

KENOJUAK ASHEVAK



Kenojuak Ashevak is one of Canada's most acclaimed graphic artists.

Her long list of achievements and honours is surpassed only by her stamina and good humour.

Born on south Baffin Island at a camp area known as Ikkirisaq, Kenojuak grew up traveling from camp to camp on south Baffin and in Arctic Quebec (Nunavik). As a young woman, she was married to Johnniebo and lived with him in various camps including Keakto, a scenic area seven miles from Cape Dorset. While still living at Keakto in the late 1950's, both Kenojuak and Johnniebo first experimented with carving and drawing. They moved to Cape Dorset in 1966 in order for their children to attend school, and continued to work closely together until Johnniebo's death.

Kenojuak's drawings were immediately captivating, and she has been represented in almost every annual print collection since 1959. Her work has also been included in numerous special projects and commissions. In 1961 she was the subject of a film produced by the National Film Board about her traditional life and art. The film is still shown today, and was instrumental in introducing her to the world beyond Cape Dorset. In 1970 her print, *Enchanted Owl (1960)* was reproduced on a stamp commemorating the centennial of the Northwest Territories, and again in 1993 Canada Post selected her drawing entitled "The Owl" to be reproduced on their .86 cent stamp.

Special commissions include the World Wildlife Print Portfolio released in 1978. In the same year, the Commonwealth Print Portfolio featured one of her works. Her art and life were the focus of the limited edition book entitled "Graphic Arts of the Inuit: Kenojuak", published in 1981. In 1988, Via Rail Canada commissioned a large mural from Kenojuak for their Club Car series, which featured some of Canada's most highly respected artists. Kenojuak's print *Nunavut Qajanatuk (Our Beautiful Land)* was commissioned by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to commemorate the signing of the Inuit Land Claim Agreement in Principle, in April 1990. To commemorate the signing of the Final Agreement early in 1994, Kenojuak conceived and hand-coloured a large and exclusive lithograph entitled Nunavut.