



ISUMA AT THE 58TH BIENNALE ARTE DI VENEZIA (VENICE BIENNALE) 2019

“In today’s contentious global media environment, when millions of people have been driven from their homes worldwide, Isuma media art in the UN Year of Indigenous Languages sees the forced relocation of families from an Inuit point of view. The video installation *One Day in the Life of Noah Piugattuk* recreates an encounter on Baffin Island in April 1961 when one Inuit family was ordered to move off the land. From the same place, 58 years later, Isuma webcasts *Silakut Live from the Floe Edge* as a multinational mining company plans a railroad and supertanker shipping past today’s Inuit communities of Igloodik and Pond Inlet. Our name Isuma means “to think”; a state of thoughtfulness, intelligence or an idea. Isuma illuminates the consequences of Canada’s relocation of Inuit in the 1950s and 60s in order to reclaim history today and imagine a different future.”

–Isuma

Isuma, the artist collective led by Zacharias Kunuk and Norman Cohn, is proud to exhibit a selection of new work at the Canada Pavilion at the 58th Biennale Arte 2019 in Venice, Italy. This is the first presentation of art by Inuit in the Canada Pavilion, and coincides with the United Nations’ [International Year of Indigenous Languages](#).

Presented by the National Gallery of Canada, the Venice exhibit was organized by five curators selected by Isuma. They are Asinnajaq, artist, writer and curator from Inukjuak, Nunavik; Catherine Crowston, Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Art Gallery of Alberta; Barbara Fischer, Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Art Museum at the University of Toronto; Candice Hopkins, Senior Curator of the Toronto Biennial of Art; and Josée Drouin- Brisebois, Senior Curator of Contemporary Art, National Gallery of Canada.

There are **three components** to the exhibition in the Canada Pavilion:

- *One Day in the Life of Noah Piugattuk*, a video installation of Isuma’s latest dramatic film
- *Silakut Live from the Floe Edge*, a series of live webcasts from the land around Baffin Island
- *Isuma Online*, a collection of Inuit and other Indigenous-language films available on iTunes and IsumaTV with an online exhibition catalogue at www.isuma.tv

One Day in the Life of Noah Piugattuk

4K digital video installation, 112 minutes, Inuktitut-English 2019

In April 1961, John Kennedy is America’s new President, the Cold War heats up in Berlin and nuclear bombers are deployed from bases in arctic Canada. In Kapuivik, north Baffin Island, Noah Piugattuk’s nomadic Inuit band live and hunt by dog team as his ancestors did when he was born in 1900. When the white man known as Boss arrives at Piugattuk’s hunting camp, what appears as a chance meeting soon opens up the prospect of momentous change. Boss is an agent of the government, assigned to get Piugattuk to move his band to settlement housing and send his children to school so they can get jobs and make money. But Kapuivik is Piugattuk’s homeland. He takes no part in the Canadian experience; and cannot imagine what his children would do with money.

Silakut Live from the Floe Edge



Fifty-eight years after Piugattuk was ordered off his homeland into government settlement, a mining company proposes a railroad across Baffin Island to ship 30 million tons of iron ore annually by supertanker through walrus breeding grounds within view of Piugattuk's former home site at Kapuivik. Isuma will webcast Silakut Live from the Floe Edge from May 8–11, 2019, consulting Igloolik hunting families on the impact and benefits of the iron mine's proposed expansion. From September 16–21, Isuma will webcast Silakut Live from Pond Inlet, where public hearings will review the mining company's Environmental Impact Statement. Silakut Live brings global media transparency to the consequences of forced relocation to viewers in Nunavut, Venice, Canada and worldwide. A schedule of Silakut Live webcasts online and transmitted to select theatres in Venice, Canada and other participating locations can be found at <http://www.isuma.tv/live>.

Isuma Online www.isuma.tv

Isuma's exhibition in cyberspace presents a collection of Isuma and other Indigenous-language films on iTunes in 30 countries with subtitles in English, Italian, French, Spanish and German. Isuma Online features Silakut Live from the Floe Edge webcasts, the complete archive of Igloolik's Inuktitut video production since 1985, and more than 7,000 international Indigenous films and videos in 75 languages. IsumaTV's network of local servers in remote Inuit communities makes the exhibition available in regions where high-cost and low-bandwidth prevent fair access to internet media. Isuma Online also offers a free exhibition catalogue with critical essays, scripts, background information, behind-the-scenes photographs and links to all films.

For more information about Isuma, the artists and film screenings, please visit isuma.tv.

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