

Exhibition of Inuit Art, Architecture and Traditional Knowledge

Presented in partnership with EVOQ architecture, in collaboration with Land InSights, the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit: Art, Architecture and Traditional Knowledge exhibition is the result of a contest that involved Inuit from all over the Inuit Nunangat territory (Nunatsiavut, Nunavik, Nunavut and Inuvialuit). This initiative is the first of its kind in the relatively recent history of Canadian Inuit art. Called upon to submit a work of art to be integrated into the architecture of the new Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) built in Ikaluktutiak (Cambridge Bay), Nunavut, the artists created works illustrating the contribution of traditional knowledge to the development of sciences and technologies of international caliber, still in use today, thus putting to light past and present Inuit peoples' ingenuity and inventiveness (Qanuqtuurniq). The fifty or so drawings and sculptures presented in this exhibition were created by the winners of this competition and all fall under the same theme: Honoring the timeless creative genius of past and present Inuit.

Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit /
That which has long been
known by Inuit /
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Ikaluktutiak, Nunavut, Canada

ARCHITECTS	EVOQ and NFOE in joint venture
ENGINEERS	SNC-Lavalin
PROJECT MANAGER	PSPC
CLIENT	INAC
STATION MANAGER	Polar Knowledge Canada

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The Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS)

The Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) was built in Ikalukutiak (Cambridge Bay), Nunavut, as part of Canada's Northern Strategy. This facility is a world-class Arctic research station, demonstrating state of the art design excellence that serves as a model for similar polar facilities around the world. The design and fundamental personality of the CHARS tangibly and visibly

constitute a major break away from the old scientific research station model in Arctic communities. The CHARS brings Traditional Science and Technology and Traditional Inuit knowledge to work together under one roof. The architecture(planning and design) of the Station reflects and makes possible this new paradigm.





Architecture: Building design narrative

Guiding principles and Cultural references

While CHARS will make an international statement on Canadian research in the Arctic, it will also be an architectural representation of Inuit culture to ensure full integration into the community of Ikaluktutiak. Architecture is a powerful means of cultural expression. Both the process leading to the design and the design of the station itself are derived from a number of Inuit Qaujimagatuqanngit (IQ) principles “that which has always been known by Inuit”. The Inuit planning principle of free, open, interconnected spaces is used in the layout of the public spaces.

The circular shaped qalgiq (traditional communal igloo) used inside and outside, takes on a both physical and symbolic presences. The exposed wood structure conveys the ingenuity of the many Inuit designed, stick built assemblies. The copper-coloured cladding are a nod to the Copper Inuit, the host community.



Host community: Copper Inuit
Host territory: Inuit Nunangat



Art integration

Integrating Inuit artworks into the very built fabric of the CHARS supports and strengthens the narrative of the building's design and it further reinforces the expression of Inuit culture. Drawings and a sculpture were selected following a competition that solicited Inuit artists from all across the Inuit Nunangat territory (Nunatsiavut, Nunavik, Nunavut and Inuvialuit). This was a first in the history of the Canadian Inuit art world. The artists were invited to submit works that would illustrate the traditional Inuit knowledge's contribution to the development of world-class science and technology, showcasing the past and present resourcefulness and inventiveness (Qanuq-tuurniq) of the Inuit.

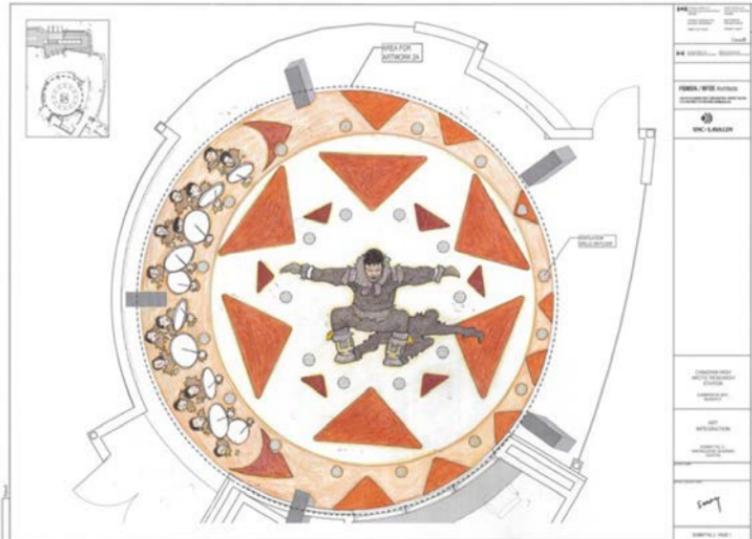
The works speak to the theme: Honouring the timeless creative genius of Inuit. The small scale drawings submitted by the artists were digitally enlarged to the full scale of the building so they could be integrated into the flooring and glazing panels of the various public areas of the Main Research Building. The small scale sculpture was also digitally enlarged to fill the space of the main entrance of the Main Research Building.



« I selected this theme [drum dancers] for my submission to the CHARS art contest , along with drawings about the Iqaluktuut-tiamiut Culture. The drum dancers stand out as a very unique representation of Kitikmeot society in that part of Inuit Nunangat. When I drew the dancers, I could hear them very loudly and imagine the strong cultural connection to their past and heritage. Every time I watch and hear the drum dancers perform, it makes me want to dance with them.»

Knowledge Sharing Centre /Flooring

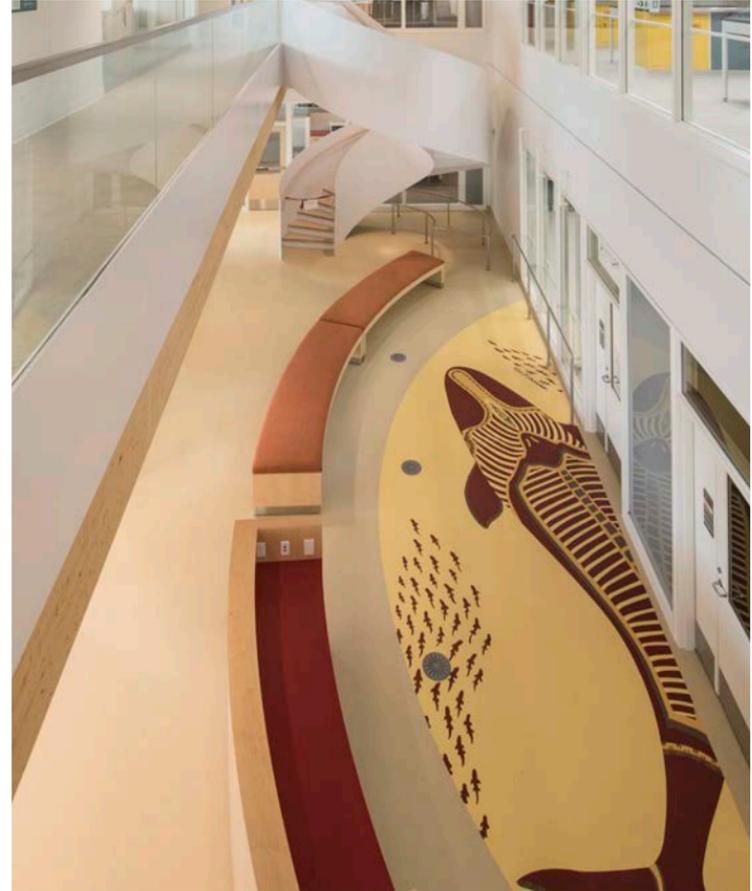
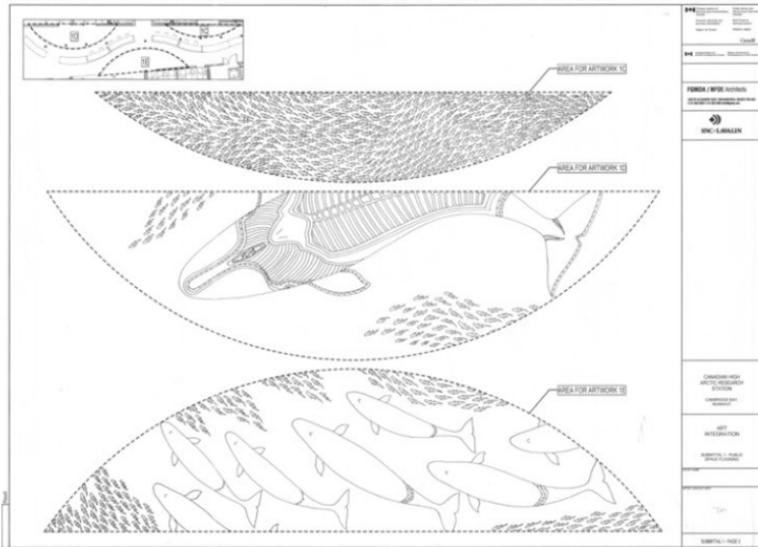
Igaluktuuttuag Qilaujatigit, Drum dancers,
Pencil and Coloured pencil on paper, 2016
Sammy Kudluk
Kuujuaq, Nunavik,
Canada



Tim is a hunter and his respect for the natural world and its wildlife is fundamental to his artistic sensibility. Tim is particularly inspired by the whales that frequent the cold, Arctic waters - the beluga and the bowhead - because, as he says, nobody really knows much about them. The bowhead in particular is a majestic and mysterious creature and frequently he will embellish his drawings of these animals with 'tattoos' of ancient artifacts.

Public space flooring / Public corridor

Beluga Whales and a Bowhead,
Black Ink on paper, 2016
Timotee "Tim" Pitsiulak
Cape Dorset, Nunavut,
Canada



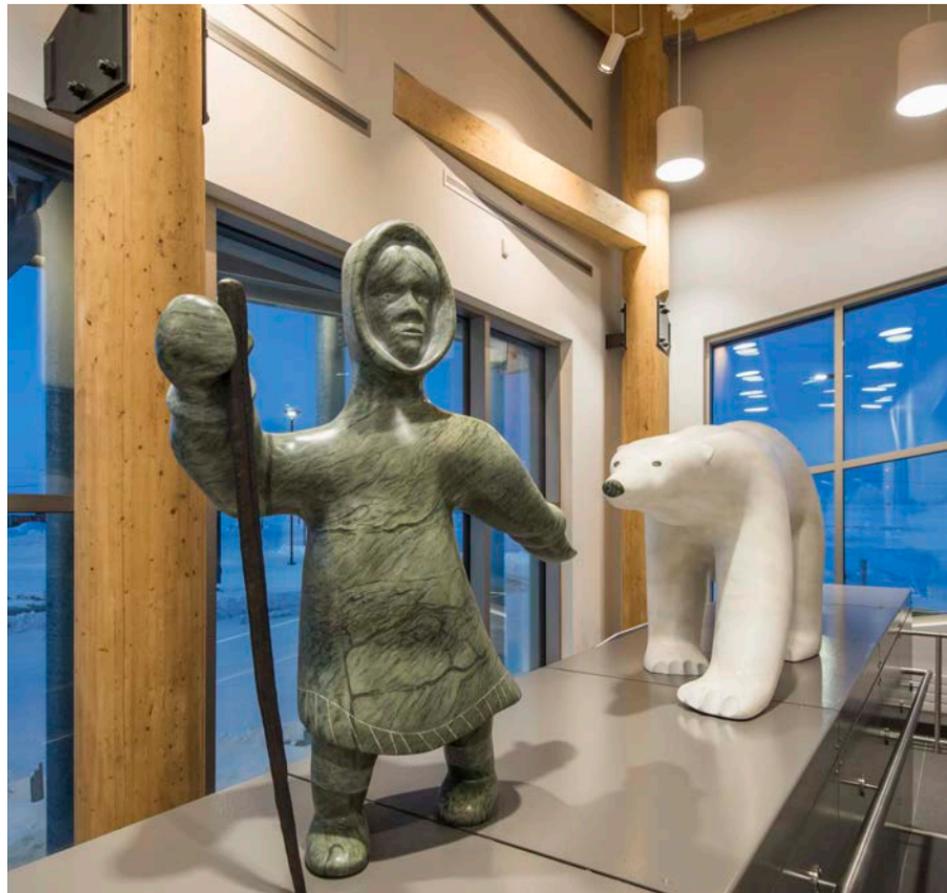
This carving is about Elders and how they guide us with their knowledge. Science is not new to the Arctic. It began long ago, with Inuit ancestors observing the world and sharing their thoughts with younger generations. Today, modern technology and universities are the popular images associated with science and learning. But it is our Elders who continue to urge Inuit knowledge forwards, guiding the powerful force of our culture like the Elder in my carving leads her bear.



Main entrance vestibule

The nanuq is meaningful to me as a symbol in my art. Like knowledge, bears are a source of power, history and memory that our Elders respect. They also symbolize the environment that our ancestors have learned to live with in harmony. With the Arctic facing threats such as climate change and the disappearance of traditional languages and culture, the bear stands for what is being lost to Inuit.

Ningjuq Amma Nanuq, Elder and polar bear,
Italian alabaster, Serpentine and pine wood, 2017
Koomuatuk "Kuzy" Sapa Curley
Cape Dorset, Nunavut,
Canada





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EVOQ ARCHITECTURE

To the Right:

Exhibition presented during Arctic Circle Summit 2019 at HARPA Concert Hall and Conference Center, Reykjavik, Iceland

For the past seven years, Isabelle Laurier has been involved in the planning and management of projects for EVOQ architecture with Aboriginal communities in Canada. Her mandate has been to oversee art integration of projects in architecture. She recently managed an Inuit Nunangat-wide art competition, a first in Canadian Inuit art history.

Integrating Inuit artworks into architecture reinforces the expression of Inuit culture. Therefore, self-esteem, sense of wellness, sense of wellbeing and sense of pride become the output of the work. It's all about sustainable development as a values-driven approach. Protection and promotion of cultural diversity through architecture and art is a responsible and powerful approach.

As curator of the prestigious Inuit art exhibition called «Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, Art, Architecture and Traditional Knowledge», Isabelle is in charge of introducing this traveling exhibition to the rest of the world. This exciting exhibition of Canadian Inuit artworks has already been presented in seven different venues such as art galleries, museums, cultural centers and universities. It is particularly well suited to arctic cultural centres or museums.

CANADIAN HIGH ARCTIC RESEARCH STATION

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