

News of the arts

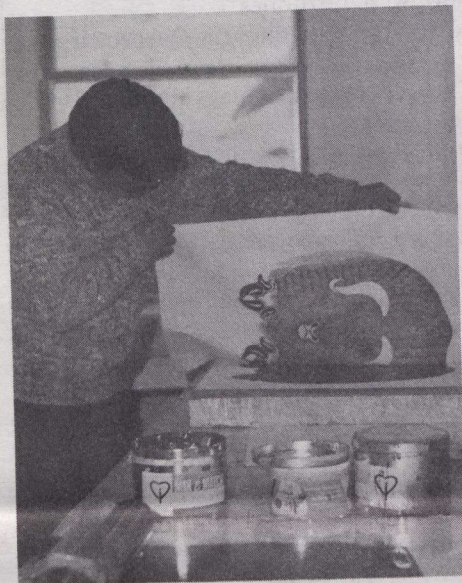
Inuit art supports world wildlife

"Wild animals are an integral part of life to an Eskimo, who remembers that man is still a part of nature. The Arctic does not forgive those who forget the truth."
(Sir Peter Scott, chairman of the World Wildlife Fund.)

A special limited edition of stone-cut prints by Cape Dorset print-makers to raise money for the World Wildlife Fund has been created by three of Canada's most accomplished Inuit artists — Kenojuak, Peter Pitseolak and Kananginak.

Only 200 copies of the print sets have been produced and they are presented in a luxurious leather portfolio. To preserve the integrity of the sets all stone-cuts have been destroyed.

The project was organized for the Fund in co-operation with author and filmmaker James Houston, who has also written an article on Eskimo art for inclusion

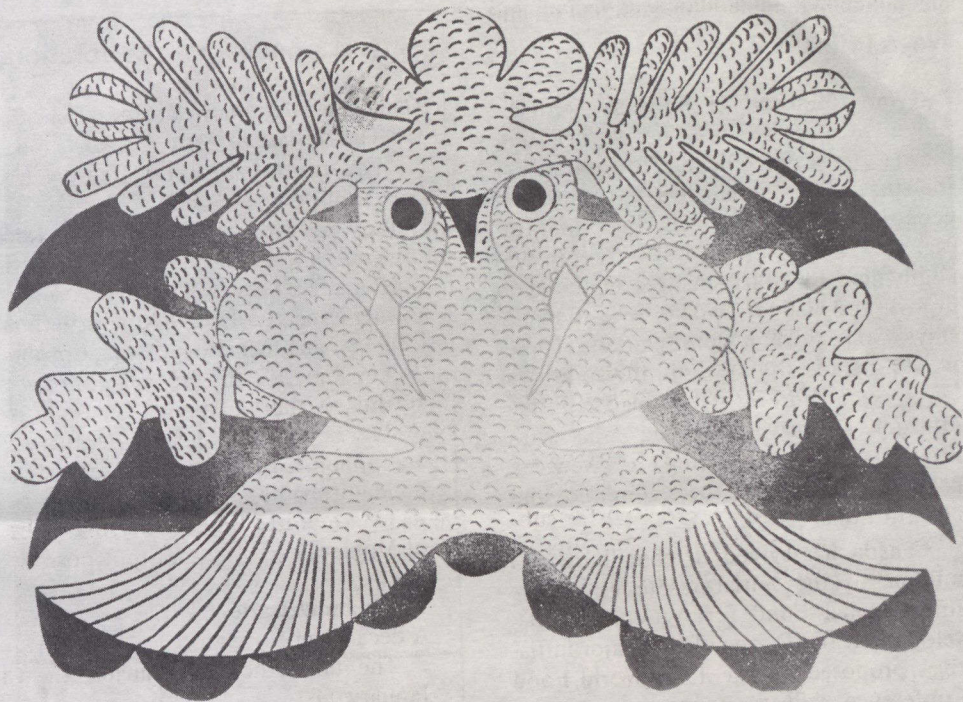


Kananginak works on his Musk Ox.

in the portfolio. Mr. Houston, past chairman of the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council, first introduced print-making to the Inuit artists in 1957. He also helped the local craftsmen form co-operatives to distribute their work, which has since become immensely popular throughout the world. Kenojuak's *The Enchanted Owl*, for example, which once sold for \$75, today brings prices in the tens of thousands of dollars.

The Inuit and their art

The 500 residents of Cape Dorset, West Baffin Island, who call themselves King-



Kenojuak's Enchanted Owl once cost \$75, and is now worth thousands.

Minuit, are descendants of nomadic Asiatic tribes. They are sea hunters, carvers, singers and dancers. "They are among the last of the hunting societies which have preserved a keen, insightful sense of observation," says Mr. Houston. Three techniques are used in Inuit art — the stone-cut, the stencil and the engraving. To make a stone-cut, a large stone is flattened and polished on which is carved in low relief the forms to be printed. The block is

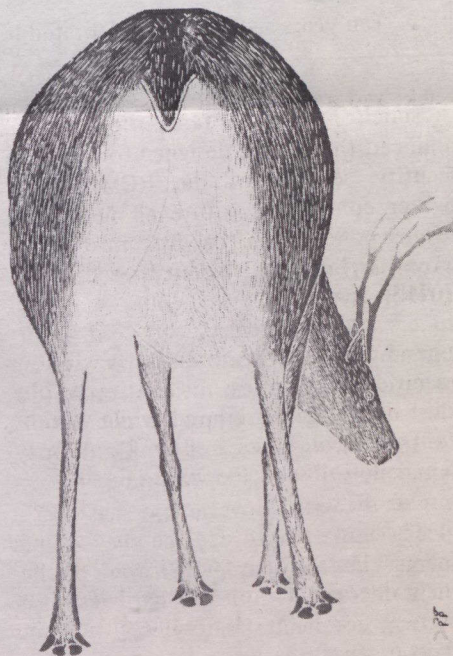
then inked and a sheet of fine paper placed on it, which is gently rubbed with the fingers or a small sealskin tampon to transfer the inked impression onto the paper.

"For the Inuit," states Mr. Houston, "print-making boldly expresses the importance of traditional Eskimo life even as it becomes entwined with a new and swiftly changing world." And, "In these evocative prints, Eskimo artists transcend the barriers of language, time and space... we come to realize that the prints embody much of what all men share, however disparate their cultures and experience."

Canada and the Fund

The World Wildlife Fund, an international non-government agency established in 1961, is dedicated to diminish and reverse destruction of the environment by financing and supporting conservation programs. In Canada, a major concern has been the preservation of Arctic animal life in the face of the rapid progress occurring as mineral resources are explored in the North. The portfolio has been produced to raise funds for this continuing effort.

The Canadian embassy in Washington has already provided facilities for display of the prints in October of this year. The embassy in Paris held a similar exhibition in late November, and other displays are planned for embassies in the Hague and London in December.



Kananginak's Caribou