

ESKIMO SCULPTURE ON WORLD TOUR



Man Holding Up Two Fish

Kakasilala Koodluarlik (1968)

The biggest and most comprehensive collection of Eskimo sculpture ever assembled is currently being drawn together in Ottawa for a world tour. Opening in Vancouver on November 9, the Masterworks Exhibition will be seen in Paris in February, Copenhagen (April), London (October to December), Moscow (July), Leningrad (August and September), Philadelphia (February 1973) and Ottawa (April 1973).

The exhibition covers the story of Eskimo sculpture and carving through the centuries. One quarter is made up of prehistoric and historic pieces – the former consisting of archeological finds from Thule and Dorset, the oldest piece of which dates from 720 BC, and the latter comprising nineteenth century finds by whalers and traders; together with pieces dating from 1948. Initially the exhibition was designed to include some 300 works, but the organizers found they had to increase the size as the choice of pieces became more difficult and it became impossible to leave out certain works.

The exhibition, comprising 405 sculptures, has been put into categories – the prehistoric and historic

pieces in one group, with others divided into: hunters and animals; birds; camp life; mothers and children; spirits; and faces and figures. Eleven specially-designed showcases will enable the viewer to see the material from all angles. There will also be pieces in the open on varying-sized pedestals covered in white duffel. The exhibition was designed by Luc Matter of Montreal.

Sculptures for the exhibition have been loaned from private collectors and museums across Canada and the United States, the final selections being made by a committee of three formed by the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council – Doris Shadbolt of the Vancouver Art Gallery; James Houston, author of *The White Dawn*, and Professor George Swinton of the University of Manitoba School of Art.

The Masterworks Exhibition has been sponsored by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Department of External Affairs, the Department of National Defence, the Government of the Northwest Territories, the National Museum of Man in Ottawa and the Canada Council, with organization by the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council.