**National Gallery of Canada**  
**Ningiukulu Teevee**

**Artist: TEEVEE, Ningiukulu** (Inuit, b. 1963, Cape Dorset, Northwest Territories; lives and works in Cape Dorset / né 1963, Cape Dorset, Territoires du Nord-ouest; vit et travaille à Cape Dorset)

Graphic artist and author, Ningiukulu Teevee, is today recognized as one of Kinngait studios leading artists. The popularity of her work has been on a constant rise since it was first included in the 2004 Cape Dorset annual print collection, and since then her work has been shown extensively across Canada and internationally. Teevee’s comprehensive knowledge of Inuit legends and folklore has been the inspiration for her work, which she combines with often humorous images of westernized contemporary life in Nunavut. Although she has formerly been known as Ningeokuluk, as of March 2017 she has gone by Ningiukulu, to reflect the modern orthography that appears on her government issued identification.¹ Her work is included in a number of major public collections including the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Canadian Museum of History, the McMichael Collection of Canadian Art and the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Her work is also actively sought after by private collectors, as evidenced by sales records from her recent exhibitions.²

Since she started exhibiting her work in 2004, Teevee has been included in a number of exhibitions, both group and solo. Her work has been included in the Cape Dorset Graphics annual illustrated catalogue every since 2004. Her first solo exhibition, *Original Drawings by Ningeokuluk Teevee*, was held in 2006 at Feheley Fine Arts in Toronto. Since then, she has had three more solo exhibitions held at Feheley in 2009, 2016 and 2018. In 2010 her exhibition *Ningeokuluk Teevee Drawings* was held at the Albers Gallery in San Francisco. In 2015 *Beyond the Surface: Drawings by Ningeokuluk Teevee* was held at the Inuit Gallery of Vancouver, and in 2017 *Ningiukulu Teevee: Kinngait Stories*, curated by Darlene Wight, opened at the Winnipeg Art Gallery before travelling to the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC. Selected group exhibitions include: *The Canada 150 Project*, Presented by Roche Bobois, Toronto (2017); *Floe Edge: Contemporary Art and Collaborations from Nunavut*, Canada House, London, UK (2016); Cape Dorset Annual Print Collection, Kinngait Studios, Cape Dorset (2004 – 2016); *15 Years: Kinngait 2000 – 2015*, Feheley Fine Arts, Toronto (2015); *New Voices from the New North*, National Gallery of Canada (2014); *Women in Charge: Inuit Contemporary Women Artists*, Museo Nazionale Preistorica Etnografica, Rome, Italy (2012); *New Art from Cape Dorset*, Winnipeg Art Gallery (2011); *Uuturautiit: Cape Dorset Celebrates 50 Years of Printmaking*, National Gallery of Canada (2009); and *Arctic Spirit: 50th Anniversary of Cape Dorset’s Kinngait Studios*, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2009). In addition to being an accomplished graphic artist, Teevee is a successful children’s author. Her first book, *Alego*, was published by Groundwood Books in 2009. It is an autobiographical story of a young girl named Alego who goes clam digging with her grandmother and along the way discovers the wonders of the seashore. Alego was short-listed for the 2009 Governor General’s Literary Award for children’s illustration.

² Sales records from Feheley Fine Arts, accessed, August 2018.
As is common, Teevee is self-taught yet well versed in several drawing media, including black fibre-tip pen, coloured pencil, oil sticks, and watercolour and is also adept in other modes of art-making, even having attempted stone carving. Teevee’s career initially began in the 1990’s, when Jimmy Manning, the manager of Kinngait Studios, sent out a call inviting people to submit drawings. She began drawing at this time, however, felt she needed more experience, and it was not until the early 2000’s that she showed her work to Manning, who took an immediate interest and encouraged her to produce more images.\(^3\) Despite early hesitation, Teevee’s works are strong and experimental.

Of a generation raised in an urban community, Teevee continues to be influenced by her cultural heritage, creating images from Inuit oral tradition as shared by Elders as well as from her contemporary life. Recognizing the importance of the story-telling of Elders, she explains, “I can never retell those stories like Mialia [Jaw] but when she told them I could see them in my mind.”\(^4\) Teevee has described how envisioning the narrative episodes in the stories she heard later inspired the subject matter in her own work.\(^5\) Her subject matter however is diverse in nature, and she draws upon a spectrum of contexts that illustrate current realities of northern life rendering the natural environment around her (like \textit{Yesterday} and \textit{Arctic Appetizer}), to images that are infused by more traditionally-bound content rooted in Inuit cultural narratives and practices (like \textit{Legend of Qalupalik} [2011] and \textit{The Blind Boy and the Loon} [2009]). Her rendering of the stories heard from Elders are true to the telling but nonetheless interpreted through her own imagination and life as a modern day Inuk. She will invent details that give the tales a timeless relevance or humanity, as is the case in \textit{Legend of Qalupalik}. Usually described as a frightening type of creature, the qalupalik steals disobedient children who wander too close to the ice edge. For Teevee however, there is a gentleness in the way the child is being held in the hood of the qalupalik, who is depicted with an older women’s facial tattoos. Her stylistic technique is likewise diverse and can range from using finely detailed line to colourful print palettes - her work can shift from being quite subdued and contemplative in its illustrative nature to dynamic, multicoloured abstractions. It appears, however, that the more ‘traditional’ Inuit practices are what generally fascinate Teevee.\(^6\)

Please cite in the following manner:

Jasmine Inglis, Acquisition Proposal for Ningiukulu Teevee’s \textit{Raven and Owl}, accession #48515, Curatorial File, National Gallery of Canada.


\(^5\) Ibid.

\(^6\) Lalonde, 2010.