

**Communities of Access: Examining Emerging Geographies of Inuit Art in
Canada Through the Lens of the Winnipeg Art Gallery's Inuit Art Centre
and Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop**

by

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ABSTRACT

COMMUNITIES OF ACCESS: EXAMINING EMERGING GEOGRAPHIES OF INUIT ART IN CANADA THROUGH THE LENS OF THE WINNIPEG ART GALLERY'S INUIT ART CENTRE AND KENOJUAK CULTURAL CENTRE AND PRINT SHOP

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This thesis investigates how access to Inuit art and culture is changing through the development of new museum practices in the north and south of Canada, analyzing two new sites that are central to these emerging geographies. Opening in 2020, the Winnipeg Art Gallery's Inuit Art Centre is the first large-scale exhibition space in the world that focuses on Inuit art and culture. Located in Cape Dorset, the Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop (2018), serves as a cultural centre for the production/exhibition of Inuit art in the north. Looking at the development of these two institutions within the historiography of Inuit cultural stewardship and Canadian institutional culture, I examine, through a thematic examination of print, news articles and social media posts, how new geographic centres of Inuit art are changing accessibility to Inuit culture, particularly in relation to the communities that produce it.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACHRN	Arctic Cultural Heritage Research Network
CMA	Canadian Museum Association
DFA	Dorset Fine Arts
DNANR	Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
IAC	Inuit Art Centre
IAQ	Inuit Art Quarterly
ICOM	International Council of Museums
IQ	<i>Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit</i>
ITK	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
KCCPS	Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop
MICH	Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage
MSAC	MacDonald Stewart Art Centre
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
WAG	Winnipeg Art Gallery
WBEC	West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has seen the increased presence of Inuit artists on a global stage. In 2017, for example, Kananginak Pootoogook of Cape Dorset, Nunavut was the first Inuit artist to be included in the Venice Biennale's feature exhibition curated by Christine Macel of the Centre Pompidou.¹ That same year, Canada announced that the artist collective and production company Isuma of Igloolik, Nunavut would represent the country at the 2019 Biennale, marking the first time that Canada would showcase the work of Inuit artists at its Biennale pavilion.² Artist Shuvina Ashoona's collaborations with contemporary Canadian artists have also helped reposition Inuit art within a global context, creating works that have established "an international reach with work that challenges stereotypes about life and artmaking in the North."³

Such developments highlight new geographies precipitated by globalization, marked by heightened access by international audiences to Inuit cultural knowledge in the form of creative practice that "springs from an ancient cultural context to create an exciting new hybridized art form."⁴ Borders have also been recast in the cultural landscape within Canada, as historical relationships are remapped between art institutions in the south, informed by Western values and an art world in the north inhabited by Inuit with their own worldviews, particularly in response to the legacy of colonialism and calls to action posed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).⁵ As recently as April of 2019, Canadian Heritage announced a review of the management

¹ Leah Sandals, "Inuit Art Makes a Global Breakthrough at the Venice Biennale," *Canadianart*, May 9th, 2017, <https://canadianart.ca/news/kananginak-pootoogook-inuit-art-venice-biennale/>.

² Gareth Harris, "Canada announces first presentation of Inuit art for 2019 Venice Biennale," *The Art Newspaper*, December 14th, 2017, <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/canada-announces-first-presentation-of-inuit-art-for-the-2019-venice-biennale>.

³ Nancy G. Campbell, "Going Global The entrance of Shuvina Ashoona's art into the contemporary canon and international museums," *The Essay*, n.d., Accessed June 1st, 2019, <https://www.aci-iac.ca/the-essay/going-global-by-nancy-g-campbell>.

⁴ "AGO Exhibition Explores the Legacy and Future of Inuit Art," Art Gallery of Ontario, March 14th, 2011, Accessed June 1st, 2019, <http://www.ago.net/ago-exhibition-explores-the-legacy-and-future-of-inuit-art>.

⁵ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (TRC) is a document published in 2015 that addresses ninety-four calls to action in order to "redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation."

of Indigenous collections by Canada's museums and funds to advance reconciliation efforts and promote collaboration in the preservation of Indigenous culture.⁶ This thesis will examine two new sites that are central to this emerging geography. Located in Cape Dorset, the Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop (KCCPS) opened in September 2018 and serves as a key cultural centre for the production and exhibition of Inuit art in the north. Opening in Winnipeg in 2020, the Inuit Art Centre (IAC) is the first large-scale exhibition space in the world that focuses on Inuit art and culture, featuring the Winnipeg Art Gallery's collection of 13,000 works as well as over 7000 works on long term loan from the Government of Nunavut's Fine Art Collection overseen by an advisory committee of Inuit curators.

My main research question asks how are new geographic centres of Inuit art changing the accessibility of Inuit culture, particularly in relation to the communities that produced it, to urban Inuit publics, as well as for Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences. Inuk art historian and curator Heather Igloliorte has suggested that Inuit art has always held different meanings for *Qallunaat*, or non-Inuit, then it has for those who create it, and this dynamic has been fundamental to the history and definition of Inuit art:

For artists, there is no doubt that there was an economic motivation behind the creation of artworks that featured traditional themes, as their main audience in the beginning were the primitive art enthusiasts of the international art market; those who had romanticized notions about the daily lives of Inuit. The traditional subject matter of the artwork held a different meaning for this audience than it did for the makers....as long as Inuit knowledge, stories, or practices portrayed in the artwork are not distorted or falsified to make them more saleable, the artwork can both appeal to a Western audience as well as act as an expression of cultural knowledge and cultural resilience. In fact, these motivate many Inuit artists today to continue making art about what life was like before colonization.⁷

"Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action," Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 1, http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf.

⁶ "Advancing Reconciliation With Indigenous Peoples Through Canadian Museums Association Funding," Cision, April 16th, 2019, Accessed June 1st, 2019, <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/advancing-reconciliation-with-indigenous-peoples-through-canadian-museums-association-funding-889250729.html>.

⁷ Heather Igloliorte, "Inuit Artistic Expression as Cultural Resilience," in *Response, Responsibility, and Renewal: Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Journey*, ed. Gregory Younging, Jonathan Dewar and Mike DeGagné. Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2009. 130, <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/trc2.pdf>.

Drawing upon research in museum studies as well as Indigenous art history, this thesis explores questions of culture and cultural authority, examining the evolving relationship of Inuit creative practices and museum institutions to frame these cases. As collection-centered museum models have shifted to those focused on public engagement and consultation, traditional museological relationships that underpinned their authority and authenticity have also been redefined, reflected in increased public access to and active participation in museum functions. Paralleling this “new museology”, technologies have also made collections more widely accessible to communities through virtual exhibitions, online databases, and educational programming with implications for practices ranging from curation to repatriation.

In engaging with this research, it is important to recognize that I am a non-Indigenous person dealing with scholarship surrounding Inuit art. I recognize my positionality as a white, educated woman. This position holds social privilege, which I hope can help facilitate a critical discussion concerning power dynamics within Canadian museum practice. However, as a young academic in museum studies, without insider knowledge of Indigenous/Inuit values and worldviews, my research has often compelled me to ask: how can I contribute to this discourse in a meaningful way? For these reasons I see myself as a co-learner⁸ within this research about Canadian and Indigenous history and its subsequent impacts on museum practice. My goal in this thesis is to not speak on behalf of anyone but, rather, to study and critically analyze new museum models in Canada that recognize inclusivity and accessibility in relation to Inuit communities and their art production. I do recognize, however, that the data collected and interpreted within this thesis reflects my positionality as a non-Indigenous researcher, and my worldview is intertwined with and will impact my findings.

As a settler ally, I recognize that everyone should have access to their own cultural material.⁹ Thus, education, dialogue, access and, most importantly, reconciliation within the

⁸ As stated by Courtney Arseneau, PhD Candidate, Community Psychology, in “Perspectives and Constructions of Free, Prior and Informed Consent involving Resource Development in First Nations Communities,” Wilfred Laurier University, June 27th, 2019. Personal Correspondence with Kimberly Anderson.

⁹ The term *cultural material* throughout this thesis will refer to objects that are not classified as art. The focus on this thesis pertains to Inuit art, however in certain instances the term *cultural material* will be used to indicate a broader range of Inuit and Indigenous objects. For instance,

museum community affects us all. My goal is to unpack a deeper understanding of emerging museum models and the access they offer to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences.

Chapter Outline

Chapter One is a literature review comprised of four areas of focus; Inuit history and art production from a settler perspective, Inuit history and art production from an Inuit perspective, museum and Indigenous art history and finally institutional critiques. The first two sections of this literature review highlight the difference in literary approaches in discussing Inuit history and art production. Texts from Darlene Coward Wight, Norman Vorano, Alooook Ipellie and Heather Igloliorte are contrasted to each other regarding the very different realities portrayed of Inuit art production and history. Museums and Indigenous art history will be discussed to reflect changes made towards collaborative museum practice in Canada. Literature will be examined surrounding the exhibition *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples*, presented at the Glenbow Museum in 1988 and subsequent ethical literature such as the *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples Report* (1992). This will be followed by literature on collaborative Indigenous and more specifically Inuit art exhibitions from Richard William Hill, Darlene Coward Wight, Marie Bouchard and Christine Lalonde. Finally, institutional critiques by Lee-Ann Martin, Heather Igloliorte, and Donna Ennis indicate that improved inclusion of Indigenous voices is needed in the discourse museum practice. Furthermore, this points to literature surrounding reconciliation and the role that museums play within this dynamic which can be seen in the *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (2015). This discussion will highlight shifts in museum practices and their impacts on access of Indigenous art and culture.

Chapter Two is a case study that explores a new geographic centre focused on access to Inuit art in the south of Canada. Known as the Inuit Art Centre (IAC), developed at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, I explore the project's context, development and impact for communities using thematic analysis of print and web material focused on commentary that

this may refer to anthropological objects, clothing etc. This term in particular is used throughout the literature review and in reference to museum collections that do not include solely art objects.

surrounds this new initiative. Within this chapter I analyze key approaches by which access to Inuit art is re-mapping relationships between south and north by providing a diversity of communities the means to engage with, and participate in, the IAC's development and content. This chapter will contribute to our understanding of what constitutes accessibility in regard to Inuit art and culture within a southern context, and what this means for both Inuit and non-Inuit participants and audiences.

Chapter Three is a second case study of a new geographic centre of Inuit art situated in the north of Canada. Using thematic analysis of print and web material, I examine the Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop (KCCPS), located in Cape Dorset, Nunavut, Canada. Within this chapter I examine how this northern museum model facilitates the dissemination of, and access to, Inuit art and culture directly to Inuit communities, while highlighting a shift in the geographical placement of Inuit art. This chapter will contribute to our understanding of what constitutes access to Inuit art and culture within a northern context, and what this means for remote northern Inuit communities.

Chapter Four consists of a comparative analysis of the Inuit Art Centre and the Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop., examining their similarities and differences in relation to the topic of access, analyzed through broad themes of Inuit voice, collaboration and reconciliation. This will then be followed by my own critiques on the effectiveness of these two museum models.

Finally, within my concluding chapter, I will explore these emerging geographies through the lens of technology and the impact of modes of access to Inuit art and culture through digital applications. Within this section I will briefly discuss digital projects such as the *Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage* (MICH) project from York University, the *Iningat Ilagiit* project headed by the McMichael Canadian Art Gallery, and the *Arctic Cultural Heritage Research Network* (ACHRN) developed through the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Fellowship,¹⁰ which will

¹⁰ The *Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage* Project is a SSHRC Partnership Grant which focuses on the contribution and access of Inuit art, culture, language and identity through digital and communication technologies.

“Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage,” York University, Accessed April 10th, 2019, <http://mich.info.yorku.ca/about/>.

Iningat Ilagiit is a project designed through the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. It is an online website for Inuit and Northern communities to connect with their own art, with a specific

address a new digital application to help overcome geographical remoteness in the pursuit of access of Inuit art and culture. These examples reiterate the importance of collaboration and aligning north and south in advancing access to Inuit art and culture through the creation of new geographies made possible by digitization.

focus on works from the Cape Dorset region. On this website users can browse through Inuit art collections as well as create their own virtual collections to share with others.

“Welcome to Iningat Ilagiit,” Iningat Ilagiit Connecting through the Cape Dorset Archive, McMichael Canadian Art Collection, n.d. Accessed June 14th, 2019.

<http://westbaffineskimocooper.neoreninc.com/>.

The *Arctic Research Heritage Research Network* is a web-based portal that enables Northern Inuit communities to share cultural knowledge while accessing Arctic cultural heritage collections around the world.

“Norman Vorano,” Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation, Accessed April 10th, 2019,

<http://www.fondationtrudeau.ca/en/community/norman-vorano>.

Note: The specifics and developments of these online projects will be discussed in further detail in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

As an interdisciplinary study that combines art history, museology, Inuit history and politics, this study will draw on literature from a range of fields to address the power relationships that have informed the interactions of Indigenous communities, settlers and settler scholarship, as well as curatorial practices within a Canadian context. It is important to consider that Indigenous, more precisely Inuit¹¹ voices have historically been excluded from scholarship and the conversation surrounding the interpretation, dissemination, access and control of their art objects. This exclusion is the basis for the concept of unequal power relations throughout the literature. This literature review will be comprised of four sections. Sections One and Two discuss Inuit history and the factors that led to northern art production from settler and Inuit points of view. The contrast between these perspectives speaks to the historical constraints on Inuit access to their cultural materials on the part of Canadian museums and museum practice. Section Three addresses scholarship that resulted from Indigenous critiques of controversial exhibitions involving Indigenous representation and collaboration, such as *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples* (1988). These controversies prompted responses with a focus on advancing equity and ethical relationships such as the *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples Report* (1992). Such critiques, with their emphasis on restoring access to cultural and heritage materials, resulted in the creation of several key exhibitions that attempted to forge improved partnerships and collaborations with Indigenous communities. Considering this history, in Section Three I analyze the effectiveness of these collaborative structures and exhibitions in fostering more equal power relations between Indigenous and settler parties. Finally, Section Four revolves around institutional critiques of museum practice from an Indigenous and, more specifically, Inuit perspective. As will be discussed, the state of the scholarship, according to Lee-Ann Martin, independent curator and former Curator of Contemporary Canadian Aboriginal Art at the Canadian Museum of History, indicates that non-Indigenous writers dominate scholarship surrounding Indigenous art, history

¹¹ I recognize that using the terms *Indigenous* and *Inuit* is redundant given that Indigenous includes Inuit communities. In this thesis I separate the term *Inuit* into a distinct category because I wish to emphasize that this research is focused specifically on Inuit art.

and culture.¹² This points to a lack of voice on the part of Inuit communities and a need for new approaches to reconciliation in the context of Canadian museum practice.

Section 1: Inuit History and Art Production – Settler Perspectives

Scholarship on the part of settler scholars has historically dominated the literature on Inuit art and history. The production of Inuit art as a commodity destined for the south of Canada has meant that southern settler scholars have monopolized the discussion surrounding Inuit communities. Key chapters from primary art history survey materials such as *Creation and Transformation* (2012) and *Inuit Modern* (2010) entail largely settler accounts of Inuit history that neglect to truly encapsulate the difficult realities of the Canadian government's involvement in Canada's north and the impact of colonial influences on Inuit communities.

Creation and Transformation: Defining Moments in Inuit Art (2012) by Darlene Coward Wight, Curator of Inuit Art at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, is a comprehensive exhibition catalogue of a key exhibition mounted by the Winnipeg Art Gallery, and describes the genesis and evolution of Inuit art from its origins to present day.¹³ Chapters such as the "Birth of an Art Form: 1949 to 1959" and "The 1960s: The Rise of Inuit Co-Operatives," both written by Wight, chart the development of Inuit art production in the north of Canada. According to Wight, northern art production can be heavily attributed to Inuit culture proponent and avid collector of Inuit art, James Houston, who made numerous trips to the north to foster art production in the form of Inuit carving in the mid-1900s.¹⁴ Wight also discusses the influence of southern entities in the development of Inuit art production, with reference to the Canadian Handicraft Guild,

¹² Lee-Ann Martin, "Making a Noise in This (Art) World," in *Making a Noise Aboriginal Perspectives on Art, Art History, Critical Writing and Community*, ed. Lee-Ann Martin (Banff International Curatorial Institute, Banff, Alberta, 2005), 20.

¹³ "WAG Exhibition Traces Development of Inuit Art," Winnipeg Art Gallery, n.d., Accessed May 27th, 2019, <https://www.wag.ca/about/press/media-releases/read.release/261/wag-exhibition-traces-development-of-inuit-art>.

¹⁴ Darlene Coward Wight, "Birth of an Art Form: 1949 to 1959," in *Creation and Transformation Defining Moments in Inuit Art*, ed. Darlene Coward Wight, (Vancouver, Canada, 2012), 20-24.

For in depth scholarship on the contribution of James Houston to the development of Inuit art refer to:

Richard C. Crandall, *Inuit Art A History* (London: McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers, 2000), 66-101.

which worked directly with Houston,¹⁵ as well as the Hudson's Bay Company.¹⁶ In 1954, through the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (DNANR), the Canadian government began playing a more active role in the development of Inuit art production.¹⁷

Wight articulates that in 1959, due to a federal government initiative, the Co-Operative Development Program was created.¹⁸ These co-operatives were Inuit-owned spaces that aided artists in the procuring of materials and offered artistic guidance. The works produced from the co-operatives were then sold to the southern art market through the aid of the Hudson's Bay Company as well as the Handicraft Guild.¹⁹ Wight's historic recounting of art co-operatives highlights the importance that these spaces had for the consumption and success of Inuit art in the south of Canada.

In *Creation and Transformation*, Norman Vorano's essay, "The Globalization of Inuit Art in the 1950s and 1960s," explores the rapid globalization of Inuit art in the mid-1950s.²⁰ Vorano, like Wight, highlights the important role that James Houston played in the development of Inuit art production through northern expeditions and subsequent literature.²¹ As Project Lead for the Arctic Cultural Heritage Research Network, Vorano attributes the globalization of Inuit art to the National Gallery of Canada's internationally touring exhibition entitled *Canadian Eskimo Art* (1955). The exhibition toured to twelve countries across Europe and was deployed as a means of enhancing Canada's cultural profile on an international stage.²² Vorano asserts that

¹⁵ Darlene Coward Wight, "Birth of an Art Form: 1949 to 1959," 21.

¹⁶ Ibid. 25.

¹⁷ Ibid. 25.

¹⁸ Darlene Coward Wight, "The 1960s: The Rise of Inuit Co-operatives," in *Creation and Transformation Defining Moments in Inuit Art*, ed. Darlene Coward Wight, (Vancouver, Canada, 2012), 60.

¹⁹ Ibid. 60-61.

²⁰ Norman Vorano, "The Globalization of Inuit Art in the 1950s and 1960s," in *Creation and Transformation Defining Moments in Inuit Art*, ed. Darlene Coward Wight, (Vancouver, Canada, 2012), 50.

²¹ Ibid. 50-51.

²² Ibid. 56.

For more information on *Canadian Eskimo Art* refer to:
Canadian Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and James Houston,
Canadian Eskimo Art (Ottawa: 1955), 1-40.

Canadian Eskimo Art was a vehicle for the Canadian government to promote Canadian political and economic interests abroad through Inuit art.²³

Both Wight and Vorano's essays in *Creation and Transformation* provide insight into the development of Inuit art production in the north of Canada and its rapid globalization and promotion to southern and international audiences. Both discuss the development of Inuit art from their perspectives as settler-scholars with a focus on southern influences in the development of Inuit art, such as James Houston, the Handicraft Guild, the Hudson's Bay Company, and the federal government. This scholarship reflects the importance of the south in the development of Inuit art production in the north of Canada.

What is missed in such accounts, however, is the wider impact of these influences historically. For example, neither text engages critically with the forces of colonization that precipitated severe historical crises throughout Canada's north, creating conditions that were optimal for the development of Inuit art production.²⁴ Disease, starvation and the fluctuation of game migration patterns would lead to the transformation of nomadic lifestyles and resettlement in small communities across Canada's north. As a result, the arts and crafts programs introduced from the south would parallel an increasingly sedentary lifestyle.²⁵ What such historical accounts fail to address are the devastating cultural impacts of colonial influences, manifest in starvation conditions, the separation of families, the implementation of residential day schools for Inuit children, and a complete shift in lifestyle that made Inuit communities dependent on the Canadian government. With a focus that overlooks trauma inflicted on Inuit communities and their culture, this literature masks a historical power imbalance and presents Inuit art and history as an economic endeavor influenced positively by southern companies and organizations.

²³ Norman Vorano, "The Globalization of Inuit Art in the 1950s and 1960s," 56.

²⁴ Norman Vorano's research does concern itself with the resettlement of Inuit art and culture through digital projects such as the *Arctic Cultural Heritage Research Network* (ACHRN).

²⁵ Darlene Coward Wight, "Birth of an Art Form: 1949 to 1959," 25.

Bernadette Driscoll Engelstad, research collaborator with the Arctic Studies Centre at the Smithsonian Institution, sees more personal autonomy in Inuit art production, however in her essay for the catalogue *Inuit Modern*,²⁶ “Inuit Art and the Creation of Nunavut” (2010), Engelstad contends that the art historical canon consistently overlooks the fact that art has always been fundamental to Inuit culture.²⁷ Secondly, Engelstad recognizes the economic implications that Inuit art has had on Inuit communities. However, she believes that Inuit art production “strengthen[s] Inuit cultural identity, preserv[es] memory and relay[s] cultural ideas and ideals across generations.”²⁸

Engelstad acknowledges the economic value of Inuit art, yet she asserts that understanding Inuit art solely through the lens of economics is narrow minded. Instead, Engelstad contends that through autonomy, art production for Canada’s northern communities helped better connect the Inuit to their own culture, fueling a creative spirit on a personal and collective level.²⁹ Engelstad credits Inuit art as laying the groundwork for cross-cultural understanding between the north and south of Canada.³⁰ Unlike her contemporaries, Engelstad posits a settler account of Inuit history and art production that does not solely identify Inuit art with southern influences. Instead, Engelstad recognizes the role and importance that Inuit communities played within their own history and the fostering of Inuit art. Nonetheless, Engelstad does not engage in the discussion of the trauma inflicted on Inuit communities due to southern colonial influences within Canada’s northern history and art production.

Christine Lalonde’s contribution to *Inuit Modern*, entitled “Inuit Modern, Colonialism Changes Everything,” unlike the previous sources, provides a more accurate recounting of the history of Inuit life and art production from a settler perspective. Curator of Indigenous Art at the National Gallery of Canada, Lalonde’s discussion of Inuit history acknowledges the Canadian government’s newfound sense of responsibility, developed in the 1950s, for Inuit citizens. Due to

²⁶ *Inuit Modern* is an exhibition catalog from a retrospective show on Inuit art held at the Art Gallery of Ontario. The exhibition and catalog focus on the transformation of Inuit art in the twentieth century.

²⁷ Bernadette Driscoll Engelstad, “Inuit Art and the Creation of Nunavut,” in *Inuit Modern*, ed. Douglas & McIntyre (Vancouver, Canada, 2010), 34.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 33.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 36.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 33.

the collapse of the fur trade, changes in caribou migration patterns and famine, the Canadian Government responded by moving Inuit into settlements with no input from the Inuit themselves.³¹ Lalonde further asserts that the Canadian government's help to Inuit communities served their own nationalistic agendas concerning control over natural resources and sovereignty.³² Lalonde steps away from attributing the development of Inuit art to James Houston and to the south of Canada; she recognizes that Inuit are now more regularly contributing to literature and scholarship, sharing their knowledge and experiences regarding Inuit history and art production. This can be noted in oral and written narratives that provide much-needed Inuit perspectives on the struggles and hardships that Inuit communities have endured.³³

Although these Inuit publications have developed in conjunction with southern museum exhibitions and catalogues, efforts to understand Inuit art and history from an Inuit perspective is a step in the right direction, according to Lalonde. However, Inuit perspectives are only partially heard in scholarship as they are being overshadowed by Western notions of art.³⁴ "Colonialism Changes Everything" aptly captures the crux of the issue, highlighting that Inuit history and art production has historically been monopolized by southern settler scholars. This imbalance needs to be addressed and corrected, she suggests, as Inuit voices should be part of the discourse.

Section 2: Inuit History and Art Production – Inuit Perspectives

Inuit scholarship provides a vastly different perspective on Inuit cultural history. As settler scholars have largely focused on the impacts of southern colonial influences on Canada's north, Inuit contributors highlight the nature and impact of colonial practices, the unethical treatment of Inuit communities, as well as persistent unequal power relationships between the north and south.

³¹ Christine Lalonde, "Colonialism Changes Everything," in *Inuit Modern*, ed. Douglas & McIntyre (Vancouver, Canada, 2010), 27.

³² *Ibid.* 27.

³³ *Ibid.* 27.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 29.

An important text that encapsulates an Inuit perspective on Inuit history and art production is found in the late Inuk writer, journalist, cartoonist and artist Alootook Ipellie's essay entitled "The Colonization of the Arctic" (1992) in *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives on Five Hundred Years and Land*,³⁵ the catalogue of an important exhibition that has driven improved Indigenous representation in Canadian museums. Ipellie's work is quoted and used by numerous settler, Indigenous and more precisely Inuit scholars due to its accuracy and the contrast that it provides its readers in comparison to settler accounts of Inuit history. "The Colonization of the Arctic" directly engages with key factors that led to the production of Inuit art in Canada's north, while highlighting the struggles that Inuit communities faced due to colonial southern influences.

Ipellie introduces and discusses in detail the impact of colonization in Canada's north. Changes to Canada's north began due to famine epidemics that swept across the Arctic in the 1940s – a shift in caribou migration contributed to the starvation and disease that was rampant throughout Inuit populations.³⁶ This resulted in the involvement of the Canadian federal government in the establishment of medical outposts. A shift in hunting patterns and limited access to food resulted in the Inuit becoming more dependent on the Hudson Bay Company's trading posts for necessities.³⁷ Catholic missionaries also had a significant influence on Inuit communities and culture.

According to Ipellie, on their arrival the missionaries "began their assault on the Inuit,"³⁸ as they were forced to change traditional cultural practices, languages, and worldviews.³⁹ As well, the growing influence of the government in Canada's north required the Inuit to register with the RCMP for statistical purposes, receiving "Eskimo Identification" badges through tag serial numbers which were to be worn at all times.⁴⁰ Ipellie also discusses the impact that the

³⁵ Alootook Ipellie, "The Colonization of the Arctic," in *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives*, ed. Douglas & McIntyre (Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Quebec, 1992), 39-57.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 51.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 44.

³⁸ *Ibid.* 44.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 45.

⁴⁰ Heather Igloliorte, "Curating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit Knowledge in the Qallunaat Art Museum," *Art Journal* 76, no. 2 (October 12th, 2017): 109, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00043249.2017.1367196>.

Federal Day schools had on Inuit youth, removing them from their homes and placing them in these schools with the rationale that this would be the most effective way for children of “primitive” environments to experience “civilized” education, and advance their assimilation.⁴¹ This loss of personal and cultural identity, as well as the trauma of pervasive physical, mental and sexual abuse, resulted in long-term effects and impacts. Ipellie provides a complete picture of what the power relationship was between the Canadian government and Inuit communities:

In all of the Inuit communities across the Arctic, the story was the same. The government did what it wanted to do and when it wanted to do it. There was absolutely no opposition from the Inuit to any of the projects the government brought in. All Inuit people in the Arctic were treated like infants by the paternalistic government.⁴²

The paternalistic approach of settlers towards the Inuit would create a relationship that has fostered the erosion of Inuit customs, tradition and language.⁴³ The magnitude of the impact of government and missionary activity in the north that Ipellie speaks of are rarely acknowledged in literature from settler scholars such as Wight and Vorano. It is crucial to have more scholarship that is representative of Inuit perspectives and points of view on their own history and cultural practices.

Inuk art historian and curator Heather Igloliorte has been a major contributor to the discipline of Inuit art history. In her scholarship, Igloliorte references Alootook Ipellie’s article “Colonization of the Arctic” as a means to “penetrate with profundity [the] nearly incomprehensible part of [Inuit] history.”⁴⁴ Works such as “The Inuit of Our Imagination” in *Inuit Modern* (2010), “Inuit Art: Markers of Cultural Resilience” (2010), and “Curating Inuit Qaujimaqatugangit: Inuit Knowledge in the Qallunaat Art Museum” (2017), all address the power imbalance that currently exists in scholarship. As Igloliorte states:

⁴¹ Heather Igloliorte, “Inuit Art: Markers of Cultural Resilience,” in *Inuit Art Quarterly*, ed. Marybelle Mitchell, 25, no. 1 & 2 (Ottawa, Spring/Summer 2010), 5, <http://iaq.inuitartfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/25.1-2.pdf>.

⁴² Alootook Ipellie, “The Colonization of the Arctic,” 53.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 56.

⁴⁴ Heather, Igloliorte. “The Inuit of our Imagination,” in *Inuit Modern*, ed. Douglas & McIntyre (Vancouver, Canada, 2010), 42.

Although there exists a vast literature on Inuit art in Canada—including hundreds of exhibition catalogues and scholarly texts, edited volumes, journal articles, and publications in the popular media—very little of it has been produced by Inuit. Despite the critical and commercial success of Inuit art, which has flourished since the beginning of the modern Inuit art movement in the mid-twentieth century into an internationally recognized art form and multimillion-dollar industry, the research, study, and dissemination of Inuit art has largely been the work of Qallunaat (non-Inuit) scholars, curators, critics, and museum staff. Few Inuit authors have ever been published in art-historical texts.⁴⁵

This imbalance informs Igloliorte’s focus on Inuit sovereignty prevalent throughout her research. Igloliorte points out that the sovereignty of Inuit people can be linked to the formation of the territory of Nunavut in 1999. Since then, Inuit have been regaining their autonomy from Qallunaat (non-Inuit), taking control of their own global representation, and speaking out against the legacies of colonialism while asserting their rights to sovereignty and self-determination.⁴⁶ Igloliorte suggests that it is necessary to understand issues of northern sovereignty and colonization in order to recognize the important role that Inuit artists have played in maintaining Inuit cultural identity and autonomy, connecting the impacts of colonialism to Inuit art production in a manner that southern/settler sources do not.⁴⁷

Igloliorte’s research suggests that Inuit art has supported *cultural resilience* in Inuit communities. Igloliorte cites the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, which states that “resilience is the capacity for communities, families, and individuals to spring back from adversity more fortified and resourceful despite decades of societal stressors.”⁴⁸ Igloliorte asserts the role of Inuit art with respect to cultural resilience was paradoxical – as traditional Inuit life in the north of Canada was eroding rapidly due to southern colonial influences, a visual culture highlighting traditional values took on primacy in the south:

...while Inuit culture was being debased, devalued, exploited and eroded in the North by the dominant colonial presence that sought to wholly assimilate Inuit culture into the mainstream, in the mainstream culture these same Inuit values were being celebrated

⁴⁵ Heather Igloliorte, “Curating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit Knowledge in the Qallunaat Art Museum,” 101.

⁴⁶ Heather, Igloliorte. “The Inuit of our Imagination,” 41.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 41.

⁴⁸ Heather Igloliorte, “Inuit Art: Markers of Cultural Resilience,” 4.

through the enthusiastic purchase of Inuit art in the national and even international art market.⁴⁹

Statements such as this by Igloliorte highlight the power imbalance and the ironies that have created tension in the historiography of Inuit history and art production. Furthermore, it reinforces the difference in perspectives between non-Inuit scholars and the disproportionately small number of Inuit scholars and literature that document these realities.

Igloliorte also introduces Inuit models for thinking about Inuit art, such as the concept of Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit*, or IQ, which can be understood as encompassing “the complex matrix of Inuit environmental knowledge, societal values, cosmology, worldviews, and language.”⁵⁰ To Igloliorte, IQ is integral to contemporary Inuit life, as it represents a living knowledge which can be applied to, and reflect upon, Inuit art, as a means to maintain cultural knowledge.⁵¹ According to Igloliorte, IQ was disrupted due to the rapid introduction of Christianity and colonization that followed contact with non-Inuit culture. This historically jeopardized Inuit values, language and spirituality. Yet, through the perseverance of IQ, there has been a shift in Inuit independence and an assertion of Inuit self-representation within the artistic community.⁵² Igloliorte’s reference to IQ implies that the production of Inuit art is more than an economic venture, as discussed by southern literature. Rather, Inuit artists imbue their own cultural values, knowledge and traditions into the artwork they produce. Ultimately, Heather Igloliorte provides a vital Inuk perspective of the historical and current day realities of Inuit experience and cultural production through her focus on the state of Inuit scholarship, forces of cultural resilience, and significance of Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit*. Due to the monopolization of scholarship on the part of non-Inuit, settler scholars, Igloliorte presses the need for more Inuit voices to enter the discourse of Inuit art and history.⁵³

⁴⁹ Heather, Igloliorte. “The Inuit of our Imagination,” 45.

⁵⁰ Heather Igloliorte, “Curating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit Knowledge in the Qallunaat Art Museum,” 102.

⁵¹ Ibid. 103.

⁵² Ibid. 111.

⁵³ Heather, Igloliorte. “The Inuit of our Imagination,” 46.

To conclude, Section One and Two have highlighted the differences in approach that Inuit and non-Inuit scholars have taken to discussing the history of Inuit people and their subsequent art production. Concerned with the impacts that the south's colonial influence has had on their communities, scholars such as IPELLIE and IGLOLIORTE highlight the cultural strength represented by art production in Canada's north as a means to preserve Inuit traditions and culture. Settler scholars such as WIGHT and VORANO, in contrast, approach art production primarily in terms of its role as an economic venture, highlighting the influence of southern enterprise and collections held by its cultural institutions.

Section 3: Museums and Indigenous Art History

Historically, the practice of collecting the work of Indigenous communities by museums was informed by salvage anthropological and ethnographical ideologies, assuming that Indigenous peoples and their cultures were extinct or on the verge of vanishing.⁵⁴ In light of this, extensive collections of Indigenous cultural material began to develop at the turn of the twentieth century. This conception was paralleled by an approach to Indigenous and Inuit cultural material as existing in the past and being incapable of change.⁵⁵ Against this backdrop, Section Three will address literature supporting collaborative museological practices. My discussion surrounding this shift then focuses on the controversies that resulted in Canada in association with the exhibition *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples*, presented at the Glenbow Museum in 1988. Those controversies would influence and inform conversations leading to the development of more ethical collaborative museum practice, seen in the publication *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples*, a report jointly sponsored by the Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museums Association in 1992. Finally, studies of Indigenous and Inuit art exhibitions in Canadian museums will be discussed as a means of showing how collaborative partnerships have been

⁵⁴ Janet C. Berlo and Ruth B. Phillips, "An Introduction to the Indigenous Arts of North America," in *Native North American Art*, ed. Janet C. Berlo and Ruth B. Phillips (Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 13-14.

⁵⁵ Task Force on Museums and First Peoples and the Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museum Association, *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples* (Ottawa: Task Force, 2nd ed. 1992), 7.

developing between Indigenous communities and Canadian museums. The majority of studies discussed are written from settler perspectives, which reinforces the dominance of settler viewpoints throughout Indigenous/Inuit museum practice.

Within the discourse addressing museum practice and art history, Janet Berlo and Ruth Phillips' publication *Native North American Art* (1998) addresses the importance of a "new art history" that evolved in the 1970s, challenging the hierarchies of race, class and gender that were historically embedded in the narrative and canons of Western art history.⁵⁶ This would provide the context for changing approaches to Indigenous art practices. Challenging the hierarchy of diminishing Indigenous/Inuit voices and perspectives in favor of settler, scholarly voices within museum spaces, this period was crucial – paralleling increased engagement with Inuit and Indigenous communities more widely within Canadian museums.

A contributor to the seminal *Museums and their Communities* (2007), museum studies professor, Sheila Watson echoes the sentiments of Berlo and Phillips, highlighting a distinction between traditional and new museology. Watson suggests that historically museology was characterized by an emphasis on the collection, documentation and interpretation of objects. The new museology, Watson suggests, emphasizes community needs; it "questions [the] traditional museum approaches to issues of value, meaning, control, interpretation, authority and authenticity."⁵⁷ Watson asserts that the relationships that museums have historically had with their communities has been unequal, with the balance of power in the hands of the institution.⁵⁸ Changing these power dynamics between museums and their communities, Watson views this as necessary to make institutions more relevant to the communities in which they serve.⁵⁹ Bringing together such research from around the world, *Museums and their Communities* highlights the longstanding and pervasive imbalance of power and authority between museums and the communities they serve – a dynamic which is crucial to how Inuit communities have been addressed and presented within museum settings.

⁵⁶ Janet C. Berlo and Ruth B. Phillips, "An Introduction to the Indigenous Arts of North America," 14.

⁵⁷ Sheila Watson, "Museums and their Communities," in *Museums and their Communities*, ed. Sheila Watson (Routledge, 2007), 13.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 9.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 10-11.

The author of *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture* (2000), Eilean Hooper-Greenhill articulates a new emerging stage of practice for cultural institutions known as the *post-museum*. According to Greenhill, this practice will concentrate on communication, including numerous voices and perspectives as opposed to a singular, monolithic Western worldview, and assuring that the museum's voice and knowledge-sharing becomes multi-vocal, including a range of perspectives, experiences and values.⁶⁰ The post-museum will consist of numerous forms of communication that includes exhibitions as well as community partnerships, educational programs, community gatherings and virtual connections to the museum.⁶¹ Greenhill's concept of the post-museum echoes Watson's importance of community inclusion as well as a shift in power authority in museum practice.

Literature from Berlo, Phillips, Watson and Greenhill provide insight into a shift within museum practice that steps away from being authoritative and to one that is rather more inclusive and open to hearing different perspectives and voices within museums. As will now be discussed, the need for collaboration in museum practice came to a head in Canada within research in the 1980s, particularly surrounding the representation and curation practices related to Indigenous cultural material as in *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples* (1988).

The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples (1988)

Contemporary scholars have explored the exhibition *The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples* (1988) as a pivotal turning point in understanding Indigeneity within a postcolonial context. Presented at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, Alberta, the exhibition coincided with the 1988 Winter Olympics. With an intention to explore Indigenous cultures across Canada through historical works, *The Spirit Sings* was an attempt to "bring home" the cultural objects of Canadian Indigenous groups.⁶² According to Ruth Phillips in her essay

⁶⁰ Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture* (London: Routledge, 2000), 152.

⁶¹ Ibid. 152.

⁶² Kelsey R. Wrightson, "The Limits of Recognition: *The Spirit Sings*, Canadian Museums and the Colonial Politics of Recognition," *Museum Anthropology* 40, no. 1 (March, 2017): 39, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/doi/10.1111/muan.12129/epdf>.

“Moment of Truth: The Spirit Sings as Critical Event and the Exhibition Inside It” in *Museum Pieces: Towards the Indigenization of Canadian Museums* (2011), the *Spirit Sings* has been positioned by virtually all Canadian writers as the point of departure for the postcolonial project of museum reform that would occur throughout the 1990s and 2000s.⁶³

The Spirit Sings incurred controversy regarding museum representation and political differences. While the intention of the museum was to expand the knowledge of Indigenous cultures, it was critiqued on numerous points including curatorial content, display of sacred objects, presentation style, and a lack of consultation with source communities.⁶⁴ In addition, *The Spirit Sings* sparked controversy regarding the integration of a corporate sponsor, Shell Oil, given that the company had been drilling on Indigenous Lubicon Cree territory in northern Alberta since the 1950s. The Lubicon Cree and other Indigenous groups would initiate a boycott, created a political platform for Indigenous rights, as well as advocating against the misrepresentation of Indigenous groups within museum practice. As a result of the heavy attention to these tensions, the inclusion of Indigenous voices became imperative.

The scholarly debate surrounding *The Spirit Sings* and its role in advancing ethical museum practice in relation to Indigenous communities is the subject of the article “The Spirit Sings’ and the Future of Anthropology” (1988), written by lead curator of the exhibition, Julia Harrison, and former Curator of Ethnology at McGill University’s McCord Museum, the late Bruce Trigger.

Harrison points out that the Glenbow museum was advocating for a better understanding of Indigenous cultures, and that this was not influenced by their corporate sponsorship. However, to Indigenous communities, the issue of corporate sponsorship was troubling as it presented Shell Oil as being supportive of Indigenous peoples, when in reality the company was destroying the Lubicon Cree territory through oil drilling.⁶⁵ Harrison continues to push the blame away from

⁶³ Ruth B. Phillips, “Moment of Truth The Spirit Sings as Critical Event and the Exhibition Inside It,” in *Museum Pieces Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums*, ed. Ruth B. Phillips (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 48, <https://books.scholarsportal.info/uri/ebooks/ebooks3/upress/2013-08-23/1/9780773587465>.

⁶⁴ Kelsey R. Wrightson, “The Limits of Recognition: *The Spirit Sings*, Canadian Museums and the Colonial Politics of Recognition,” 39.

⁶⁵ Julia D. Harrison and Bruce Trigger, “The Spirit Sings’ and the Future of Anthropology.” *Anthropology Today* 4, no. 6 (December 1988): 6, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3032945>.

The Spirit Sings, by suggesting that biases within the overall discipline of anthropology were the key contributing factor as to why the exhibition was not well received. Harrison denies any of the political issues that led to the widespread boycott of the exhibition by Indigenous activists. Instead, Harrison believes that *The Spirit Sings* had a positive outcome for visitors by offering better Indigenous representation. More recent scholarship by Ruth Phillips, who was also a curator for *The Spirit Sings*, says in “Moment of Truth” (2011) that the exhibition was a transitional and intentionally hybrid exhibition that blurred art and artifact display paradigms.⁶⁶ Harrison and Phillips view *The Spirit Sings* as a positive exhibition that ultimately improved the representation of Indigenous cultural material. Harrison, however, concedes that *The Spirit Sings* curators failed to consult with local Indigenous Band Councils as suggested by their Native Liaison Committee.⁶⁷ In *The Last Song*, Harrison cites the International Council of Museums (ICOM), which asserted that *The Spirit Sings* was the last exhibition of its genre that lacked appropriate consultation with source communities.⁶⁸

Bruce Trigger (1937-2006) responds directly to Harrison, rejecting her argument in “The Spirit Sings’ and the Future of Anthropology.” Trigger highlights that the curators of *The Spirit Sings* should not have decided what was in the best interest of Indigenous groups regarding the representation of cultural objects.⁶⁹ Trigger’s bold response to Harrison does not shift blame concerning the controversies over the exhibition but tackles these indifferences head on. Trigger says that museums cannot accept money from corporate sponsors and pretend to maintain their academic freedom.⁷⁰ Trigger advocates for more responsibility and sensitivity when exhibiting Indigenous cultural objects. He questions the role of museum curators and strongly suggests that they need to take a more responsible role to “redress the negative consequences of 500 years of European domination.”⁷¹ Harrison and Phillips view *The Spirit Sings* as a positive attempt at

⁶⁶ Ruth B. Phillips, “Moment of Truth The Spirit Sings as Critical Event and the Exhibition Inside It,” 51-52.

⁶⁷ Julia D. Harrison, “The Spirit Sings The Last Song?,” *The International Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship*, 7, no. 4 (December, 1988): 355, [doi: 10.1080/09647778809515138](https://doi.org/10.1080/09647778809515138).

⁶⁸ Julia D. Harrison, “The Spirit Sings The Last Song?,” 359.

⁶⁹ Julia D. Harrison and Bruce Trigger, “The Spirit Sings’ and the Future of Anthropology.” 9.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 9.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* 10.

Indigenous representation within museums, whereas Trigger views *The Spirit Sings* as a critical moment of change and revision within Canadian museum practice and its engagement with Indigenous communities. Ultimately, as Harrison asserts, “Museums will be challenged ever more in the future, on every level, and we had better know clearly what we are about and why. If we can achieve such a level of consciousness there will be an exciting future ahead for museums.”⁷²

The positive and negative impacts addressed by scholars such as Harrison, Phillips and Trigger point to a shift in Canadian museum practice in relation to inclusion and improved representation of Indigenous/Inuit communities and their cultural material. Furthermore, *The Spirit Sings* reinforced the persistence of settler colonial power in museums. Indigenous scholar Kelsey Wrightson, Executive Director at Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning addresses such politics of recognition in relation to Canadian museological practice.⁷³ Wrightson argues that museum practice in Canada, as it relates to Indigenous/Inuit cultural material, has lacked a critical analysis of settler colonial regimes of power.⁷⁴ Wrightson cites *The Spirit Sings* as an example of early signs of a colonial politics of recognition.⁷⁵ The discussion surrounding power relationships within Canadian museums in relation to Indigenous and Inuit communities is imperative, as is the implementation of ethical standards that would better facilitate collaborative models within Canadian museum practice. This can be noted the 1992 report on museums, *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships between Museums and First Peoples Report*.

⁷² Julia D. Harrison, “The Spirit Sings The Last Song?,” 362.

⁷³ Kelsey R. Wrightson, “The Limits of Recognition: *The Spirit Sings*, Canadian Museums and the Colonial Politics of Recognition,” 36.

⁷⁴ Ibid. 36.

⁷⁵ Ibid. 37.

Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples (1992)

The controversies that arose from *The Spirit Sings* led to the development of the report *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples* (1992) with its mission statement “to develop an ethical framework and strategies for Aboriginal Nations to represent their history and culture in concert with cultural institutions.”⁷⁶ As former National Chief Assembly of First Nations George Erasmus stated, “the Spirit Sings...raised questions that museums had to deal with and a lot of questions that Native people had to address...What we are embarking on now is the beginning of a different kind of relationship between two potentially strong allies.”⁷⁷ The report was concerned with creating such open and lasting partnerships between museums and Indigenous communities, providing ethical guidelines around the topics of interpretation, access, repatriation, training, and implementation.⁷⁸ Although the report presents a shift in Canadian museum practice and collaboration with Indigenous and Inuit communities, Indigenous scholars have raised concerns that this document does not address systemic issues inherent in power dynamics in the sector related to the representation of Indigenous/Inuit cultural material and communities.

Mohawk curator and scholar Deborah Doxtator’s (1957-1998) essay, “The Implications of Canadian Nationalism for Aboriginal Cultural Autonomy” in *Curatorship: Indigenous Perspectives in Post-Colonial Societies* (1996), questions whether equal partnership can exist between Indigenous peoples and museums in a manner that will create meaningful change, as outlined by the report.⁷⁹ Doxtator asserts that the recommendations reinforce passivity of Indigenous communities while re-ascribing responsibility or power to those who are non-

⁷⁶ Task Force on Museums and First Peoples and the Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museum Association, *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples*, vi.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* ii.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 7-10.

⁷⁹ Deborah Doxtator, “The Implications of Canadian Nationalism for Aboriginal Cultural Autonomy,” in *Curatorship: Indigenous Perspectives in Post-Colonial Societies*, (Canadian Museum of Civilization with the Commonwealth Association of Museums and the University of Victoria, 1996), 64.

Indigenous within the museum sector. To counter this, she emphasizes that it is a moral necessity that Indigenous peoples are given access to their cultural materials within museum collections.⁸⁰

The tension is also expressed by Mohawk curator Lee-Ann Martin. Martin's essay "Aboriginal People Need to Control Their Own Culture", also published in *Curatorship: Indigenous Perspectives in Post-Colonial Societies* (1996), questions whether Indigenous peoples are key players within museum practice and partnerships. Although Indigenous peoples are curating and writing more within mainstream institutions, are Indigenous peoples really in control of what is occurring with their cultural material?⁸¹ To Martin, terms such as *partnership*, that the Task Force report references heavily, speaks to equality amongst parties. However, she maintains that attaining this equality is challenging because partnership requires an acknowledgement, sharing of power and recognizing differences between museums and Indigenous communities.⁸² Doxtator and Martin question the effectiveness of the collaboration and partnership recommendations as ultimately, despite the call for equity, issues of control and access to Indigenous cultural material remains in the hands of settler museums.⁸³

Echoing the opinions of Doxtator and Martin, Kelsey Wrightson states that the report "retains the asymmetric relationship between museums and Indigenous communities, mirroring the larger structural settler colonial relationships between the Canadian state and Indigenous peoples."⁸⁴ Wrightson suggests that the report does not change the colonial relations between museums and Indigenous communities, but rather reproduces the structural conditions of settler colonial power.⁸⁵ Although the report recognizes the historically biased power relations in Canadian museums, Doxtator, Martin and Wrightson's critiques of this document highlight the perpetuation of settler control and access with regards to Indigenous cultural material.

⁸⁰ Deborah Doxtator, "The Implications of Canadian Nationalism for Aboriginal Cultural Autonomy," 63.

⁸¹ Lee-Ann Martin, "Aboriginal People Need to Control Their Own Culture," in *Curatorship: Indigenous Perspectives in Post-Colonial Societies*, (Canadian Museum of Civilization with the Commonwealth Association of Museums and the University of Victoria, 1996), 27.

⁸² *Ibid.* 28.

⁸³ Deborah Doxtator, "The Implications of Canadian Nationalism for Aboriginal Cultural Autonomy," 63.

⁸⁴ Kelsey R. Wrightson, "The Limits of Recognition: *The Spirit Sings*, Canadian Museums and the Colonial Politics of Recognition," 42.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 42.

Collaboration in Museum Exhibitions

Subsequent to the publication of the Task Force report, researchers have explored the emergence of collaborative exhibitions that were more inclusive to Indigenous and Inuit communities and their art objects. These exhibitions have been approached as a means of shifting power dynamics from museum settler curators to Indigenous and Inuit scholars and artists. This is particularly true of the exhibition *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives on Five Hundred Years* and *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada*, both held in 1992. According to Ruth Phillips in “Making Space: First Nations Artists, the National Museums, and the Columbus Quincentennial,” published in *Museum Pieces* (2011), these two exhibitions brought attention to the tension over the marginalization of Indigenous peoples and their [art objects] to the forefront of the country’s most official spaces for artistic and cultural display – the Canadian Museum of History and the National Gallery of Canada.⁸⁶ *Indigena* was organized by Indigenous curators Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin. The show addressed, from an Indigenous perspective, the arrival of Christopher Columbus and, according to Phillips, represents a landmark in Canadian museum history as it was the first exhibition whose participants (i.e. the curators, artists and writers) were all of Indigenous heritage.⁸⁷ Furthermore, *Indigena* was openly personal and political, which diverged from earlier purportedly “objective” academic surveys used to portray Indigenous art.⁸⁸

Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada, took a collaborative approach to the curatorial team, with members of both settler and Indigenous heritage. This included curators Diana Nemiroff, Robert Houle and Charlotte Townsend-Gault. The exhibition itself presented a broad range of contemporary visual art from Canada and the United States by Indigenous artists, which was incorporated based upon aesthetic and political themes.⁸⁹ According to Phillips, both *Indigena* and *Land, Spirit, Power* complemented each other. Both host institutions have a history of collecting Indigenous art objects, so the creation of

⁸⁶ Ruth B. Phillips, “Making Space First Nations Artists, the National Museums, and the Columbus Quincentennial (1992),” in *Museum Pieces Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums*, ed. Ruth B. Phillips (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 161, <https://books.scholarsportal.info/uri/ebooks/ebooks3/upress/2013-08-23/1/9780773587465>.

⁸⁷ Ibid. 161-162.

⁸⁸ Ibid. 162.

⁸⁹ Ibid. 162.

these two exhibitions reflected the importance of this material in Canada's cultural landscape, while highlighting themes of history, cultural survival and art.⁹⁰ Indigenous critic and curator Richard William Hill agrees with the positive praise that Phillips ascribes to the exhibitions. According to Hill, such group shows "define artistic movements" and have been particularly important in defining conceptions of Indigenous art.⁹¹ In his article "9 Group Exhibitions That Define Contemporary Indigenous Art" (2016), Hill suggests that *Indigena* and *Land, Spirit, Power* represent "pendant exhibitions staged by Canada's two major national museums".⁹² Hill also points out that both included vastly different artists, which he suggests is a reminder that Indigenous art was already beyond the capacity of one exhibition to capture.⁹³

The expansion, collaboration and shifting of power dynamics of Indigenous communities in Canadian museums can also be applied to Inuit art. In her essay within the volume *Creation and Transformation Defining Moments in Inuit Art* (2012), Darlene Coward Wight echoes this shift in museum practice throughout the 1990s. Wight states, "In the 1990s public galleries started researching and organizing their exhibitions in collaboration with [Inuit] artists—a model that has become standard practice in recent years."⁹⁴ Wight addresses various Inuit art exhibitions held at the Winnipeg Art Gallery that utilized collaborative approaches with Inuit artists. This included the WAG's show in 1989 entitled, *Out of Tradition: Abraham Anghik/David Ruben Piqtoukun*. According to Wight, both Anghik and Piqtoukun assisted with the research for the show, and provided written and verbal commentaries that provided the basis for the interpretation of their works.⁹⁵ Further collaboration occurred with Anghik and Piqtoukun into the 1990s and early 2000s with solo exhibitions such as *Between Two Worlds: Sculpture by David Ruben Piqtoukun* (1996) and *Abraham Anghik Ruben* (2001).⁹⁶ Wight highlights that

⁹⁰ Ruth B. Phillips, "Making Space First Nations Artists, the National Museums, and the Columbus Quincentennial (1992)," 162.

⁹¹ Richard William Hill, "9 Group Exhibitions That Defined Contemporary Indigenous Art," *Canadianart*, July 28th, 2016, <https://canadianart.ca/essays/9-group-exhibitions-that-defined-contemporary-indigenous-art/>.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Darlene Coward Wight, "The 1990s: Between Two Worlds," in *Creation and Transformation Defining Moments in Inuit Art*, ed. Darlene Coward Wight (Vancouver, Canada, 2012), 154.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 154.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 154.

collaborative practices with Inuit artists points to a shift in the curation and exhibition of Inuit art in Canada as being a standard practice in museums.

The discussion surrounding collaborative Inuit exhibitions is also discussed by Métis art historian and curator Marie Bouchard, in “Curating in Relation to Community”, a chapter within *Making a Noise Aboriginal Perspectives on Art, Art History, Critical Writing and Community* (2004). Bouchard discusses the importance of collaborating with Inuit artists in the creation of Inuit art exhibitions. Specifically, Bouchard refers to key community-based curatorial projects executed both before and after the formation of the territory of Nunavut. These projects were undertaken through collaboration with Inuit artists and their broader, northern geographical communities.⁹⁷ Firstly, Bouchard discusses the *Qamanittuaq: Where the River Widens* (1994), an exhibition of Baker Lake drawings held at the MacDonald Stewart Art Centre (MSAC) (now known as the Art Gallery of Guelph). Collaboration occurred at a curatorial level, between Inuit artist William Noah, Judith Nasby (Director of the MSAC) and Inuit art specialist Marion Jackson. Bouchard asserts that while it is commendable that primary research was undertaken in Baker Lake for this exhibition, this research would not be beneficial to the Inuit community it represented, relegated to exhibition catalogues that would only be seen several years later.⁹⁸ It is for this reason that Bouchard suggested that *Qamanittuaq: Where the River Widens* be officially opened in Baker Lake, marking this as the first major exhibition of Inuit art organized by a southern art institution to open in the north of Canada.⁹⁹ Furthermore, to celebrate this opening, an art symposium was organized for Inuit artists, community members, and southern curators, scholars, collectors and gallery dealers. As these events occurred prior to the formation of the territory of Nunavut, Bouchard stresses that these events “sought to inverse the long-established power relationship between Inuit and their southern audience...”¹⁰⁰ Bouchard believes that it was through such events that the power dynamic between the north and south of Canada could shift, providing northern Inuit artists with more autonomy to speak and interpret their own artwork.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Marie Bouchard, “Curating in Relation to Community,” in *Making a Noise Aboriginal Perspectives on Art, Art History, Critical Writing and Community*, ed. Lee-Ann Martin (Banff International Curatorial Institute, Banff, Alberta, 2005), 211-212.

⁹⁸ Ibid. 212-213.

⁹⁹ Ibid. 213.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 214.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 214.

Bouchard also discusses exhibitions and their collaborative nature after the formation of the territory of Nunavut. For instance, *An Inuit Perspective: Baker Lake Sculpture* (2000), was a collaboration between the Art Gallery of Ontario and Itsarnittakarvik: the Inuit Heritage Centre in Baker Lake.¹⁰² It was decided that the exhibition would be curated by the Inuit artists involved, making this the first exhibition curated by Inuit to open in the Arctic community of Baker Lake.¹⁰³ This forum was monumental, as it occurred in conjunction with the formation of Nunavut. Bouchard asserts that this led to the recognition of Inuit traditional knowledge, which challenged the status quo of curatorial practice pertaining to the exhibition of Inuit art.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, the exhibition provided community members a chance to reacquaint themselves with historical works of art, creating better physical access to these artworks, while repositioning the geographical exhibition of Inuit art to the north of Canada. Ultimately, both Wight and Bouchard present defining moments of collaborative curatorial practice with Inuit artists. It is through these events that these scholars identify a shift in power dynamics, based on the engagement of Inuit artists and their northern communities. However, it is still important to note that despite this, the voice of Inuit heritage curators remains lacking from this literature; rather, settler and Indigenous scholars predominate in this conversation.

The conversation concerning the collaboration with Inuit artists in museum exhibitions points to the increasing recognition of the Inuit within the contemporary art world. In her essay “New Directions in Inuit Art,” in *Creation and Transformation*, Christine Lalonde suggests new Inuit curatorial voices are being used and recognized throughout Canada and that this collaboration and inclusion of Inuit art within the national and international contemporary art scene has broken down barriers of exclusivity.¹⁰⁵ The benefits of this collaboration and inclusion, Lalonde believes, will aid and flow back to the north of Canada.¹⁰⁶ In addition, she questions how being a part of a larger art scene will affect Inuit artists who are no longer located in the north.¹⁰⁷ These are important questions to raise as collaboration between Canadian museums and

¹⁰² Marie Bouchard, “Curating in Relation to Community,” 214.

¹⁰³ Ibid. 215.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 215.

¹⁰⁵ Christine Lalonde, “New Directions in Inuit Art since 2000,” in *Creation and Transformation Defining Moments in Inuit Art*, ed. Darlene Coward Wight (Vancouver, Canada, 2012), 187.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 186.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 187.

Inuit artists has, in many ways, compressed physical and psychological distances between the north and south of Canada. Furthermore, this shift in practice has enabled the opportunity for greater engagement with Inuit voice and perspectives, while supporting sovereignty for Inuit communities with regards to their culture and art production. Again, it is important to note that the conversation surrounding a shift to collaborative museum practice with Inuit artists has been discussed primarily by southern settler scholars. This begs the question, what do Inuit scholars have to say about these shifts in museum practice and what are their critiques of power relationships within the art historical and museum community?

Section 4: Institutional Critiques by Indigenous and Inuit scholars

In *Making a Noise! Aboriginal Perspectives on Art, Art History, Critical Writing and Community* (2005), Lee-Ann Martin asks readers why such under-representation of Indigenous and Inuit scholars and critical writing persist into the twenty-first century.¹⁰⁸ Martin asserts that although Indigenous and Inuit have received better recognition in and by Canadian museums in the 1990s, the exclusion of curators and writers of Indigenous and more precisely Inuit ancestry remains an unresolved issue.¹⁰⁹ Martin references a “soft inclusion” of Indigenous and Inuit literature in the discourses of arts and culture, which “absolves the institution from a long-term commitment to the serious treatment of works by [Indigenous] artists... This intermittent inclusion... almost always guarantees consistent exclusion... and gives the impression that there is no problem of exclusion.”¹¹⁰ Martin highlights that this minimal inclusion does not overcome the primary perspectives within the discourse of Inuit and Indigenous scholarship dominated by settler voices. Offering potential solutions to shift this monopolization within the literature, she suggests recommendations that include an increase in frequency and use of mainstream modes of dissemination of critical literature that targets both Indigenous and non-Indigenous readers.¹¹¹ Doing so will increase the access and inclusion of Indigenous and Inuit voices within the

¹⁰⁸ Lee-Ann Martin, “Wordplay: Issues of Authority and Territory,” in *Making a Noise Aboriginal Perspectives on Art, Art History, Critical Writing and Community*, ed. Lee-Ann Martin (Banff International Curatorial Institute, Banff, Alberta, 2005), 103.

¹⁰⁹ Lee-Ann Martin, “Making a Noise in This (Art) World,” 17.

¹¹⁰ Lee-Ann Martin, “Wordplay: Issues of Authority and Territory,” 103.

¹¹¹ Ibid. 106-107.

discourse of arts and culture. Martin suggests that the presence of Indigenous and Inuit writers and curators “is individually diverse and collectively strong—a noise too loud to ignore.”¹¹² Highlighting the complexity of power relationships and dynamics between museums and Indigenous/Inuit scholars, she raises the question whether the system of collaboration is working to *equally* benefit both Indigenous and non-Indigenous parties within a museum context.

Martin’s analysis is echoed more specifically within an Inuit context by Inuk Heather Igloliorte in “Curating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit Knowledge in the Qallunaat Art Museum” (2017). Igloliorte reinforces the lack of inclusion of Inuit literature by Inuit writers, indicating that she is (as of 2017), “the only Inuk in Canada to hold a PhD in art history, one of only two or three Inuit to ever teach an Inuit art class at the university level, and one of the few curators of circumpolar art from our country to date.”¹¹³ This personal statement from Igloliorte reinforces the deep power imbalance when it comes to who is writing about Inuit and their art production, establishing settler scholars as authorities on a culture that they are not a part of.

The importance of hearing Inuit voices within the discourse of Inuit art and culture reinforces Igloliorte’s emphasis on cultural sovereignty. According to Tribal Elder Donna Ennis in her essay “It’s Time to Take Back Our Cultural Sovereignty” (2015), “Cultural Sovereignty is our inherent right to use our values, traditions, and spirituality to protect our future.”¹¹⁴ From Igloliorte’s perspective art production and culturally distinct artistic practices and traditions are critical forces for Inuit cultural sovereignty.¹¹⁵ She further states that the development of new Inuit voices within the discourse that surrounds Inuit art and culture will also advance Inuit authority and processes of reconciliation.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Lee-Ann Martin, “Making a Noise in This (Art) World,” 22.

¹¹³ Heather Igloliorte, “Curating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit Knowledge in the Qallunaat Art Museum,” 101.

¹¹⁴ Donna Ennis, “Time to Take Back Our Cultural Sovereignty,” *Indian Country Today Digital Indigenous News*, July 22nd, 2015, <https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/it-s-time-to-take-back-our-cultural-sovereignty-19eMjNQmi0yRkL5hLWOfIA/>.

¹¹⁵ Heather, Igloliorte. “The Inuit of our Imagination,” 44-45.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.* 46.

Inuit Voice and Reconciliation

The conversation surrounding reconciliation between Indigenous and settler parties is an important topic of conversation in scholarship about Canadian art, and especially in relation to Canadian museum practice. Reconciliation can be defined as “an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change.”¹¹⁷ The report *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (2015), represents a key text in literature on the topic of reconciliation in Canada, focusing on the legacy of residential schools and with the following aims “1) to discover, clarify, and formally acknowledge past abuses; 2) to respond to specific needs of victims; 3) to contribute to justice and accountability; 4) to outline institutional responsibility and recommend reforms; and 5) to promote reconciliation and reduce conflict over the past.”¹¹⁸ Within the report, the concept of reconciliation is discussed as being not just an Indigenous problem, but, rather, a Canadian one, and is about “coming to terms with events of the past in a manner that overcomes conflict and establishes a respectful and healthy relationship among people, going forward.”¹¹⁹ Emphasis is placed on the sharing of responsibility between parties; as residential school survivor Archie Little stated at the Victoria Regional Event in 2012,

¹¹⁷ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future- Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication, 2015), 16, http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/Honouring_the_Truth_Reconciling_for_the_Future_July_23_2015.pdf.

¹¹⁸ Brian Rice and Anna Snyder, “Reconciliation in the Context of a Settler Society: Healing the Legacy of Colonialism in Canada,” in *From Truth to Reconciliation Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools*, ed. Marlene Brant Castellano, Linda Archibald and Mike DeGagné (Ottawa, Ontario, Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2008), 46, <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/truth-to-reconciliation.pdf>.

¹¹⁹ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future- Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 6.

“We need to work together...”¹²⁰ Little’s statement reiterates a core theme of the report – that education and dialogue between settler and Indigenous parties is the key to reconciliation.¹²¹

Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada also asserts that Canadian museums have a key role to play in the reconciliation process, highlighting that cultural and heritage institutions are well-positioned to contribute to the reconciliation process through exhibitions, education, outreach and research programs.¹²² The role of museums within reconciliation is recognized within the Calls to Action #67, #68, and #79 in particular:

67) We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Museums Association to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of museum policies and best practices to determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples¹²³ and to make recommendations.

68) We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, and the Canadian Museums Association to mark the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation in 2017 by establishing a dedicated national funding program for commemoration projects on the theme of reconciliation.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future- Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 9.

¹²¹ Ibid. 184-185.

¹²² Ibid. 247, 252.

¹²³ The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was created on September 13th, 2007. This document is recognized as an international framework on the rights and freedoms of Indigenous peoples.

“United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” United Nations- Indigenous Peoples, n.d., Accessed April 15th, 2019,

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>.

For full document see “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” United Nations General Assembly, September 13th, 2007, Accessed April 15th, 2019,

https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf.

¹²⁴ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future- Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 252.

79. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration.

These Calls to Action reflect the importance of reconciliation within museum settings in Canada. Also published in *From Truth to Reconciliation Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools* Brian Rice and Anna Snyder's essay, "Reconciliation in the Context of a Settler Society: Healing the Legacy of Colonialism in Canada," addresses the concept of reconciliation as power-sharing between settler and Indigenous parties, as a means of creating a constructive reconciliation process.¹²⁵ This approach is critical within a museum context where, as previously addressed by Igloliorte, the necessity for Inuit voices and curators is at an all-time high. Reconciliation is not a "forgive and forget" concept, as a result.¹²⁶ Rather, Canadian museums are positioned as a powerful locus of education, dialogue and power-sharing between Indigenous, Inuit and settler parties, by validating Indigenous and Inuit cultural practices and processes.¹²⁷

Conclusion

The trajectory of museum practice in Canada has revealed critical information about Indigenous and Inuit collaboration and power sharing dynamics. While commentary has addressed concepts of collaboration and improved partnerships, Indigenous and Inuit researchers and writers suggest that more work remains to be done. For Indigenous communities within Canada's north, these developments represent both opportunities and challenges, particularly in relation to art objects that now reside in private and public art collections. Identified as "cultural property" within Canada's legal system since 1977,¹²⁸ these materials have gained national

¹²⁵ Brian Rice and Anna Snyder, "Reconciliation in the Context of a Settler Society: Healing the Legacy of Colonialism in Canada," 46.

¹²⁶ Ibid. 46.

¹²⁷ Ibid. 57-58.

¹²⁸ This was due to the establishment of the *Canadian Cultural Property Export and Import Act* established in 1977. This document represented a first attempt by Canada to create legislation on the import and export of cultural property in Canada.

Sharon A. William, "Protection of Cultural Property: The Canadian Approach," *Arizona Law Review* 22, no. 3 (1980): 738-739,

https://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1729&context=scholarly_works.

significance and are viewed as part of a collective patrimony. Moving forward, I will look at institutional practices and precedents in Canada as well as current models and future directions, including exhibitions and digital strategies. Specifically, within this thesis, I will present two case studies of recently developed Canadian museum models that were deliberately developed to facilitate dissemination of, and access to, Inuk artistic practices and art objects by producers and communities that experience unique structural inequalities posed by remoteness.

CHAPTER 2:

ACCESS IN THE SOUTH OF CANADA – THE INUIT ART CENTRE

Introduction

Located in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the Inuit Art Centre (IAC) is the first large-scale exhibition space with a focus on Inuit art and culture. An initiative of the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the project provides a single site for the display, study, and appreciation of its extensive Inuit art collections. The project also marks a unique partnership in the Canadian cultural landscape, incorporating a substantial number of works from the Government of Nunavut's Fine Art Collection as well as the Winnipeg Art Gallery's collection. Ensuring engagement with these cultural resources in order to build knowledge of Inuit culture is the primary mandate of the IAC, bringing cultural perspectives into dialogue as a meeting place for Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities locally, nationally, and internationally.

Returning to the main research question, this chapter will explore how the Inuit Art Centre represents a new geographic centre, re-mapping relationships between south and north by ensuring a diversity of communities means to engage with and participate in its development and content. This discussion will contribute to our understanding of what constitutes accessibility with regard to Inuit art and culture– and what this means for both Inuit and non-Inuit communities. Against this backdrop, I will introduce the Winnipeg Art Gallery (WAG) and the objectives that motivated the creation of the IAC. I will then outline the methodology I used, followed by a critical analysis of my findings through the elucidation of specific themes that emerged from my research.

The Winnipeg Art Gallery

The Winnipeg Art Gallery (WAG), founded in 1912, was Canada's first public art gallery.¹²⁹ From both a historical and contemporary perspective, the WAG has assumed, and continues to play, a pivotal role in documenting the development of Inuit art. The WAG's continued focus on Inuit art stems from the city's long-standing connection with the Arctic. This

¹²⁹ Darlene Coward Wight, "Preface," in *Creation and Transformation Defining Moments in Inuit Art*, ed. Darlene Coward Wight (Vancouver, Canada, 2012), 1.

includes the provision of medical services, government administration, scientific studies and the use of Inuit territories for military operations; all of these have connected the province of Manitoba to the territory of Nunavut. Furthermore, Winnipeg was the headquarters for the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), acting as the main buyer of Inuit carvings in the 1950s.¹³⁰ Hence, it was in 1953 that Director of the WAG, Ferdinand Eckhardt, considered the importance of exhibiting Inuit art at the WAG. Collecting Inuit art at the WAG began in 1957, with a policy drafted in 1960, institutionalizing the WAG's long-term commitment to the acquisition and exhibition of Inuit art.¹³¹

Since the 1960s, the WAG has expanded their Inuit art collection which now includes over 13,500 pieces. This established the WAG's holdings as the largest public collection of contemporary Inuit art in the world, including objects created in a variety of media: 7,500 sculptures, 4000 prints, 1,900 drawings, hundreds of artifacts, ceramics and textiles, and 7,380 works on long-term loan from the Government of Nunavut's Fine Art Collection.¹³² To amass such an extensive collection takes time¹³³ and has involved numerous donors. Over the years, the WAG has acquired significant Inuit art collections from private collectors such as George Swinton, Jerry Twomey and Ian Lindsay, as well as company collections from Canada's Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and the Hudson's Bay Company Collection.¹³⁴ All of these collections have contributed to the WAG's vast range of geographic, artistic and stylistic knowledge on Inuit art. This knowledge, however, is largely grounded in Western aesthetics and presented through the eyes of colonizers and settler scholars.

¹³⁰ Darlene Coward Wight, "Inuit Art at the Winnipeg Art Gallery: An Introduction," in *Creation and Transformation Defining Moments in Inuit Art*, ed. Darlene Coward Wight (Vancouver, Canada, 2012), 5.

¹³¹ Stephen Borys, "Director's Foreword," in *Creation and Transformation Defining Moments in Inuit Art*, ed. Darlene Coward Wight (Vancouver, Canada, 2012), x-xi.

¹³² "The Collection," Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, Accessed February 13th, 2019, <http://inuit.wag.ca/concept/the-collection/>.

¹³³ The collecting of Inuit art at the WAG has spanned for over 65 years.

"Concept Innovating the Art Museum," Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, Accessed February 13th, 2019, <http://inuit.wag.ca/concept/>.

¹³⁴ Darlene Coward Wight, "Inuit Art at the Winnipeg Art Gallery: An Introduction," 7,8,12,13.

The WAG has also been a significant proponent of research focused exclusively on Inuit art through the designation, in 1975, of the position of Inuit Art Curator. This position was first filled by Jean Blodgett (1975-1979), followed by Bernadette Driscoll (Engelstad) from 1979 to 1985 and finally, the WAG's Inuit Art Curator since 1985, Darlene Coward Wight.¹³⁵ With this curatorial team, the WAG has produced and hosted several local, national and international touring shows on Inuit art.¹³⁶ This has included organizing over 166 exhibitions, 27 of which have toured to other venues, and the production of over 45 catalogues and publications discussing Inuit art.¹³⁷ While receiving organizational support, however, this role has always been led by someone of a settler background. Inuk art historian and curator Heather Igloliorte has commented on such absences of Inuit scholars and curators in Canada's arts and culture sector, which create a systemic imbalance between who is being written about and who is writing.¹³⁸ According to Igloliorte, the lack of Inuit scholars and curators has consequently meant that Inuit perspectives and cultural knowledge have been historically absent from a great deal of research and writing on Inuit people.¹³⁹

The WAG's extensive Inuit art collection, coupled with their research and exhibition record has made them an advocate for sharing and expanding the public's knowledge of Inuit art in Winnipeg, in Canada and internationally – a major driver behind the creation of the Centre, intended to open in 2020. As historically the gallery's approach to Inuit content was largely grounded in Western aesthetics, often interpreted through a colonial and settler perspective, the project is also aimed at decolonizing the institution through the lens of its collections with the

¹³⁵ Darlene Coward Wight, "Inuit Art at the Winnipeg Art Gallery: An Introduction," 11-12.

¹³⁶ The WAG's exhibitions have spanned a vast geographic range including throughout the province of Manitoba, across Canada, the United States and Europe, such as Italy, France and Greece.

Darlene Coward Wight, "WAG Inuit Art Exhibitions, 1961-Present," Personal Notes from Darlene provided during WAG visit, Winnipeg Art Gallery, January 10th, 2019.

¹³⁷ Darlene Coward Wight, "Inuit Art at the Winnipeg Art Gallery: An Introduction," 16.

¹³⁸ Heather Igloliorte, "Curating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit Knowledge in the Qallunaat Art Museum," 101.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.* 101.

goal of challenging colonial narratives within the Canadian institution,¹⁴⁰ while aiming to address a gap in access to Inuit art and culture in the south of Canada.

The Inuit Art Centre

The WAG's IAC represents a new cultural landmark adjacent to the Winnipeg Art Gallery building.¹⁴¹ Located on the corner of St. Mary Avenue and Memorial Boulevard, the IAC will be a four-level Centre, connected by glass bridges to the existing WAG building.¹⁴² The IAC will be state of the art, including, according to the published description:

...exhibition spaces, a glass-enclosed visible art vault, closed art storage; a conservation facility, art studios, a two-level interactive presentation theatre and classrooms. The glass-walled visible art vault will engage people of all ages by making the gallery's extensive Inuit carving collection viewable from the streetscape.¹⁴³

The emphasis at the IAC will be on the new visibility of Inuit art in its own space. Currently, only 100 Inuit works are publicly accessible on view at the WAG, but "the proposed centre would allow Canadians to see about half the entire collection for the first time [all at once]."¹⁴⁴ On completion, it will be the "largest single gallery space in the world devoted to Inuit art, culture, and history,"¹⁴⁵ While access to Inuit culture is a key element of this vision, who is truly its intended audience? Will the IAC have a genuine impact on northern Inuit communities?

¹⁴⁰ Heather Igloliorte, "'No History of Colonialism' Decolonizing Practices in Indigenous Arts," in *Decolonize Me*, ed. Heather Igloliorte (Ottawa, Ottawa Art Gallery, 2012), 21.

¹⁴¹ "Mayor Bowman Announces Funding to Support Inuit Art Centre," Winnipeg Art Gallery, May 6th, 2016, Accessed February 13th, 2019, <https://www.wag.ca/about/press/media-releases/read,release/506/mayor-bowman-announces-funding-to-support-inuit-art-centre>.

¹⁴² "A Place for Discovery, Learning and Inspiration," The Inuit Art Centre Project Exhibition, Winnipeg Art Gallery, Accessed January 10th, 2019.

¹⁴³ "Government of Canada Supports the Winnipeg Art Gallery's Inuit Art Centre," Winnipeg Art Gallery, August 2nd, 2016, (Accessed February 13th, 2019), <https://www.wag.ca/about/press/media-releases/read,release/517/government-of-canada-supports-the-winnipeg-art-gallery-s-inuit-art-centre>.

¹⁴⁴ Alexandra Paul, "Inuit Art Centre dream nearer," *Winnipeg Free Press*, March 27th, 2015, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/inuit-art-centre-dream-nearer-297754551.html>.

¹⁴⁵ "WAG Celebrates Groundbreaking for Inuit Art Centre," Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, May 25th, 2018, Accessed February 15th, 2019, <http://inuit.wag.ca/wag-celebrates-groundbreaking-for-inuit-art-centre/>.

The objective of the WAG's IAC is to "be a full sensory experience that brings people together through art in new and unexpected ways. By elevating art from object to experience,¹⁴⁶ according to WAG Director Stephen Borys. "[the WAG] will be moving constantly between art and learning, ensuring that each encounter with the artwork is one that leads to a new experience of exploration."¹⁴⁷ Hence, the IAC is intended to play a vital educational role in the community of Winnipeg.

The IAC reiterates that this cultural access to Inuit art will be provided from a locus within the south of Canada. According to Borys, this access is necessary as "most people will never travel north to really see the context in which the art is produced. One thing the WAG can do is just provide more information about the culture, about the art making."¹⁴⁸ This statement is interesting as it reiterates the geographic source of Inuit art as the north of Canada, while providing context for the IAC's location in Winnipeg. According to Inuk carver Jerry Ell, the centre will be appreciated in Winnipeg: "Winnipeg has always been a very strong market for Inuit art, so it's very appropriate for the art gallery to be there."¹⁴⁹ Finally, the IAC will provide an opportunity to collaborate and share in learning experiences with other Indigenous communities. Among the all-Inuit curatorial team, Heather Igloliorte has stated:

"We're in Winnipeg, and we have the world's largest collection of Inuit art – but this is not the place where the world's most Inuit live... We're on Treaty One Territory, we're on the Métis homeland. I think there's a real opportunity here, for us to bring together Manitoba's First Nations and Métis people and Canada's First Nations Métis people in a real, meaningful conversation with the Inuit, who are our northern neighbors."¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ "WAG Celebrates Groundbreaking for Inuit Art Centre," Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

¹⁴⁷ "Wag Task Force Meets to Discuss Inuit Art and Learning Centre," Winnipeg Art Gallery, n.d., Accessed February 12th, 2019,

<https://www.wag.ca/about/press/media-releases/read.release/243/wag-task-force-meets-to-discuss-inuit-art-and-learning-centre>.

¹⁴⁸ Brielle Morgan, "Winnipeg's Inuit art gallery planners hone their visions," *Nunatsiaq News*, January 7th, 2013,

https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674winnipegs_inuit_art_gallery_planners_hone_their_visions/.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Jen Zoratti, "First team of curators for Inuit Art Centre is all-Inuit, all-woman," *Winnipeg Free Press*, February 8th, 2018, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/first-team-of-curators-for-inuit-art-centre-is-all-inuit-all-woman-473484823.html>.

From a curatorial perspective, the IAC represents an exciting opportunity to share and learn about Inuit art in the south of Canada, particularly to provide contact and interaction with Indigenous populations in Winnipeg. Igloliorte situates the IAC as an opportunity to create dialogues amongst Indigenous communities, not merely a venue for showcasing Inuit art for settler audiences. What the IAC wishes to avoid is an anthropological approach to Inuit art that separates artifacts from their origin through settler interpretation. According to Borys, “we have the collection, we have the exhibition records, the publication records, we have the outreach with the North... So, for some reason we feel there’s a justification, there’s a responsibility.”¹⁵¹ This project does not entail physically reuniting this material with northern Inuit communities from which the work originated; the IAC will rather act as a space that will educate and create better access to Inuit art to a variety of Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in the south of Canada.

Methodology

My approach to questions of access to Inuit art and Inuit communities at the WAG began with gathering print and web/social media sources ranging from 2012-2019. More precisely, I sought WAG promotional materials, news articles about IAC, editorials in newspapers and online and social media posts that mentioned the IAC. The time range was selected to coincide with the initial announcement of IAC through the development of the centre to the present. Promotional material provided the curated perspective of the WAG as an institution. News articles and editorials showcased a variety of perspectives and voices from Winnipeg, Iqaluit, and art historical foundations; from audiences and users of the facilities as a cultural space for encountering Inuit art. Finally, social media posts from Facebook and Instagram provided various public perspectives on the IAC. It is important to recognize that the sources selected for this analysis present their own limitations and biases. Given that the IAC is not yet open to the public, the majority of sources consulted are promotional materials that are suggestive of the

¹⁵¹ Randy Turner, “Raising their voices,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, December 16th, 2016, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/the-wags-stunning-65m-inuit-art-centre-will-be-about-people-not-just-things-they-create-406567685.html>.

intentions and outcomes of the centre. Hence, I acknowledge at this stage in my research that consulted materials are speculative and could, in time, present a different impact or outcome.

Promotional materials gathered for this chapter came from the WAG's main website in the form of press releases discussing the IAC. The IAC also has a website, which includes promotional videos, articles, and explanatory entries on the development of the centre. In addition, my visit to the Winnipeg Art Gallery in January of 2019 enabled me to view the museum's Inuit Art Centre Project Exhibition, which further discusses the development of the centre through the presentation of architectural plans, 3-D models, text panels, rendered drawings and selected works of Inuit art. There were also banners and signage within the museum and throughout the city of Winnipeg announcing the plans for IAC. The visit confirmed the significance of the project to the City of Winnipeg, to Indigenous and Inuit communities and to the future of museum practices with regard to Indigenous art.

Secondly, I gathered news articles that discussed the development of the IAC. These were largely from media sources in the city of Winnipeg (i.e. the *Winnipeg Free Press*), but also included Inuit newspapers from the Nunavut and Nunavik territory of Quebec (i.e. *Nunatsiaq News*) and articles from the *Inuit Art Quarterly*.¹⁵² I selected these newspapers in order to include a variety of Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices in the conversation about the IAC. I also conducted targeted searches for social media posts that discussed the progress of the IAC. I gathered posts from the WAG's Facebook page, as well as posts from Instagram that utilized the hashtag #inuitartcentre. The selection of these posts and hashtags was made in relation to place and institutional names as a means to be as nominative while remaining neutral within this process. These social media sources allowed me to incorporate the public's voice in the dialogue about the IAC. I was particularly interested in how local Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups and individuals had responded to and received this project. Finally, I drew upon transcribed audiovisual materials and interviews I conducted at the WAG as well as notes taken through

¹⁵² The Inuit Art Quarterly (IAQ) is a publication which features both scholarly and popular content regarding Inuit art and culture, emerging artists and current/up-coming events. The IAQ is an important resource for Indigenous art history that connects Inuit and non-Inuit readers around the world.

“About,” Inuit Art Foundation, n.d., Accessed April 7th, 2019, <http://iaq.inuitartfoundation.org/about/>.

personal observation. To facilitate a first analysis of these materials, I utilized NVivo© software – an advanced data management tool that enabled me to organize, store, retrieve and code diverse content into various themes as well as create visualizations of my gathered material.¹⁵³

Given that the IAC is not yet open to the public (it will open in 2020), I realize that the early stages of development creates certain limitations and biases within my overall results. However, although the IAC is still in the process of realization, it is clear in its objectives and intentions, has clear governance structures and has articulated its position in relation to past and future museum practices with respect to Inuit art. I acknowledge that the measurement of results in five years' time would produce different results, impacts and outcomes. However, I wished to capture this particular cultural moment, in the wake of TRC, when we can witness the mechanisms and processes of change in our cultural landscape. Moving forward, I will be discussing my findings on six key themes that emerged in my coding: Dialogue/Voice, Public Opinions, Public Access, Resource/Learning, Committee structures, and finally, Bridging the North and South of Canada.¹⁵⁴

Results

Theme 1: Dialogue/Voice

Material gathered on the IAC relating to access primarily focused on the concept of providing a space for dialogue, to design the IAC as a space to hear the voices of Inuit community members surrounding their history and art. In reporting the findings from this section, I will first focus on the main theme that emerged from public discussion; through the incorporation of Inuit voice, the IAC will be a place for reconciliation.

My analysis of material has pointed to the concept that the IAC provides Inuit communities with a space to reconcile historical hardships, while paving the way for new dialogue. Inuit organization members, WAG Board Members, political figures and museum staff

¹⁵³ “Looking through different lenses,” NVIVO, n.d., Accessed April 11th, 2019, <https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo/what-is-nvivo>.

¹⁵⁴ The language used for these themes came from repetitive key word searches found throughout my gathered sources.

See bibliography for the specific breakdown of sources in relation to my data analysis (pg. 107).

throughout my research have expressed the need for reconciliation within the museum community. According to *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, the arts are able to play a vital role in reconciliation, as a means to break silences, transform conflicts and mend damaged relationships of violence, oppression and exclusion.”¹⁵⁵ The report states that, “as Canada confronts its settler colonial past, museums and archives have been gradually transforming from institutions of colony and empire into more inclusive institutions that better reflect the full richness of Canadian history.”¹⁵⁶ Based on commentary in the public sphere, it is clear that the IAC is intended to address recommendations and calls to action posed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report.

The President of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK),¹⁵⁷ Nathan Obed, views the development of the IAC as a “dream of self-determination, pushing us forward in all aspects of society, back into a place where we [Inuit] are in control of our destiny [. . .] so that we can work with Canadians for a better Canada.”¹⁵⁸ This road to self-determination that Obed speaks of was echoed by Inuk Fred Ford, the President of the Manitoba Inuit Association and WAG board member. Ford asserts that in order to begin reconciliation people need to know what happened, “...the Inuit experience was very different from people from First Nations — similar, but different. The stories about relocation and the impact of the families being separated. The Inuit Art Centre will tell those stories.”¹⁵⁹ According to Ford, reconciliation will also occur through the artwork itself, displayed at the IAC, “to bring in people to talk about their own work as artists, and not have anybody speak for them... that’s an act of reconciliation.”¹⁶⁰ The IAC offers

¹⁵⁵ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future- Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 279.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. 246.

¹⁵⁷ The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) is a national Inuit organization formed in 1971. ITK’s mission is to act as a national voice in advancing and protecting the rights of Inuit in Canada. “We Are The National Voice Of Canada’s 60,000 Inuit,” Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, n.d., Accessed April 10th, 2019, <https://www.itk.ca/national-voice-for-communities-in-the-canadian-arctic/#intro>.

¹⁵⁸ Inuit Art Quarterly, “WAG Breaks Ground on Inuit Art Centre,” Inuit Art Foundation, May 25th, 2018, Accessed February 21st, 2019, <http://iaq.inuitartfoundation.org/wag-inuit-art-centre/>.

¹⁵⁹ Randy Turner, “Raising their voices,” *Winnipeg Free Press*.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

its future visitors a space where the Inuit voice can be heard. Access to this voice is crucial at a time when Manitoba and Canada seek meaningful reconciliation with Inuit communities as per the recommendations of the TRC. As Stephen Borys stated in a news release from 2017, “the Inuit Art Centre offers a path to dialogue and understanding between Canada’s north and south, and indeed across the country and beyond. It will be a platform for Inuit who use art as a voice and language to celebrate their stories with the world.”¹⁶¹ This statement by Borys expresses how crucial it is for the WAG to engage in the reconciliation process, ensuring that Inuit voices are being heard and represented to the public at the IAC. Ultimately, the WAG is evolving to reflect multiple voices and perspectives on Inuit history, culture and art as a means to foster reconciliation, while improving their institutional relationships with Inuit communities.¹⁶²

Media sources also frequently discussed the importance of dialogue and voice as a means of sharing knowledge between older and younger Inuit generations and with the non-Indigenous public. As Education Lead for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba, Charlene Bearhead stated, "Education is reconciliation. ... What’s really amazing about the potential of this (centre), [is] it gives the Inuit an opportunity to see themselves, to express themselves. To voice what they believe non-indigenous people need to know about them. But also, a place to take their own children and grandchildren.”¹⁶³ This expression of Inuit voice is crucial in the context of Inuit Elders at the IAC. Resources refer to including the voice of Inuit Elders at the Centre to share their stories with the broader community, which will aid in building bridges between cultures, between the north and south, and between generations.¹⁶⁴ This

¹⁶¹ Jane George, “Winnipeg Art Gallery snags \$10 million for Inuit Art Centre,” Nunatsiaq News, December 21st, 2017, https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674winnipeg_art_gallery_gets_10_million_more_towards_inuit_art_centre/.

¹⁶² Ernest Cholakis, “WAG evolving to better serve Winnipeg,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, January 10th, 2016, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/analysis/wag-evolving-to-better-serve-winnipeg-395498601.html>.

I question what sort of impact the IAC will have on the reconciliation process within a Canadian museum context. Will the inclusion of Inuit voice and stories be as effective as the IAC says it will be?

¹⁶³ Randy Turner, “Raising their voices,” *Winnipeg Free Press*.

¹⁶⁴ “Partners,” Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, n.d., Accessed February 13th, 2019, <http://inuit.wag.ca/partners/#more>.

sharing of voices from Inuit community members will create a deeper understanding on the part of northern, southern, Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous publics and an “awareness and understanding of Inuit art, culture, history and contemporary life.”¹⁶⁵ Most importantly, the sharing of Inuit voice is an act of cultural sovereignty. It is a means for Inuit communities to continue their cultural integrity¹⁶⁶ as well as their inherent rights to their own cultural values, traditions and spirituality.¹⁶⁷

Finally, my sources often referred to the idea that dialogue and voice at the IAC will be heard through the Inuit art objects themselves. As the IAC website states: “Every work of Inuit art contains stories. The story the artist wanted to express, as well as stories the work tells us about the artist, their history, their family and their life.”¹⁶⁸ These stories will be heard and understood through the use of trilingual didactic texts throughout the IAC in Inuktitut, English and French, as a means for these stories to be accessible to a variety of audience members. The importance of stories from Inuit art objects reiterates Heather Igloliorte’s concept that Inuit art is an act of *cultural resilience*. Igloliorte asserts that Inuit art reveals Inuit responses to historic changes that threatened their own cultural practice as well as strengthening of the Inuit voice.¹⁶⁹ For her, the WAG’s expansive Inuit art collection enables thousands of stories to be shared and discovered by the public.

To conclude, the theme of *Dialogue/Voice* came out as a prominent theme when I coded sources on the IAC. Concepts of hearing, learning and understanding from Inuit communities and having their perspectives strongly represented at the IAC were also recurring themes. As Director Stephen Borys stated: “...what keeps me up at night is whether the Inuit voice is the first thing you hear. That’s going to be critical. You know, we’re calling this an Inuit Art Centre, so that could mean 100 different things to 100 different people...”¹⁷⁰ Journalist Randy Turner

¹⁶⁵ “Interactive Theatre,” Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, n.d., Accessed February 13th, 2019, <http://inuit.wag.ca/concept/interactive-theatre/>.

¹⁶⁶ As stated by Native American author, theologian, historian, and activist, Vine Deloria Jr.

¹⁶⁷ Donna Ennis, “Time to Take Back Our Cultural Sovereignty,” Indian Country Today Digital Indigenous News.

¹⁶⁸ Winnipeg Art Gallery, “WAG Inuit Art Centre- Art is a Voice,” YouTube, November 21st, 2018, <http://inuit.wag.ca/video-art-is-a-voice/>.

¹⁶⁹ Heather Igloliorte, “Inuit Art: Markers of Cultural Resilience,” 9.

¹⁷⁰ Randy Turner, “Raising their voices,” *Winnipeg Free Press*.

(1962-2019), in his 2016 Winnipeg Free Press article *Raising their Voices*¹⁷¹ echoes Borys statement by emphasising this uncertainty regarding the success of the WAG's development of a new museum template that incorporates Inuit voices. A new museum such as the IAC represents a new opportunity to reassert minority voices, however, there remains questions about whether it can effectively capture all Inuit voices and perspectives. Nonetheless, the IAC is pushing forward in incorporating the Inuit voice into this new centre, acting as a space that celebrates Inuit voices, a locus for reconciliation, a place to share Inuit knowledge and, finally, a place to share stories through Inuit art.

Theme 2: Public Opinions

A second theme that emerged from my analysis was public opinions regarding the IAC. By using the term “public” I am referring to Indigenous and non-Indigenous contributors to promotional material such as the WAG's *Art is Voice* video, as well as comments from Facebook and Instagram posts that discuss the development of the IAC. These public opinions represent only a snapshot of the depth and breadth of opinions on the IAC; however, they are notable in the discussion concerning how the public sees the development of new kinds of access to Inuit art at the IAC.

Firstly, public opinion was documented from Inuit community members. For instance, Inuk Fred Ford views the IAC as being “our Smithsonian for Inuit.”¹⁷² Ford's comment is valuable as it infers the historical imbalance of authority between Canadian museums and Inuit communities. Furthermore, it points to the fact that Inuit communities have not been included and celebrated as makers of authority regarding their own history and cultural in a museum setting. Ford's statement reasserts authority as the IAC belongs and is intended *for* Inuit communities. This analogy infers that the IAC represents a physical museum where Inuit and non-Inuit visitors can connect with their history and culture. Being able to connect with one's culture and family represents an exciting opportunity at the IAC. One individual interviewed in the *Art is Voice* promotional video stated “My mom's dad, I know might have carvings here [at

¹⁷¹ Randy Turner, “Raising their voices,” *Winnipeg Free Press*.

¹⁷² Randy Turner, “Northern Stars,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, December 9th, 2016, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/cover-north-stars-inside-northern-exposure-405492856.html>.

the WAG]. My kids have never met their great-grandfather, it would be nice to show them and tell them a little bit about my grandfather..."¹⁷³ This comment from an Inuk Winnipeg resident suggests that the IAC is a space for visitors to create connections with their families, to share family kinship knowledge, culture and history. This connection to Inuit cultural history is a key form of learning that can occur at the IAC, yet it also highlights the southern monopolization of Inuit art in Canadian institutions.

In addition to personal knowledge, the public views the IAC as a vehicle for creating and disseminating a greater awareness and a deeper knowledge of Inuit art and culture. As one individual in the *Art is Voice* video stated, "I think being able to create a centre that shows peoples the breadth of knowledge and creativity and talent that is in our North, makes us think about our whole country and not just the parts of it that we see regularly."¹⁷⁴ Hence, the public views the IAC as a space for sharing the artistic talent of Canada's north that few Canadians get to experience.

Theme 3: Public Access

Material gathered on the IAC also focused on public access. The engagement of various publics with the IAC and its art included local Winnipeg communities, encompassing Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous publics. Public access also refers to national visitors from the rest of Canada, and, in particular, visitors from northern Inuit communities. Finally, public access also includes international visitors to the IAC. The concept of public access at the IAC takes many different forms. In certain cases, this access may be direct and in person. For other more remote communities' access at the IAC may be made possible through digital technology. The material gathered on public access can thus be further divided into sub-themes including access as a meeting place, creating access for Inuit artists and the promotion of their works, access to the WAG's Inuit art collections through an Inuit curatorial lens, increasing tourist travel to the city of Winnipeg and, finally, creating online access for remote and local visitors.

¹⁷³ Winnipeg Art Gallery. "WAG Inuit Art Centre- Art is a Voice." YouTube. 5:41-6:25.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. 5:17-5:40.

Sub-Theme: Meeting Place

In source materials, the IAC is often discussed as a meeting place for local and international communities. Acting as a community hub for the exploration of Inuit art and culture, numerous sources have identified the IAC as a place for celebration, of Inuit art, Inuit artists and the northern regions of Canada.¹⁷⁵ I would suggest that the IAC's function as a meeting place can be connected to Language and Literature Professor Mary Louise Pratt's notion of the *contact zone*. A *contact zone* refers to "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power..."¹⁷⁶ Social spaces that Pratt refers to can be applied within a museum context. Anthropologist James Clifford links Pratt's notion of the contact zone to cultural institutions. According to Clifford, museums practice contact work by engaging with cultural and political negotiations between cultural groups that visit museum spaces.¹⁷⁷ As the IAC is located in the south of Canada, this centre acts as a contact zone between Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous visitors. As a contact zone, according to Pratt, the IAC will enable visitors, to engage with suppressed aspects of history (including their own Inuit history), while creating open communication with mutual respect for one another as a means for cultural mediation amongst visitors.

Sub-Theme: Promoting Inuit Art and Artists

The IAC is widely recognized as being a meeting place for Inuit artists. According to Rankin Inlet Inuit artist Theresie Tungilik, recognizing that Inuit artists live far away from one another means "a place like the Inuit Art and Learning Centre will be able to house many Inuit artists from the past and the present, as well as looking at future artists through the learning centre."¹⁷⁸ This is critical as Inuit artists and their art will be gathered and convened at one location. According to the Mayor of Winnipeg, Brian Bowman, "the Inuit Art Centre will play an

¹⁷⁵ "Land, Voice, Art-Advertising Sign," Winnipeg Art Gallery exhibition sign, Accessed January 10th, 2019.

¹⁷⁶ Mary Louise Pratt, "Art of the Contact Zone," *Modern Language Association* (1991): 34, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/25595469.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Aae01e432cb43c044d328ac8e5aaa1727>.

¹⁷⁷ James Clifford, *Routes Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), 213.

¹⁷⁸ Brielle Morgan, "Winnipeg's Inuit art gallery planners hone their visions," *Nunatsiaq News*.

integral role in promoting Indigenous Arts and Culture ...”¹⁷⁹ This will be achieved by providing a physical dedicated space where Inuit artists and community members can share the full breadth of their creative worlds with the broader public.¹⁸⁰ According to Heather Igloliorte, the IAC will be a place for Inuit artists to connect with one another. In the north of Canada, Igloliorte states, “we don’t have many places where we can get together regularly and really share what we’re doing in our art.”¹⁸¹ Hence, the IAC presents an exciting opportunity for collaboration, that will “create a permanent conduit through which artists can continue to share and create together.”¹⁸² This opportunity to collaborate amongst Inuit artists may create experiences resulting in the expansion of work practices, exploring new mediums and creating new works of art.¹⁸³ Hence, through promotion and collaboration, the IAC will provide a unique gathering space for Inuit artists to share their artistic practices as well as a new entry point for “better understanding and respecting Canadian Inuit art.”¹⁸⁴ This new entry point will act as a catalyst, according to generous donor to the IAC, Louise Leatherdale, in “promoting and raising awareness of Inuit art, artists, and culture to a much wider national and global audience.”¹⁸⁵ Ultimately, the IAC is seen as a physical space which promotes the collaboration and growth of Inuit artists and their artistic practice. Whether this gathering of Inuit artists and their art at a singular location in the south of Canada is truly feasible for all is a further question. Will all Inuit artists be able to physically visit the IAC and reap the benefits that the centre has to offer? Furthermore, although the IAC acts as a meeting place for Inuit artists, does this truly reflect a new collaborative museum

¹⁷⁹ “Mayor Bowman Announces Funding to Support Inuit Art Centre,” Winnipeg Art Gallery.

¹⁸⁰ Inuit Art Quarterly, “WAG Breaks Ground on Inuit Art Centre,” Inuit Art Foundation.

¹⁸¹ Jen Zoratti, “First team of curators for Inuit Art Centre is all-Inuit, all-woman,” *Winnipeg Free Press*.

¹⁸² “RBC Announces \$500K Donation to WAG’s Inuit Art Centre,” Winnipeg Art Gallery, December 6th, 2016, Accessed February 13th, 2019, <https://www.wag.ca/about/press/media-releases/read,release/533/rbc-announces-500k-donation-to-wag-s-inuit-art-centre>.

¹⁸³ “WAG’s Inuit Art Centre Receives Support from TD to Help Build Bridges Between Canada’s North and South,” Winnipeg Art Gallery, March 26th, 2015, Accessed February 12th, 2019, <https://www.wag.ca/about/press/media-releases/read,release/423/wag-s-inuit-art-centre-receives-support-from-td-to-help-build-bridges-between-canada-s-north-and-south>.

¹⁸⁴ Inuit Art Quarterly, “WAG Breaks Ground on Inuit Art Centre,” Inuit Art Foundation.

¹⁸⁵ “WAG Announces \$1 Million Gift to the Inuit Art Centre,” Winnipeg Art Gallery, n.d., Accessed February 13th, 2019, <https://www.wag.ca/about/press/media-releases/read,release/608/wag-announces-1-million-gift-to-the-inuit-art-centre>.

approach? As Ruth Phillips has queried, does implementing a collaborative approach at the IAC “signal a new era of social agency for museums, or does it make the museum a space where symbolic restitution is made for the injustices of the colonial era in lieu of more concrete forms of social, economic, and political redress?”¹⁸⁶

Sub-Theme: Access to Art Collections

The IAC will also provide the public access to art collections that have not been on display for many years. Firstly, the IAC’s “entire main level will be free to the public [thereby] welcoming people inside to engage with the art, exhibitions, and displays.”¹⁸⁷ Secondly, this access will be further reinforced by the IAC’s visible vault, which will provide visitors with a permanent view of the WAG’s Inuit stone collection.¹⁸⁸ Finally, the Government of Nunavut Fine Art collection, which has been on long-term loan to the WAG since 2015, will be publicly displayed for the first time. The display of these important historic Inuit art collections is directly in line with the TRC’s Call to Action #79: the integration of “Indigenous history, heritage values, and memory practices into Canada’s national heritage and history.”¹⁸⁹ By exhibiting these key Inuit art collections, the IAC is recognizing and commemorating Inuit artists and families within the tradition of art making in Canada’s north. Furthermore, it is an acknowledgment of Inuit cultural heritage being celebrated with other Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in Canada. Hence, physical public access to these artistically rich and varied collections from the WAG and the Government of Nunavut is significant. By bringing these works out of vaults and into public spaces, the IAC is creating a symbolic gesture of reconciliation while creating an expansion of access to Inuit art to its visitors.

¹⁸⁶ Ruth B. Phillips, “Towards a Dialogic Paradigm: New Models of Collaborative Curatorial Practice,” in *Museum Pieces Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums*, ed. Ruth B. Phillips (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 189.

¹⁸⁷ “Designed as an Invitation to All,” Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, December 6th, 2018, Accessed February 15th, 2019, <http://inuit.wag.ca/designed-as-an-invitation-to-all/>.

¹⁸⁸ Randy Turner, “Raising their voices,” *Winnipeg Free Press*.

¹⁸⁹ Lee-Ann Martin and Shawna Dempsey, “Resilience, The National Billboard Exhibition Project,” Resilience, Accessed April 13th, 2019, <https://resilienceproject.ca/en/introduction>.

Sub-Theme: Tourism

The IAC is also seen as a catalyst for increasing tourism to the city of Winnipeg and the province of Manitoba. The Centre is recognized by provincial political figures as attracting tourists from around the globe. According to Winnipeg Foundation President, Rick Frost, the IAC is “a signature project for this city.”¹⁹⁰ The addition of the IAC to Winnipeg, according to Stephen Borys, will “highlight the province as an international cultural destination.”¹⁹¹ The development of the IAC, from a tourism perspective, suggests an improvement in the province’s cultural infrastructure as well as economic development. Cathy Cox, Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage for the Province of Manitoba states that “in order to continue to attract national and international visitors, we know our cultural institutions must be innovative and world class.”¹⁹² Many public sources imply that the creation of the IAC will have an impact on public access in terms of tourism to the province of Manitoba and more specifically to the city of Winnipeg. Although encouraging tourism to the city of Winnipeg looks promising by political figures and WAG staff, there is little information available regarding the target audience the WAG hopes to attract. An increase in tourism to the city of Winnipeg is advantageous to their economy regardless of demographics. Statements by Frost and Cox highlight the desire for an increase in tourism, but they do not reflect the lack of geographic accessibility the centre presents to remote Inuit visitors from the north. The likelihood that remote Inuit communities will be visiting this southern museum is questionable due to time and high travel expenses. Thus, reconciliation must be negotiated through means that will transcend geographical barriers.

¹⁹⁰ Bill Redekop, “Private sector stepping up to fund Inuit Art Centre,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, November 15th, 2015, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/private-sector-stepping-up-to-fund-inuit-art-centre-332999231.html>.

¹⁹¹ Jane George, “Winnipeg Art Gallery snags \$10 million for Inuit Art Centre,” *Nunatsiaq News*.

¹⁹² “WAG’s Inuit Art Centre Receives \$10 Million from Province of Manitoba,” Winnipeg Art Gallery, December 19th, 2017, Accessed February 13th, 2019, <https://www.wag.ca/about/press/media-releases/read.release/581/wag-s-inuit-art-centre-receives-10-million-from-province-of-manitoba>.

Sub-Theme: Online Access

The discussion of public access at the IAC emphasizes the concept of online access using technology, providing access to the collections and as a vehicle for public education. The use of technology as a tool for education at the IAC will incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing as opposed to solely relying on western models of history. This is imperative as the IAC will implement a collaborative paradigm of intellectual practice that enables power sharing between Inuit communities and the museum itself.¹⁹³ According to Charlene Bearhead, “The most important thing about the programming and education [at the IAC] is that it comes from Inuit. It comes from the communities, it comes from the knowledge keepers, it comes from the families. That’s key in all of this...”¹⁹⁴ Hence, the use of technology to educate its public about Inuit art and culture at the IAC diverges from more traditional museum models by which museums convey information through in person static authoritative didactic panels. The IAC attempts to incorporate meaning-making as well as storytelling from Inuit Elders and community members to its visitors. This is so important, because the inclusion of the Inuit voice into the IAC provides new authority to a cultural group that has been historically marginalized by these institutions. The co-managing of information through online capabilities can enable the formation of community partnerships between the IAC and Inuit communities, which has the potential to create new and exciting outcomes.¹⁹⁵

In terms of using technology at the Centre, the IAC will utilize phone applications that enable visitors to download art images and curate their own exhibitions from their phones.¹⁹⁶ In addition, the IAC’s interactive theatre will use technology to connect groups for “orientations, lectures, films, training sessions, live music, theatrical performances, and other events.”¹⁹⁷ The interactive theatre technology will also be used in an online capacity to provide learning experiences to local and rural classrooms in the north and south of Canada. Technological

¹⁹³ Ruth B. Phillips, “Towards a Dialogic Paradigm: New Models of Collaborative Curatorial Practice,” 188.

¹⁹⁴ Randy Turner, “Raising their voices,” *Winnipeg Free Press*.

¹⁹⁵ Ruth B. Phillips, “Towards a Dialogic Paradigm: New Models of Collaborative Curatorial Practice,” 188.

¹⁹⁶ “A Look Inside the Inuit Art Centre,” Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, August 30th, 2018, Accessed February 15th, 2019, <http://inuit.wag.ca/a-look-inside-the-inuit-art-centre/>.

¹⁹⁷ “Interactive Theatre,” Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

communication will connect students, teachers, artists and Elders from across the country, “students from [the] North and South will talk and learn from each other through real-time video links.”¹⁹⁸ This online technology was tested in January of 2016, when the WAG initiated a pilot project, hosting a 45-minute virtual tour of their past exhibition *Our Land* (2017). The application of virtual technology to *Our Land* is significant as this exhibition represented a collaboration between the WAG and their newly acquired loan collection from the Government of Nunavut’s Fine Art Collection, in addition to works borrowed from the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem Massachusetts.¹⁹⁹ Having access to the Government of Nunavut Art collection made *Our Land* an excellent exhibition to share digitally with students throughout the north and south of Canada, as it was a means to share a territorial collection that few have ever seen in both a northern and southern geographical context. This virtual tour was seen by students in Arviat, Nunavut, Brampton, Ontario and Vancouver.²⁰⁰ The use of this technology at the IAC represents new learning possibilities as students and visitors will be able to “watch a carver working in Baker Lake and listen to stories being told by an elder from Arviat.”²⁰¹ These models emphasize both art-making and the interpretation of art objects as collective and collaborative, creating virtual spaces for communities of practice and effectively erasing the barriers of distance and remoteness.

Online access to the public will be provided at the IAC through their fully digitized collection which will “invite people around the world to experience the powerful beauty of Inuit art and culture [from the comfort of their own homes].”²⁰² The IAC’s approach in incorporating technology throughout their visitors’ experience, both in person and online, is cutting edge in the field of Inuit art. The IAC’s use of technology complements emerging projects that use technology to connect Inuit art with Inuit communities such as the *Mobilizing Inuit Cultural*

¹⁹⁸ “Concept Innovating the Art Museum,” Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

¹⁹⁹ “Our Land: Contemporary Art from the Arctic,” Winnipeg Art Gallery, October 1st, 2016-March 26th, 2017, Accessed April 13th, 2019, <https://www.wag.ca/art/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/display/exhibition/192/our-land-contemporary-art-from-the-arctic>.

²⁰⁰ Randy Turner, “Raising their voices,” *Winnipeg Free Press*.

²⁰¹ Jane George, “Winnipeg Art Gallery snags \$10 million for Inuit Art Centre,” *Nunatsiaq News*.

²⁰² “The Collection,” Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

*Heritage project, Iningat Ilagiit project and the Arctic Cultural Heritage Research Network.*²⁰³ Hence, the IAC is both leading and following new trends in culture-sharing and knowledge dissemination through the use of phone applications, virtual reality, an interactive theatre and digitized collections. The use of virtual/online technology at the WAG and IAC is exciting for the education, connection and understanding of, and access to, Inuit art to Winnipeg's local, northern and international audiences. Despite all the various applications of online access being developed at the IAC, it is helpful to question the rationale behind the use of this technology. The primary means by which the IAC can connect with the north of Canada, it entails, in part, in fulfilment of the IAC's institutional mandate, shaped by the culture of WAG. Although technology use at the IAC acts as an educational tool, who is really benefitting from this online interaction from a long-term perspective? Do northern Inuit communities truly benefit from seeing their art objects digitally? Or, rather, is it visitors to the centre that benefit the most from these applications?

Theme 4: IAC as a Resource and Learning Opportunity

Public discussion identifies the IAC as a cultural resource and a centre for learning for its visitors. A prevalent term that emerged through my thematic analysis was that the IAC is a resource. In particular, the IAC is seen to be a cultural resource to its local and international visitors. By acting as a resource, the IAC's artworks, educational programming and interactive experiences can be shared with people of all ages and backgrounds.²⁰⁴ This is key as the IAC is able to provide access to its visitors through the lens of learning and education.

The IAC is considered an educational hub for its visitors. Next to exhibition space, the IAC will be dedicated to spaces relating to public learning and educational programming for students.²⁰⁵ This will be achieved by offering the public ongoing education through partnership

²⁰³ Note that the specifics and developments of these online projects will be discussed in further detail in subsequent chapters.

²⁰⁴ "WAG's Inuit Art Centre Receives Support from TD to Help Build Bridges Between Canada's North and South," Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²⁰⁵ "Studio and Learning Space," Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, n.d., Accessed February 13th, 2019,

<http://inuit.wag.ca/concept/learning-space/#more>.

with Inuit communities about Inuit history, culture and art.²⁰⁶ The IAC, according to Charlene Bearhead, will give the Inuit the freedom to express and see themselves, while voicing what Inuit communities believe non-Indigenous peoples should know about them.²⁰⁷ This voice and knowledge from Inuit communities will be seen throughout the Centre in the form of educational programs, developed in alignment with school curriculums at the local and provincial level. These programs will aid in creating a deeper understanding of northern Inuit art and culture.²⁰⁸ WAG's Head of Education, Rachel Baerg, intends to enable these learning opportunities by consulting with key stakeholders such as Inuit artists, Elders, the Manitoba Inuit Association, and the provincial Department of Education, to design educational programs for IAC visitors.²⁰⁹ Educational opportunities will be furthered at the IAC through their Education Suite and indoor studios. These areas will provide students, as well as the general public, with opportunities to partake in virtual and live educational experiences from experts in the field of Inuit art and culture, as well as gain hands-on-experiences with digital media labs and a clay studio.²¹⁰ Although educational programming at the IAC will include Inuit consultation, I question whether the IAC's educational programming needs a more collaborative, on-going relationship with Inuit stakeholders. Furthermore, how will this educational programming develop over time as Inuit history and artistic narratives change? In other words, does this impetus to education truly change the view of Inuit art on the part of settler audiences, or does it run the risk of reinforcing old narratives about Inuit culture being static and idyllic, framed by a settler institution? Given these concerns, frequent educational consultation will be a necessity for the IAC.

Finally, the IAC will also be a hub for Inuit art and culture from a scholarly perspective. First, in the Education Suite, artists-in-residence, interns and scholars will have an area to share their knowledge with the public as well as students. Moreover, the Knowledge and Sharing

²⁰⁶ "Government of Canada Supports the Winnipeg Art Gallery's Inuit Art Centre," Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²⁰⁷ Randy Turner, "Raising their voices," *Winnipeg Free Press*.

²⁰⁸ Kevin Rollason, "Tories announce more cash for Inuit Art Centre," *Winnipeg Free Press*, May 25th, 2018, Accessed February 20th, 2019, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/tories-announce-more-cash-for-inuit-art-centre-483744683.html>.

²⁰⁹ Kevin Rollason, "Tories announce more cash for Inuit Art Centre," *Winnipeg Free Press*.

²¹⁰ "Studio and Learning Space," Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

Centre, on the second floor of the IAC, will be a space for training, internships and mentorship programs for emerging professionals seeking employment in the arts and culture sector.²¹¹ This area will consist of a Carving-Porch, Learning Common as well as the WAG's Library and Archives. Having access to these educative spaces at the IAC represents exciting learning opportunities for career development for researchers, scholars and emerging professionals. Spaces for scholarship and learning opportunities at the IAC, I suggest, promotes Inuit agency in research. Furthermore, the IAC from a scholarly perspective will aid in providing a space where more voices can enter into the discourse of Inuit studies.²¹² Hence, the IAC's focus on scholarship creates opportunities for emerging arts and culture professionals to be engaged in this area of the centre, in order to provide more Inuit authority within the narrative of Inuit art.

Theme 5: Committee Structures

Resources gathered about the IAC discussed the importance of developing a governance and management infrastructure (i.e. various committees) designed to provide access to Inuit art and culture at the WAG and the IAC. Editorials and news articles discussed how this would be achieved through the formation of an Indigenous Advisory Circle, IAC Task Force and all-Inuit curatorial team. The development of Indigenous collaboration at the WAG and IAC historically has stemmed from recommendations made in the report *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples* (1992), which offered new principles and recommendations for improved relationships and partnerships between museums and Indigenous communities.²¹³ More recently, the discussion around the formation of improved committee structures emanated from the TRC's Call to Action #67 which states:

We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Museums Association to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of museum policies and best practices to determine the level of compliance with the United

²¹¹ "Studio and Learning Space," Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²¹² Heather, Igloliorte. "The Inuit of our Imagination," 46.

²¹³ Task Force on Museums and First Peoples, Assembly of First Nations and the Canadian Museum Association, *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples*, 7.

Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to make recommendations.²¹⁴

In 2017-2018 the Canadian Museum Association (CMA) established a framework to create a national review of museum policies. It was from this development that a fourteen-member Museum Indigenous Council was developed across the country.²¹⁵ Due to this establishment by the CMA provincial museum associations have discussed ways to improve their collaborative partnerships with Indigenous communities. For instance, at the 2018 Indigenous Collections Symposium presented by the Ontario Museum Association, participants discussed the challenges associated with building relationships with Indigenous communities that require new collaborative partnerships.²¹⁶ Relationships with Indigenous and Inuit communities need to move beyond singular projects and instead should be grounded within “systems in place for formal or regular collaboration and decision-making (e.g., advisory committee, networks, joint agreements).”²¹⁷ Through the TRC and the CMA museums such as the IAC recognize the necessity to include systems such as advisory teams and committees to continue and foster meaningful relationships with Indigenous and more precisely Inuit communities. These groups have been formed to decolonize the WAG and to position the IAC in a manner that is inclusive and representative of Indigenous and Inuit communities.

²¹⁴ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action,” Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 12.

²¹⁵ “CMA initiates working group to address Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Call to Action #67,” Canadian Museums Association, May 1st, 2018, Accessed July 7th, 2019, https://www.museums.ca/document/3982/CMA_Communicu%C3%A9_TRC_Group_2018.pdf.

²¹⁶ Jane Holland, “Indigenous Collections Symposium: Next Steps,” Ontario Museum Association, June 30th, 2017, Accessed April 14th, 2019, 10, https://members.museumsonario.ca/sites/default/files/ICS%20next%20steps%20paper%20FINA%20L%20Jun%2030%202017_COLOUR.pdf.

²¹⁷ Ibid. 11.

Sub-Theme: Indigenous Advisory Circle

The Indigenous Advisory Circle was formed in 2017 and has been co-chaired by University of Winnipeg History Professor in Indigenous Arts in North America, Julie Nagam, and Inuk art historian and curator Heather Igloliorte. The Advisory Circle's primary purpose is to ensure that the voices of Indigenous, and more precisely Inuit are at the forefront of the WAG and that this mandate is carried into the future.²¹⁸ Members include representatives from the four regions of Inuit Nunangat.²¹⁹ This includes the Inuvialuit region (western Arctic), the territory of Nunavut, Quebec and Nunatsiavut (Labrador).²²⁰ Furthermore, members are drawn from urban Inuit and circumpolar Inuit communities such as Alaska and Greenland. Finally, First Nations as well as Métis members from Manitoba will be included in the Advisory Circle.²²¹ At this point in the development of the IAC, the Indigenous Advisory Circle's governance, according to a Winnipeg Free Press article, will meet annually with one another. They will influence everything in the IAC, from the building's design, exhibitions, curation, staffing and staff training.²²²

The development of the Indigenous Advisory Circle, according to co-chair Julie Nagam, comes at a critical time, as previously Indigenous peoples have been disregarded and pushed out of the narrative in museums. Nagam views a shift in this practice as a logical outcome of urban demographics: "Winnipeg has one of the largest and fastest-growing Indigenous populations in Canada. That's why I think it's important the WAG takes the advisory circle on."²²³ Co-chair Heather Igloliorte emphasizes the instrumentality of the Advisory Circle: "the work of the circle

²¹⁸ "WAG Celebrates Ground-breaking for Inuit Art Centre," Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²¹⁹ Inuit Nunangat, according to the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami is understood as the four Inuit regions in Canada. This is a term that includes land, water, and ice.

"About Canadian Inuit," Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, n.d., (Accessed November 17th, 2018), <https://www.itk.ca/about-canadian-inuit/#nunangat>.

²²⁰ "WAG Announces All-Inuit Curatorial Team for Inuit Art Centre Inaugural Exhibits," Winnipeg Art Gallery, February 8th, 2018, Accessed February 13th, 2019, <https://www.wag.ca/about/press/media-releases/read,release/588/wag-announces-all-inuit-curatorial-team-for-inuit-art-centre-inaugural-exhibits>.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Randy Turner, "Newly formed Indigenous Advisory Circle aims to 'decolonize' Winnipeg Art Gallery," *Winnipeg Free Press*, July 25th, 2017, Accessed February 20th, 2019, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/shaping-the-world-through-art-436624603.html>.

²²³ Ibid.

is instrumental if not critical to the transformation of the WAG affecting both the City of Winnipeg and Canada. Through the Advisory Circle members will be in a position of leadership and counsel by bringing their own expertise and perspectives to the WAG and IAC to better connect and educate the public.”²²⁴ By expanding dialogue through the Advisory Circle, the WAG views the development of this committee as having a more inclusive impact on museum practice. The Indigenous Advisory Committee only meets once a year, however, I question as to whether meaningful collaboration between the WAG, IAC and the Advisory Circle can be maintained with such limited contact.

Secondary Theme: Shift in Museum Practice

Themes that have emerged in discussion about the development of the Indigenous Advisory Circle include a shift in museum practice at the WAG and upcoming IAC. Heather Igloliorte remarks that the Advisory Circle represents a new model of museum practice, “I think it was sort of a shock to some of the people there that they were going to have their input [through the Advisory Circle] before the building was even built...It’s unusual. It’s exciting because definitely museums don’t usually work that way.”²²⁵ Igloliorte’s statement highlights the fact that museums in Canada have been historically contrived out of a colonial approach. Hence, having an Indigenous Advisory Circle formed prior to the development of the IAC represents progress toward creating a collaborative, decolonizing means to museum development. Furthermore, co-chair Julie Nagam articulates that a shift in museum practice through the Indigenous Advisory Circle is necessary, “why have an Inuit Art Centre or Indigenous content in the gallery if there isn’t strong Indigenous people leading that charge?”²²⁶ Nagam’s statement asserts that there’s a dire necessity to include Indigenous voices as a means to create change in Canadian museum practice.

²²⁴ “WAG Announces Indigenous Advisory Circle,” Winnipeg Art Gallery, March 23rd, 2017, Accessed February 13th, 2019, <https://www.wag.ca/about/press/media-releases/read,release/549/wag-announces-indigenous-advisory-circle>.

²²⁵ Randy Turner, “Newly formed Indigenous Advisory Circle aims to ‘decolonize’ Winnipeg Art Gallery,” *Winnipeg Free Press*.

²²⁶ Ibid.

For the WAG, the development of the Advisory Circle has created changes in their own museum practice in a positive manner. As Stephen Borys states, “All these people [on the Advisory Committee] have challenged us and pushed us in terms of what we’re doing here...Not only has it changed the design of the [Inuit Art] centre, but it’s really changed the focus of the WAG. It tells me we’re on the right track.”²²⁷ Borys statement reflects a reinvention of the WAG’s museum practice. According to curator, Hilde S. Hein, “[museums are] casting their own history up for review...to shape the museum’s vision of itself,...through negotiated settlements and managed dialogue.”²²⁸ I suggest that the WAG and the IAC are utilizing Hein’s concept of the reinvention of museum practice through the Advisory Circle, which will have an impact on museum practice in Manitoba and in Canada. Thus, through the Advisory Circle, the WAG and the development of the IAC will create a new template for museum practice consisting of Indigenous methods, ideologies and community involvement in the museum field.²²⁹

Sub-Theme: IAC Task Force

Discussions about the IAC also revolved around the development of a national Inuit Art Task Force. The Task Force, chaired by Director Stephen Borys, was created to aid and guide WAG staff in the planning and programming of the IAC.²³⁰ Members of the IAC Task Force consist of Indigenous and non-Indigenous members from a variety of disciplines in relation to the arts and government, and includes members from the north and south of Canada.²³¹ These members²³² will work with the WAG’s staff by lending their voices and perspectives to help

²²⁷ Randy Turner, “Newly formed Indigenous Advisory Circle aims to ‘decolonize’ Winnipeg Art Gallery,” *Winnipeg Free Press*.

Although Director of the WAG, Stephen Borys, discusses how the Indigenous Advisory Circle has shifted the WAG’s museum practice, it remains to be documented in literature by the WAG or through news articles, what these changes entail.

²²⁸ Hilde S. Hein, *The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), 143-144.

²²⁹ “WAG Announces Indigenous Advisory Circle,” Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²³⁰ “Wag Task Force Meets to Discuss Inuit Art and Learning Centre,” Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²³¹ Brielle Morgan, “Winnipeg’s Inuit art gallery planners hone their visions,” *Nunatsiaq News*.

²³² Members of the IAC Inuit Art Task Force consist of “artist Colleen Cutschall, Professor Emerita, Visual and Aboriginal Arts, Brandon University, Brandon, Manitoba; artist Jerry Ell, Iqaluit, Nunavut; Kyra Fisher, Manager, Cultural Industries, Department of Economic Development & Transportation, Government of Nunavut; Fred Ford, Manitoba Urban Inuit

inform the mandate of the IAC and its subsequent programming, which will impact the development of the IAC.²³³

Sub-Theme: Curatorial Team

Finally, the IAC has developed a new governance infrastructure through the creation of an all-Inuit curatorial team that will be leading and developing the inaugural exhibitions for the opening of the IAC in 2020. This team is critical, as it is the first time that a curatorial team will represent all four regions of Inuit Nunangat.²³⁴ The curatorial team will be led by Heather Igloliorte, accompanied by emerging artists and curators Asinnajaq, Jade Nasogaluak Carpenter and Krista Ulujuk Zawadski.²³⁵ The team will play an active role in selecting works from the WAG's Inuit art collection, as well as connecting with emerging Inuit artists. Furthermore, the curatorial team will oversee elements of the IAC's education and public programming.²³⁶ Having an influence on the educational programming at the IAC is important as it represents a blurring of boundaries between departments. For this new curatorial team at the IAC, writer and curator Richard Hill views this collaboration to be in response to one another, while creating a living space within the gallery setting.²³⁷ Furthermore, the formation of an all-Inuit curatorial team is

Association; the Honourable George Hickes, former Speaker of the Manitoba Legislature; Heather Igloliorte, Assistant Professor of Aboriginal Art History, Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec; Theresie Tungilik, Advisor, Arts & Traditional Economy, Department of Economic Development & Transportation, Government of Nunavut; and Norman Vorano, Curator of Contemporary Inuit Art, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Gatineau, Quebec. Representing the WAG are Helen Delacretaz, Chief Curator and Curator, Decorative Arts; Anna Wiebe, Head of Education; and Darlene Coward Wight, Curator of Inuit Art.”

“WAG Task Force Meets to Discuss Inuit Art and Learning Centre,” Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²³³ At the time of data collection, sources have not discussed the specific role and involvement of the Task Force in relation to the IAC.

²³⁴ “WAG Announces All-Inuit Curatorial Team for Inuit Art Centre Inaugural Exhibits,” Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²³⁵ “Concept Innovating the Art Museum,” Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²³⁶ “WAG Announces All-Inuit Curatorial Team for Inuit Art Centre Inaugural Exhibits,” Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²³⁷ Richard William Hill, “Meeting Ground: The Reinstallation of the Art Gallery of Ontario's McLaughlin Gallery,” in *Making a Noise Aboriginal Perspectives on Art, Art History, Critical Writing and Community*, ed. Lee-Ann Martin (The Banff Centre, Alberta, Canada, 2004), 70.

instrumental as contemporary scholarship has criticized museum practice for not collaborating and for not being more inclusive to Indigenous and, more specifically, Inuit curatorial practice.

The formation of an all-Inuit curatorial team for the IAC makes this an exciting time during which new Inuit voices are at the forefront of curatorial practice. This curatorial team reflects the WAG's commitment to increasing Indigenous representation at the managerial and curatorial level. What is unclear is the future plans for this curatorial team. Perhaps this curatorial team will provide consultations and guidance to the IAC, but this has not been discussed by consulted sources.

As the primary position of Inuit Art Curator at the WAG continues to be filled by an Inuit art expert of settler background, the role of an all-Inuit curatorial team engages with the lack of Inuit voices in curatorial positions at the WAG. On a more permanent level, as recently as March 2019, the WAG has announced two Indigenous hires to their staff. Member of the Tsilhqot'in Nation in B.C., Lisa Charleyboy, was hired as manager of Indigenous initiatives at the WAG, and Inuk Jocelyn Piirainen was hired as the assistant curator of Inuit art.²³⁸ This push for the inclusion of Indigenous and more specifically Inuit voices at the curatorial level reinforces the decolonizing practices being taken at the WAG and IAC.

In conclusion, the development of structure through Indigenous advisory circles, task forces and curatorial teams reinforces the WAG's dedication to the TRC's calls to action. By implementing Inuit and Indigenous collaboration, these initiatives will aid in creating necessary structure to promote and engage with the voice of Inuit from Inuit communities on a national and international platform.²³⁹ These approaches will help make the IAC an accessible space to Inuit communities.²⁴⁰ I do question the longevity and effectiveness of these newly implemented structures, however, the WAG's systemic changes of hiring Indigenous staff members points to decolonizing strategies that reflects improved power sharing in a way that changes the historic settler narrative of Inuit art.

²³⁸ "WAG hires more indigenous staff," *Winnipeg Free Press*, March 18th, 2019, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/entertainment/arts/wag-hires-moreindigenous-staff-507286712.html>.

²³⁹ Jen Zoratti, "First team of curators for Inuit Art Centre is all-Inuit, all-woman," *Winnipeg Free Press*.

²⁴⁰ Again, through the terms "access" and "Inuit communities" I am referring more precisely to local Inuit and Indigenous communities who are able to physically visit the IAC.

Theme 6: Bridging the North and South of Canada

The IAC, according to sources, is an initiative that will support new geographical relationships, bridging Canada's north and south, erasing the distance that has kept Inuit art separate from its points of origin. Forming a strong link between these geographical areas lies at the heart of the IAC's initiative²⁴¹ and will be achieved through exhibitions, research, education and art-making.²⁴² Connecting the north and south has been heightened at the IAC through the WAG's relationship to the Government of Nunavut's Fine Art Collection. According to Stephen Borys, having access to this collection "has opened up a whole new set of options and ways for us to engage the North."²⁴³ Furthermore, Borys sees the IAC as a means to engage both emotionally and economically with the north and more specifically Nunavut.²⁴⁴ In addition, Igloliorte believes that the IAC will create bridging between the north and the south of Canada through community connection between Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.²⁴⁵

Bridging over distance represents an accessible option for northern Inuit communities to be involved at the Centre. Bridging can be seen as an educational tool for the IAC, establishing collaborative approaches to museum practice. However, such work at the IAC does not provide northern Inuit communities with direct physical access to Inuit art. Furthermore, bridging still maintains the historic relationship in which Inuit art and information comes from the north and is consumed and disseminated in the south of Canada. Therefore, it appears that bridging mainly benefits those who are able to physically visit the IAC. Furthermore, I question whether bridging at the IAC will be maintained and fostered into meaningful collaborative relationships over the years?

²⁴¹ "The Power of the Art, People and Land," The Inuit Art Centre Project Exhibition, Winnipeg Art Gallery, Accessed January 10th, 2019.

²⁴² "RBC Announces \$500K Donation to WAG's Inuit Art Centre," Winnipeg Art Gallery.

²⁴³ Steve Ducharme, "Precious links to Nunavut's past head to Winnipeg gallery," *Nunatsiaq News*, February 25th, 2016, Accessed February 21st, 2019, <https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674precious-links-to-nunavuts-past-heading-to-winnipeg-gallery/>.

²⁴⁴ Alan Small, "'Bridge to the North' WAG welcomes 8,000 pieces of Nunavut art," *Winnipeg Free Press*, March 3rd, 2016, Accessed February 19th, 2019, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/entertainment/arts/bridge-to-the-north-370998791.html>.

²⁴⁵ Jen Zoratti, "First team of curators for Inuit Art Centre is all-Inuit, all-woman," *Winnipeg Free Press*.

Discussion

My analysis of the development of the IAC suggests that this southern centre is providing access to Inuit art and culture through the framework of learning and education. The IAC was developed with the intention of building knowledge surrounding Inuit art and culture, creating a dialogue amongst its Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous visitors. My research suggests that access in the south of Canada is approached by engaging with Inuit voices, creating public access either in person or through online capabilities that target a wide range of audience members, creating learning opportunities, shifting museum practice through committee structures and bridging to form collaborations between the north and south of Canada. Having an institution such as the IAC in the south of Canada points to themes such as the opportunity to restructure museum practice. I will now discuss these critical themes and questions surrounding the IAC, followed by a brief summary of the findings emerging from my data analysis.

This data analysis suggests that the IAC museum model creates access to Inuit art and culture through education. I suggest that education at the IAC is used in the learning and restructuring of Canadian museum practice at the WAG. As the largest gallery devoted to Inuit art, culture and history, the IAC is confronting a huge task in reorienting museum practice, ensuring that colonial narratives are not being perpetuated, and that Inuit and wider Indigenous communities are co-collaborators within this process. Learning and applying new decolonizing museum strategies at the IAC takes shape throughout my data analysis in the form of Inuit collaboration with the WAG – through the use of voice, dialogue and implementing long-term committee structures that will help guide the IAC into a new age of museum practice. However, it should be noted that the effectiveness of this new museum approach at the IAC remains to be seen as the effects of these decolonizing strategies will be truly tested once the centre is open to the public. Nonetheless, it can be noted that the development of the IAC has impacted and caused the WAG to reflect critically on how they approach their museum practice. The WAG has chosen to educate themselves on how to make the IAC accessible, welcoming and representative of Inuit communities, their art and their culture.

Although attempts are made through digital and virtual technology to connect northern and southern partners in providing access to Inuit art and culture, the physical objects themselves remain at the IAC and in the south of Canada. This means that northern Inuit communities, the

communities that have produced these works over the years, lack direct physical access to these art objects. Perhaps in the future, once the IAC is open to the public, collaborative efforts between northern and southern partners could make the WAG's Inuit art collections physically accessible to northern Inuit communities. This could create better partnerships amongst museums and northern Inuit communities between the north and south of Canada, all the while creating a geographical intervention in engaging with the northern exhibition of Inuit art.

Finally, my data analysis causes me to assert that the IAC is an education tool for the south of Canada. Through education the IAC wants its visitors to connect and engage with Inuit art, Inuit culture and history from the perspective of the Inuit themselves. I feel that in the south of Canada the remoteness of our country's north has caused these communities to feel separated from one another. I believe that the IAC as a museum model acts as a locus for Inuit, Indigenous, and non-Indigenous peoples to learn about our northern communities and neighbors. This is a positive opportunity for engagement and education. However, at the early development stages of the IAC, I question how the IAC, through education, will truly benefit northern Inuit communities? Better communication and exchange of ideas between regions is advanced through the involvement of communities of Inuit artists and cultural leaders in this curatorial initiative, yet, the collaboration of Inuit communities largely benefits the education of the IAC's southern visitors. How will the IAC, as an educational tool, serve and engage northern Inuit communities in a manner that is meaningful and necessary to their own needs and connection with their art objects.

My analysis of themes of access to Inuit art and culture at the IAC found, primarily, that utilizing the voice of Inuit community members asserts autonomy and sovereignty over Inuit history and their cultural practices. In addition, the implementation of committee structures, involving and collaborating with Indigenous and Inuit community members, reinforces this sovereignty. The high ranking of these themes within my data analysis points to a shift in collaborative museum practice, although we should continue to be critical of these same structures that intend to be more inclusive. These voices are central to the learning and education at the heart of the concept of access at the IAC that directly engages with a variety of Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Hence, education is key as a guiding force in the understanding, appreciation and meaning-making that occurs at the IAC.

Finally, the emphasis on public access and bridging regions and cultures through digital means points to an emerging trend in projects that provide access to Inuit art. As will be discussed later within this paper, providing online access to Inuit art presents a unique opportunity to engage with northern Inuit communities that also relocates art objects despite geographic remoteness.

CHAPTER 3: ACCESS IN THE NORTH OF CANADA – THE KENOJUAK CULTURAL CENTRE AND PRINT SHOP

Introduction

This chapter addresses the Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop (KCCPS), a northern cultural centre for the production and exhibition of Inuit art located in Cape Dorset that represents a museum model that facilitates the dissemination of and access to Inuit art and culture directly to Inuit communities. Opened in September 2018, the KCCPS was named after prolific Cape Dorset artist, Kenojuak Ashevak. Architecturally, the centre is 10,400 square foot, \$10.2 million-dollar facility, designed by Iqaluit and Inuit based firm, Panaq Design.²⁴⁶ The lead architect for the KCCPS, Alain Fournier, suggests this project is an example of “meaningful Arctic architecture,” with a focus on the creation of better relationships with Inuit communities.²⁴⁷ Fournier articulates that the incorporation of Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit*²⁴⁸ (IQ) into this building design aids in the preservation of Inuit history and culture.²⁴⁹ Through Panaq Design’s consultations and relationships with the community of Cape Dorset, the KCCPS’s building reflects the activities that occur within the interior of the space.²⁵⁰ By involving Inuit

²⁴⁶ Inuit Art Quarterly, “Kenojuak Cultural Centre Opens Its Doors in Kinngait,” Inuit Art Foundation, September 5th, 2018, Accessed March 30th, 2019, <http://iaq.inuitartfoundation.org/kenojuak-cultural-centre-opens-its-doors-in-kinngait/>.

²⁴⁷ David Murphy, “Meaningful Arctic architecture: more than bells and whistles,” *Nunatsiaq News*, March 16th, 2016, https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674meaningful_arctic_architecture_more_than_bells_and_whistles/.

²⁴⁸ Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) can be defined as “encompass[ing] all aspects of traditional Inuit culture including values, world-view, language, social organization, knowledge, life skills, perceptions, and expectations. IQ use to be called Inuit Traditional Knowledge, however scholars felt that this term was limiting of all that encompasses IQ.

Sarah, Bonesteel, “Canada’s Relationship with Inuit a History of Policy and Program Development,” Prepared for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, ed. Erik Anderson (Ottawa, June 2006), 174, footnote 51. https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/inuit-book_1100100016901_eng.pdf.

²⁴⁹ David Murphy, “Meaningful Arctic architecture: more than bells and whistles,” *Nunatsiaq News*.

²⁵⁰ Sarah Rogers, “Nunavut’s oldest artist studio gets a new space,” *Nunatsiaq News*, June 2nd, 2014, https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674a_new_space_for_nunavuts_oldest_artists_studio/.

communities, collaboration, and IQ, the KCCPS has physically created an accessible space for the production, exhibition and continuance of Inuit art and culture in Cape Dorset.

The KCCPS provides Inuit communities with updated print-making facilities as well as direct access to Inuit art that has traditionally been collected and exhibited at institutions outside of Nunavut. Through data analysis, my research suggests that the key means by which the KCCPS creates accessibility to its collections on the part of northern communities is by being understood as a meeting place, by including the Inuit voice, by having an exhibition and art production space, by sharing knowledge and, finally, using technology to bridge communities between the north and south of Canada. In order to investigate these outcomes, I will provide a brief history of the development of the KCCPS as a northern cultural centre. I will then outline the methodology I used to gather data about the anticipated outcomes of the increased accessibility the Centre would provide to Inuit art and culture on the part of various constituencies. Finally, I will offer a critical discussion of my findings.

History of Cape Dorset Art Production

Largely considered to be the “capital of Inuit art,” Cape Dorset is an Inuit hamlet located on the southern tip of Baffin Island in Nunavut, Canada.²⁵¹ Art production in Cape Dorset began in the 1950s, consisting of drawings, stone carvings and prints. This was due to the strategic development of a northern art market by the Canadian government in order to create an “Inuit” art that catered to southern and international buyers. In 1959, Kinngait Studios was created, which acted as a space for artists to work. Kinngait Studios was managed by the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative Ltd. (WBEC)²⁵² and work created there continues to be marketed

²⁵¹ “Kenojuak Cultural Centre Gains Momentum,” *Canadianart*, July 13th, 2015, <https://canadianart.ca/features/kenojuak-cultural-centre-gains-momentum/>.

²⁵² The West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative Ltd. (WBEC) is in charge of the operations of the historic Kinngait Studios in Cape Dorset. It is important to note that WBEC was established by southern DNANR officers, this reinforces the southern influence within the development of Kinngait Studios. In recent years WBEC’s role has expanded to include the communications, promotion, advocacy, government relations and special projects that is affiliated to the Inuit art of Cape Dorset.

“Home,” West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative Ltd., n.d., Accessed May 18th, 2019, <https://www.westbaffin.com/>.

worldwide by Dorset Fine Arts (DFA)²⁵³, located in Toronto, Ontario.²⁵⁴ Kinngait Studios is considered to be the oldest professional printmaking studio in all of Canada.²⁵⁵ Through the development of these professional printing studios, Inuit artists in Cape Dorset produced annual collections of prints marketed to buyers and collectors in the south of Canada.²⁵⁶ As discussed earlier, art production in Cape Dorset was historically regarded as an economic endeavor, sold and acquired geographically outside of the Inuit community that produced it.

Over the past 50 years, Inuit art produced in Cape Dorset, has gained international recognition by curators and museums. Dorset's bold and imaginative prints and drawings have become sought after items for collectors, as well as acting as important symbols of Canada.²⁵⁷ Cape Dorset's excellence in printmaking has provided income for the community and continues to be an important economic engine today.²⁵⁸ A 2010 study by the Canada Council for the Arts found that Cape Dorset has "the second highest concentration of artists [within its labor force] among all Canadian municipalities."²⁵⁹ In 2017, art production from Cape Dorset generated over

Jennifer Alsop, "History of Cape Dorset and the West Baffin Co-operative," *University of Victoria* (May. 1st, 2010), cited on "A History of the WBEC," West Baffin Eskimo Co-Operative Ltd., Accessed July 6th, 2019, <https://www.westbaffin.com/new-page-1>.

²⁵³ Dorset Fine Arts (DFA) is the wholesale marketing division of the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative. DFA was established in Toronto in 1978 as a means to market and connect buyers and institutions to the Inuit fine art produced by artists part of the Cape Dorset Co-operative. "Dorset Fine Arts," Dorset Fine Arts, n.d., Accessed May 18th, 2019, <http://www.dorsetfinearts.com/>.

²⁵⁴ "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Fact Sheet," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, November 2017, Accessed March 26th, 2019, <file:///C:/Users/chrys/Documents/MASTERS/THESIS/March%202019/KCCPS%20FACT%20Sheet30Nov2017.pdf> (URL no longer active)

²⁵⁵ Sarah Rogers, "Nunavut's oldest artist studio gets a new space," *Nunatsiaq News*.

²⁵⁶ "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Brochure," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, n.d., Accessed March 18th, 2019, http://kenojuakcentre.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/150127_Brochure_VF_2.pdf.

²⁵⁷ "Art and Artists of Cape Dorset," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, n.d., Accessed March 18th, 2019, <http://kenojuakcentre.ca/art-and-artists-of-cape-dorset/>.

²⁵⁸ "About Cape Dorset," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, n.d., Accessed March 18th, 2019, <http://kenojuakcentre.ca/about-the-community/>.

²⁵⁹ Kelly Hill, "Artists in Small and Rural Municipalities in Canada," *Hill Strategies Research Inc.* 8, no. 2 (January, 2010): 14, <https://canadacouncil.ca/research/research-library/2010/01/artists-in-small-and-rural-municipalities>.

\$3,000,000.00 to the local community.²⁶⁰ This is crucial, as the community of Cape Dorset functions and thrives through the production of this work. Hence, the creation of KCCPS is pivotal for the Cape Dorset community, many of whose members are artists.

The Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop – Rationale and Purpose

Rationale

The new KCCPS was built in collaboration between northern and southern partners. This includes the hamlet of Cape Dorset, the WBEC, DFA and southern curators.²⁶¹ The KCCPS emerged in conjunction with an ad hoc program established through the DFA’s Cape Dorset Legacy Project. Through communication and resource sharing with Dorset artists, the Legacy Project intends to create an Inuit art renaissance while generating momentum for the future of Inuit art.²⁶² According to DFA, “With the Kenojuak Cultural Centre as its home base, the studios have the potential to become a premier destination for international travelers. A healthy and thriving creative community is integral to seizing this opportunity – the Cape Dorset Legacy Project can ensure that necessary community prosperity.”²⁶³ Statements such as this reiterate that the development of the KCCPS is not an entirely Inuit idea. Rather, the KCCPS represents an initiative that involves key northern and southern organizations that want to see the continued success of Inuit art production and the promotion of artmaking in the Cape Dorset region. This can be reiterated by examining the way funding was acquired for the KCCPS. Using a collaborative approach resulted in a fundraising campaign that attracted pledges from both the federal and territorial government as well as substantial donations from the private sector.²⁶⁴

²⁶⁰ “Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Fact Sheet,” Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop.

²⁶¹ “Fundraising nets \$400K for Cape Dorset Cultural Centre,” *CBC News*, June 3rd, 2014, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/fundraising-nets-400k-for-cape-dorset-cultural-centre-1.2663450>.

²⁶² “Cape Dorset Legacy Project,” Dorset Fine Arts, n.d., Accessed May 18th, 2019, <http://www.dorsetfinearts.com/legacyproject>.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ “Our Donors,” Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, Accessed April 13th, 2019, <http://kenojuakcentre.ca/our-donors/>.

On the logistical side, the development of the KCCPS stemmed from the necessity to replace the outdated Kinngait Studios. Built in 1957, the Kinngait Studios were no longer up to code and required extensive maintenance as the result of age and the region's harsh winter climate.²⁶⁵ According to the General Manager of the WBEC, Cary Merritt, the Kinngait Studios were pieced together from various structures; "...the work environments [at the Kinngait Studios were] not the greatest for the printmakers."²⁶⁶ The necessity to revamp the studio spaces for the Cape Dorset community is strongly echoed by the architect of the KCCPS, Alain Fournier, who stated, "It's pretty bad [the Kinngait Studios]. And it's amazing to think they [Cape Dorset artists] have produced world-class art in these conditions. And none of our artists south would have accepted these conditions, really."²⁶⁷ Attempts to revitalize the Kinngait Studios were attempted in the 1980s. According to Jimmy Manning, artist and former manager of the Kinngait Studios, "we talked about maybe planning something like a cultural centre idea, and during that time after the eighties, [a] bad recession down south killed our plans."²⁶⁸ Manning continues that "years later, we felt strongly that we should look at it again. It's a much-needed addition to the community."²⁶⁹ Manning's statement highlights that the fact that the development of the KCCPS has long been considered a necessity, but it also reinforces the necessity of involvement from the south of Canada's for this project to become a reality.

Private donors included a variety of companies and charitable foundations. This included (but not limited to): banks such as *BMO*, *CIBC*, *RCB*, *TD* and *Scotiabank*, northern telecommunication companies such as, *Northwestel*, retail companies for rural communities such as, *The North West Company*, law firms (*Blakes Lawyers*) and charity foundations such as the *Howard Webster Foundation* and *The Molson Foundation* etc.

²⁶⁵ Sarah Rogers, "Nunavut's oldest artist studio gets a new space," *Nunatsiaq News*.

"Kenojuak Cultural Centre Gains Momentum," *Canadianart*.

²⁶⁶ Fehelley Fine Arts, "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Promotional Video," YouTube, June 3rd, 2014, 4:37-4:44, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGMwboYLNSw&t=1s>.

²⁶⁷ David Murphy, "Meaningful Arctic architecture: more than bells and whistles," *Nunatsiaq News*.

²⁶⁸ "Dreamt of for decades, Cape Dorset finally gets a cultural centre," *CBC News*, July 25th, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/cape-dorset-kenojuak-cultural-centre-1.4760423>.

²⁶⁹ Sarah Rogers, "Nunavut's oldest artist studio gets a new space," *Nunatsiaq News*.

The new building is a significant addition for Cape Dorset artists and printmakers. For instance, the print shop at the KCCPS is a state-of-the-art facility, a vast improvement from the previous conditions at the Kinngait Studios.²⁷⁰ The new print shop features large studio spaces for drawing, printing, sculpting and conducting art lessons. In addition, this space includes proper humidity, heating and lighting control.²⁷¹ The centre also features specialized ventilation which will help to control fumes from the printing process.²⁷² The new print shop at the KCCPS provides improved facilities to artists. By having access to a fully functioning print studio artists will be able to continue producing renowned works of art for years to come. As Master Printer at Kinngait Studios, Niveaksie Quvianaqtuliaq, stated, “the new print centre will be much better for the fire code hazard, that is going to be a lot better for us [printers and artists] and also better equipment and better ventilation system.”²⁷³

Improved printing facilities not only benefits Inuit artists, but rather protects the interest of southern stakeholders for the KCCPS. Campaign Chair of the building project and politician Jim Prentice (P.C., Q.C.) agreed with the necessity to update this facility. As Prentice stated, “...our country needed to modernize [the Kinngait Studios], to build and to make sure that we have working space for artists of a current generation.”²⁷⁴ Statements by southern politicians again highlight the fact that the KCCPS is not an entirely northern run initiative. Rather, the KCCPS is a collaboration between organizations in the north and south of Canada. This dynamic is important to note, as it highlights the south’s involvement in northern museum models in Canada. Hence, key players in the north and south of Canada have collaborated on improving working conditions for Cape Dorset artists, resulting in the new production facilities and cultural centre that will be able to support artistic work from Cape Dorset while providing a safe

²⁷⁰ Feheley Fine Arts, “Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Promotional Video,” YouTube, 5:01- 5:13.

²⁷¹ “About the Centre,” Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, n.d., Accessed March 18th, 2019, <http://kenojuakcentre.ca/about-the-centre/>.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ “Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Campaign Videos- 7 minute,” Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, n.d., 2:36-2:45, <http://kenojuakcentre.ca/video/>.

²⁷⁴ Feheley Fine Arts, “Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Promotional Video,” YouTube, 3:50-3:59.

production space for years to come.²⁷⁵ That longevity will continue to feed the market for Inuit art, but the profits from the endeavor will be, in part, reinvested in the KCCPS and help to sustain the economy of Cape Dorset.

Purpose

Located at the heart of the hamlet of Cape Dorset, the KCCPS has been designed to serve its local community and international visitors in three primary ways. First, the Centre is intended to be a heritage centre for the Cape Dorset community through preserving and sharing cultural traditions. Secondly, the KCCPS will act as a modernized home for the Kinngait Studios. Thirdly, the KCCPS will act as a visitor centre for tourists to learn about the heritage and art production of the Cape Dorset area.²⁷⁶ More precisely, the KCCPS includes key features of interest for visitors including meeting and activity spaces for community groups, modern print shop facilities with studios for lithography, etching, stone cutting and drawing, temporary and permanent exhibition spaces, an exterior terrace and sculpture garden, visitor centre, retail area and, finally, temperature and humidity controlled archives.²⁷⁷

The KCCPS officially opened to the public on September 5th, 2018. The opening of the centre included a community gathering which featured a prayer, flag raising, ulliq lighting²⁷⁸, throat singing, a country food feast, square dancing and official tours of the centre for the community.²⁷⁹ A second official inaugural was held on September 8th, 2018 and included over

²⁷⁵ “Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Campaign,” Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, n.d., Accessed March 18th, 2019, <http://kenojuakcentre.ca/>.

“About the campaign,” Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, n.d., Accessed March 18th, 2019, <http://kenojuakcentre.ca/about-the-campaign/>.

²⁷⁶ “Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Brochure,” Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ A qulliq is an Inuit lamp. This lamp is used at community gatherings. Specifically, this lamp is incorporated into the Truth-Gathering Process which recognizes and acknowledges the stories of missing and murdered Indigenous and Inuit women. The qulliq represents love, care and strength.

“Protocols, Symbols and Ceremonies,” National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, n.d., Accessed April 7th, 2019, <http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/protocols-symbols-and-ceremonies/>.

²⁷⁹ Inuit Art Quarterly, “Kenojuak Cultural Centre Opens Its Doors in Kinngait,” Inuit Art Foundation.

seventy-five officials from outside of Cape Dorset.²⁸⁰ Guests included members of the territorial government, the federal government, Inuit organizations and private donors.²⁸¹ These dual opening celebrations reinforced the collaborative efforts between north and south in developing the KCCPS. These collaborative efforts were pivotal, reinforcing the importance of new inclusive, collaborative museum models in the north of Canada.

The KCCPS provides direct access to Inuit art and art production to community members and visitors. Future plans include having artists using the print shop for art production and holding community events and gatherings. There is also discussion surrounding future development of Cape Dorset artwork in areas of Europe such as Paris, France and Bern, Switzerland. Marketing Dorset artwork internationally through the KCCPS stems from the market that was created when the Canadian Federal Government utilized cultural diplomacy programs to actively promote Inuit art.²⁸² In European markets, the most recognizable “Canadian” art is often Inuit art.²⁸³ Touring exhibitions imply that the KCCPS will be building relationships with other institutions outside of Nunavut.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁰ Derek Neary, “Kenojuak Cultural Centre bringing many visitors to Cape Dorset,” *Nunavut News Online*, December 12th, 2018, <https://nunavutnews.com/nunavut-news/kenojuak-cultural-centre-bringing-many-visitors-to-cape-dorset/>.

²⁸¹ Derek Neary, “Cultural centre opening date set, manager hired,” *Nunavut News Online*, June 26th, 2018, <https://nunavutnews.com/nunavut-news/cultural-centre-opening-date-set-manager-hired/>.

²⁸² Derek Neary, “Co-op marks 60 years in Cape Dorset,” *Nunavut News Online*, January 9th, 2019, <https://nunavutnews.com/nunavut-news/co-op-marks-60-years-in-cape-dorset/>.

Touring shows at the KCCPS includes the inaugural show which features an array of Kenojuak Ashevak’s works across Canada.

²⁸³ Inuit art according to Director of the WAG, Stephen Borys, has also since the end of 2017/early 2018 been touring through traveling exhibitions throughout Europe. By engaging with international audiences, the WAG hopes to showcase contemporary Inuit art production. Levon Sevunts, “Winnipeg Art Gallery to feature Inuit art in France,” *Eye on the Arctic*, July 14th, 2016, Accessed July 8th, 2019, <http://www.rcinet.ca/eye-on-the-arctic/2016/07/14/winnipeg-art-gallery-to-feature-inuit-art-in-france/>.

²⁸⁴ Discussion of collaborating with other institutions with travelling shows has yet to be further discussed since the opening of the KCCPS in September of 2018.

Methodology

In this case, access to Inuit art and culture on the part of Inuit communities becomes more complex given geographical distance and the perception of the remoteness of the north in Canadian terms. The fact that the KCCPS is located in Cape Dorset means that, for the first time, proximal communities will have first-hand access to historic collections, exhibitions and to contemporary art production. One of my primary research questions is to examine the impact that this unprecedented access will have on the community, since it will bring visitors from both north and south, creating an intersectional site for re-interpreting Inuit art in its northern contexts. This chapter discusses how the KCCPS is creating access to Inuit art and collections for Inuit communities in Cape Dorset.

Resources generated during the period of development of the Centre through to its official opening span from 2014 to 2019. I examined promotional materials, websites, news articles editorials, scholarly articles and social media posts in order to access a broad variety of positions and voices throughout the continued development of the KCCPS. Promotional materials, most particularly the KCCPS website, provided information regarding the perspective and intention of the KCCPS as a heritage centre and print-making studio. Meanwhile, news articles showcased a variety of perspectives and voices from the Cape Dorset community, Nunavut, and art publications. Finally, social media posts from Facebook and Instagram provided insight into the public reception of the KCCPS among northern and southern Canadian communities.

The KCCPS's main website provided synopses discussing the campaign, purpose, history, and artistic production surrounding Cape Dorset and the KCCPS. Secondly, I gathered news articles that discussed the development of the KCCPS, focusing on newspapers from the territory of Nunavut (i.e. *Nunatsiaq News* and *Nunavut News Online*), southern news sources (i.e. *CBC*) and art related articles from the *Inuit Art Foundation*²⁸⁵ and *Canadian Art Magazine*.²⁸⁶ I

²⁸⁵ The Inuit Art Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to supporting Inuit art and artists from across Canada. The Inuit Art Foundation provides a platform for scholarly and non-scholarly discussions surrounding Inuit art, as well as supports and advocates for the interests and needs of Inuit artists across Canada.

“About,” Inuit Art Foundation.

²⁸⁶ Canadian Art is a non-profit organization that produces digital and print based magazines that act as a platform for Canadian arts and culture. Focused on the journalism and critique of art and

selected these newspapers to include a variety of Inuit and non-Inuit voices within the conversation about the KCCPS. Finally, my research consisted of acquiring social media posts that discussed the progress of the KCCPS. I gathered posts from the KCCPS's Facebook page, as well as posts from Instagram posted by @kenojuakcentre. In addition, to gather a wider variety of posts from other users, I also consulted hashtags such as #kenojuakcentre and #kinngaitstudios. The selection of these hashtags was made in relation to place and institutional names as a means to be as nominative while remaining neutral within this process. I decided to utilize social media posts to incorporate more of the public's voice on the happenings at the KCCPS – to provide insight into what local Inuit/non-Inuit residents of Cape Dorset think of this project and to understand their responses to the new centre.

Given that the KCCPS only opened in September of 2018, I realize that its early stages of development creates certain limitations and biases within my overall results. However, although this centre is in its early stages of realization, it is clear in its objectives and intentions, has clear governance structures and has articulated their position in relation to past and future museum practices with respect to Inuit art. I acknowledge that the measurement of results in five years' time would produce different results, impacts and outcomes. However, I wished to capture this particular cultural moment, in the wake of TRC, when we can actually witness the mechanisms and processes of change in our cultural landscape. The themes that emerged from my analysis of this primary material can be separated into five themes; Meeting Place, Community Perspective, Cultural Centre Exhibition Space, Sharing of Knowledge, and, finally, Bridging the North and South of Canada.²⁸⁷

culture in Canada, the Canadian art magazine empowers the discussion surrounding diverse audiences and artists.

“About Us,” *Canadian Art*, n.d., Accessed April 7th, 2019, <https://canadianart.ca/about-the-foundation/>.

²⁸⁷ The language used for these themes came from repetitive key word searches found throughout my gathered sources.

See bibliography for the specific breakdown of sources in relation to my data analysis (pg. 107).

Results

Theme 1: Meeting Place

Material gathered on the KCCPS focused primarily on concepts that discussed the centre as a meeting place. Acting as a primary theme within my data collection, the concept of a meeting place can be broken down into sub-themes of celebration and tourism. The KCCPS is understood to be a meeting place for community members. Alain Fournier articulates that the KCCPS will function culturally as a *qaggiq* which, in Inuit tradition, refers to a large communal igloo for members both young and old in the community to gather, tell stories, share knowledge and discuss the future.²⁸⁸ On entering the main entrance of the KCCPS, visitors are at the centre of a cultural hub with sightlines to the exhibition rooms, artwork, a retail area, information desk, and an outdoor terrace to enjoy with others.²⁸⁹ Since opening in 2018, the space has already hosted a number of cultural events, elder gatherings and community meetings, defining itself as a community and cultural centre.²⁹⁰

Multiple references discussed how the KCCPS was a meeting place for community Elders. Since the centre has opened three Elder gatherings have occurred at the KCCPS. These gatherings have consisted of approximately thirty to forty Elders who have gathered and socialized at the centre.²⁹¹ Cultural Centre Manager of the KCCPS, Louisa Parr, hopes to increase these gatherings to twice a month while incorporating Elder and youth programming during these gatherings.²⁹² These gatherings at the KCCPS are important, as they provide a safe space where Elders can gather and socialize, a regular function that differs from southern museums. I would assert that the inclusion of Elders within the KCCPS museum model acts as a contact zone as previously discussed with regards to the IAC. Unlike Mary Louise Pratt's notion

²⁸⁸ "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Campaign Videos, 7 minute," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, 4:00-4:21.

²⁸⁹ Sarah Rogers, "Nunavut's oldest artist studio gets a new space," *Nunatsiaq News*.

²⁹⁰ Derek Neary, "Kenojuak Cultural Centre bringing many visitors to Cape Dorset," *Nunavut News Online*, December 12th, 2018, <https://nunavutnews.com/nunavut-news/kenojuak-cultural-centre-bringing-many-visitors-to-cape-dorset/>.

²⁹¹ Derek Neary, "Elders welcomed at Kenojuak Cultural Centre," *Nunavut News Online*, November 1st, 2018. <https://nunavutnews.com/nunavut-news/elders-welcomed-at-kenojuak-cultural-centre/>.

²⁹² Ibid.

of a contact zone, which refers to the meeting of groups with unequal colonial relations, I see this contact zone as consistent with the notion advanced by Laura Peers (Curator at the Pitt Rivers Museum) and Alison K. Brown (Researcher at the Glasgow Museum). Peer and Brown's notion of the contact zone can be applied to source communities, "where the histories and politics of the past [years] have often led to gaps in knowledge across generations."²⁹³ This idea of being a source community contact zone enables the KCCPS to directly engage in creating a more inclusive space for knowledge keepers of their community. By creating a space that is accessible to all members of the Cape Dorset community, this further encourages a collaborative and engaged museum model in the north of Canada one that benefits its source community by facilitating access to art objects that represents fragments of lost community histories.

In addition to being a meeting place for Elders, the KCCPS is intended to be a hub for artists and the general public. As Alain Fournier states, "The building will be welcoming [and] will be warm, [it will] be a place where both artists and the public will want to come because it is a place where it's fun to work in, it's a good place to work in and it's a good place to meet."²⁹⁴ Moreover, in accordance with being a meeting place for artists, my research suggests that the KCCPS will be a space for celebration of Cape Dorset's historic and contemporary artistic achievements. The function of celebration at the KCCPS recontextualizes cultural production for the Cape Dorset community. Instead of art from Cape Dorset being created for an outside market and held only in the south of Canada, the presentation of this material in the territory of Nunavut is an act of decolonization. Celebrating Inuit art from Cape Dorset reinforces the importance of having physical access to art objects for northern Inuit communities, as it is a means to connect with their history and cultural heritage. As former Mayor of Cape Dorset, Palaya Qiatsuk, has stated, "this centre will celebrate our people's creative history while encouraging more of our youth to become artists."²⁹⁵ Campaign Chair Hon. Jim Prentice (P.C., Q.C.), echoes the

²⁹³ Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown, "Introduction," in *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader*, ed. Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown (Routledge, London, 2003), 5, http://search.ebscohost.com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=134504&site=ehost-live&scope=site&ebv=EB&ppid=pp_iv.

²⁹⁴ "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Campaign Videos- 7 minute," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, 2:53-3:08.

²⁹⁵ Thomas, "Cape Dorset cultural centre taking shape," *Nunavut News Online*, August 11th, 2017, <https://nunavutnews.com/nunavut-news/cape-dorset-cultural-centre-taking-shape/>.

importance of Qiatsuk's statement in that the KCCPS will "celebrate all of the great artistic achievements that have happened in Dorset for many years [to come]."²⁹⁶ Hence, the KCCPS is seen as a physical space that is welcoming to various members of the local community: Elders, youth, artists and the general public. This is critical in making sure that the centre feels accessible to all members of society. It is through this meeting place that the KCCPS is a hub for the community of Cape Dorset, as well as a place for the celebration of cultural knowledge, heritage, and artistic production.²⁹⁷

Sub-Theme: Tourism

A sub-theme of the KCCPS being a meeting place, is that it is a northern attraction for tourism. Numerous sources discuss the attractiveness that the centre holds for visitors to Cape Dorset. As Jimmy Manning states, "The cultural centre part is very very important to have and long overdue, because there's so many people that [have] come through here [Cape Dorset], from the south, from Europe, from Japan, from all over the world, [who] are very interested in seeing the art. When we get tourists, our studios can only take so much people and people have to line [up] outside."²⁹⁸ The new KCCPS will be able to accommodate tourists, while acting as a meeting place for international visitors. This is an exciting opportunity for the community as the KCCPS will serve as a year-round destination for travellers.²⁹⁹ The KCCPS is seen as an attraction that will boost traffic to local hotels and attractions, creating a tourist economy that will generate profit for the community as a whole. According to late artist Tim Pitseolak, "[The KCCPS] will be a great privilege to show the people outside [of Cape Dorset], the true meaning of Cape Dorset and the art that's well known worldwide, and this is the best place to uh, express Cape Dorset is through the culture centre."³⁰⁰ Resources therefore suggest that the KCCPS is a valued addition to the community to act as a meeting place for tourism, while sharing with

²⁹⁶ Fehelley Fine Arts, "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Promotional Video," YouTube, 8:25-8:29.

²⁹⁷ "About the campaign," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop.

²⁹⁸ "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Campaign Videos- 5 minute," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, n.d., 2:53-3:24, <http://kenojuakcentre.ca/video/>.

²⁹⁹ "About the campaign," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop.

³⁰⁰ "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Campaign Videos- 7 minute," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, 5:43-6:01.

visitors the importance of art production for Cape Dorset. A visit to the KCCPS offers tourists an experience to view artistic production in real time, to buy works of art on site and to learn from and connect with others.³⁰¹ It is important to note that the emphasis placed on tourism at the KCCPS perpetuates the economic narrative of the centre. Although there is an economic element involved at the KCCPS tourism creates further opportunities for visitors to learn and engage with Inuit art and culture in a northern setting.

The construction of the KCCPS is already attracting great interest for tourism as Cape Dorset's senior administrative officer, John Hussey states, "[The KCCPS is] causing a lot of attraction to Cape Dorset..."³⁰² This attraction is quantified by William Huffman, Marketing Manager for Dorset Fine Arts, who estimates 125 visitors to the KCCPS per month, made up of international tourists, art collectors, gallerists, museum officials and journalists.³⁰³ Additionally, the KCCPS will increase tourism even more due to its incorporation into cruise ship itineraries such as the South Baffin Explorer.³⁰⁴ Overall, sources discussing the KCCPS reflect that the new centre shows a great deal of anticipation for tourism that will boost Cape Dorset's art market and economy.

Theme 2: Cape Dorset Perspective/Public Opinions

The second theme throughout my data collection on the KCCPS was the inclusion of community perspectives from Cape Dorset and public opinions on the centre by experts and social media users. The inclusion of Inuit voices in the development of the KCCPS is critical as this creates a dialogue for an accessible space that meets the needs of the community that it is intended to serve. This inclusion of Inuit voices, as Heather Igloliorte has suggested, contributes to greater presence and influence within the discourse of Inuit studies, which has been of concern

³⁰¹ "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Brochure," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop.

³⁰² "About the campaign," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop.

³⁰³ Derek Neary, "Kenojuak Cultural Centre bringing many visitors to Cape Dorset," *Nunavut News Online*.

³⁰⁴ Jocelyn Pointkoski and Nicola Slater, "South Baffin Explorer: Art, Culture and Wildlife," *Canadianart*, February 28th, 2019, <https://canadianart.ca/sponsored/south-baffin-explorer-art-culture-and-wildlife-copy/>.

within the scholarly literature throughout the past decade.³⁰⁵ With this in mind, my data on community perspectives and public opinions demonstrated three areas of discussion: first, the theme of pride and enthusiasm for the centre; second, the excitement for the continuity of art production; and, finally, the idea that the centre will enable better preservation of Inuit history and culture.³⁰⁶

Sub-Theme: Pride and Enthusiasm

The development and construction of the KCCPS has elicited pride and enthusiasm from community members of Cape Dorset. According to Alain Fournier, “The community was really behind the project.”³⁰⁷ In numerous news articles Cape Dorset community members expressed their pride for the arrival of the KCCPS. As Jimmy Manning stated, “[I’m] feeling proud and very, very happy to see this new building coming up.”³⁰⁸ Elders from the Cape Dorset area were also excited for the KCCPS, as former Mayor of Cape Dorset, Padlaya Qiatsuk stated, “Our elders have been waiting a long time for this centre, and the whole community is very enthusiastic about seeing this project built.”³⁰⁹ Social media posts have also encapsulated public opinions on the development of the KCCPS, as a comment from a post from Facebook on January 2nd, 2018 stated, “This [the KCCPS] has become a reality. As Dorset people [we] should be so proud and grateful.”³¹⁰ These sentiments reiterate that there is great pride and enthusiasm by Elders and community members for the development and access that will be provided through the KCCPS.

³⁰⁵ Heather Igloliorte, “The Inuit of our Imagination,” 46.

³⁰⁶ The preservation of Cape Dorset history I suggest will be applied using Inuit ways of knowing. I suggest this application given that the intended audience of this material is for Cape Dorset community members and regional Inuit communities. At the time of my research, resources have not discussed the format in which this material will be presented.

³⁰⁷ Derek Neary, “Cape Dorset cultural centre construction completed,” *Nunavut News Online*, March 2nd, 2018, <https://nunavutnews.com/nunavut-news/cape-dorset-cultural-centre-construction-completed/>.

³⁰⁸ “Dreamt of for decades, Cape Dorset finally gets a cultural centre,” *CBC News*.

³⁰⁹ John Van Dusen, “Kenojuak Centre campaign in Cape Dorset gets \$4.5M from feds,” *CBC News*, June 29th, 2016, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/kenojuak-centre-and-print-shop-cape-dorset-federal-contribution-1.3656969>.

³¹⁰ “Kenojuak Cultural Centre And Print Shop,” Facebook, January 2nd, 2018, Accessed March 26th, 2019, https://www.facebook.com/pg/kenojuakcentre/posts/?ref=page_internal.

Sub-Theme: Continuity of Art Production

The KCCPS has generated many community/public opinions on its ability to aid in the continuity of artistic production by Cape Dorset artists. According to Cape Dorset's Senior Administrative Officer, Ed Devereaux, by having a facility such as the KCCPS, artists will be able to continue to contribute to their artistic legacy.³¹¹ Artists and printmakers such as Niveaksie Quvianaqtuliaq are proud to be a part of this new venture, as Quvianaqtuliaq believes that being a part of the production of future collections of Cape Dorset art is exciting.³¹² This emphasis on futurity suggests to me that the centre will enable Cape Dorset artists to assert more authority over their own artistic production and the exhibition of their work within a northern museum setting. That being said, the KCCPS presents opportunities to exhibit and share artist talents with their local northern community, while contributing to the Inuit art market. By having access to updated printing facilities and studios, investors ensure the continuation of Cape Dorset art production, which will at some point in time travel south for consumption by southern buyers and institutions. Hence, from a community perspective, the KCCPS is a welcomed addition to the Cape Dorset community in creating agency for artists to share their works in a northern context. At the same time the KCCPS as a space, strengthens the Inuit art market by enabling artists works to travel, be sold and recognized in exhibitions on a national and international level.

Sub-Theme: Preserving Inuit History/Culture

A final sub-theme within my data suggests that there is some public recognition of the role that the KCCPS will play as a centre that aids in preserving Inuit history and culture. For instance, some community members noted that the KCCPS will be a place where visitors can learn more about their ancestors through stories.³¹³ It will be a place, according to current Cape Dorset Mayor Timoon Toonoo, where Inuit culture and history can be preserved.³¹⁴ This is

³¹¹ John Van Dusen, "Kenojuak Centre campaign in Cape Dorset gets \$4.5M from feds," *CBC News*.

³¹² Feheley Fine Arts, "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Promotional Video," YouTube, 10:13-10:21.

³¹³ John Van Dusen, "Kenojuak Centre campaign in Cape Dorset gets \$4.5M from feds," *CBC News*.

³¹⁴ Inuit Art Quarterly, "Kenojuak Cultural Centre Opens Its Doors in Kinngait," Inuit Art Foundation.

important as the public sees the KCCPS as an accessible space that constitutes a learning centre for their own cultural heritage. This is crucial as having a space that addresses Inuit culture and history reverses what former WAG Inuit Art Curator, Jean Blodgett, refers to as the unbalanced power relationships for Inuit communities, leaving decision making about their cultural materials in the hands of outsiders.³¹⁵ Thus, having access to Inuit cultural history at a centre such the KCCPS puts authority in the hands of Inuit community members. This to me is an act of cultural sovereignty, where having direct, physical access to cultural heritage connects community members to their ancestors, engages youth, and furthers the discourse about Cape Dorset history for years to come. To highlight the importance of this, I refer to P.J. Akeegok, President of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association³¹⁶, who stated, in relation to Nunavut forming a territorial heritage centre in Iqaluit that, “[this access to Inuit cultural heritage] would empower our communities and instil a sense of pride in our culture by allowing more Inuit to gain exposure to the rich traditional knowledge and skills of our ancestors.”³¹⁷ Although this quote is not in relation to the KCCPS, I believe it encapsulates the importance of having direct access to Inuit culture and history as well as the positive outcomes of pride and the perpetuation of traditional knowledge. Having direct access to Inuit culture and history shifts historical power relationships and gives authority to Inuit community members.

³¹⁵ Jean Blodgett, “After Essay-And What About Inuit Art?” in *On Aboriginal Representation in the Gallery*, ed. Lynda Jessup and Shannon Bagg (Canadian Museum of Civilization, Quebec, 2002), 210.

³¹⁶ The Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) is a not-for-profit society representing the rights of Inuit in the Qikiqtani (Baffin) Region of Nunavut. The QIA strives to advance the rights of the Qikiqtani Inuit and to promote cultural traditions, environmental values as well as economic, social and cultural well-being.

“About Us,” Qikiqtani Inuit Association, n.d., Accessed May 17th, 2019, <http://www.qia.ca/about-us/>.

³¹⁷ “Baffin Inuit pledge \$5 million toward Nunavut heritage centre,” *Nunatsiaq News*, October 6th, 2017, https://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674baffin_inuit_pledge_5_million_toward_nunavut_heritage_centre/.

Theme 3: Cultural Centre Exhibition Space

Sources on the KCCPS also discussed the importance of the cultural centre's exhibition space. The relevance of the KCCPS exhibition spaces is key, as this space provides direct physical access to both historic and contemporary Inuit art for community members and visitors to the centre. These new spaces are imperative; the previous Kinngait studios lacked exhibition spaces for drawings, carvings and artefacts. As Jimmy Manning stated, "These works [at the co-op]...we would put aside [now these objects]...have a house in Cape Dorset, so I'm very pleased."³¹⁸ The KCCPS features 1,300 square-feet of both permanent and temporary exhibition spaces with magnetic walls that allow for more flexible exhibition design, in particular for displaying large-scale drawings.³¹⁹ The permanent exhibition spaces display curated exhibitions from Cape Dorset's permanent collection, which until the opening of the KCCPS, had been scattered across Nunavut and the south of Canada.³²⁰ The permanent exhibition spaces at the centre are crucial as they provide opportunities for visitors, youths and other communities to have access to these materials and objects. Again, this is imperative as it connects community members with their visual culture and cultural heritage, shifting the traditional placement of Inuit art from distant Canadian museums. As Alain Fournier states, "[In Cape Dorset] We've got lots of data, we've got archeological artifacts, we've got all of these things, what do we do them? How can we give them meaning such that the youth and others from the community can really have this dialogue with in some ways their history, their culture and their ancestors?"³²¹ Fournier's statement highlights that having a physical and permanent exhibition space at the KCCPS will propel dialogue between community members and their cultural heritage. Hence, having access to a physical, permanent exhibition space will create learning opportunities for community members to view, question and engage with these objects that are important to Cape

³¹⁸ "Dreamt of for decades, Cape Dorset finally gets a cultural centre," *CBC News*.

³¹⁹ Derek Neary, "Countdown underway for Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop," *Nunavut News Online*, August 29th, 2018, <https://nunavutnews.com/nunavut-news/countdown-underway-for-kenojuak-cultural-centre-and-print-shop/>.

"Kenojuak Cultural Centre Gains Momentum," *Canadianart*.

³²⁰ Sarah Rogers, "Nunavut's oldest artist studio gets a new space," *Nunatsiaq News*.

³²¹ "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Campaign Videos- 7 minute," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop, 4:43-4:57.

Dorset's community and culture.³²² Furthermore, having access to cultural material through physical means reinforces Inuit cultural rights, as stated through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), to have effective access to their cultural material.³²³ By having a physical exhibition space³²³ where visitors can engage with their art objects creates a venue for reconciliation by "breaking silences, transforming conflicts, and mending the damaged relationships of violence, oppression, and exclusion."³²⁴

Regarding the KCCPS temporary exhibition spaces, these areas of the centre will feature current work made in the print shop at the centre. This will provide visitors with the opportunity to see these contemporary works before they are shipped south to be exhibited or sold.³²⁵ This is important as this space provides artists with an area for their work to be featured as well as to inspire and share with their community their artistic talents. The stories that artists depict in their work will first be told to their own communities.

Both the permanent and temporary exhibition spaces at the KCCPS create an intervention in the geographies of Inuit art and the history of museums. These exhibition spaces open new geographical spaces for visitors to view Inuit art in a northern context. Exhibition spaces at the KCCPS have already been put to good use since its opening in September. For the inaugural opening, the Centre featured two exhibitions, co-curated by the center's manager, Louisa Parr, and William Huffman, Marketing Manager of Dorset Fine Arts. The exhibitions featured never-before-seen works from the WBEC archives and permanent collection.³²⁶ The first exhibition, intended to tour throughout Canada, was entitled *Works of a Lifetime*, and featured the largest survey of Kenojuak Ashevak's work exhibited in the Canadian Arctic.³²⁷ The second exhibition,

³²² The pedagogical and didactic structures with regards to how this learning by youths at the KCCPS has not been discussed in consulted literature. How these learning opportunities are approached by the KCCPS remains to be seen.

³²³ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future- Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 246-247.

³²⁴ *Ibid.* 279.

³²⁵ "About the Centre," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop.

³²⁶ "Cape Dorset's Kenojuak Cultural Centre and gallery to open in September," *Nunatsiaq News*, July 20th, 2018, https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674cape_dorsets_kenojuak_cultural_centre_and_gallery_to_open_in_september/.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

entitled *Age of Stone: A History of Cape Dorset Carvings*, examined the cultural significance of contemporary and historical carving in the Cape Dorset community.³²⁸ These exhibitions created first-hand access to collections that few in the north have seen, particularly within a northern context.

I suggest that having access to exhibitions of Inuit art at the KCCPS represents an emerging new geography related to Inuit art. This differs from the traditional trajectory as described by the project lead for the Arctic Cultural Heritage Research Network, Norman Vorano, who articulates that historical and social processes have traditionally moved Inuit art from the Arctic to museums and homes abroad. Accessibility to Inuit art in the north in effect shifts the historical placement of Inuit art and thus disrupts the colonial paradigm. This placement shifts Inuit art from colonial museum constructs while creating further autonomy for Inuit communities and visitors to the centre. I further acknowledge that geographical shifts in the location of Inuit art are not being discussed by southern Canadian museums, as the majority of Inuit art, according to Heather Igloliorte, continues to be curated, exhibited and stored in the south.³²⁹ It is difficult for institutions to be critical of their stewardship practices, and to envision doing things differently.³³⁰

Theme 4: Sharing Knowledge

The theme of sharing knowledge was the fourth theme presented within my data coding. The KCCPS was discussed as being a centre where the sharing of knowledge would occur amongst visitors, including knowledge sharing among Inuit youth and Elders. A goal of the KCCPS is to encourage intergenerational cultural transfer by Elders through the sharing of stories and legends through traditional ways.³³¹ The development of the KCCPS has been desired

Derek Neary, "Co-op marks 60 years in Cape Dorset," *Nunavut News Online*.

³²⁸ Cape Dorset's Kenojuak Cultural Centre and gallery to open in September," *Nunatsiaq News*.

³²⁹ Heather Igloliorte, "The Inuit of our Imagination," 46.

³³⁰ Geographical interventions that remap the intersecting territories of Inuit art will be further discussed in the conclusion of this thesis in reference to digital projects created to improve accessibility to Inuit art. These projects attempt to bridge the geographical distance between the north and south of Canada, while shifting authority to Inuit communities over their cultural materials.

³³¹ "Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop Brochure," Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Shop.

by community Elders for decades. As Palaya Qiatsuk stated, “Our elders have been asking over the last 30 years for a place where our stories and history can be kept and shared between our people.”³³²

The KCCPS is seen as a space for the sharing of artistic practice and knowledge to a younger generation. The KCCPS wants to ensure the continuation of the skills of carving, print-making and drawing by passing these ideas, skills and abilities down to the next generation.³³³ Acting as a strong foundation for a new generation of Inuit artists, the KCCPS has already been offering art workshops to grade 7, 8 and 9 school classes from Pangnirtung and Cape Dorset in the form of stone-cut printmaking lessons by Inuit artist Joamie Tapaungai.³³⁴ I assert that the importance placed on the sharing of Inuit knowledge and art-making at the KCCPS supports what Heather Igloliorte refers to as *cultural resilience*. Igloliorte asserts that cultural resilience “is cultivated or maintained through the revival and celebration of [Indigenous] beliefs and practices.”³³⁵ I feel that the KCCPS encourages this revival and celebration of Inuit beliefs and practices through the sharing of stories and art production/instruction between Inuit Elders and youths. This is critical, as the sharing of this knowledge has not occurred in southern Canadian museums, which remain remote from the communities of origin of many of the objects in their collections.

Theme 5: Bridging the North and South of Canada

The final theme appearing in the data related to the KCCPS addresses the Centre’s capacity to bridge the north and south of Canada through the use of technology. Although technology at the KCCPS does not appear to have been widely used at the time of my data collection, recent events have indicated that technology be employed to connect the centre to other institutions in the south of Canada. This was noted through the KCCPS’s relationship with Cisco Canada³³⁶ which was used on February 24th, 2019 to connect KCCPS visitors to a virtual

³³² Thomas, “Cape Dorset cultural centre taking shape,” *Nunavut News Online*.

³³³ Derek Neary, “Cape Dorset cultural centre construction completed,” *Nunavut News Online*.

³³⁴ “Photo: The Cape Pang Art Hang,” *Nunatsiaq News*, April 19th, 2018, https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674photo_the_cape_pang_art_hang/.

³³⁵ Heather Igloliorte, “Inuit Art: Markers of Cultural Resilience,” 4.

³³⁶ Cisco Canada is an American Information Technology and Networking company. Through their expansive knowledge they are able to help companies transform how they connect,

tour of the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery's show on Shuvina Ashoona's *Mapping Worlds* exhibition.³³⁷ Technological developments at the KCCPS through Cisco Canada© will also facilitate the creation of networks for students across the territory of Nunavut and throughout Canada who visit or partake in events at the KCCPS.³³⁸ The use of technology at the KCCPS reflects that the centre is trying to connect and bridge with other institutions and communities in the south of Canada in the sharing and promotion of Cape Dorset art and art production. In fact, the use of technology at the KCCPS reinforces the availability of new models of museum engagement. I believe at this early stage in the development of the KCCPS that a project-by-project approach is being used, as suggested by former Director of the Canadian Museum of History, George F. MacDonald, and Digital Manager of the Canadian Museum of History, Stephen Alford, in order to bridge the KCCPS with the south of Canada.³³⁹ However, I question how effective this will be across a northern context. According to Sheila Watson, Museum Studies Professor at the University of Leicester, working with different communities and institutions takes time.³⁴⁰ Thus, it may take time for the KCCPS to develop relations with southern institutions to establish collaborations. I also question whether bridging will truly be a

communicate and collaborate with one another through the developing manufacturing and networking of hardware, software and telecommunications equipment. This form of technology is also used by the IAC in Winnipeg to be able to connect with the north of Canada.

"What is Cisco Systems?," Cisco, n.d., Accessed May 18th, 2019,

<https://search.cisco.com/search?query=what%20is%20cisco&locale=enCA&bizcontext=&cat=&mode=text&clktyp=enter&autosuggest=false>.

Darlene Coward Wight, "WAG Inuit Art Exhibitions, 1961-Present," Personal Notes from Darlene provided during WAG visit.

³³⁷ "Kenojuak Centre," Instagram, February 24th, 2019, Accessed March 26th, 2019,

https://www.instagram.com/p/BuRrV_6n63X/.

Mapping Worlds featured pencil crayon and ink drawings produced by Ashoona over the past two decades. The exhibition features work by Ashoona that depict the past, present and future of Cape Dorset Nunavut.

"Shuvina Ashoona: Mapping Worlds," The Power Plant, n.d., Accessed May 18th, 2019,

<http://www.thepowerplant.org/Exhibitions/2019/Winter-2019/Mapping-Worlds.aspx>.

³³⁸ "takingitglobal," Instagram, September 10th, 2018, Accessed March 26th, 2019,

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BnjTRAJHn1E/>.

³³⁹ George F. MacDonald and Stephen Alford, "Canadian Museums and the Representation of Culture in a Multicultural Nation," in *Museums and their Communities*, ed. Sheila Watson (Routledge, 2007), 285.

³⁴⁰ Sheila Watson, "Museums and their Communities," 18.

focus for KCCPS, since direct physical access to Inuit art and cultural heritage appear to be the Centre's priority. Perhaps the KCCPS will not be engaging with the south of Canada as much as southern institutions, such as the IAC, who need to connect with the north in order to reconcile their pasts with the future of museum practice.

Discussion

My analysis on the development of the KCCPS suggests that this northern centre is providing direct access to Inuit art and culture for northern Inuit community members. The KCCPS was developed with the intention of improving print shop facilities for the continuation of art production in Cape Dorset. Although the KCCPS addresses these needed updates, it has provided the community of Cape Dorset with so much more. As a meeting place, an area to share cultural knowledge, and a venue for exhibiting Inuit art to a largely Inuit audience, the KCCPS is creating new models for inclusivity in the north. Having a cultural centre such as the KCCPS within the north of Canada indicates a shift in museum practice, a geographical intervention in the historical displacement of Inuit art and the creation of a local art scene in the north.

This thematic data analysis suggests that the KCCPS museum model creates access to Inuit art and culture through physical means. This is achieved through the Centre's northern geographic location. Having an accessible space to house both art production facilities as well as exhibition and community spaces is a major geographic intervention in the history of displacement of Inuit art and culture, which has been primarily held within institutions in the south of Canada. I suggest that this type of direct access at the KCCPS engages with a new museum model in Canada. Unlike the IAC, the KCCPS is not attempting to undo pre-existing colonial narratives and models within an institution. Rather, the KCCPS is focused on the future, forging a northern museum model that directly acknowledges and supports the needs of its community.

The KCCPS, in my opinion, has created a new local northern art scene in Canada, a venue for community and cultural heritage.³⁴¹ This new art scene enables the continuation of art production, providing an economic livelihood for artists and a chance for their work to be shared and recognized at a national and international level. I would suggest that the KCCPS represents an emerging geography with new communities of access.

My analysis of the various data themes surrounding the conversation about the KCCPS primarily found that the centre is a meeting place for community members. Acting as a cultural hub for Elders, youths, artists, and international tourists, the KCCPS is a place for celebrating Inuit art. The second largest theme throughout my data, Cape Dorset Perspective/Public Opinion, focused on the inclusion of Inuit voice from community members on the reception that the KCCPS will find in their community.³⁴² The high ranking of these themes reflects a shift in museological practice, an approach which, according to Ruth Phillips, has been classified through collaborative methods.³⁴³ By creating a cultural hub that engages with the voices and perspectives of Inuit community members of all ages and generations, the KCCPS is employing a collaborative approach that reflects the needs and wants of its visitors.

My third theme on the KCCPS – exhibition space – reflected a real desire within the community to display works from historic collections as well as works produced by artists from the Centre’s print shop. These comments are intriguing because, although Inuit artists produce work for an international market, there is still a desire to advance and share this visual culture in their own community. As a result, Inuit art is either returning from the south to be re-contextualized in the north, or Inuit art is being held for longer in the north for exhibition

³⁴¹ Although this may be possible, the likelihood that Inuit communities will travel south to see their art objects is unrealistic. This also further points to the monopolization that the south of Canada has had on the cultural heritage of Inuit people.

³⁴² The prevalence of this theme surprised me as a researcher. I anticipated that a majority of opinions on the KCCPS would be from experts from the south of Canada. However, my analysis heavily featured the voices of Cape Dorset community members. To me, this suggests that access surrounding Inuit art must include the perspectives and opinions of the communities from which it is produced.

³⁴³ Ruth B. Phillips, “Indigenizing Exhibitions: Experiments and Practices,” in *Museum Pieces Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums*, ed. Ruth B. Phillips (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 156, <https://books.scholarsportal.info/uri/ebooks/ebooks3/upress/2013-08-23/1/9780773587465>.

purposes. This dynamic creates greater access and exposure for current contemporary artists to display their works, while providing access to historic collections by community members. This suggests that the KCCPS is slowly shifting the geographical narrative of where Inuit art is placed in Canada.

The fourth theme – sharing knowledge – highlights that the KCCPS is to play a role in the transfer of historic, cultural and artistic knowledge from Inuit Elders to Inuit youth. This is crucial, as the KCCPS will be an accessible space that fosters Heather Igloliorte’s concept of cultural resilience. The final theme of discussion, bridging the North and South, highlighted how the KCCPS will use technology to connect with other institutions in the south of Canada. The use of technology at the KCCPS, at the time of my data collection, appears to be a complementary method in creating access to Inuit art in the south of Canada. The main focus for access at KCCPS is through physical, tangible engagement with Inuit art. In the future I foresee that the approach of bridging through technology will give visitors further opportunity to engage with the Inuit art scene from the south of Canada as well as internationally. Furthermore, the use of technology may enable new collaborative models and potential partnerships between the KCCPS and other institutions and promoters of Inuit art. As Christine Lalonde, Curator of Indigenous Arts at the National Gallery of Canada, has posed – as Inuit artists are no longer isolated in the north as part of a larger and more connected art scenes, what is the impact on communities like Cape Dorset?³⁴⁴ What role will technology play within this interconnected dynamic?

³⁴⁴ Christine Lalonde, “New Directions in Inuit Art since 2000,” in *Creation and Transformation Defining Moments in Inuit Art*, ed. Darlene Coward Wight (Vancouver, Canada, 2012), 187.

CHAPTER 4: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS – ADVANCING ACCESSIBLE MUSEUM PRACTICES THROUGH NEW GEOGRAPHIES

Introduction

In this chapter I offer a comparative analysis of the results of my findings regarding the question of increased accessibility in the contexts of museum practices associated with the IAC and KCCPS. How is accessibility defined in both cases, from both southern and northern perspectives? Who benefits from this increased accessibility? How is the ‘museumization’ of Inuit art changed and how are those changes perceived by the various audiences who access these collections and spaces? Who are these museums for, and do they change the landscape of Inuit art nationally and globally? How effective are these accessible northern and southern museum models for Inuit communities? Finally, does the north/south paradigm hold, or is museum practice defining new spaces for Inuit art that transcend physical geographies?

The development of the IAC and the creation of the KCCPS, in their own ways, represent new levels of accessibility in relation to Inuit art. Access to Inuit art differs fundamentally between these two centres. One located in the south of Canada (Winnipeg), the other located in the north of Canada (Cape Dorset), there are complex differences in their approaches to access, given their locations, approach to museum practice and stakeholder involvement. My research has suggested that the concept of access has a different meaning dependent on the geographic setting of the respective centres and in each case is articulated in relation to the variegated communities and audiences they serve. Keeping these differences in mind I will explore the broader themes that emerged from my research; dialogue, collaboration and reconciliation; in order to critique the effectiveness of these museum models and the way they might shape the future of Inuit art within institutional culture in Canada.

Access in the South of Canada

Access to Inuit art in the south of Canada, as demonstrated through my analysis of the IAC, is often approached through the lens of education and learning. The IAC identifies multiple learner communities in its mandate to be accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds.³⁴⁵ The IAC intends to serve a variety of community visitors; Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Given the diversity of visitors, the IAC is envisioned as a site for cultural exchange, a place where visitors can learn about each other³⁴⁶ while inspiring a greater understanding of Inuit art and culture within the south of Canada.³⁴⁷

In self-identifying as a site for cultural exchange, the WAG has determined to be consistent with recommendations and practices outlined by the TRC. Using decolonizing strategies, my research has suggested that access at the IAC is approached through the use of Inuit voice and collaboration within a framework of reconciliation. The emphasis on Inuit voice at the IAC enables a variety of broader discussions about Inuit art and culture among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural groups. To reiterate Heather Igloliorte's statement about the IAC, this centre "bring[s] together Manitoba's First Nations and Métis people and Canada's First Nations Métis people in a real, meaningful conversation with the Inuit, who are our northern neighbors."³⁴⁸ This convergence of a variety of Indigenous groups, peoples and voices at the IAC reengages with a new mode of access, one that is not solely focused on settler educators versus Indigenous communities, but rather breaks this binary and encourages access and dialogue initiated from an Indigenous point of view.

³⁴⁵ "WAG's Inuit Art Centre Receives Support from TD to Help Build Bridges Between Canada's North and South," Winnipeg Art Gallery.

³⁴⁶ Randy Turner, "Ottawa announces \$15M commitment to WAG's Inuit Art Centre," *Winnipeg Free Press*, August 2nd, 2016, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/entertainment/arts/ottawa-announces-15m-commitment-to-wags-inuit-art-centre-388990561.html>.

³⁴⁷ Kevin Rollason, "Tories announce more cash for Inuit Art Centre," *Winnipeg Free Press*.

³⁴⁸ Jen Zoratti, "First team of curators for Inuit Art Centre is all-Inuit, all-woman," *Winnipeg Free Press*.

The presence of Inuit voice at the IAC reinforces that access in the south of Canada is focused predominately on collaborative museum practice. Collaborative museum practice is manifested in the decolonizing structures that the IAC has implemented such as the Indigenous Advisory Circle, the Indigenous Task Force, and all-Inuit curatorial team. These structures reinforce the leadership of Inuit and wider Indigenous community members, while paving the way for new accessible museum practice that includes Indigenous/Inuit voices and ways of knowing. Through these methods, I would suggest that the IAC can be classified as a *participatory museum*, as defined by Executive Director of the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, Nina Simon.³⁴⁹ This museum model is imperative as it will enable the IAC to act as a platform, connecting museum visitors as collaborators, content creators, consumers and critics within the IAC.³⁵⁰ The reliance on a collaborative, participatory museum model focused through the lens of education at the IAC opens up a variety of ways that diverse people can engage with Inuit art, culture and institutional practice.³⁵¹ This is imperative as the education of a variety of cultural communities that strongly utilizes Inuit and Indigenous voice and collaboration is an act that improves autonomy for Inuit communities while forging improved relationships through reconciliation.

Although access at the IAC is presented through the lens of education and learning, the Centre's dissemination of Inuit art and culture truly benefits those that are physically able to visit this museum. Visitors to the IAC will be able to engage first-hand with Inuit art, history, culture, and digital opportunities for engagement. On the other hand, these in-person physical engagements with Inuit art are lacking for remote northern Inuit communities. The lack of physical access to these extensive Inuit art collections, including the Government of Nunavut's Fine Art Collection, reiterates that the south of Canada still monopolizes Inuit art. Although the IAC will use digital capabilities to bridge the gap between the north and south of Canada, we must question who really benefits most from the establishment of the IAC.

³⁴⁹ A participatory museum can be defined as a “cultural institution as a place where visitors can create, share, and connect with each other around content.”

Nina Simon, “Preface: Why Participate?,” in *The Participatory Museum*, 2010, <http://www.participatorymuseum.org/preface/>.

³⁵⁰ Nina Simon, “Chapter 1: Principles of Participation,” in *The Participatory Museum*, 2010, <http://www.participatorymuseum.org/chapter1/>.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

Access in the North of Canada

Access in the north of Canada, as demonstrated through my analysis of the KCCPS, is approached directly through physical accessibility to Inuit art and culture to remote Inuit communities. This physical access allows a new audience to see and engage with collections of Inuit art that have never been exhibited within a museum setting in Canada's north. Having tangible collections and exhibitions of Inuit art in the north of Canada represents a geographic intervention in the historic placement of Inuit art in Canada. Rather than being stored, exhibited and disseminated predominantly by a southern settler audience, the KCCPS places historic Inuit art collections back in the north, to be accessible to Inuit communities. This geographic shift creates a northern space for the negotiation of Inuit museum models in Canada.

Access at the KCCPS involves direct access to Inuit art and culture through the implementation of Inuit voice and ways of knowing. Unlike southern settler museum models, which are attempting to undo colonizing practices, access in a northern context at the KCCPS features Inuit voices and perspectives directly from the Cape Dorset community. This collaboration amongst this northern Inuit community has created a meeting space that directly imbues the art and the space with Inuit values and perspectives. This autonomy has created an entirely new museum space in the north. The KCCPS, through its print and artist studios and exhibition spaces, encourages the continuation of contemporary Inuit art production while giving community members a chance to share cultural knowledge and learn from their ancestors.

This new model continues to rely on collaboration and dialogue between northern and southern partners and institutions. I believe that this collaboration represents opportunities for reconciliation between Inuit and settler parties, while strengthening Canada's northern art scene. Furthermore, the KCCPS acts as a meeting place for community members which fosters dialogue and collaboration amongst Inuit communities, between Elders and youths. This sort of access creates opportunities for improved autonomy by Inuit communities over their own art objects. The KCCPS acts as a foundational site for self-determination through the material, intellectual and spiritual stewardship of Inuit art collections.

Critique of Museum Models

Both museum models, the IAC and KCCPS, create access in distinctive ways that reflect the communities they intend to serve. These museum models are the result of great strides that institutions have taken in decolonizing Canadian museum practice by listening to and incorporating Inuit and other Indigenous voices, engaging in open dialogue and striving for true collaboration in order to reconcile with Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners.

In terms of the effectiveness of both models in facilitating greater access to Inuit museum culture on the part of Inuit communities, I would argue that the KCCPS museum model is more effective than its southern counterpart. First, as the KCCPS creates a new space for Inuit art by exhibiting historic and contemporary works in the north of Canada. This model creates new opportunities for connection and collaboration among communities across the north of Canada, by shifting the axis of access, which traditionally flowed from north to south, to a more local, lateral and intergenerational sharing of museum access. The KCCPS thus also physically shifts the narrative of the historic production of Inuit art as originating in the north for permanent placement in the south of Canada. Instead, the KCCPS reverses this narrative by enabling opportunities for cultural connections to Inuit art objects within a northern setting. This represents a museum model that limits the integration of settler narratives into material histories that have their own origins and stories and presents exciting new opportunities for cultural engagement by remote northern Inuit communities.

The IAC, as a southern museum model, is still impressive and exciting for its potential in providing access to Inuit art and culture to a variety of Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous visitors. The IAC's approach to access is one that is inclusive of Indigenous points of view and ways of knowing. By breaking the binary of understanding as being solely a construct between Indigenous and settler communities, the IAC will foster access that is inclusive of numerous Indigenous communities.

I suggest, however, that the museum model at the IAC still perpetuates the dominance of southern institutions with respect to the placement of Inuit art in Canada. Although the IAC has asserted that connecting with and bridging north and south will occur through digital capabilities, this does not change the fact that the IAC will maintain physical ownership of, and control over, a vast Inuit patrimony that lives permanently in Winnipeg. I further question whether the

building of the IAC increases the perception of colonial appropriation rather than an effort to bridge geographical and political divides. Does the IAC, in fact, make the north more distant? Furthermore, although the IAC engages with a variety of communities as its audience, it remains inaccessible to remote northern Inuit visitors, who are unable to visit the IAC.

With these critiques in mind it should be noted that the IAC and KCCPS address access to Inuit art and culture in new ways which should be recognized as positive strides in Canadian museum practice. Through their emphasis on Inuit voice, dialogue and collaboration, the IAC and KCCPS represent progress towards reconciliation between Canadian settlers and Indigenous communities. Time will tell whether these institutions can begin a process that will permit a re-examination of the history of Inuit art in Canada, as Igloliorte puts it “the existing scholarship still represents a deep imbalance between who is being written about and who is writing”³⁵²

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis I have attempted to demonstrate how new geographic centres of Inuit art are changing accessibility to Inuit culture and heritage for a variety of Inuit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. I have traced the larger narrative of how access is being approached to Inuit art within Canadian museums. The IAC and KCCPS present exciting initiatives for more inclusive access yet they still struggle with the isolation of geographical remoteness. To combat these geographical discrepancies, a new strand of museum practice is beginning to emerge that features digital/technological projects designed to provide improved access for Inuit communities to Inuit art and culture. Although my thesis research has addressed how access to Inuit art and culture has been approached through physical locations, it is important to understand the impact of technology in the creation of new forms of access. I will now briefly discuss the emergence of digital technology within Canadian museums and the connection it has with Indigenous communities. I will then discuss key critiques of digital practice from Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars. Finally, I will then briefly reference key digital projects that attempt to encourage more accessibility to Inuit art and culture to Inuit communities.

³⁵² Heather Igloliorte, “Curating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Inuit Knowledge in the Qallunaat Art Museum,” 101.

Access through Digital Technology

Technology use in museums can be understood as having various applications – acting as a new tool for communication and dialogue, a means to convey further information about collection pieces, or a virtual way of creating stand-alone digital projects.³⁵³ The rise of digital practice has paralleled the changing forms of public engagement and interaction. According to Chiel Van Den Akker and Susan Legêne, museum visitors over the past decades have shifted from being passive observers to being participants in facilitating the understanding and dissemination of cultural material.³⁵⁴ At the same time, technology is redefining the museum through the creation of new forms of curation of art and culture and collaboration amongst staff, visitors and artists.³⁵⁵

Digitization and digital access have also fostered new opportunities for knowledge-sharing and connections for Indigenous peoples.³⁵⁶ David Vuillaume, Director of the Swiss Museum Association and ICOM Switzerland, suggests that digital tools must be used as supplementary choices for both museums and their visitors.³⁵⁷ I would assert that there is a necessity for digital projects as a means for Inuit communities to engage with their art objects. However, this does not act as a substitute for physical in-person interaction with these art objects. I see digital applications as projects that overcome these geographical distances, yet the crux of the issue remains that Inuit art collections remain physically in the south of Canada.

³⁵³ David Vuillaume, “What About the Need for New Media Technologies in Museums,” in *Museum in the Digital Age*, ed. Régine Bonnefoit and Melissa Rérat (Newcastle, UK, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), 69.

³⁵⁴ Chiel van den Akker and Susan Legêne, “Introduction Museums in a Digital Culture: How Art and Heritage Become Meaningful,” in *Museums in a Digital Culture How Art and Heritage Become Meaningful*, ed. Chiel van den Akker and Susan Legêne (Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 8.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 8.

³⁵⁶ Anne Beaulieu and Sarah de Rijcke, “Networked Knowledge and Epistemic Authority in the Development of Virtual Museums,” in *Museums in a Digital Culture How Art and Heritage Become Meaningful*, ed. Chiel van den Akker and Susan Legêne (Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 78.

Kate Hennessy, “From the Smithsonian’s MacFarlane Collection to Inuvialuit Living History,” in *Museums in a Digital Culture How Art and Heritage Become Meaningful*, ed. Chiel van den Akker and Susan Legêne (Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 109.

³⁵⁷ David Vuillaume, “What About the Need for New Media Technologies in Museums,” 70.

In order to bridge both physical and interpretive distances, I suggest that digital applications and projects engage with the concept of *borderlands*. Late communications researcher Moira McLoughlin views borderlands as the reconfiguring of narratives to be more collaborative and inclusive to Indigenous communities.³⁵⁸ These are transformative spaces within museums, that engage with intersections of cultures.³⁵⁹ I apply McLoughlin's concept of borderlands to digital projects that exist outside of the physical museum space. I suggest that digital projects are not bound to physical locations or borders of museums themselves, but create new, shared spaces outside of permanently fixed walls. These digital projects exist outside northern or southern geographies to inhabit a third space that all parties can access, collaborate in and engage with, while shifting the narrative of Inuit art to be more inclusive of different perspectives and worldviews. The question is whether this third space, virtual borderlands can renegotiate the power dynamics that structure traditional museum practices.

The use of digitally mediated practices is opening up a new virtual space for dialogue and collaboration between museums and Indigenous peoples.³⁶⁰ However, the use of these digital applications also illuminates embedded power relations.³⁶¹ While technological infrastructure, according to Van Den Akker and Legêne, may challenge existing authoritative power relations by museums, and offer new means for communities and users to communicate³⁶², others such as Métis and Cree filmmaker Loretta Todd questions whether digital applications will actually rupture the power dynamics of colonizer versus the colonized. Are these digital approaches simply a guise for creating only the appearance of improved Indigenous and settler relations?³⁶³ The question is contingent on larger issues related to the power dynamics of virtual spaces, and precisely who, for example, would own this digital information. Would this information still

³⁵⁸ Moira McLoughlin, *Museums and the Representation of Native Canadians Negotiating the Borders of Culture* (New York & London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1999), 12.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 263-264.

³⁶⁰ Kate Hennessy, "From the Smithsonian's MacFarlane Collection to Inuvialuit Living History," 126.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.* 126.

³⁶² Chiel van den Akker and Susan Legêne, "Introduction Museums in a Digital Culture: How Art and Heritage Become Meaningful," 8.

³⁶³ Michael Ames and Mina McKenzie, "Rapporteurs' Summary Comments," in *Transference Tradition Technology Native New Media Exploring Visual and Digital Culture*, ed. Walter Phillips Gallery Editions (Banff, Alberta, 2005), 154.

remain in the hands of settler museums whose collections and financial contributions have funded these projects?

Finally, in relation to Inuit digital projects, cultural anthropologist Kate Hennessy asserts that these represent “an opportunity for originating communities to re-contextualize their cultural heritage in museums in new digital forms, potentially shifting power over representation from institutions to Aboriginal publics.”³⁶⁴ Thus, questions of power dynamics also cause us to question what sort of meaning and understanding Indigenous narratives, histories, languages and knowledge might have in the digital realm.³⁶⁵ With these questions in mind, I will now briefly discuss key Inuit digital projects such as the *Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage Project* (MICH) (2013), the *Iningat Ilagiit* project by the McMichael Canadian Art Gallery (Fall 2019) and the *Arctic Cultural Heritage Research Network* (ACHRN) (2017). I wish to demonstrate how access to Inuit art is occurring through digital strategies and what this means for remote northern Inuit communities.

Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage

Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage (MICH) is a six-year SSHRC grant through York University, awarded in 2013, focused on the contribution of Inuit art, culture and performance in relation to Inuit language preservation, social well-being and cultural identity.³⁶⁶ MICH has been designed to help give Inuit participants a voice throughout a variety of collaborative projects surrounding the objectives of access, connection and creation.³⁶⁷ By bringing together Inuit and non-Inuit, researchers, artists, graduate students and stakeholders, MICH supports the research, curatorial practice, and artistic production of Inuit cultural heritage.³⁶⁸ All activities carried out through MICH are approached through the lens of improving access for northern communities to

³⁶⁴ Chiel van den Akker and Susan Legêne, “Introduction Museums in a Digital Culture: How Art and Heritage Become Meaningful,” 12.

³⁶⁵ Michael Ames and Mina McKenzie, “Rapporteurs’ Summary Comments,” 153.

³⁶⁶ “Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage,” York University.

³⁶⁷ Sima Sahar Zerehi, “Inuit carvers create a monument at Toronto’s York University,” *CBC*, August 25th, 2015, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/inuit-carvers-create-a-monument-at-toronto-s-york-university-1.3204217>.

³⁶⁸ Angelica Babiera, “A new voice in art,” *Excalibur*, January 19th, 2018, <https://excal.on.ca/a-new-voice-in-art/>.

“Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage,” York University.

digital information and technology, bettering the connection of Inuit voice to objects of cultural heritage and, finally, creating Inuit-focused cultural engagement.³⁶⁹ According to Anna Hudson, MICH's project leader and Professor of Canadian and Indigenous art historical studies at York University, the project is interested "in creating opportunities where there is greater interaction and more knowledge and awareness of Inuit art as a vital presentation of Inuit culture, and a very important economic driver for...northern territories and communities."³⁷⁰

The importance of knowledge and awareness of Inuit art and culture through MICH can be noted through a variety of physical and digital projects across Canada. Digital projects such as the *Mittimatalik Arnait Miqusuqtuit Collective*³⁷¹, funded by MICH, has created an extensive repertoire of introductory and master level instructional classes on sealskin preparation and sewing techniques.³⁷²

Digitization projects of Inuit art are another venture funded by MICH. In 2013 MICH partnered with the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg, Ontario, to digitize their Cape Dorset drawing and print collection. This digitization project was funded to create a repertoire of digital images for both archival and web-based usage.

Also funded by MICH, *Pinnguaq*, a Nunavut-based gaming design company, created an interactive digital series called *Art Alive* (2015), using digitized archival images of works by Pudlo Pudlat from the McMichael's collection. *Art Alive*, exhibited at the McMichael in 2015,

³⁶⁹ "Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage," York University.

³⁷⁰ Megan Mueller, "Cultural heritage project engages Indigenous voices," York University, February 2nd, 2017, Accessed June 14th, 2019, <http://yfile.news.yorku.ca/2017/02/02/cultural-heritage-project-engages-indigenous-voices/>.

³⁷¹ "Mittimatalik Arnait Miqusuqtuit," Vimeo, n.d., Accessed June 15th, 2019, <https://vimeo.com/mamc>.

³⁷² "Mittimatalik Arnait Miqusuqtuit," Vimeo, n.d., Accessed June 14th, 2019, <https://vimeo.com/mamc/about>.

Sarah Rogers, "Documenting the art of seal skin preparation for future generations," *Nunatsiaq News*, October 12th, 2016, https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674womens_collective_documents_seal_skin_preparation_for_future_generatio/.

used these Inuit works to develop an interactive storytelling game.³⁷³ This interactive gaming experience used iPads that displayed animated graphics developed from Pudlat's prints.³⁷⁴

MICH has been involved in a variety of digital projects that have connected Inuit users with their cultural material. By creating instructional videos, digitizing extensive Inuit art collections, and developing interactive games about Inuit art, MICH has funded various technological platforms that invite people to re-engage with Inuit art and culture.³⁷⁵ According to Anna Hudson, these projects create "opportunities where there is greater interaction and more knowledge and awareness of Inuit art as a vital presentation of Inuit culture."³⁷⁶

Iningat Ilagiit

Iningat Ilagiit, which means "a place for family" in Inuktitut, is an online digital archive developed through the McMichael Canadian Art Collection and WBEC where users can browse the collection as well as curate their own virtual exhibitions to be shared with others through social media accounts.³⁷⁷ Established in the Fall of 2019, *Iningat Ilagiit* has publicly digitized almost 4,000 drawings and 250 photographs from the Cape Dorset collection held at the McMichael.³⁷⁸ *Iningat Ilagiit* is a digital platform accessible to both southern and remote northern, Inuit and non-Inuit users. This digital platform is accessible in both normal and low

³⁷³ "For Immediate Release," McMichael Canadian Art Collection, June 5th, 2015, Accessed June 14th, 2019, <http://mcmichael.com/mcmichael-marks-first-year-of-inuit-art-digitization-project-with-interactive-exhibition-journey-into-fantasy/>.

³⁷⁴ My research suggests that *Art Alive* has never been exhibited in the north. Due to an agreement with DFA, art used within *Art Alive* is not permitted to be downloadable content. This means that *Art Alive* can only exist via iPads and tablets within physical museum displays, which do not exist in Canada's north. If *Art Alive*, due to technicalities, can only exist in physical museum spaces, how can remote Inuit communities gain access to this technological intervention?

Ryan Oliver, Pinnguaq, Personal correspondence through Facebook. June 21st, 2019.

³⁷⁵ Angelica Babiera, "A new voice in art," *Excalibur*.

³⁷⁶ Sima Sahar Zerehi, "Inuit carvers create a monument at Toronto's York University," *CBC*.

³⁷⁷ "Welcome to Iningat Ilagiit," Iningat Ilagiit Connecting through the Cape Dorset Archive, McMichael Canadian Art Collection, n.d. Accessed June 14th, 2019. <http://westbaffineskimocooper.neoreninc.com/>.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

At the time of my research, I reached out to the McMichael regarding whether Iningat Ilagiit had any association to the funding and digitization project supported by MICH. No response has been provided by the McMichael at this time (July 2019).

bandwidth options. It is also linguistically accessible by being offered in English, French and Inuktitut. This project represents an exciting opportunity for northern Inuit communities to connect with their art objects and contribute to the dialogue about Cape Dorset history and culture.³⁷⁹

Iningat Ilagiit presents an opportunity for Inuit users to be included within a museum setting, however, users are passive, able to participate in a one-way dissemination of knowledge and curation of pre-selected works of art and unable to have discussions and dialogue with museum staff or other users. The database interface does not yet permit a full exchange of ideas between users and the museum.

Arctic Cultural Heritage Research Network

Developed by Norman Vorano, 2017 Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Fellowship recipient, the *Arctic Cultural Heritage Research Network* (ACHRC) is a web-based portal that will enable “northerners to share their cultural knowledge and empower their communities by accessing Arctic cultural heritage collections scattered in museums across the world.”³⁸⁰ This digital project addresses the lack of access to cultural materials faced by northern Inuit communities, thereby creating a new model of engagement between public museums, universities and Inuit users.³⁸¹ ACHRN is a multi-phase project, with a three-year start-up trajectory, that partners the Inuit of Nunavut and museums to build and empower these communities.³⁸² Currently, the ACHRN is only in the early development stages of Phase One of their project, therefore the impact of this digital collaborative museum model remains to be seen.

³⁷⁹ “Welcome to Iningat Ilagiit,” Iningat Ilagiit Connecting through the Cape Dorset Archive, McMichael Canadian Art Collection.

A critique of *Iningat Ilagiit* is that users are passive, being only able to participate in a one-way dissemination of knowledge and curation due to pre-selected works of art and being unable to have discussions and dialogue with museum staff or other users. These criticisms illustrate that there are still limitations to access posed by these digital projects.

³⁸⁰ “Norman Vorano,” Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation.

³⁸¹ “2017 Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Fellowship Nomination: Project Proposal,” Pierre Elliot Trudeau Foundation, 2017, Accessed June 14th, 2019, <http://www.fondationtrudeau.ca/sites/default/files/vorano-project-web-en.pdf>.

³⁸² “Norman Vorano,” Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation.

At its initial stage, ACHRN will create an online platform between four heritage centres in three North Baffin communities; these include Piquqsilirivvik (Clyde River), Ittaq (Clyde River), Pond Inlet Archives (Pond Inlet), and Qimatuligvik Heritage Centre (Arctic Bay).³⁸³ These northern centres will forge connections between the Canadian Museum of History, the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation and Queen’s University.³⁸⁴ Offered in low and high bandwidth capabilities the ACHRC will be compatible with tablets, smartphones and desktop configurations.³⁸⁵

This digital museum model enables for a two-way transmission of knowledge by encouraging Inuit community members to contribute their cultural knowledge in collaboration with Canadian museums. Inuit users will therefore have authority in this project, while gaining access to Inuit cultural collections that have seldom been engaged with in a northern context.

Final Thoughts

The emergence of digital projects such as the *Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage* program, the *Iningat Ilagiit* digital archive and the *Arctic Cultural Heritage Research Network* indicates that more research could be done on digitization as another possible direction for access in relation to remote Inuit communities.³⁸⁶ As technology develops and as time passes, I suggest that digital approaches to museum studies will require critical engagement and analysis on the part of scholars. By doing so, we can better understand the effectiveness of technology enabling access to Inuit art and culture and its subsequent impacts on the engagement of remote Inuit communities. It may be found that digital projects stimulate greater engagement on the part of Inuit constituencies in comparison to initiatives that are based in physical, permanently situated southern museums in Canada.³⁸⁷

³⁸³ “2017 Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Fellowship Nomination: Project Proposal,” Pierre Elliot Trudeau Foundation, 2017.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ It should be noted that Internet capabilities in the north of Canada is still somewhat unreliable and efficiencies remain scattered. Therefore, the effectiveness of these digital projects may present new technical issues regarding access. I present this as a recognition of a critical factor that may impede the functioning of these digital projects.

³⁸⁷ What is interesting to note is that the majority of these projects were developed and constructed independently from Canadian museums. Does this suggest a new approach to

To conclude, my research has shown that implementing access to Inuit art and culture, whether it is in physical or virtual form, presents opportunities for improved engagement but also engenders some limitations. While all of these projects enhance south to north and north to south communication, perhaps the future of museum practice lies in models such as the KCCPS that foster north-to-north dialogue, while still recognizing the benefit of creating art that can be disseminated to tell authentic stories to the wider world. Shifting the geographical locale of Inuit art out of traditional settler museum spaces and into northern physical and digital museum models, may enable improved engagement and more authentic sharing of Inuit cultural knowledge and tradition throughout Inuit communities, without limiting participation in the global market for Inuit art.

Accessibility represents opportunities for autonomy and reconciliation through the engagement of Inuit voice and world views in determining the future of their cultural heritage. As my analyses of the IAC and KCCPS have shown, there are critical factors that must be considered when providing access to Inuit art and culture within southern and northern contexts. Both centres ultimately act as “third places”³⁸⁸ for the public to share experiences with one another while learning about Inuit art, culture and history. This analysis has also highlighted that current innovations will inform and advance access on the part of Inuit communities by forging new geographies which transcend existing paradigms of north and south, and even extend beyond museums themselves, creating new spaces in which to explore. As the TRC report states the broader debate that continues is “whose history is [being] told and how [is it being]

improved access outside of existing museum infrastructures enabling a better connection between remote Inuit communities and their cultural materials and heritage? Importantly, due to their existence outside of the museum, will these projects help to undo settler museum practices?³⁸⁸ *Third Places*, as defined by Urban Sociologist, Ray Oldenburg, can be understood as informal public gathering spaces. These are spaces where people can gather and interact. “In contrast to first places (home) and second places (work/school), third places allow people to put aside their concerns and simply enjoy the company and conversation around them. Third places ‘host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work.’”

Ray Oldenburg, “The Great Good Place,” (July 1999), quoted in California Association of Museums, *Foresight Research Report: Museums as Third Place*, n.d., 4, http://art.ucsc.edu/sites/default/files/CAMLF_Third_Place_Baseline_Final.pdf.

interpreted.”³⁸⁹ Ultimately, we must traverse these new geographies to encounter new ways of knowing our past and meeting our future.

³⁸⁹ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future- Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 248.

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