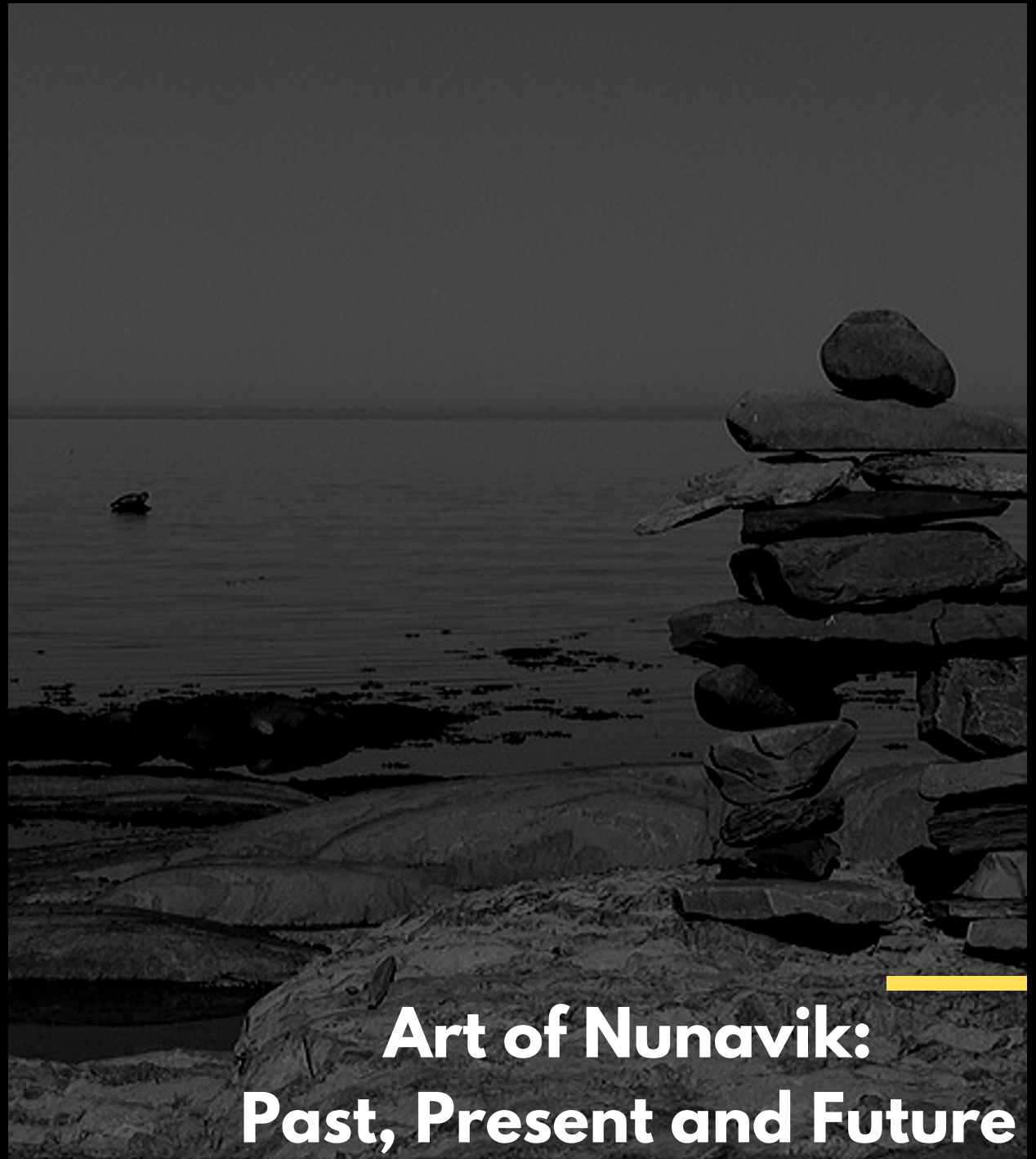


Drumming

Information and
Biographies

and

Reference
Document



**Art of Nunavik:
Past, Present and Future**

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Drumming in Nunavik



Inuit have been drumming for a very long time. It is hard to say when drumming was introduced to the Inuit culture, but some drum fragments in Greenland have been found dating from 4,500 years ago. The oldest drum pieces found in Canada were over 1,000 years old and were found on Bylot Island in Nunavut. Traditionally, drumming was done by men mostly to celebrate occasions like a young boy's first hunt or the birth of a child. But in some Nunavut communities, women and children were drum dancing, as well.

Traditionally, drums were made of wood that was soaked in water for a long time to be bent by the drum maker's knees, hands and jaw. The cover of the drum was mainly caribou skin taken from specific caribous at specific seasons to get very thin skin. This caribou skin was then soaked in water to take all the hair off and then dried. It was very important for the caribou skin to be intact without any holes in it. The drum beater was made from wood, antlers or part of sea mammals and wrapped with animal skin (caribou, seal or other). The rope around the drum was braided by women using sinew. This kind of drum had to be taken apart when the drum dance was done. The caribou skin was taken off, rolled up and properly stored until the next drum dance.

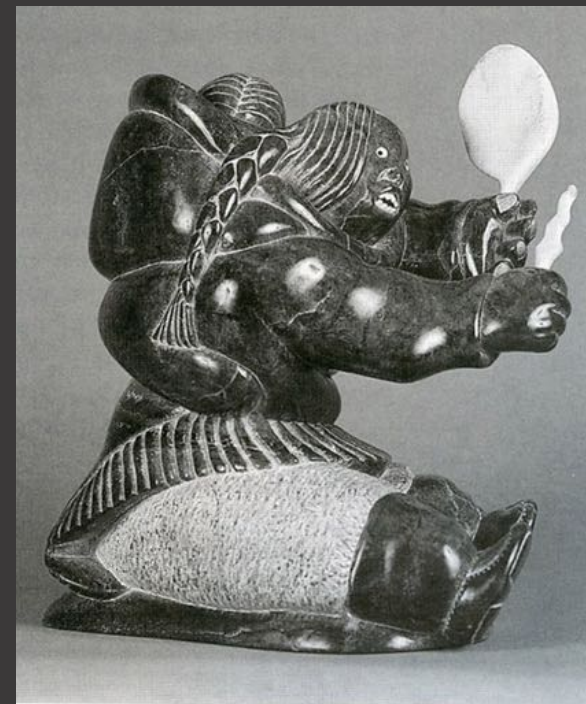


"Drum Dancer" by Akeeaktashuk

Nowadays, Inuit drums are made from wood and synthetic fabrics such as nylon (material used to make rainproof parkas). People can buy these fabrics at the store, along with the rope to wrap around the drum. This way of doing is much faster and the drums last much longer. The cover does not have to be taken off to be stored properly.

"Some are so good in their motions that they move back and forth gracefully."

Luke Arna'naaq
1987



"Woman Drummer" by Noah Echalook



"In Spirit" by Lawson Alec Tuckatuck

Drum dancing also comes with some unique dance movements such as a knee-bending motion and moving around in a circle. Some drum dancers also make a noise that is called utterance. This utterance can be an indication of the drummer's excitement and happiness. Some Inuit drummers will also write their own song to go along with their drumming. Most of these songs are of a special journey out on the land. Some songs can be passed on by parents or by sauniks (namesakes).

Although Inuit drums do not seem to have made their way to Nunavik in the past, many artists are bringing the drums into the Nunavik communities nowadays. We can also find many artists' carvings or prints that include the Inuit drum as an element of their culture.



Sylvia was born in Kuujuaq and has lived in Iqaluit, Nunavut for many years. She is a performing artist, well-known for Inuit throat singing and drum dancing. Sylvia is also a producer, a director and a motivational speaker for youth events. She started throat singing when she was about 18 years old, learning from elders and other throat singers her age. She is the co-founder of Aqsaniit, producing shows that promote Inuit culture for special events. She has also collaborated with artists all over the world, including "Think of One" from Belgium, "Tafelmusik" (baroque orchestra) from Toronto and Montreal DJ "Madeskimo".

Sylvia Watt-Cloutier



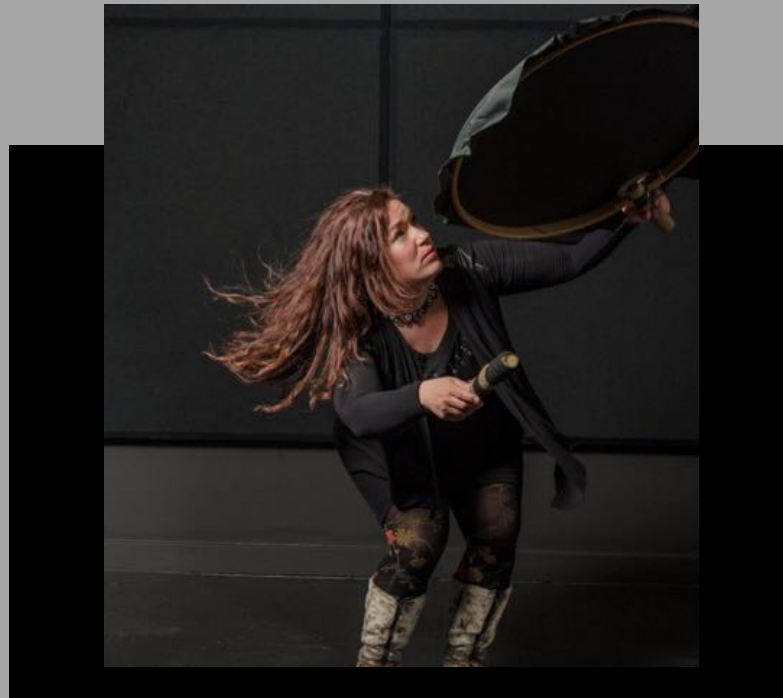
Sylvia performing drum dancing



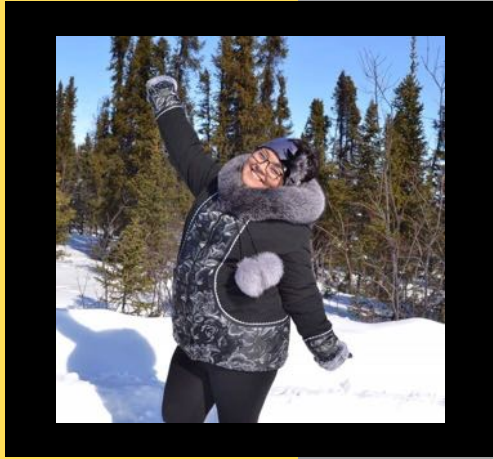
Fun fact about the artist

In 2009, Sylvia was named "woman of the year" by Pauktutiit, the National Inuit Women's Organization in Nunavik.

In 2013, she was named "outstanding young woman of the year" by Qullit Nunavut Women's Organization.



Sylvia performing drum dancing

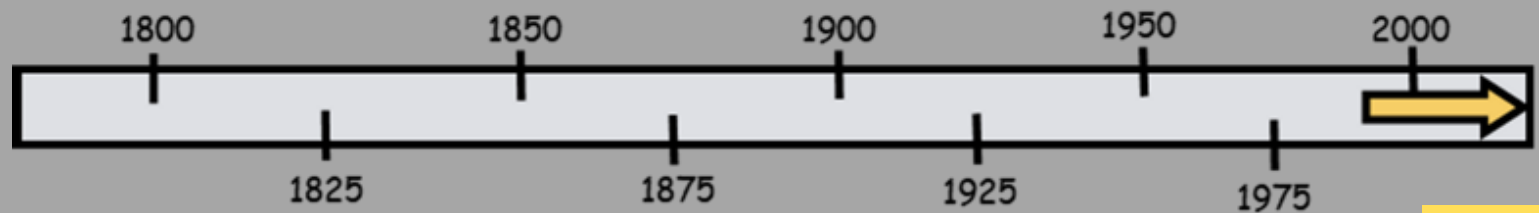


Janice was born in Kuujjuaq on March 29 1992. She has been throat singing since she was 7 years old, when she joined the Kuujjuaq Youth Group who performs each year for the opening of the Aqpiq Jam Festival, in Kuujjuaq. Not only does Janice throat sing, but she also plays the Inuit drum and she's the one who taught her partner, Sandy Emudluk, how to play! When she performs in front of a crowd, Janice always wears a traditional outfit called "arnautik" sewn by herself and her mother. Some of her accomplishments include winning 1st place at the Kuujjuaq's Got Talent 2019 and throat singing for the singer Ariane Moffatt in her video called "Pour toi".

Janice Parsons Gordon



Janice and Sandy in their traditional outfits



Fun fact about the artist

"I am able to synchronize my throat singing techniques into everyday music. Give me your favorite song and I'll throat sing to it, to give a little touch of Inuit remix!"



Janice Parsons Gordon

Janice throatsinging with Sandy Emudluk

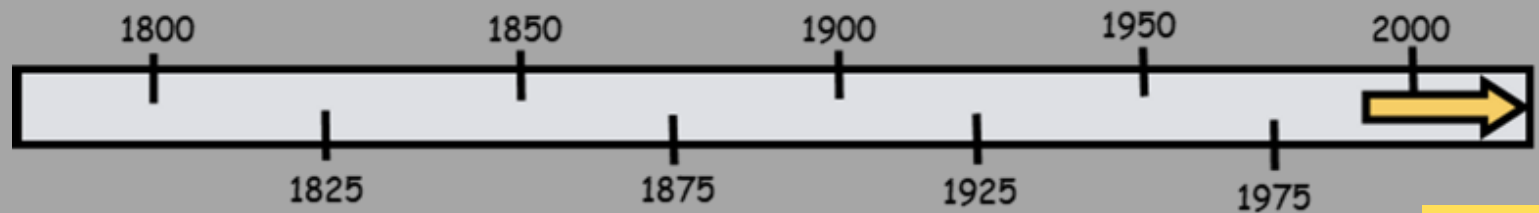


Sandy was born in Kangiqsualujjuaq on May 16 1991 and is now living in Kuujjuaq. As an artist, he does throat singing and drum dances with his partner Janice Parsons Gordon. Sandy uses a traditional Inuit drum made by David Serkoak, a well-known Inuit drum-maker from Arviat, Nunavut. Some of his accomplishments include performing for the music video "Pour toi" by Ariane Moffatt and winning 1st place at the Kuujjuaq's Got Talent 2019. It is also possible to view many other contracts he has done, on his and Janice's Facebook pages.

Sandy
Emudluk



Sandy and Janice performing



What would be your best piece of advice to students who want to be an artist?

"Don't be shy to try new things and never give up!"

Sandy Emudluk



Sandy with his partner Janice Parsons Gordon



Nukariik is a throat singing group made up of Karin and Kathy Kettler. The name of their group means "sisters". They are from Kangiqsualujjuaq, but have been living in Ottawa for a large part of their lives. Karin and Kathy have been performing together as Nukariik since the summer of 2002. Karin has been performing since 1997 when she performed at the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards and Kathy has been performing since 2000. Together, they work to preserve and share the Inuit culture of Canada by performing across Canada and internationally.

Nukariik



Nukariik performing drum dancing



Fun fact about the artist

Nukariik has taught drum dancing and throat singing to youth in Nain, Labrador.

Karin has also conducted many workshops with students throughout Nunavik.



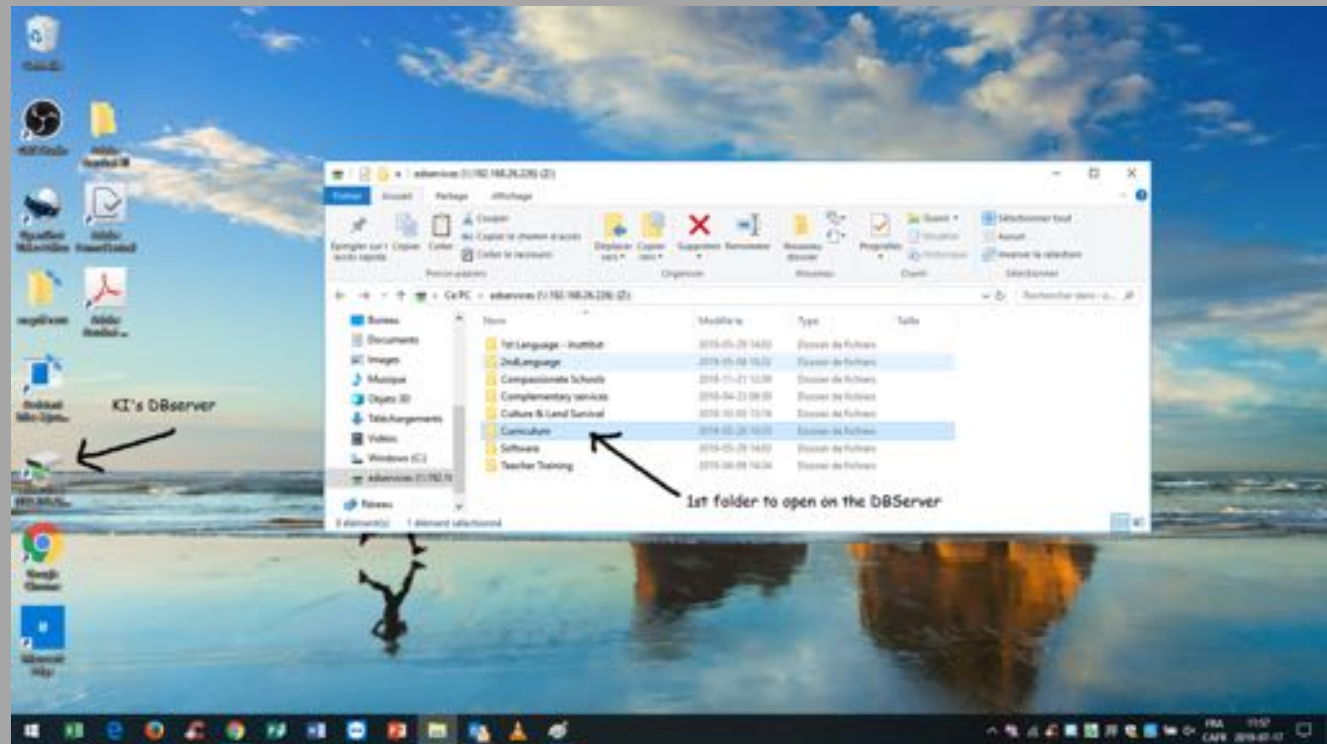
Nukariik throat singing

Where to get more information on Inuit drumming

More information on Inuit drumming (continued)

Here is the path to follow to get the videos by David Serkoak:

1. Find the "Edservices" DBserver on your computer.
2. Choose the folder "Curriculum".
3. Choose the folder "Arts".
4. Then choose the folder "Drumming" and then "videos with David Serkoak".
5. Choose the language you would prefer to watch the videos, you have a choice of English or Inuttitut.



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Kativik Ilisarniliriniq