



Ink and graphite drawing, 28.5 x 45.9 cm., c. 1967-68.

Oonark's family

To help celebrate the Jessie Oonark retrospective, an exhibition of works by her eight children — all well-known artists from Baker Lake — is on view at the Winnipeg gallery until February 1, 1987. The second generation of six daughters and two sons is represented by drawings, sculptures, prints and wall hangings created since the mid 1960s. General influences are reflected in the high quality of craftsmanship by all the artists and in their depiction of similar themes from stories and legends. Styles, however, vary considerably from their mother's and from each other.

Janet Kigusiuq, the eldest, interprets bustling camp scenes and legends on paper with a delicate, linear drawing style and little colour.

Victoria Mamnguqsualuk uses line to define forms and colour to separate figures from the ground. On large wall hangings, curving forms often converge to a central focus. Traditional legends are shown in an episodic manner or are represented by one climactic incident.

Nancy Pukingrnak's drawings illustrate multi-headed creatures in violent scenes from legends. Her sculptures are heavy rounded forms which reflect power in three dimensions.

Peggy Qablunaaq presents the human face and head as a symbol of the spirit world in sculpture.

Mary Yuusipik began carving in the early 1960s and her work is finely crafted. Most of her recent work has

been wall hangings with boldly contrasting figure and ground.

Jessie Oonark's eldest son, **Josiah Nuilaalik**, created sculpture and drawings in the 1960s and 1970s. *Bird Spirit* was made into a stonecut for the 1971 Baker Lake print collection. His sculpture has little surface detail but the forms are surprisingly delicate.

The most prolific sculptor of the family, **Miriam Qiyuk**, has evolved from realistic subjects and style to a symbolic nest theme in a round, flat format. In recent works, nude human figures and animals entwined in sleep, inhabit the nests.

William Noah, the youngest member of the family, is a graphic artist whose works often have a detailed landscape setting. Some of his drawings show the skeletons and internal organs of shamans and animals in vivid colours.

including birds, ulus (the traditional Inuit woman's knife), tattoo markings and circles, but over her career, she changed the visual appearance and sometimes the connotations of the motifs. Circles, for example, became faces, igloos, drums, coloured balls, the sun and moon.

Despite the recurring motifs, Ms. Blodgett points out that Oonark portrayed a wide range of topics "from the individual to the universal, from the mundane to the supernatural, from the traditional to the acculturated". Many of her subjects were inspired by her experiences and are associated with contemporary Inuit art: people, animals, daily activities, traditional legends and the



Wall hanging on felt, 159.5 x 122.5 cm., c. 1975.

spirits, shamans and transformed creatures from the spiritual world of the Inuit. Modern influences are revealed through various illustrations including snowmobiles, pipelines, airplanes, helicopters, outboard motorboats and Christian subjects ■