instantly curious to know what 1,000 or even 15,000 needles looked like, as I envisioned them taking up a large space in a ship's hold. To feed my curiosity, I ordered 3,000 needles from the UK, and expected a large, heavy package to arrive. Instead, I received three small packages of neatly packed needles.

Selection of cotton fabrics (2021)

Purchased at Fabricland in Ottawa

We don't know how whalers chose the fabrics they brought to Qatiktalik as trade goods. Were they purchased locally, in the towns where whaling ships were based, such as Mystic, Connecticut? Were they imported to Mystic specifically for the whaler, such as from Boston or London? Did they request "feminine-" or "masculine-" patterned fabrics, according to their interpretations of what is "feminine" and what is "masculine"?

Eugenie Tautoonie Kabluitok, a late Elder from Rankin Inlet, recalled the value placed on cotton (and cotton clothing) when it was first introduced to Inuit society:

That new (cloth) became really useful. People would keep the same dress from cotton material for about two summers, sometimes more, washing it carefully and making sure there were no tears and trying to keep it as pretty as possible. Then once winter came we'd store them away where nobody would touch them. Only in summer would we wear the cotton skirts again.

Eugenie Tautoonie Kabluitok, quoted in Dorothy Eber, *When the Whalers Were Up North: Inuit Memories from the Eastern Arctic* (1989), p. 122.



I was very young and I was at a place called Qatiktalik where there were some RCMP houses. A very big ship called there.

In return for work..[Inuit] women were given some material to make themselves dresses. When...[some of us girls] saw this we became very envious and cried, thinking that we weren't going to get any dresses.

The...[women] noticed this and told us we could come over to select some material, and they made dresses for us. We were scared to go but we chose some material anyways and they quickly made dresses for us. We put them on and they were our first dresses.

Leah Arnaujaq, in *Recollections of Inuit Elders in the Days of the Whalers and Other Stories* (Inuit Cultural Institute, 1986), 13.



Siusarnaq using a sewing machine, possibly the first sewing machine used and owned by Inuit in the Central Arctic. Taken on whaling schooner A.T. Gifford, c. 1907-1912

Photograph by George Comer (1858-1937), contemporary print, © Mystic Seaport Museum, 1966.339.42

Siusaarnaaq was a close companion of the American whaler, Captain George Comer, who frequently wintered at Qatiktalik. In the photograph above you see Siusaarnaaq sewing on a machine that was gifted to her by Comer, who brought it to Qatiktalik on the whaling schooner *A. T. Gifford*. The sewing machine, fabrics and supplies including needles, thimbles and thread are listed as trade goods on the ships' logs displayed nearby (page 42). A sewing machine was likely used to sew the atigi (top) that Tasiuq Maliki is wearing in the photograph below.

All the people knew that Nivisinnaaq [Siusaarnaaq] was the first to use a sewing machine in the North. She was really good and could sew really well. She started sewing cloth material for friends and relatives—that's when we started using cloth for clothes. I've heard she used to make dresses out of cotton. She used to make them on a ship. The captain must have taught her how to make a pattern for dresses, and she started making dresses and skirts. Maybe they had cloth material in other areas, but people remember that it was Nivisinnaaq [Siusaarnaaq] who started the new clothing (style) up here.

Eugenie Tautoonie Kabluitok, quoted in Dorothy Eber, *When the Whalers Were Up North: Inuit Memories from the Eastern Arctic* (1989), p. 121



Tasiuq Maliki on board the whaling schooner Era, c. 1904. Maliki is wearing a cotton atigi, or top

Photograph by George Comer (1858–1937), contemporary print,
© Mystic Seaport Museum, 1963.1767.41

The wearing of clothes made of cotton fabric introduced by whalers into Inuit society quickly became a sign of social status. As Paul Kaludjak explains, cotton clothing was more than a fashion statement:

For some, wearing (cotton) clothing also became an outward expression of status and prestige. Because of foreign whalers' influence, Qainirmiut and Aivilingmiut men adopted a checked cloth shirt that became a badge of office or honour for the head whale harpooner.

From Judy Hall, Jill Oakes and Sally Qimmiu'naaq Webster,
Sanatujut: Pride in Women's Work: Copper and Caribou Inuit Clothing Traditions (1994), p. 89.

The presentation of contemporary sewn and beaded works with photographs of older clothing reinforces the message that Inuit today are part of the larger (and longer) living culture of Inuit. We have ongoing cultural traditions that play a part in our history and in the history of Qatiktalik today.



Japak (2021)

Created by Augatnaaq Eccles

Cotton fabric, Hollofil lining, fox fur, cotton thread, metal zipper

Augatnaaq Eccles is an undergraduate history student at Carleton University. Her design demonstrates a genealogy of Inuit sewing legacies from her ancestors, such well-known artists and seamstresses as her grandmother, Akpaliapik Rhoda Karetak, and her aunt, Charlotte St. John. Augatnaaq is coming into her own through the mentorship of Martha Kyak, fashion designer of Inukchic. It was important to showcase Augatnaaq's work in *Nuvisi* because it embodies the carrying forward of Inuit familial artistic traditions. Augatnaaq says:

.... the colour choice for the piece was inspired by my Anaanatsiaq (grandmother), who is a very talented artist and seamstress. She would often use those colours in the outfits she would sew for my aunts and mom, which were later passed down and used by her grandchildren. I knew when I was planning the initial design for the piece, I wanted to incorporate something that revealed her through my work. The bottom shape and fringe is inspired by traditional Inuit women's clothing. I decided to add the belt made from the same material and siniksaq (trim) as I wanted it to show a bit of my own personal sewing style in the parka, as well as a bit of a modern touch.





Necklace (2021)

Created by Miranda Qanatsiaq

Seed beads, nylon thread, metal clasp

Inspired by the elaborate beadwork in Kalaallit (Greenlandic) national dress, the beaded necklace has become a popular fashion staple among many Inuit today. Miranda Qanatsiaq is a young student in Ottawa. Taking her cue from the beaded fringe work on *tulliit* (women's parkas), where horizontal blocks of colour alternate between light and dark beads, as seen in the archival photographs featured in this exhibition, Qanatsiaq aptly highlights beading legacies from the whaling era that are vibrant today.



Sealskin atigi (2016)

Created by Brenda Putulik

Cotton fabric, sealskin, bias tape, cotton thread

When I finished my master's degree in 2016, I wanted to wear something to convocation that was special to me. I opted for an atigi, a popular garment worn by Inuit. It was important to me to have sealskin on it, but since I had never sewn sealskin in that way (with a sewing machine), I was not sure how to produce the garment.

My aunt, Brenda Putulik, graciously agreed to work with me on this project. Brenda is a phenomenal seamstress and I was grateful for her guidance. She walked me through the making of the garment and ended up making it for me as a graduation gift. Through the sewing experience with my aunt, it became an even more special garment for me than I had originally anticipated.

Brenda has both directly and indirectly influenced the design and thinking behind this exhibition. Her presence echoes throughout the exhibition, including as a descendant of Leah Arnaujaq (see her quotation on page 47) and Noah Piugattuq (who appears in the clip of Isuma's film *Arviq!* in the exhibition), and as an instructor in the sewing and beading workshops I organized and facilitated this past summer. Brenda's influence continues to reverberate throughout my research journey.





Atigi (2021)

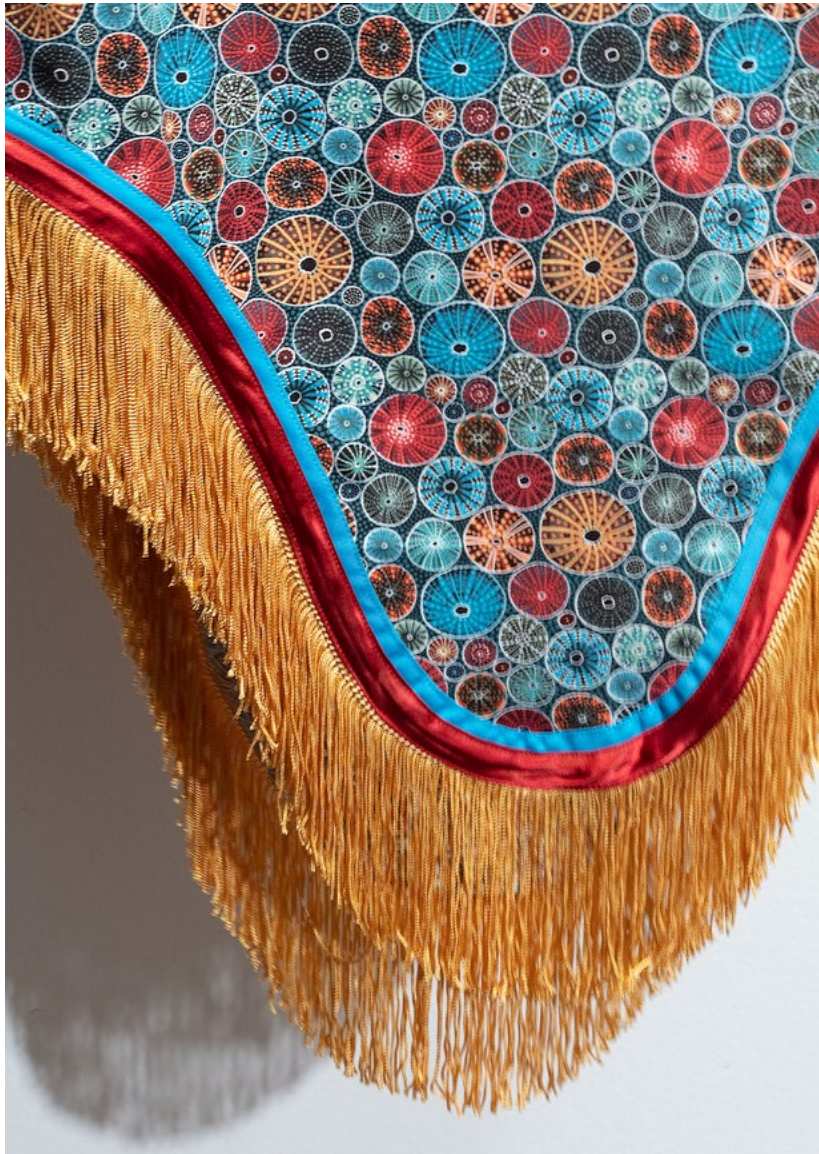
Created by Emily Joanasie

Cotton fabric, bias tape, cotton thread

The garment, called atigi, is a common top worn by both men and women in Inuit Nunaat, the Inuit homelands. It is favoured among Inuit at social functions, such as weddings and community events, and is a nod to the history of sewing with fabric first introduced to Inuit with the introduction of imported cotton fabric.

The colour scheme and the quality of the garment reflects the skills of its maker, Emily Joanasie, owner of Miqsuqta. Her fabric store, located in Iqaluit, is an important supplier of fabrics that are in high demand throughout the year in the Arctic.





Part 4: Connecting the past and present





These photographs show Inuit women who lived at Qatiktalik during the whaling era at the turn of the twentieth century. Their incredible sewing and beading skills are preserved through photographs taken by whalers and others, through garments in private and public collections, and through legacies that can be traced to our contemporary sewing and beadwork today.

When looking at the amazing garments these women are wearing, it is important to remember the words of Amy Lonetree: “We are not just looking at interesting pieces. In the presence of objects from the past, we are privileged to stand as witnesses to living entities that remain intimately and inextricably tied to their descendant communities.”

From Amy Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums* (2012), p. xv.



Inuit onboard the whaling schooner Era in 1905. Harry Gibbons is between Nellie Taptaqut on the left and Hattie Niviarsarjuk on the right
Photograph by George Comer (1858-1937), contemporary print, © Mystic Seaport Museum, 1963.1767.11



Veronica Tautu with her beaded tuili, taken c. 1904-05. Tautu is my great-great-grandmother, Igalaag Leonie Sammurtok's mother
Photograph by Geraldine Moodie (1854-1945), contemporary print, courtesy Glenbow Archives, NC-81-56
Geraldine Moodie's caption: *Portrait of Inuit woman, Towtook, in her beaded attigi, Fullerton Harbour, Nunavut. 1904-1905*



Aivilik Inuit women in beaded tuiliit. Siusaarnaaq is seated in the front row on the left, with Tautu behind her and Kukilasak on the far left, back row. Photo taken c. 1904-05

Photograph by Geraldine Moodie (1854-1945), contemporary print, courtesy Glenbow Archives, NC-81-41

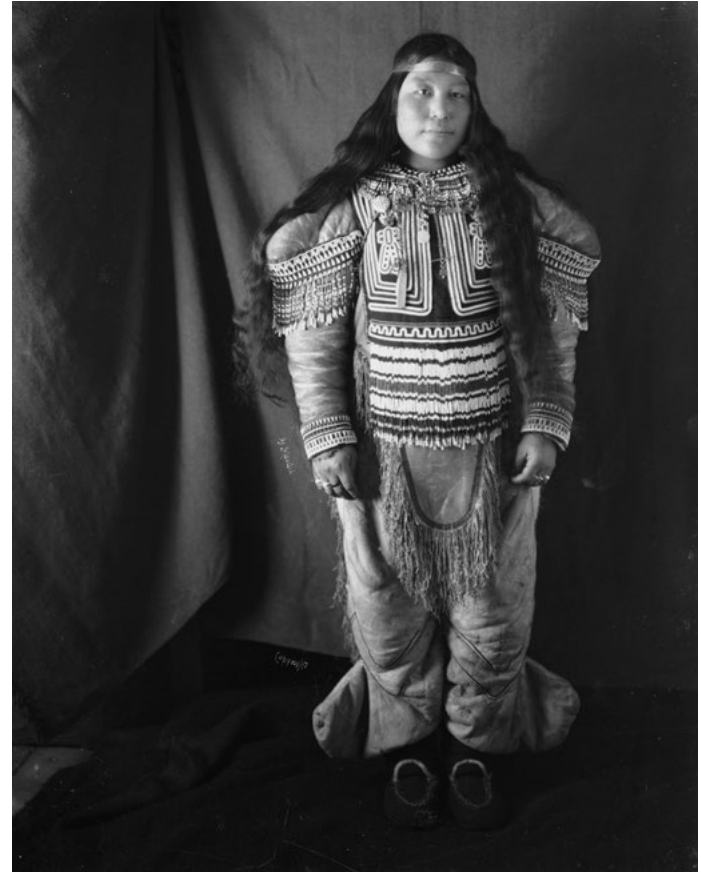
Geraldine Moodie's caption: *Portrait of six Inuit women of the Ivalik tribe, in their decorated attigis, Fullerton Harbour, Nunavut. 1904-1905.*



Hattie Niviarsaarjuk, Siusaarnaq's sister, wearing a beaded tulli and cotton skirt, and with tuglirut in her hair

Photograph by Geraldine Moodie (1854-1945), contemporary print, Courtesy of Glenbow Archives, ND-44-21

Geraldine Moodie's caption: *Portrait of Inuit woman, Ooktook, of the Kinepetoo tribe, Fullerton Harbour, Nunavut. 1904-1905*



In this photograph, Hattie Niviarsaarjuk does not have tuglirut in her hair and is wearing caribou skin pants

Photograph by Geraldine Moodie (1854-1945), contemporary print, Courtesy of Glenbow Archives, ND-44-24

Geraldine Moodie's caption: *Portrait of Inuit woman, Ooktook, of the Kinepetoo tribe, Fullerton Harbour, Nunavut. 1904-1905*



Siusaarnaaq in beaded tuili (1903-04)

Photograph by A.P. Low (1861-1942), Library and Archives Canada, Geological Services of Canada Collection, Item number 3223677

Library and Archives Canada current title: *Aivillik woman*

Nivisanaaq ("Shoofly Comer") in beaded amauti (1903-04)

Library and Archives Canada historic title: *(A.P. Low Expedition, 1903-1904) Aivillik woman Nivisanaaq ("Shoofly Comer") in gala dress*

The name of Nivisanaaq, whose real name is Siusaarnaaq, is familiar in the Kivalliq region, where Qatiktalik is located. Many Inuit today trace their ancestry to her. This photograph depicts Siusaarnaaq in a beaded tuili (woman's parka) she made, a famous garment collected by Comer for the anthropologist Franz Boas and in the American Museum of Natural History's collection.

This photograph is well-known in Inuit communities and has been circulated widely in exhibitions, catalogues, history books and on social media. The photograph's power to captivate the viewer is palpable and is one many Inuit refer to when they talk about ancestors and genealogy.

The story, as told to me by Bernadette Miqqusaaq Dean in 2021, is that Comer had given European-style high-heeled boots to Siusaarnaaq, but they did not fit her. Instead, she beaded them on her tuili so that she could keep them with her in another form.

In 2005, my parents made a trip to the Mystic Seaport Museum in Connecticut to see an exhibition about Qatiktalik. My mother did not expect to see Siusaarnaaq's famous tuili and beadwork at the museum and was happily surprised. It certainly is a privilege to connect with our belongings in museum collections, a valued experience that often stays with us for a long time.

In 2014, my mother, Maggie Putulik, recalled this about her museum visit:

I always wanted to see what Nivisinnaaq's [Siusaarnaaq's] tuili looked like to see the colours of the beads. A Qairnirmiut commented before that different Inuit groups used different bead colours, and being an Aivilingmiut I always wondered what our colours were. Knowing Nivisinnaaq [Siusaarnaaq] was also Aivilingmiut, I wondered what bead colours she used. I've only ever seen her tuili in black-and-white photos.

Rhoda Karetak saw that tuili when they were filming *Inuit Piqutingit* and mentioned the number of beads of each colour and that was good enough for me, to be able to gain that knowledge about it.

While at the Mystic Seaport Museum, I was reading the museum labels and I got caught in that moment: 100 years ago. I thought "whoa, uakalanga!" I beelined to the glass case. When I saw the amauti, uakallangaaluakkanni!! It's as though a hundred years ago suddenly arrived! I didn't know whether to cry or laugh, seeing Nivisannaaq's [Siusaarnaaq's] tuili right in front of my eyes.

A picture is very deceiving. Whenever I looked at that picture of Nivisinnaaq [Siusaarnaaq] I used to think she's tall, she must have been a tall person. When I saw the tuili I realized it was small. It clashed in my mind, I thought she was a tall person but her tuili was extra small.

We asked to take photos since there no photos were allowed in the museum. We told him I was her descendant and he agreed to let us take photos.

Isuma (Norman Cohn, Katarina Soukup, Bernadette Dean, Zacharias Kunuk)

Inuit Piqutingit (What Belongs to Inuit) 2006

Video, 49:00 minutes

Carleton University Art Gallery: Purchase, 2007

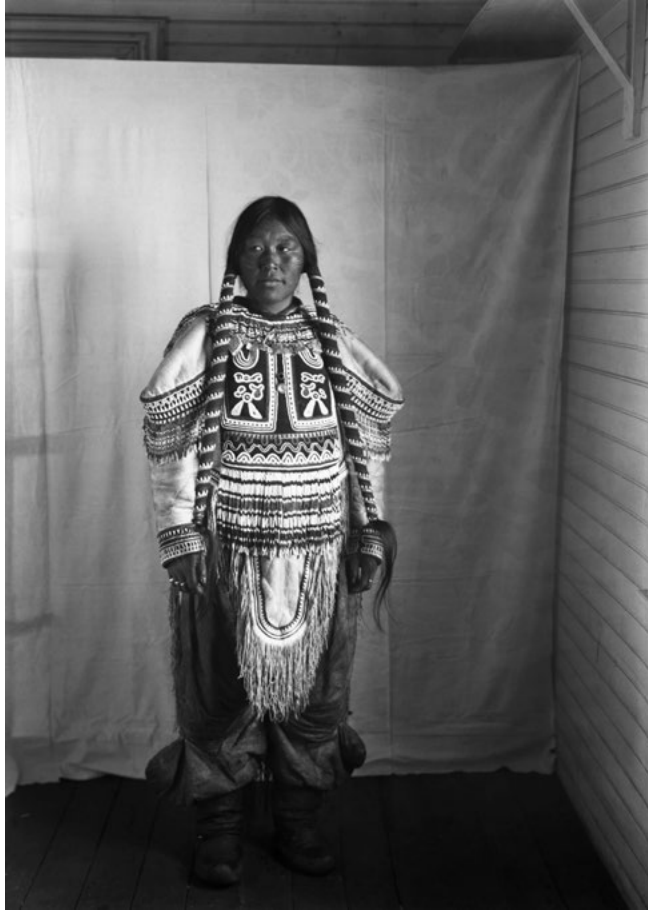
In 2005, a group of Inuit Elders from Nunavut travelled to Toronto, Ottawa, New York, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., to visit museums that hold Inuit belongings in their collections. In the documentary film *Isuma* made about the trip, the Elders speak about the emotional impact the journey had on them.

We are showing an excerpt of the film, in which the Elders visit the American Museum of Natural History in New York, where they see and talk about Siusaarnaaq's famous tuili in the museum's collection storage.

This film highlights the important work for Inuit to preserve and document Inuit knowledge in collections. It is a favourite of mine because it epitomizes the knowledge sharing and engagement communities can (and do) have with Inuit cultural material and museum collections. Opportunities to work with cultural material create spaces to share stories, and to transmit knowledge about how things are made and the stories associated with them.



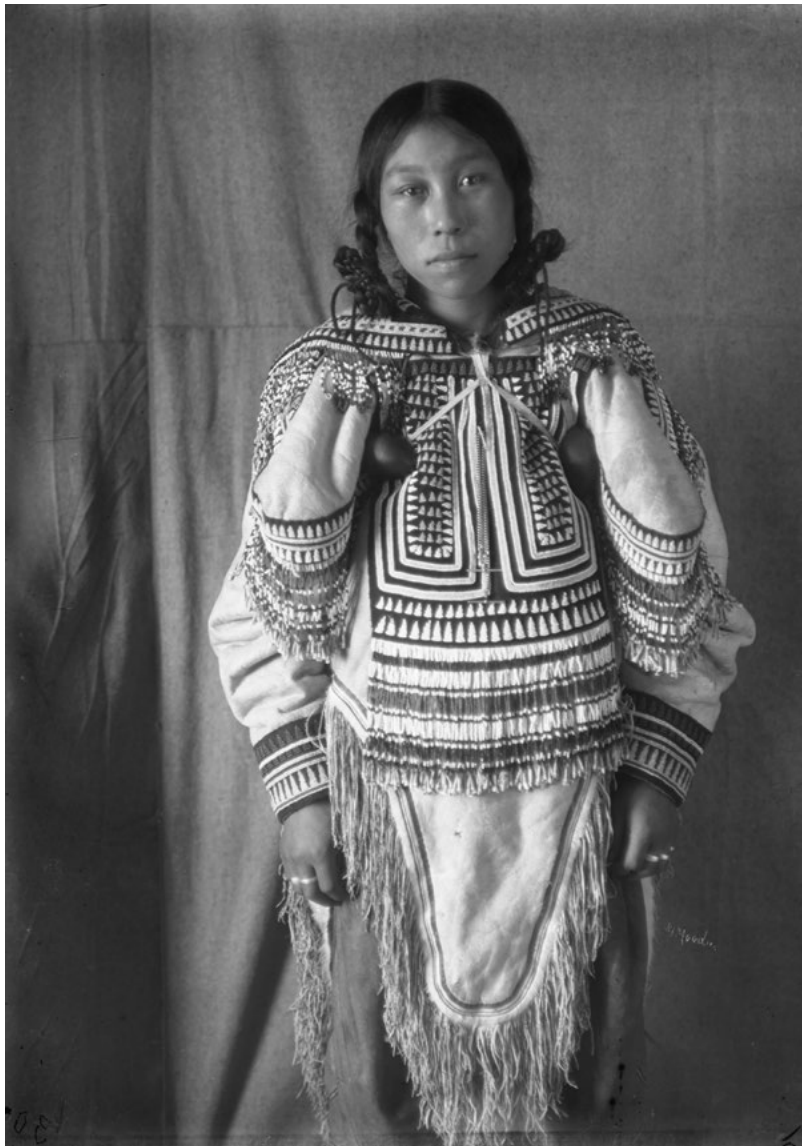




Uuktuq wearing a beaded tuili and tuglirut (hair braids wrapped around a piece of wood and wrapped with ribbon) in her hair, taken in 1904
Photograph by Douglas Moodie (1849-1947), contemporary print, courtesy Glenbow Archives, NB-60-neptune-35
Douglas Moodie's caption: *Portrait of Inuit woman, Ooktook, of the Kinepetoo tribe, Fullerton Harbour, Nunavut. May 1904*



From left to right, Uuktuq, Atunuk and Tulugattuq (Jennie)
Photograph by Douglas Moodie (1849-1947), contemporary print, courtesy Glenbow Archives, Nb-60-neptune-34
Douglas Moodie's caption: *Portrait of three Inuit women, Fullerton Harbour, Nunavut (Ooktook, Atunuck and Tutuucktuuck). May 1904*



Tulugattuaq (Jennie) in her beaded tuili, taken in 1905

Photograph by Geraldine Moodie (1854-1945), contemporary print, Courtesy of Glenbow Archives, NC-81-45

Geraldine Moodie's caption: *Portrait of Inuit woman, Tutuucktuuck, in her beaded attigi, Fullerton Harbour, Nunavut*

Tuili-making and beading workshops organized and facilitated by Krista Ulujuk Zawadski in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut (7 July 2021) and Igluligaarjuk (19 August 2021)

Photographs by Krista Ulujuk Zawadski (2021)



Inside the Hamlet Chambers in Igluligaarjuk. Mary Makpah beads the border of her saarut / saaruti, the beaded front panel of the tuili. After completing the sewing part of the workshop, Mary jumped right into beading. Despite not knowing how to bead prior to the workshop, Mary was easily one of the fastest and prolific beaders of the cohort. She is making the tuili and beadwork for her granddaughter.



Inside the Kivalliq Regional Visitor Centre in Rankin Inlet. Here we used the space to instruct the participants on how to sew the tuili and how to bead the panels that are sewn onto the tuili. On the foreground are completed beaded tuili and tuili panels. The beaded tuili on the mannequin was sewn by late Elder Jenny Piunguallaq Tootoo. From left to right: (baby boy, sleeping), Helen Iguptak and Monica Ugjuk, Joyce Ramey, Ada Angidlik, Pooka Tootoo, Isabelle Nilaulak and Special Kusugak.



Inside the Kivalliq Regional Visitor Centre in Rankin Inlet. Helen Iguptak (left), workshop instructor and Elder, explains the components of the tuili (the garment used by women as parkas and to carry babies on our backs) to our oldest student, Monica Ugjuk. Monica is a beader and participated in the workshop to learn how to sew the tuili. Monica says it is never too late to learn new things.



Inside the Kivalliq Regional Visitor Centre in Rankin Inlet. Helen Iguptak (centre) instructing workshop participants Marcia Kaurayok (left) and Special Kusugak (right) on how to cut out the tuili pattern. Once the pattern was cut, the women sewed them together to make the tuili. We used stroud (wool) material as it offers strength and structure to hold the weight of the beaded panels.

Slideshow featuring Facebook posts by Clifford Inooya, Maggie Putulik and Silu Connelly

Posts compiled by Krista Ulujuk Zawadski, used with permission

Learning about your family genealogy is an important aspect of passing on knowledge. Since Inuit did not have a writing system until relatively recently, our knowledge about kinship and relations was passed by word of mouth. Today, people still rely heavily on the same system, but also use social media to their advantage to crowdsource knowledge.

Today, people post historic photographs of their relatives online, including some of the photographs featured in this exhibition, which Captain Comer, Geraldine Moodie and Douglas Moodie took more than a century ago. They tell people about who is depicted in the photographs or ask the public for more information about them. We Inuit are extremely knowledgeable about our genealogies and eager to help build knowledge online.



Grid icon, Messenger icon, Notification icon, Heart icon

Silu Panniuq Inunguna
December 4, 2018 · 2 people

Pamiulik Savviurtalik

Silujjuaq Panniuq

12 likes · 10 Comments · 1 Share

Like Comment

Silu Panniuq Inunguna
XOXO
Like · Reply · 2y

My dad. (Handsome)
Like · Reply · 2y · 1 like

Like · Reply · 2y

Who was Albert? Their oldest sonviniq?
Like · Reply · 2y

.interesting pics Silu, thanks
Like · Reply · 2y

3 hearts

Write a comment... 🗨️ 📷 📺 🗑️



Clifford Inooya
April 26, 2019 · 🌐



😱 1

1 Comment



My great grandmother Nellie
Taptaqt far right 1903, sitting
beside her mother or sister.

Like · Reply · 2y · Edited

Write a comment...





Clifford Inooya

October 13, 2020 · 🌐



Could these be the sisters? Maybe the second from left is the mother Tarralik? With her daughters?



3

2 Comments



Like



Comment



Share



Clifford Inooya

I wonder if the far left is Qattalik? She appears to have one foot. Story goes that Qattalik had a one foot.

Like · Reply · 39w



1

My mom mentioned that all five were sisters. They all worked together. All kind sister. Ikajuqtigiikaumuguuq avitaulauqtut. Separated just because they are kind ppl. Worked together

Like · Reply · 33w

Write a comment...



Credits

This publication is produced in conjunction with *Nuvisi: Threading Our Beads at Qatiktalik*, curated by Krista Ulujuk Zawadski and presented at Carleton University Art Gallery from 28 September – 12 December 2021.

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Nuvisi: Threading Our Beads at Qatiktalik

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