

Schwarzenbach's diary begins with the May 8, 1953, arrival of the expedition participants in Montreal. The following days were spent assembling and packing the expedition supplies and gear in the front yard of the Arctic Institute headquarters at McGill University. By May 12, everything was ready and 4000 lbs of gear were transported to Frobisher Bay (now Iqaluit) courtesy of the Royal Canadian Air Force. A year earlier, 13 tons of expedition supplies had been shipped to Pangnirtung by sea. From Iqaluit, men and gear were flown to Pangnirtung in a Norseman aircraft, chartered from Arctic Wings of Churchill, Manitoba. The first of the four flights that landed on the sea ice below the hamlet was met by a large number of inquisitive Inuit. The expedition members were housed temporarily in the Hudson's Bay Company buildings, while they again sorted supplies and gear for transport to the designated field locations. In 1953, Pangnirtung consisted of little more than the Hudson's Bay Company post, established in 1921; the RCMP post, established in 1923; the Anglican mission, moved from the Blacklead Island whaling station in 1926; and St. Luke's Hospital, the only hospital on Baffin Island at the time, which was built in 1930 and run by the mission.

Initially the Inuit of Cumberland Sound had been reluctant to settle in Pangnirtung, a location far removed from good hunting areas. Thus the Inuit greeting the expedition members were mostly visitors to Pangnirtung themselves, who had come to trade sealskins at the Bay and visit others who were there for the same purpose. In the early 1950s, there were still 16 winter camps in Cumberland Sound; however, with the establishment of a Department of Northern Affairs office in Pangnirtung, increasing numbers of camps moved to the settlement on a permanent basis. In the mid-1960s, a devastating dog epidemic drove all but one Inuit group at Krepishaw to relocate to the settlement.

In his diary, the author describes his time spent with the Inuit as he attempted to master a few rudimentary Inuit words and experience the challenge of sledding with dogs. By May 25 everything was ready, and the flights to the field camps commenced. Base camp was established at Summit Lake in the centre of Pangnirtung Pass. Camp A-1 was located on the Penny Ice Cap and camp A-2 at the head of Highway Glacier. The Norseman left for its base in Churchill, and the 13 expedition members were on their own.

During the flights, the author had had ample opportunity to notice the magnificent mountain and glacier landscape of Pangnirtung Pass. Mountaineering and first ascents of prominent peaks were important elements of the expedition. When their busy scientific schedule allowed, various expedition members set out to climb the highest peaks within reach of the base camp. They climbed a total of eight peaks and measured their elevations. On July 13, the author and his three fellow Swiss scientist-mountaineers started their ascent to the top of the prominent Mount Asgard. By the author's account it was an arduous climb, but successful; by 17:45, they had planted their banner on top of the 2011 m high mountain.

When they returned to base camp in the early morning hours of July 14, they heard disturbing news from Pat Baird: Ben Battle, the McGill University geomorphologist, was missing. Following tracks in the snow and ice and knowing the area of Ben's scientific investigations, the expedition members concentrated their efforts on a lake with newly broken ice. On July 15, they recovered Ben Battle's body. They buried him in a stone grave and erected a large stone cairn nearby.

Zoological work was carried out from the biological camp on the Owl River, which drains the northern part of Pangnirtung Pass. Having spent four weeks assisting with the seismic work, the author joined McGill University zoologist Adam Watson on the Owl River, where they made a detailed survey of flora and plant communities. The work entailed some rather dramatic river crossings and living with soaked footwear for extended periods of time. Finally a rope "bridge," suspended over the rushing meltwater streams, made for drier crossings. During the expedition, remarkable film footage was taken by the Swiss geophysicist Hans Weber, supplemented with still photography by the technical assistant John Thomson. The resulting documentary was the first colour film made of an Arctic expedition. In September, the field parties gathered at the base camp to prepare for their home journey. Expedition gear was flown out with an amphibious plane, maneuvering rather precariously between floating blocks of ice. The field party then spent three days hiking out to the head of the fiord, and from there traveled by boat to Pangnirtung, where they were later picked up by the Canadian Coast Guard vessel *C.D. Howe*.

For the German reader, the book is an interesting and descriptive personal account of the difficult, but exhilarating daily adventures experienced by all field researchers working in remote regions. It is well illustrated with colourful photos of scenery and expedition members. I should think that an English translation would be well received and worth the effort.

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INUIT MODERN: ART FROM THE SAMUEL AND ESTHER SARICK COLLECTION. Edited by GERALD McMASTER. Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre. xvi + 272 p., 11 contributors, b&w and colour plates, notes, index. Softbound. Cdn\$55.00.

The exhibition *Inuit Modern*, which opened at the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) on 2 April 2011, ambitiously aims to document the artistic responses of Inuit to traditional life on the land, to the transition to urban living, to a conscious post-colonial aesthetic. It also hopes to do this within the context of a single collection, the gift of 175 works from collectors Sam and Esther Sarick. It is a magnificent and

highly representative collection, and the works are, in themselves, sufficient to the task. The exhibition catalogue is a collection of essays interspersed with large and beautiful colour photographs of the works.

The title of the exhibition and catalogue briefly led me to hope that at last a major institution was undertaking an overdue evaluation of recent Inuit art; that is, of the post-colonial art produced in the past 25 years or so. Such an exhibit, featuring a range of the most exciting second-generation (now middle aged) urban artists who will now set the tone for the next generation, is long overdue. Alas, however, this is not it. *Inuit Modern* is yet another celebration of a private collection, a gift to the AGO, centered on the post-1950 era of contemporary Inuit art. Many of the works are spectacular pieces featured in past exhibits and publications, and much of the text deals with history covered many times before, although it does include some new information and interpretations.

Strictly speaking, this is not an exhibition catalogue. Unlike, for example, Ingo Hessel's *Arctic Spirit*, an exemplary catalogue of the Albrecht collection exhibition, there is virtually no description or discussion of the art itself in *Inuit Modern*. Instead, the book is mainly a collection of essays by well-known art historians, and as such is a useful compendium of contemporary Inuit art history. It is apparent that the curators felt the works exemplified their curatorial purpose, and they do, but this may not be evident to those new to the subject.

Twelve different authors contributed 21 essays, poems, interviews, and artist biographies to this voluminous, beautifully illustrated volume. The large number of contributors assures a broad viewpoint but also leads to some overlap and the odd contradiction. Only the five contiguous essays by Ingo Hessel convey a sense of how the broad range of works in the exhibition, seen together, might help visitors envisage the history of contemporary Inuit art.

Gerald McMaster introduces the book by stating the exhibition's aim: "social, political and cultural transformation will be seen through the two dynamic lenses of colonial influence and agency," demonstrating that Inuit artists have "wrestled back their voice" (p. 2). He contends that through their art, Inuit have demonstrated both recognition of their traditional past and an authentic modernism. As an innovative curator, artist, and "insider," McMaster has much to say about the art of Canada's Native people, and he gives us here an unusually positive view of contemporary influences.

McGhee's essay summarizes background information on Arctic prehistory and the arrival of Inuit ancestors, and expands (somewhat tenuously) on archaeological research done by several researchers on Norse-Eskimo sites. Eber, Lalonde, and Driscoll review the early history of contemporary Inuit art, covering the whaling period to the mid-20th-century marketing bloom with the arrival of Houston, his work with the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, and the growth of the co-op movement, which Driscoll contends contributed to the ultimate creation of Nunavut.

One quibble I have with the first half of the book is its failure to emphasize that early Eskimo and Inuit people did create art for their own use: not only graphic art to illustrate their stories (created ephemerally with story knives, string, and shadow and frost drawings), but also sculpture, including soapstone carvings, as discovered in prehistoric sites in Labrador, for example.

Moving into more recent art, Heather Igloliorte addresses issues of cultural sovereignty and self-governance among contemporary Inuit and how these concerns are reflected by the newer artists, "fortifying the culture from within" (p. 45). She gives examples of artists and their "art of cultural resistance," but because these are not part of the collection or exhibition, they are not illustrated. Indeed, only two illustrations accompany her essay, although some of the artists she refers to are featured elsewhere in the catalogue.

This example reflects a weakness of both the exhibition and the catalogue: because the curators are confined to one collection by particular donors, their chosen theme—that art reflects a dynamic adaptation to a new reality—cannot be fully explored. The first rule dominating museum storylines is that the curator must begin with the collection, not with a desired theme. The only exception to this rule occurs when the curator has the world's museum collections at his or her disposal, a circumstance that happens (in Canada, at least) only during Olympic years.

The difficulty is partly editorial: no connection is made between much of what is said in the essays and the collection photographs. The simple insertion of reference pages within the texts would have helped to connect the two.

Ingo Hessel's first essay summarizes the development of the art from souvenirs to gallery-worthy pieces against the archaeological and historical background. Along the way, he asks us to explore the question of whether the Inuit were passive participants in the process or whether they took an active role in shaping their artistic destiny. His second essay elaborates on this theme as he traces the Houston era and what Martijn (1964:583) terms the "sham façade of primitiveness." Hessel benefits from both an intuitive mind and the concrete opportunity to spend time in the Arctic with the artists he studies. Thus he is able to write with enormous perception about the artists' intent. More's the pity, therefore, that few of the catalogue's pieces are documented in this way. On the other hand, both this essay and his third essay, on identity, abound with enough new, informative nuggets to delight any Inuit art enthusiast. His fourth and fifth essays, at last, describe some of the artists featured in the exhibition, but with little commentary on the specific works. Nevertheless, Hessel has some interesting points to make about how contemporary Inuit artists inhabit and interpret their world. These five essays would make a nice art history study in themselves, although they are not specific to this collection. Along the way, Hessel and the other contributors pay their respects to the enormous contributions made by past researchers, George Swinton in particular.

The catalogue ends with two interviews by Gerald McMaster, with filmmaker Zacharais Kunuk and

artist David Ruben Piqtoukun, and a short afterword by John Ralston Saul on the problems of perception (of contemporary Inuit art) caused by ethnocentrism and how he feels that Canadians have overcome this problem through recognition of our mutual relationship to the land. Kudos to his optimism.

Not having seen the exhibition, I don't know if the omissions in this book—the commentary on individual works and the relationship of the essays to the collection—will be rectified there. I believe, however, that an exhibition catalogue should be a record able to stand on its own, and in this sense the book fails. In its useful histories, its innovative analyses, it succeeds. The photography is outstanding, with sculpture illustrated from creative angles and in sharp definition. Every sculpture is shown in colour, with no attempt to lower costs by using character- and definition-robbing black and white illustrations. There are some minor typos and omissions; for example, I noted the absence of sculptor Manasie Akpaliapik's biography and list of works. Although not a conventional exhibition catalogue, it is nevertheless a handsome contribution to the ongoing study and documentation of a major force in contemporary Canadian art, and it celebrates a significant gift to the AGO's collection.

#### REFERENCE

Martijn, C.A. 1964. A Canadian Eskimo carving in historical perspective. *Anthropos* 59(3-4):546–596.

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DAILY LIFE OF THE INUIT. By PAMELA R. STERN. Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood, ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2010. ISBN 978-0-313-36311-5. 206 p., map, b&w illus., glossary, appendix, further reading, index. US\$49.95.

In the late 19th century and first half of the 20th century, anthropologists often attempted to capture and portray the essence of entire cultures in their expansive ethnographic monographs. These volumes described and explained the institutions around and within which social and cultural life was lived and ordered (religion, politics, economics, education, language, the arts, and so on). Contemporary monographs are often more problem-oriented, with anthropologists pondering particular questions related to specific aspects of a culture or society. Pamela Stern's *Daily Life of the Inuit*, while largely based on secondary rather than primary research, harks back to the earlier days of the discipline, as the author attempts (in general, successfully) to capture the essence of Inuit life as it is lived in the 21st century. Much as her intellectual forefathers would have done, Stern includes chapters covering such subjects as family,

intellectual, economic, material, political, and religious life, sports and recreation, and the arts. In so doing, she sets out to capture the essential aspects of culture that are shared by the 150 000 people collectively known as Inuit, whose homelands stretch across the Arctic from eastern Siberia, through Alaska and Canada, to Greenland.

Following an Introduction that rapidly runs the course of Inuit history and prehistory, from pre-Dorset culture through first contact with Europeans to the contemporary drive for self-determination, an excellent Chronology lists every major event in Inuit history from 8000 BCE to December 2009! Each of the 12 chapters forming the core of the book follows a similar pattern: an explanation of traditional practices is succeeded by an account of how these practices have been transformed or replaced through processes of colonialism, modernization, and globalization. Those chapters that focus on more traditional areas of Inuit scholarship, such as kinship, religion, hunting, and subsistence, are stronger and more thorough, drawing, as they do, on a greater body of work than the book's later chapters, which explore such aspects of Inuit culture as sports, the arts, and health care.

In general, Stern's book is excellent both as an introduction to Inuit culture and as a reference for those who are already grounded in the subject. She explains fundamentals of contemporary Inuit culture clearly, and for the novice who wishes to delve deeper, she includes a Further Reading section, which lists printed and online resources, as well as films and DVDs. One highlight for this reviewer was the author's detailed descriptions of the various paths to self-determination taken by Inuit in different regions of the Arctic (Chapter 6). Likewise, Chapter 12 contains accessible and useful explanations of the history and roles of such organizations as the Inuit Circumpolar Council and the Arctic Council. This is an invaluable reference at a time when distinguishing between the functions and personnel of the many acronym-laden organizations across the Arctic can be challenging.

While one can often be tempted to ignore glossaries and appendices, the reference value of those contained within this volume is superb. The glossary provides insightful descriptions of many Inuktitut terms, and the appendix contains enlightening descriptions of the many communities and settlements mentioned in the text. A thorough list of web resources is also included.

The book, however, is not without its flaws. While accepting that a book of this size and scope cannot possibly explore every aspect of Inuit culture, this reviewer felt there were a few glaring omissions. In her discussion of family and community life, Stern neglects to mention customary adoption, a universal Inuit practice that serves to create and enhance kin and other social relationships. And though she discusses games such as hockey and basketball, she neglects to mention contemporary games of chance, such as bingo and raffles, that play important cultural and economic roles in many communities, and which are played in ways that reflect long-held Inuit values and norms. Likewise,