

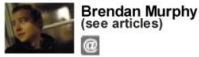


FOLLOW US



MONTRÉAL

INSIDERS



LINKS

[MontréalCAM](#)  
[Tourisme Montréal](#)

[Previous](#) [UNDER THE SNOW FEST BURIES THE MILE END IN MUSIC](#)

# INUIT MODERN EXHIBITON DAZZLES THE MCCORD MUSEUM

Posted by [v\\_redgrave](#)



When a polar bear created with hundreds of oyster shells greeted me at the entrance of the McCord Museum's powerful new show, *Inuit Modern*, I knew I should be prepared to see something out of the ordinary...

Originally organized by the Art Gallery of Ontario, *Inuit Modern: The Esther and Samuel Sarick Collection* is taken from one of the world's great collections of Inuit art. The sculptures, prints and drawings have sprung from the creative minds of a people intricately linked to, and influenced by, the land. They illustrate the struggle of reconciling a traditional lifestyle with a modern world whose environment is in peril.



This cultural heritage can be seen in the 175 works at the McCord, however, what's surprising is how modern their art is. Many sculptures have a contemporary feel that recalls 20th century artists like Henry Moore or Brancusi. The simple hand-carved pieces often created in soapstone, polished to a reflective gleam, others in whale bone, pitted by the unforgiving arctic.



The Inuit prints are also very modern. Animals and people are reduced to their essence. Important details are there, but they are often exaggerated into a simplified shape, such as the powerful back of a muscular musk ox or the silhouette of a swimming polar bear. Their visual language is full of daily details of family life, as in the work by Annie Pootoogook, or sensationally simple *Grazing Caribou* by Josephine Pootoogook.



Part of the arctic is the endangered polar bear. In a nod to its peril, Montreal artist Laura Santini created a life-sized polar bear made of oyster shells recovered from Montreal restaurants like Lucille's, L'Original, Joe Beef and more. The title, *XTINCT*, is the message. Santini wanted to use two disparate but equally threatened inhabitants of our world- the huge bear and the miniature mollusk- to make her point. This incredible life-size piece lies in solitary splendor at the entrance of the *Inuit Modern* show and serves as an introduction to how aesthetically pleasing and powerful the exhibition is.

A

**THE DETAILS**

*XTINCT*, McCord Museum, until April 30, 2012

TAG :  [Tweet](#) 11 [Like](#) 67

[Print article](#)   [E-mail this article](#)

[Top ▲](#)

[Previous](#)   [UNDER THE SNOW FEST BURIES THE MILE END IN MUSIC](#)