

# CULTURAL CARRIERS

NUUK ART MUSEUM MARCH 6th - 11th AWG 2016



## YUKON

This is a doll that was given to me on the occasion of the birth of my son in 1988. It happens to be a lovely reminder of the North, culture, children and friendship. I wish I knew who made it.

To me dolls made by First Nations, Inuit and Metis people reflect a life experienced in the North through miniature. Young women were taught to sew using scraps of materials so that it would not be wasted. The resulting doll could be carried around and cherished no matter how nomadic the lifestyle.

This seemed like a positive image to represent culture, youth, and the North.

By Laurel Parry



## NORTH WEST TERRITORIES

The Metis sash was historically adopted from the French fur traders. It was worn by fur traders to close their coats in the winter and used as a pouch to carry tobacco, pipe and knife. It was also used as a tump line to carry large loads on ones back. Its multi use signifies the "jack-of-all-trades" of the way of life of the metis people.

The Metis are a Matriarchal society and the sash is now worn over the shoulder by women also. Traditionally it is the woman of a family who comes up with the colour and pattern for that particular family.

This sash was made by Ria Coleman. Ria is a South Slave Métis woman of Beaulieu lineage, who was born in Fort Smith, Northwest Territories. She is the great, great, great granddaughter of Francois Beaulieu II, who is the first Métis man of the Northwest Territories.

Ria's grandparents were assimilated in residential schools. As a result a loss of language and culture affected her mother and in turn Ria and her own family. The passion to learn her Métis Culture grew with time as she raised her 4 children.

Ria brought her children to her birth home, Fort Smith N.W.T. This is where she came up with the mini metis sash pattern that can be traced in every sash she designs.

When Ria came home, the metis were and still are in heavy negotiations with the Canadian government. This spurred her to make a mini sash that could be worn every day on the lapel as full size sashes were used only for celebrations, such as graduations, weddings, international sport functions and funerals. The mini sash would show the membership on a day to day basis.

Being a Métis woman means to be strong and self sufficient, and being a matriarch to pass on the stories to help people grow and learning from the land - secrets to live a good life.

## YAMAL

This is a piece of birch bark with a national pattern carved on it.

Cultural traditions and customs of the people inhabiting the territory of Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug are unique and closely intertwined with surrounding nature. A special place in their life is held by a birch-tree and birch bark, which for many millennia have been accessible, convenient and unique material in the domestic culture of the peoples of the North. It surrounds a man for the whole of their life, penetrating all its spheres. This is their soul, home, food and craft.





## NUNAVIK-QUEBEC

Team Nunavik-Quebec has provided an amautik for the Cultural Carriers Exhibition at the AWG 2016 Nuuk Games. The amautik is a woman's coat, equipped with a pouch on the back for carrying a baby. This particular amautik was created by Minnie Etidloie from Kangiqsujuaq, Quebec.



## GREENLAND



Anaanaga means my mother in Greenlandic. Children throughout Greenland have been drawing on the basis of the questions: What is a mother, what can a mother do, and what can you do with a mother? So far the project has collected 400 drawings of children's ideas of a mother. On the first floor of Nuuk Art Museum 50 drawings is exhibited as an art exhibition.

Anaana/the mother is a cultural carrier – a child inherits a culture, a language and a life from its mother. Unconditional love was the overall theme in the drawings.

In these selected drawings, exhibited as a cultural carrier, some children have shown a traditional part of Greenlandic culture still alive. There is a mother as a craftswoman, a mother wearing the amaas – the traditional hoot women carried babies in -, and a mother flensing a seal with an ulu – the traditional women knife – with an excavator in the background. On the other hand there is also a mother on segboard. Culture is not just repeating itself – it's alive and anew for every generation.

Walking with your mother with mountains as the scenery is something a lot of children in Greenland drew out as important part of what you can do with a mother; you can be together by walking together. In these similar drawings nature is recreation and a place to be together away from everyday life in the city, towns and villages.

Anaanaga has been initiated by NAPA – the Nordic Institute in Greenland inspired by The International Museum of Children Art in Oslo.



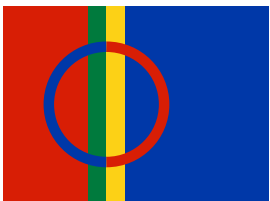
## ALASKA

This unique grass platter was made as a gift to the family of Team Alaska's 2016 cultural delegation.

The coiled grass platter was woven by Neva Rivers of Hooper Bay, which is located near the Bering Sea in Western Alaska.

Neva Rivers was a master basket weaver, whose work was sought after for the finely coiled woven shapes, geometric designs and the use of dyed seal intestines used to weave the patterns into the design.

The baskets are woven from long grass collected along the west coast of Alaska. The process of gathering, drying and dyeing the grass takes up to two months or more.



## SAPMI

Sapmi has brought a suohpan – a lasso used to catch reindeer. In old days it was made of leather today it is made of a robe and plastic. The traditional Sami life is close connected with reindeer and reindeer herding. Once the herders followed the reindeers round; today herders are assigned to specific parcels of the reindeer's traditional grazing territories. Today it is not just on foot, but from ATV's and snowmobiles you catch the reindeer with the suohpan – primarily to ear mark it.

Nowadays most Sami people live a modern lifestyle and do not have reindeer, but are connected to it through family.

The suohpan is followed by part of a documentary called Badjealbmá čalmmiiguin which means Through the Reindeer herder's Eyes by Aslak Paltto. It is a work in progress; the full documentary will be 1½ hour long and texted in English. The film explores the problem with wolverines hurting or killing reindeers for fun and the problem for reindeer herders as the hunting rules are different in Finland, Norway and Russia.