

MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

THROUGH APRIL 5, 2026 » INDIANAPOLIS, IN

Boundless Creativity

The Eiteljorg showcases distinctive Inuit artwork from the arctic region of Northern Canada.

On view at the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western art through April 5, Voices from the Arctic: Contemporary Inuit Art features work by artists from the Nunatsiavut, Nunavik, Nunavut and Inuvialuit regions of Canada’s Northwest Territories. Spanning the mid-20th to early-21st centuries, the mediums represented include sculptures carved from various types of stone, as well as whalebone and caribou antlers. Stonecut prints also have a strong presence in the show.



David Ruben Piqtoukun (Inuvialuit [Paulatuk]), Shaman Head/Bird Transformation, 1984, pyroxene, teeth. Gift of Martin J. and Julie Klaper, 2001.17.4.

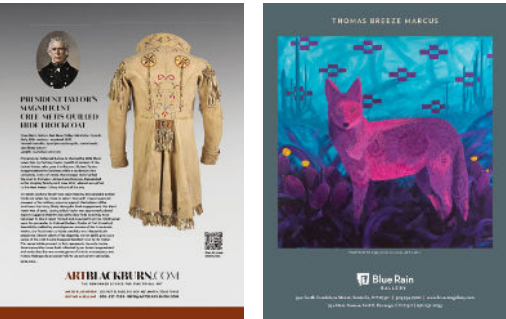
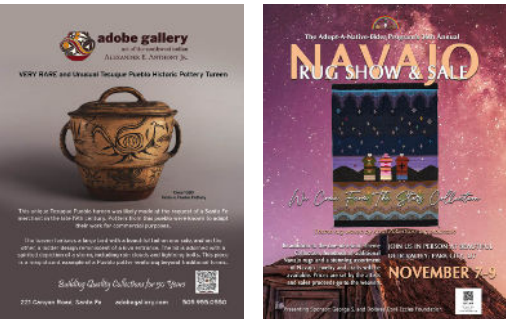
“In the far north where timber is scarce, Inuit artists have long utilized locally sourced stone, caribou antlers and whalebone,” note museum staff. “Because communities are somewhat isolated from each other, individual communities have developed their own distinctive art styles. Some pieces in the exhibition convey artists’ expressions of spiritual beliefs or highlight daily scenes of work and family life; others embody a sense of humor.” Among the well-known Inuit artists in the show are Mattiusi Iyaituk, Kenojuak Ashevak (1927-2013) and David Ruben Piqtoukun. One highlight in the show is Piqtoukun’s sculpture Shaman Head/Bird Transformation, carved out of pyroxene and teeth. “His early nomadic life along the Arctic coastline instilled a love for nature, reflected in his unique style that blends Inuit mythology with materials like stone, metal, and

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walrus ivory,” says an Eiteljorg representative. “Piqtokun’s art explores themes of cultural dislocation and resilience, influenced by his personal history, including his time at a residential school.”

Piqtokun adds, “The stone carving process teaches many rituals of my people, hunting practices, healing, animals, spirit helpers, centuries-old customs for travel and weather pushing (sky pushing techniques) and healthy eating patterns and most important ‘respect for elder people, parents, family, animals, inanimate and animate objects,’ but most of all ‘the spirt world of the Eskimo people.’”



Pack ice off northern Baffin Island, 2013. Image by Paul Gierszewski.

On the front lines of climate change, the environmental impacts of the melting polar ice cap figure in many Inuit artworks, an example of which can be found in Shuvinai Ashoona’s piece Tentacles. The 2018 print is a commentary on how the non-Inuit world is adversely affecting the arctic regions with its many menacing and meddling “limbs.”

Voices from the Arctic is an opportunity to experience the cultural soul of a formidable and fascinating region that most people will never visit. The museum adds, “If you have not yet experienced Inuit art, Voices from the Arctic is a real treat, highlighting the boundless creativity, imagination and warmth of artists from one of the coldest places on earth.” —

Through April 5, 2026

Voices from the Arctic: Contemporary Inuit Art
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