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Nuvisavik: The Place Where We Weave. Edited by Maria Von Finckenstein. Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization, copublished by McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal. Published in the United States by University of Washington Press, Seattle, 2002. 202 pages. \$35.00 paper.

This handsome book relates and illustrates the story of one of the most extraordinary artistic ventures in the Americas: the thirty-year-old tapestry weaving tradition in the Canadian Inuit community of Pangnirtung, Baffin Island. The volume consists of a foreword and four chapters, two about the history of the Inuit community and two about the weaving (tapestry) project and its members. (The Inuttit word *nuvisavik* in the title means "the place for weaving" from the root *nuvit*, which traditionally meant to thread an eyelet or needle, but which also came to mean to knit or crochet.) The text is followed by more than fifty high-quality color plates of the tapestries, interspersed with seventeen large black-and-white photographs of the "drawing artists," all accompanied by extensive notes. It closes with passport-size photos of nineteen "tapestry artists" with brief notes on each, suggested readings, and an index.

The story of the Inuit of the Cumberland Sound area who settled to form the community of Pangnirtung in the early- to mid-twentieth century is told in the chapter by July Papatsie, a local Inuk who is well known as an artist, writer, and translator, and in another by Cathleen Knotsch, a German geographer-historian. This region and its inhabitants are perhaps better known than any other place in the Canadian Arctic. First massively contacted by Scottish and later American whalers in 1839, they cooperated with and helped the newcomers through nearly eighty seasons. So they got used to trade goods (cloth clothes and tents, beadwork, sewing and embroidery), learned some English, and some even visited the lands of the whalers. The Sound was also visited in the First International Polar Year, 1882–83, by German research teams, including the renowned Franz Boas, the founder of modern American anthropology, who is remembered as seeking out Inuit still living unacculturated lifestyles (p. 12). Although whaling declined in the late nineteenth century, the foreign visitors continued to trade for sealskins and seal and beluga oil until 1921 when the Hudson's Bay Company set up a store and took over from the "whalers" by trading for newly fashionable white fox furs. An RCMP post was established nearby in 1923 and an Anglican mission in 1926. The latter established a hospital for Inuit tuberculosis patients in 1930.

Inuit life, partly dependent on trade, continued with its nomadic annual cycles of hunting, trapping, and trading until the 1960s, except for those few who worked full time in Pangnirtung. In that decade, the Canadian federal government initiated day schools in the North, with their complement of visiting teachers, administrators and clerks, generator mechanics, carpenters and builders, and eventually nurses and clinics. Inuit were encouraged to settle around these facilities, and in the Pangirtung area an epidemic of dog distemper in 1961–62 hastened the process, as most Inuit lost their ability to travel overland, and many were forcibly taken up from their camps to the "settlement." Even after the government imported more dogs the collapse in fur prices and the lack of jobs condemned most Inuit to poverty.

The story of the weaving project picks up at this point, told by Donald Stuart, the first weaving adviser/teacher, in the foreword, and by editor Maria von Finckenstein (formerly well-known as Maria Muehlen, head of the government's Inuit Art Section in Ottawa) and Deborah Hickman, manager and artistic advisor to the Tapestry Studio 1980–83 and for shorter periods since. Throughout the Arctic, the government encouraged arts and crafts programs to supplement Inuit incomes, at first soapstone, serpentine, and ivory carvings, and later by starting print-making workshops which produced annual editions sold with great fanfare in southern Canada. Commercial carving was encouraged at Pangnirtung, and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND) sent an arts and crafts adviser to the local cooperative in 1968. Some wooden looms were brought in from nearby Frobisher Bay (a former American air base on Baffin Island, now called Iqaluit, the capital of the new Nunavut Territory).

In 1969 DIAND contracted the Montreal weaving firm Karen Bulow Ltd. to help the Pangnirtung Inuit, and the business hired artist-weaver Donald Stuart to go North in 1969. He writes: "Today, over thirty years later, Karen Bulow Ltd. is no more. Pangnirtung's Uqurmiut Centre for the Arts and Crafts has the largest hand-weaving studio in Canada" (p. viii). (Uqurmiut, which means "people living in the lee of prevailing winds," is also used for people outside Pangnirtung.) At first the three young women employees wove colorful *amautik* sashes (woven wool waist sashes worn over cloth parkas); 600 were ordered for a Boy Scout jamboree and some special items were made as gifts for Queen Elizabeth who visited Canada for the 1970 centenary of the Northwest Territories. The three weavers learned quickly, and other women joined them, weaving blankets and scarves for sale down south. Stuart introduced them to tapestry, but thought their initial efforts looked "akin to the Navajo, with strong geometrics and bold colours—exciting but perhaps not appropriate" (p. vii). In other words, the white art adviser didn't think they looked traditional or Arctic or Eskimo enough for expectations of white consumers "down South" (p. 45) and guided them towards the high modern aesthetic of the "natural," emphasizing the "tactile" and "textured" qualities of the wool. This overriding of the Inuit artists' own aesthetics has occurred frequently in successful Inuit commercial art and crafts programs.

Eventually, Stuart started buying the drawings of two older women Malaya Akulukjuk ("a known shaman," pp. vii, 54, highly unlikely after eighty years of Anglicanism) and Ilisapi Ishulutaq, as models for the weavers to "copy." Those who draw these images of traditional times living on the land and sell them to the studio, usually men and women of the older generation, are called "drawing artists." Some images are selected and made into cartoon-guides. Trained weavers, called "weaver-artists," usually younger women, choose the colors and textures and weave the tapestries by hand on wooden looms using colored wool and cotton weft. This division of labor between prolific artists and careful executors is also found in Inuit printmaking workshops such as Pangnirtung, Cape Dorset, and Holman Island.

In 1972, fearing that funding might cease, the Canadian Guild of Crafts in Montreal, a gallery where Inuit sculptures were first sold in 1949, mounted

an exhibition called "In the Beginning." The immediate commercial success of these simple but bold figures on colorful backgrounds brought the project visibility, continuing orders, and further financial support. After 1979, the tapestries changed when a new adviser encouraged more complex narrative scenes and more blended colors. New artists and newly trained weavers started to produce multiple editions of the same work, although exact copies were never intended. Adviser Deborah Hickman enhanced the quality of weaving, and larger tapestries involving multiple weavers, were tried. Though women artists produced most of the drawings used, many men also began to submit drawings. Occasionally "modern" images, such as a helicopter, were reproduced, but for the most part, the weavers preferred to depict "traditional" life on the land and former spiritual beliefs. Von Finckenstein correctly suggests that it's not just the white market that desires this "memory art," but the artists and weavers themselves see the opportunity to preserve images of their former nomadic lives and pass on these lost realities to their children and to white people who have never known those experiences.

In the past decade, specialized workshops have trained the weavers in more sophisticated rendering of lines and textures, and more dramatic landscapes and natural scenes have become common. Although nineteen women weaver-artists have worked on the 500 or so tapestries produced since 1970, a smaller core of long-term employees has become very skilled. Younger artists, who never knew the nomadic life, are submitting drawings, and the Tapestry Studio is soliciting more specialized and large, often "architectural" commissions for its unique works.

This book tells the story with the most appropriate contributors and illustrates the works in high quality plates. Central are the contributions of July Papatsie, who not only wrote a chapter, but served as translator for some of the non-Inuit contributors and produced culturally explanatory commentaries on most of the artworks. He also includes recorded stories and statements by artists going back as far as 1976.

As is the authoritative work to date on the Pangnirtung experiment, this book is well worth buying for both the detailed history and the illustrations, which represent about 10 percent of the tapestries produced to date. However, there are no illustrations of the weaving studio and the artists at work. One might also ask why none of the key non-Inuit participants are portrayed along with their Inuit colleagues.

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Prayer on Top of the Earth: The Spiritual Universe of the Plains Apaches. By Kay Parker Schweinfurth. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002. 239 pages. \$29.95 cloth.

This book falls within the genre of what used to be called "salvage ethnography," ethnography based on interviews with the last surviving members of a