

Life in the Arctic Today 1

The artwork along this wall reflects the theme of contemporary life. In other words, the works here look at issues of daily life, what housing and hunting, along with other considerations shape Inuit life today.

There are two works on this wall that I find particularly interesting.

The first is a pencil drawing by artist and hunter Tim Pitsiulak. In this drawing we see a butchered polar bear – a source of food and clothing and other objects. We also see an ulu used to cut the animal's flesh, as well as the polar bears liver – which is highly toxic, so it is often removed first. This work combines Pitsiulak's skills as an artist and knowledge as a hunter.

Born in 1967, as a young boy, Tim would draw and later took up carving and even took jewelry making workshops. He was inspired by the natural world, and was particularly respected belugas and bowhead whales. He passed away in 2016.

Another artwork that speaks to contemporary life is Annie Pootoogook's lithograph titled **A Friend Visits**

Annie was the daughter of Napachie Pootoogook and the granddaughter Pitseolak Ashoona, Annie Pootoogook. She was a third generation artist who became widely known in the mainstream Canadian art world after winning the Sobey Art Award in 2006. Her colour pencil drawings often depicted the realities of daily life in her community of Cape Dorset, particularly domestic, interior scenes. These works were strongly influenced by her mother's autobiographical work, which also documented "the transition period of the 1960s and the Inuit's adjustment to life in the government-built settlements."

In this work, Pootoogook shows an Inuk woman, dressed in a parka, which is partly removed to reveals a teal coloured button up shirt. Sitting in front of a large window, the background of the image also reveals a blue pre-fabricated home and a connecting hydro line. In this image, Pootoogook's friend is shown smiling, while also directly at the viewer. Through this work, we can also imagine our own conversation with this person. Such frank scenes depicted in Pootoogook's work have been referred to as "narrative realism", a style of working that tells a story in a matter-of-fact nature.