BAIKI

THE INTERNATIONAL SAAMI JOURNAL

ISSUE #35, SPRING 2012

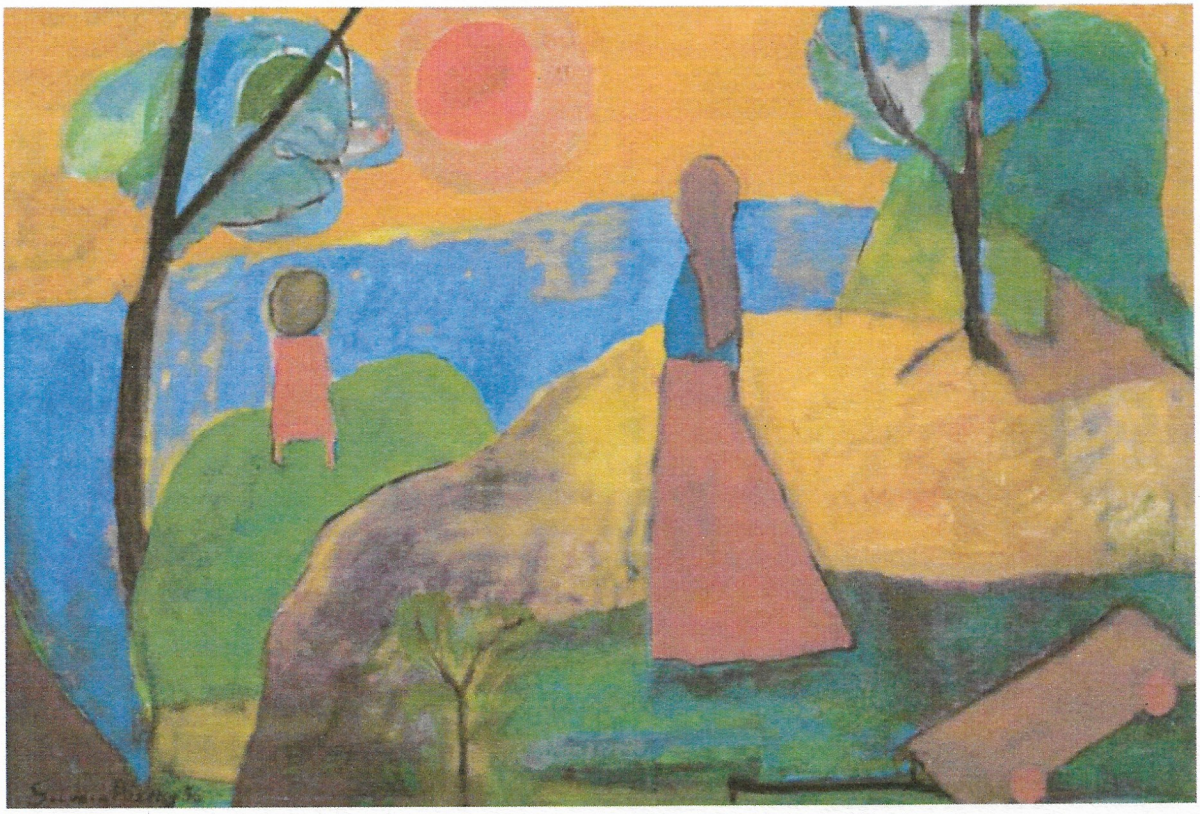

photo: Casey Meshbesher

Solveig Arneng Johnson, oil: "Mother and Child Longing for Family Across the Sea," 1953.

RECONNECTING

• ***Francis Joy:*** *The Bear Sieiddi Stone of Njuohgárggu* • ***The Sámi Jienat Choir*** • ***Kiersten Chace:*** *an interview* • ***Two Major Sami Exhibits*** • ***The Lyrics of Sofia Jannok*** • ***Turi's Book of Lapland:*** *a new English translation and much much more*

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Báiki: the International Sámi Journal
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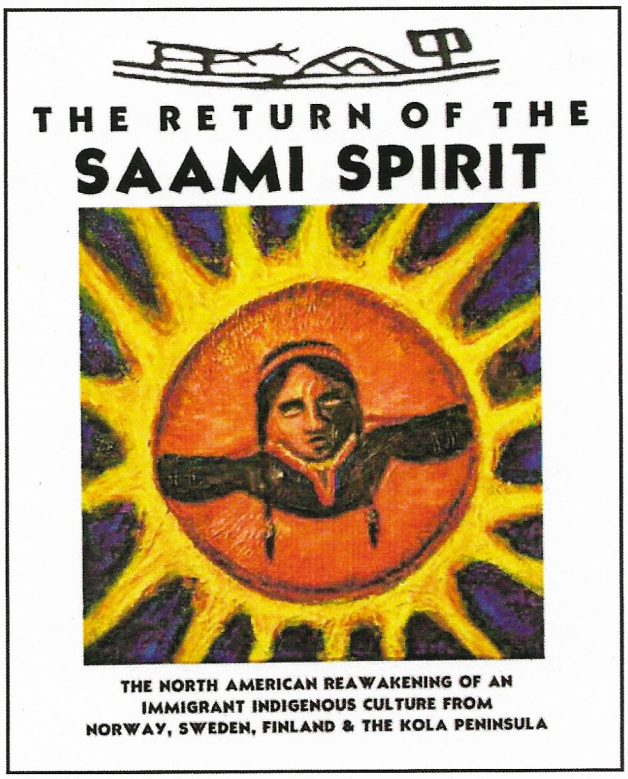
Please visit www.baiki.org.

WHO ARE THE SAAMI AND WHAT IS BÁIKI?



An anthology of articles, poetry and art from the first twenty years of *Báiki*. Cover art by Mervi Salo. Look for information on our website www.baiki.org and the Saami Baiki Facebook page in May.

"Báiki" [bye-h'kee] is the nomadic reindeer-herding society's word for the cultural identity that survives when people move from one place to another. *Báiki: the International Sámi Journal* grew out of the search for Sámi connections world wide by people in North America. After its appearance in 1991 the Sámi presence in the United States and Canada was finally acknowledged. The *Báiki* logo was designed by faith fjeld, *Báiki*'s founding editor and publisher, using pictographs from Sámi Drums. The reindeer symbolizes subsistence, the *lavvus* [Sámi dwellings] symbolize the extended family, the mountain behind symbolizes spirituality, and the *njalla* [storage shed] symbolizes traditional knowledge kept for future generations.

The "Sámi" [sah-mee] — also spelled "Saami" or "Sami" — are the Indigenous People of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Russian Kola Peninsula. The Sámi area in the North is called "Sápmi" [sahp-mee], and in the South "Åarjel Saemieh" [war-yel sah-mee-eh]. The nine Sámi languages are related to the Samoyedic, Uralic and Altaic language groups. There are about 80,000 Sámi People living in the Nordic countries. It is estimated that there may also be at least 30,000 people living in North America who have Sámi ancestry. Some are the descendants of the reindeer herders who came to Alaska and Canada in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and some are the descendants of Sámi immigrants who settled in the Midwest, the Upper Michigan Peninsula, the Pacific Northwest and parts of Canada during the same period.

The Sámi refer to their spiritual belief system as "the Nature Religion." Sámi society has traditionally been organized into *siidas* or *samebys* — semi-nomadic extended families who hunt, fish, farm and harvest together according to Nature's subsistence cycles. This worldview and way of life is still a part of Sámi society wherever possible.

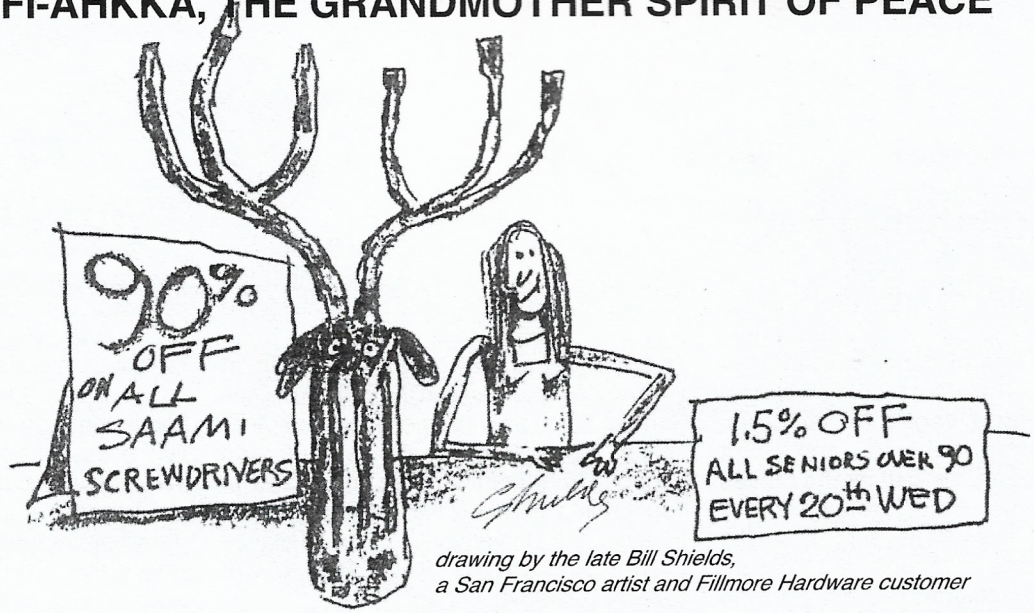
The history of Sápmi and Åarjel Saemieh parallels that of the world's other Indigenous Peoples. Colonization and genocide began in the Middle Ages after contact with European missionaries. Sami areas were divided by national borders, and Sámi children were removed from their families and placed in boarding schools where they were taught to think and act like the colonizers. Conversion by the church and assimilation by the state set the stage for the abuse of the Sami natural resources.

Today the Sámi are incorporating new technologies in the revival of their languages, the *yoik,* and other traditional arts, and the Sami are in the forefront of the worldwide post-colonial renaissance of Indigenous voice and vision. Moreover, having their own parliaments in Norway, Sweden and Finland, the Sámi relationship with their former colonizers is improving as well.

BÁIKI EDITORIAL PAGE

RÁFI-ÁHKKÁ, THE GRANDMOTHER SPIRIT OF PEACE

by faith fjeld



drawing by the late Bill Shields,
a San Francisco artist and Fillmore Hardware customer

Most of us can trace a major change in our perception of ourselves, our ancestors and the Indigenous world around us to the moment when we first came into contact through publications such as *Báiki*, newsletters such as *Árran*, and through Sami Camps and Siiddastallans at Finnfests and Scandinavian American festivals, and lately through Facebook. Our Sami connections have made us into dreamers and visionaries and inspired us to become artists, poets, teachers, writers and researchers. The creative grassroots community that has sprung to life has accomplished miracles because we have been working together peacefully from the heart.

I was once told by Elina Helander-Renvall that when the Sami meet each other they may ask, *"mii gullo?"* "what do you hear?" and it so happens that people often answer *"mis lea ráfi,"* "we have peace." Peace, *ráfi,* is the absence of sickness, the absence of predators, favourable herding conditions, good weather, good social relationships, and life without troublesome events. Unfortunately here in North America a few in our Sami community have recently been experiencing troublesome events that have compromised their sense of *ráfi* and distracted them from their dreams. Let me tell a story.

For almost ten years I worked at Fillmore Hardware, a family-owned neighborhood store in San Francisco. We helped people fix things. We stocked the tools, we made the keys, we mixed the paint, and we sold the supplies that local plumbers, electricians, carpenters and handy men needed. In other words, we found a need and filled it — or, as my boss Phil Dean said to our plumbing salesman one day, "Thanksgiving is coming. We'll need plungers and drain openers!"

My job at the hardware store made sense because while I helped people fix things it also gave me time to think. My boss Phil, his crew of teenaged co-workers, and Patty the owner's daughter who served as assistant manager, witnessed my struggles as I attended graduate school at San Francisco State, wrote my Masters thesis in American Indian Symbolism and began to establish my Sami connections. In fact *Báiki* took shape as the North American Sami journal while I worked (and thought) at Fillmore Hardware.

This job was so much a part of my life that I even had dreams about it. In one dream I was asleep in the back room of Fillmore Hardware dressed in Sami *gákti.* In the dream I wake up, yawn, stretch, and pick up a Sami flag that is hanging from a post. I hold it high above my head, parade through the store with it, stop to give my boss a hug, and walk out the door where a taxi waits for me. I get in and ride away.

Recently I invented an imaginary spirit who, for the purposes of this editorial, I will call "Ráfi-áhkká," the Grandmother Spirit of Peace. She works at Fillmore Hardware. She stands at the cash register dressed in hardware store *gákti:* bib overalls, a turtle neck sweater and logging boots. One day the North American Sami community comes into Fillmore Hardware. Ráfi-áhkká immediately recognizes them by their flat teeth and small feet. She greets them in Sami as well as English. "*Bures, bures. Welcome to Fillmore Hardware!*"

They have a shopping list in one hand and a plastic bag in the other. They look at the list. "Do you have something to combat the competitive behavior a few individuals have introduced into our community? We have enjoyed a long-time tradition of peaceful cooperation." The Grandmother Spirit of Peace thinks for a moment. "*You need a good pesticide fogger*," she says.

(**FJELD** *continued on page 23)*

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

SAMI CULTURAL CENTER

There is excitement in Sápmi with the January opening of the beautiful new Sami Cultural Center Sajos on the banks of Juutuanjoki in Inari, Finland. Sajos will serve as a Sami cultural and administrative center with a venue for concerts, conferences, festivals, and youth programming, as well as the offices of the Finnish Sami Parliament. The web site www.samediggi.fi states the purpose of Sajos "is to create better possibilities for the Sámi in Finland to preserve and develop their own language, culture and business activities as well as to manage and develop their cultural self-government and to support the development of their general living conditions."

The center can accommodate groups of over 400 people in the main hall. It was named in a contest won by Matti Morottaja of Inari who states, " 'SAJOS' is Inari Sámi, and it has for a long time past meant a base or a site on which people camp for a longer time." It was funded by 5 million euros by the European regional development fund. Congratulations to our friends and relatives in Finnish Sapmi on this great accomplishment.

Meanwhile North American Sami are working to realize the dream of a cultural center in North America. The new organization—Sami Cultural Center of North America—has been established and is launching a $450,000 capital campaign in order to purchase a property to house a center on the North Shore of Lake Superior near Duluth, Minnesota. Please see page 27 this issue for more details.

—Marlene Wisuri

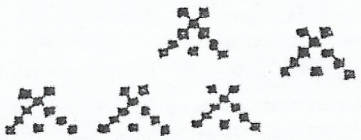
SAJOS

I was at the new Sami Cultural Center in Inari a couple of weekends ago to hear the Finnish church apologize to the Sami for the way they have treated them in the past. There present was the Archbishop of Finland Kari Makinen and the Bishop of Oulu Samuel Salmi as well as a number of other senior figures from the Finnish Lutheran Church. This seminar was organized in cooperation between the Holy Diocese of Finland, the University of Oulu, Giellagas Instituuti, and the Sámi Parliament (Saamelaiskärjät) in Inari.

There was a very honest and direct interchange about past historical events which caused a severe cultural upheaval in the seventeenth century throughout Lapland but especially in Inari where the Sami were strong as a community. Other factors too were taken into account such as Swedish and Russian governance of the northern provences in addition to the Norwegian church and government.

A sincere and direct apology was given to the Sami people in Finland by the Bishop of Oulu Samuel Salmi, and I am hoping to be able to download the content of the speeches onto a blog we are creating at the Arctic Center if it is possible, so people can listen to them.

—Francis Joy



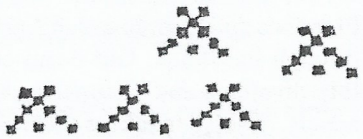
BÁIKI ISSUE #34 COVER

Thanks to all the readers who sent us emails and fan letters giving a thumbs up to our 20th anniversary cover by Keviselie/ Hans Ragnar Mathisen. His work has graced *Báiki* covers and illustrated *Báiki* articles from our earliest issues and for this we are very grateful. Please visit his website www.keviselie-hansragnarmathisen.net.

SAMI PIXL FOLK SERIES

The Saami Connections graphics are by Franz Allbert Richter. The pixl drawings you see here first appeared on the cover and across the centerfold of Báiki *Issue #16, 1996. According to the artist*: "Pixls are the smallest implements on a computer monitor, little boxes formed by the screen grid. The spelling I guess is 'pixel', but my spelling is 'pixl.' I began my first pixl drawings in 1983. The first structure was a five pixl snowflake. With the addition of a small hat this became a pixl folk. For the reindeer I added a body element to a set of pixl antlers. Snow, trees and lavvu were a process of addition and subtraction."

—Franz Allbert Richter

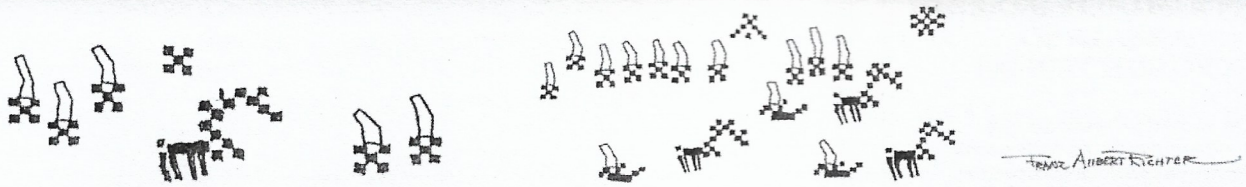


THE REPATRIATION OF SACRED ITEMS

Discussion has been generated online by two articles from Issue #34. The articles are "A Sami Trip to Pine Ridge," referring to the massacre of 400 Lakota people during a Ghost Dance ceremony at Wounded Knee (by Vicki Lantto and Olav Mathis Eira); and "Sami Noiade Drums Found in England," focusing on the repatriation of sacred items (by Francis Joy). An August 2, 1999 article "Ghost Shirt Dances Back," by BBC correspondent Pauline McLean, was e-mailed to Báiki *during this discussion and we print here an excerpt from her article.*

A Ghost Dance shirt worn by a Lakota warrior killed in the 1890 Wounded Knee massacre has been returned to Pine Ridge from Scotland.

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

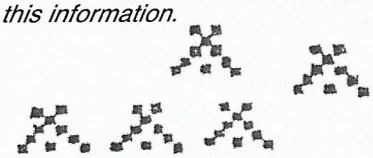


It was presented to the Kelvingrove Art Gallery in Glasgow 107 years ago by a member of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Following the Lakota request for its return, the shirt was repatriated in 1998 after a four-year effort.

At a special ceremony on the Pine Ridge Reservation the Ghost Dance shirt was officially handed back to descendants of the battle victims when Glasgow City Councilor Liz Cameron presented it to Sterling Hollow Horn, who carried it to the cemetery. Hollow Horn and fellow representative Marie Fox Belly unfolded the shirt to the sound of bagpipes. Bullet holes could be seen at the left side of the fringed shirt.

Councilor Cameron said the repatriation had created a strong bond between Glasgow residents and the Lakota. Orville Sully, a member of the Wounded Knee Survivors' Association, told those who were present: "The spirit of the man that wore that shirt is smiling down." Marcella LeBeau, who spearheaded the effort to get the shirt back, said: "This will bring about a sense of closure to a sad and horrible event. Now healing can begin."

Thanks to Francis Joy for sending this information.



FACEBOOK CONNECTIONS

By now, everyone has heard of Facebook, the online social network site. We have a very lively Saami Baiki Facebook page that is like a "Saami Connections" fueled by reindeer racing. People put up articles about Sami and other Native cultures, videos, and photos — personal, cultural — and of beautiful nature. One can read commentary by well known Sami and anyone else wanting to post something. There is some great cultural teaching going on, which I'm glad to see. People meet people who are Sami and live in Sápmi, or meet those who have Sami ancestry and live in North America, or share information with others who are just interested in anything Sami. There are many Sami and North American Sami Facebook sites that reflect our diversity. Some of the subjects discussed online include Indigenous identity, crafts, nature, family, language, and history. I like the Saami Genealogy site, for example. Though most of the dialogue is in English, we also receive postings in the Sami languages as well as in Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish.

An assumption might be made that everyone uses a computer and that everyone is on Facebook. Neither of these ideas are true, of course. I know of community members who specifically choose not to be on Facebook. At all.

Another assumption that might be made is that the Facebook community is the same thing as the North American Sami community or some organization. While Facebook reflects parts of our real community, it is a sound bite in a digital media world that cannot take the place of real people meeting and speaking together in real life, as happens at the festivals, events and gatherings that we have shared over the past 20 years.

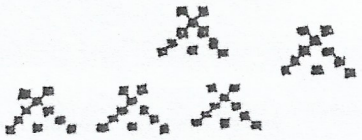
The Sami community is diverse. As in Sápmi, here in North America we have any number of different groups and individuals who do many things whether it be in the arts, in music, in literature, in education, or in philanthropic and environmental organizations. Our diversity should be a source of pride that we all share — with or without Facebook.

— Nathan Muus

UMD INDIGENOUS DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The University of Minnesota Duluth has launched a doctoral program focusing on Indigenous culture, language, and leadership—one of the few of its kind in the world. The Ed.D. in Teaching and Learning prepares students to become scholarly practitioners acknowledging cultural issues known to the world of Indigenous peoples. This could have impact on our Saami collection and there could be other inter-relationships as well. For more information, see UMD Indigenous Culture Program.

— Jim Vileta



FACEBOOK FRIENDS

A number of Sami have joined my Facebook friends list. I like most Sami people I meet on fb, but I don't know if I have much of a shared feeling about things. From what I have read, cultural identity and ancestral lines are important with many Sami. Unfortunately, I seem to lack the capacity to identify with any culture or with the past and I have little feeling for politics. I'm literally unable to experience humanity as two groups — one indigenous and the other non-indigenous. When another person happens to treat me or someone else in a hurtful way, I don't feel upset or outraged, but I see a lot of fb posts that have to do with feeling upset or outraged. I feel compassion for the person who is being abusive.They must be unhappy and carry a very heavy burden in their heart. I feel goodwill towards everyone and I find that my day is usually one of optimism and joy. I really do like the Sami — all of you.

—Keith

DECORAH, IOWA : THE VESTERHEIM MUSEUM

photo: E.A. Hogg

This photo, titled "Laplanders Milking Reindeer at Port Clarence, Alaska," was taken in 1898 at the beginning of the Alaska Reindeer Project. The reindeer herders are Maret Persdatter Biti and her husband Anders Johannesen Balto. They eventually moved to Nome where he was killed in a mining accident. This photograph and their story will be included in the Vesterheim exhibit.

We are pleased to announce that *The Sami Reindeer People of Alaska* exhibit has been scheduled by the Vesterheim Norwegian American Museum, Decorah, Iowa, to run from December 1, 2012 to November 10, 2013 in their new Koren Gallery. The Vesterheim is considered to be the largest and most comprehensive American museum dedicated to a single immigrant group.

This is the second Sami exhibit at the Vesterheim. *The Sami People: Lives of Adventure and Beauty* took place there in December,1996. It was their first major exhibit of Sami-related art and *duodji* (embellished tools and household items) from North American collections. Darrell Henning, the Vesterheim's director at the time, said "We had a small collection of Sami material but no plan or policy to interpret this story. We realized this was a gap that needed to be filled and we think that this exhibit is just the beginning." Sixteen years later his words are coming to pass.

The purpose of this new exhibit is to tell the stories and honor the contributions of the Sami reindeer herders who came to Alaska from Norwegian Finnmark as part of the U. S. government's Reindeer Project. Outside of the descendants of Alaska Native and Sami reindeer herders, little is known about this chapter of Alaska history.

The story of the coming of reindeer and herding to Alaska involves the peaceful collaboration of Indigenous Peoples from opposite sides of the Arctic Circle. In the late 1800s, Sami reindeer herders and their families were hired by the U.S. government to teach herding skills to the Yup'iks and Inupiaq whose way of life had been severely impacted by commercial trapping, fishing, and whaling by outsiders. The first group of about 30 Sami came to Alaska in 1894 and worked with reindeer that had been brought there by Chukchi herders from Siberia as breeding stock.

The second much larger group of 137 Sami came in 1898. At the end of their two-year tours of duty, more than 80 of them stayed on in Alaska, often marrying into Native families and mostly losing contact with their relatives back in Norway. From then on the blended families worked to build up huge reindeer herds that provided food, clothing and transportation from the Nome Gold Rush all the way into the 1920s and 30s. In 1937, the U.S. Reindeer Act transferred the ownership of all reindeer to Alaska Natives and the Sami were forced to sell their herds at a loss. Some of the families moved south to Poulsbo, Washington and some stayed on in Alaska and found other work. Many of the Sami felt they had been betrayed.

photo: Beverly Dobbs

This photo of herder Ellen Sara holding her baby sister Berit in a *gietka* (cradle) was taken in Nome in the early 1900s. She stands with her brothers Morten and Clement. They came to Alaska in 1898 with their parents and other family members. Clement, on the right, photographed many reindeer herding activities as they worked together and his photographs are part of the exhibit.

From the very beginning, research and preparation for *The Sami Reindeer People of Alaska* exhibit has involved a collaboration of elders who have Reindeer Project ancestry, as well as other Alaskans whose ancestors lived and worked with the Sami.

As the exhibit travelled from one venue to another (see exhibit history this page), new stories continually surfaced and the exhibit creators were able to incorporate a growing number of photographs from the families involved.

The chief curator of the exhibit is Laurann Gilbertson with input from co-curator Nathan Muus and Reindeer Project researcher Ruthanne Cecil. Project coordinators are Faith Fjeld, founding editor *Báiki: the International Sami Journal,* and Marlene Wisuri, chair of the Sami Cultural Center of North America. An Exhibit Arts Advisory Committee has been formed that includes descendants of the Alaska Sami herders.

The exhibit at the Vesterheim will showcase 25 black and white photographs that span the beginning of the Alaska Reindeer Project in 1894 to its peak in the middle of the 1920s. Many of the photos were taken by the herders as they worked with the reindeer and the exhibit creators have been given permission by the families to exhibit them. Some of the photographs are accompanied by poetry or family stories that were also shared by the descendants.

A fully furnished *lavvu* and a *goahti* (traditional Sami tents) will serve as focal points in the gallery space and settings for story telling during the year. *Duodji* from the Nathan Muus Collection for Saami Báiki, and Sami tools and implements on loan from the Reindeer Project descendants will also be on display.

The Vesterheim Norwegian American Museum is located at 523 West Water Street, Decorah, Iowa. For further information visit www.vesterheim.org or call 563-382-9681.

THE SAMI REINDEER PEOPLE OF ALASKA EXHIBIT HISTORY

Norwegian Christmas at Union Station, Washington, D.C
(*sponsored by the Norwegian Embassy*)
December 1 - 30, 1999

Yupiit Piciyarait Museum
Bethel, Alaska
April 5 - 30, 2004

Alaska Native Heritage Center
Anchorage, Alaska
May 9 - September 17, 2004

Norwegian Christmas at Union Station, Washington, D.C
(*sponsored by the Norwegian Embassy*)
December 1 - 30, 2004

Alutiiq Museum & Cultural Center
Kodiak, Alaska
September 20, 2004 - January 29, 2005

Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum
Nome, Alaska
February 8 - September 16, 2005

Nordic Heritage Museum
Seattle, Washington
October 7 - November 13, 2005

Tochak Historical Society & Museum
McGrath, Alaska
March 1 - April 29, 2006

Iññaigvik
Information & Cultural Center
Kotzebue, Alaska
June 5 - August 20, 2006

Pratt Museum, Homer, Alaska
August 26 - September 30, 2006

Saami Council Fall Session
Røros, Norway
(*Power Point Slide Show*)
September 28 - October 1, 2006

Sheldon Museum, Haines, Alaska
October 14 - November 30, 2006

Beringia Days,
Anadyr, Chukotka, Russia
(*Power Point Slide Show*)
September 21 - 23, 2007

Beringia Days, Fairbanks, Alaska
(*Power Point Slide Show*)
October 14 - 16, 2008

Finnish American
Historical Archive & Museum
Hancock, Michigan
January 22 - February 20, 2009

UNITY IN THE FAMILY

This symbol, "Unity in the Family," was designed by Hans Ragnar Mathisen (Elle Hánsa) in 1978. It stands for the significance of Sami siidda life. "The family," he said, "is the center of all activity in the Sami society. Respect between each member is as natural as respect for the environment and its resources. The parents are equal partners and the children have enough freedom to take responsibility. A Sami family, or a few together, form a siidda, and because siiddas have to agree among themselves, unity and harmony in the family is a must."

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memorial for Robert G. Erickson

SAMI RELIGION IN ITS OLDEST FORM

THE BEAR

From primeval times Arctic Peoples have been influenced by the Bear and what it symbolizes. Cultures in the northern latitudes around the world have shared an allegiance to evolving Bear Societies that have been connected to their survival as a group. In Paleolithic times an Ice Age artist fashioned an elegant naturalistic profile of a Bear on a glaciated boulder near what is Finnhagen, [Norway] today. One of a number of petroglyphs on the tundra, it survives as a symbol of the Bear's status among the earliest Sami.

Societies that recognize the Bear as a relative or cohabitant on the land probably represent Sami religion in its oldest form. The people recognize an animal that is mysteriously like them in many ways, one that skillfully ekes out its sustenance from the forest yet keeps its distance, an animal that doesn't represent a threat.

Among the Sami all forms of life are sacred. Reindeer, rabbits, birds, wolves and other animals have attributes that are perhaps comparable to their worth to the people as they struggle to survive from the land. Among the animals, the Bear has been, from earliest times, the most noble of all. Not only does it maintain a sophisticated lifestyle, but it has been thought to be as intelligent as humans. It has as well, powers not possessed by man, which have made it a sacred figure. The Bear communicates with all other animals and is believed to have access to the five spiritual realms of the major Sami dieties or spirits. Access to these spiritual realms are explained in the legends that are retold as a part of the ceremonies related to the Sami Bear Hunt.

The animal nations are a gift and a blessing from the Great Spirit. According to the *Kalevala*, the Mother Earth takes an especial pleasure in nurturing the Bear which was favored by Her. In exchange for promising to be passive and not posing a threat to other animals, the Bear is believed to have been granted several wishes at the time of its creation: cleverness, agility, a manlike stature, and claws and teeth to use as tools. From this time on, according to Sami legend, the Bear became an herbivore and a good neighbor in the wilderness. Thus the Bear has been regarded as a diety by Arctic Peoples.

This excerpt is from a three-part Báiki *series on the Bear, the Bear Hunt and the Bear Feast written by the late Mel Olsen. The series will be included in our forthcoming back issues anthology,* The Return of the Sami Spirit.

THE BEAR SIEDDI STONE IN THE VALLEY OF NJUOHGÁRGGU

by Francis Joy

Sami petroglyph: Bear with spirit spots.

On a fieldwork trip to northern Finland in December 2009 I met Esko Aikio, a northern fishing Sami who lives in the Utsjoki municipality with his family. During the interview he gave me information concerning a story surrounding possible supernatural events that had taken place at the site of an old Sieidi sacrificial stone. These events had initially been recorded on an audio tape by Nils Länsman, a Sami reindeer herder, and then translated by Esko from the Sami language into English.

There is a long history in Lapland of the Sieidi Stones which have been documented by scholars such as Jouko Hautala (1965) and Ernst Manker (1996) with reference to shamanism. Both scholars describe the function of the stones in relation to worship and sacrificial activities connected with hunting, the successful breeding of reindeer, the seeking of advice concerning travel routes during the summer and winter migrations, and the protection of animals and people. The stones are thought to have supernatural powers which can be harnessed through offerings and worship when performed in a correct way by a shaman. The Sieidi Stone in question is located near Utsjoki in northern Finland close to a reindeer corral which was built for the marking of calves.

From what is known about the history of the place itself, the roundup there saw some of the busiest usage during the 1960s. Such was the designation of the area and the power known to reside there by people from different municipalities within the Sami community.

In the course of the interview, Esko Aikio disclosed knowledge about a rare stone Bear Sieidi which had been recognised as the guardian figure of the area. It was located slightly south of the corral where a tree lay on the ground. He told me that the Sieidi was very old and was in a very important location for the reindeer on their pathway from south to north, and from north to south.

Esko Aikio holds a very old piece of wood from the reindeer roundup that was used as a trail marker for the reindeer. © *Francis Joy*

"They travel in this area, and that is why there are two roundups there and why there is a sacred Sieidi Stone there too," he said.

The Sieidi was a very big boulder on top of another flat boulder. When the trees there were cut down, it became more visible. At the time the reindeer herders did not understand what such a large boulder meant, but the reindeer no longer dared to pass by the boulder during the roundup and so the herders thought that they should knock it down. "We didn't know anything about the fact that this boulder was a Sieidi. We thought that it was just a stone," they said.

It was Nils Länsman's younger brother Pentti who realised that the stone was the sacred Bear Stone of Njouhgárggu and that the act of pushing it over was taboo. Pentti had read information about the boulder in Samuli Paulaharju's book *Taka-Lappia* (1927) that describes the Sami people and their old ways of life, traditional architecture, customs, beliefs, etc. A description of the white Bear Stone of Njouhgárggu is in the chapter called "Old Gods." Here is Aikio's translation from the Finnish:

"[There was] a sacred and frightening site for reindeer herders on Njuohkarg mountain where a god had settled in a big white boulder that looked like a seated man wearing a *luhkka*, a Sami winter poncho. Oula Länsman never dared approach it with his herd because the god would have taken for himself a sacrifice if one had not been given voluntarily. Once a reindeer herder had arrived without an offering to the holy place and the god had struck down a couple hundred of his reindeer by lightning."

In the 1960s, after the boulder was knocked down, bad years followed and a lot of reindeer died. There had been more than 10,000 animals and only 3,000 survived. Some of the

(**JOY** *continued overleaf)*

(**JOY** *continued from previous page)*

While deciding whether or not the boulder could be lifted back onto its rightful place because of its weight, members of the Sami community were engulfed by a storm that suddenly appeared from nowhere. © *Esko Aikio.*

With the assistance of a tractor, the Sieidi stone was lifted onto its former base. © *Esko Aikio.*

The stone was then guided back to its original position. © *Esko Aikio.*

herders had to quit herding. It is uncertain whether or not the boulder was responsible for this loss, or was it that the Spirit of the Stone sought revenge on the Sami for their actions?

Two points of interest here are the similarities between Paulaharju's discussion concerning lightning striking a reindeer herder who did not make offerings to the stone, thus losing many of his herd, and what Nils Länsman has said about the enormous loss of reindeer after the boulder was pushed over in the 1960s. Both suggest revenge.

In addition to this there is Paulaharju's description of how the god settled in a big white boulder that looked like a Sami man. This calls to mind the bear belief system among the eastern Sami, especially the Skolts. They would not eat bear meat and their oral tradition includes various metamorphosis rites and stories about men and women who changed into bears. They recognise a "man/bear" creature and preserve a tribal origin myth about the descent of the Skolts from a marriage between a bear and a Skolt woman.

In a similar light, early Swedish sources about the customs of the Sami in relation to bear ceremonialism speak about Varalde Biri ("The Bear of the Sky") who was also known as "The Dog of the Gods."

Between 2005 and 2006 the issue concerning the boulder gained attention. At the annual meeting of the reindeer cooperative, the local Sami decided to restore the Sieidi, but the cooperative did not carry out the decision, and it was forgotten. When the local Sami cultural association heard about the case, a decision was made to lift the boulder back onto its rightful place with the use of a tractor. On June 15, 2007, a group of people gathered at Njuohgárggu for this purpose. There were some initial concerns as to whether or not the tractor would be powerful enough to lift the boulder, or whether the Spirits would hold the stone on the ground with such strength that the people would not be able to lift it.

Once the stone was returned to its rightful position, the group decided that they did not want to make a new offering place, but wanted instead to honour the memory of the ancestors and the Spirits who lived in the valley of Njuohgárggu and give them peace.

I would like to express my gratitude to the following for their assistance with this article: Esko Aikio and Nils Länsman, Maria Sofia-Aikio, Henno von Erikson Parks from the University of Turku, Finland, and Risto Pulkkinen from the University of Helsinki.

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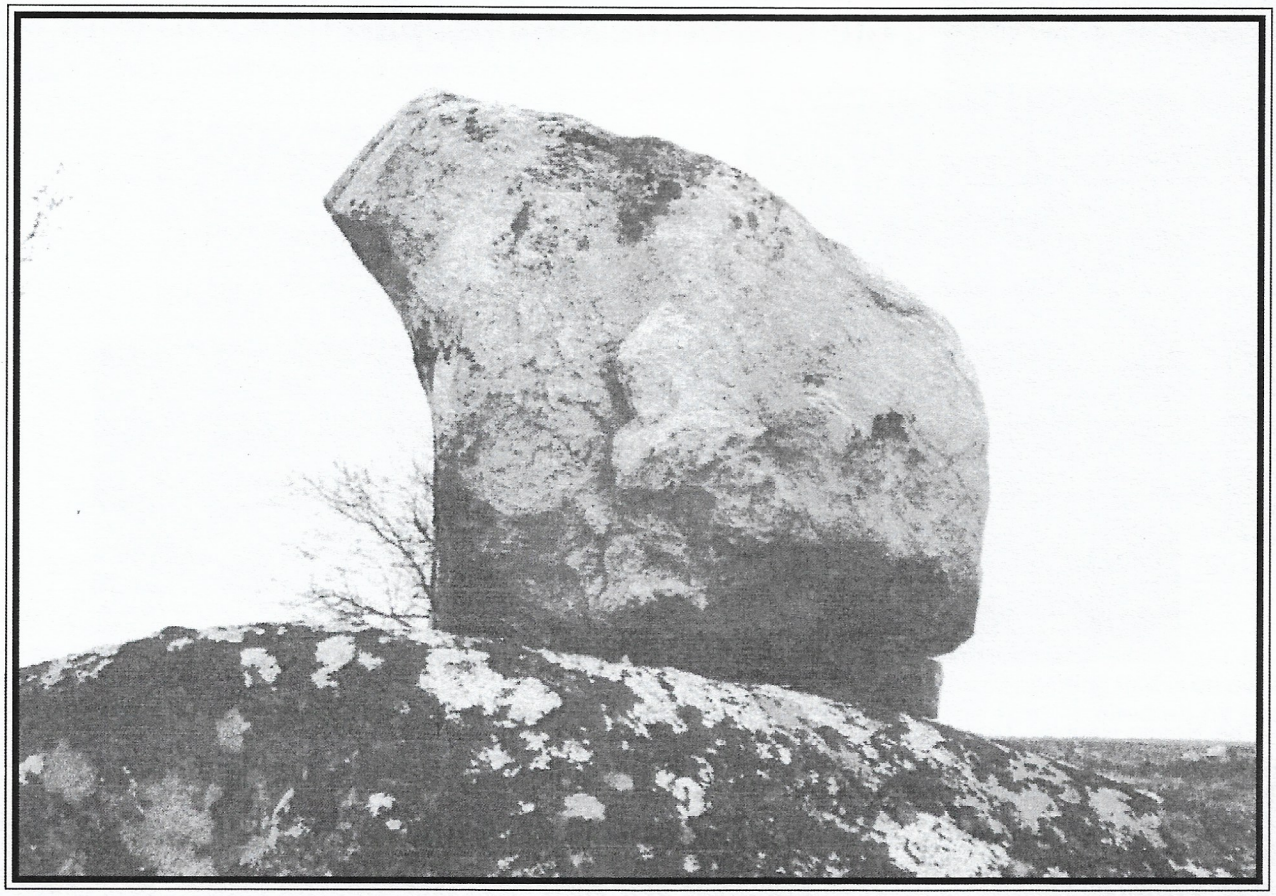


The Sieidi back on its former resting place. The remarkable physical features of a bear are evident here, especially in the neck and head area. © *Esko Aikio*.

SEATTLE: THE NORDIC HERITAGE MUSEUM

EIGHT SEASONS IN SÁPMI

the land of the Sámi people

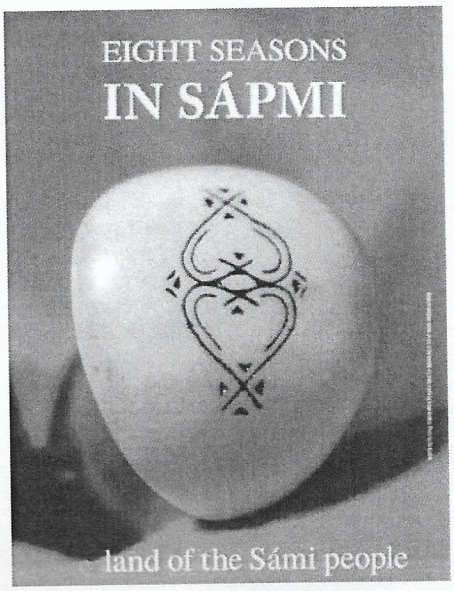
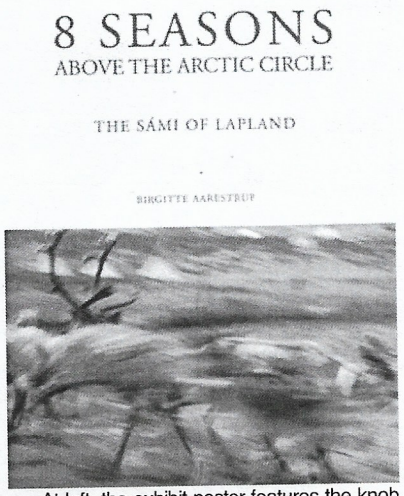


Photo by Fia Kaddik.



At left: the exhibit poster features the knob on top of a reindeer antler knife by Roger Knetka. Above: The photography of Birgitte Aarestrup, along with her book *"8 Seasons Above the Arctic Circle,"* are also part of the exhibit.

The Nordic Heritage Museum is proud to announce a collaborative exhibit between Ájtte (Swedish Mountain and Sámi Museum), Sámi Duodji (the Sámi Handicraft Foundation) both located in Jokkmokk, Sweden, and the Danish American photographer Birgitte Aarestrup.

The common denominator for Indigenous People is that they have lived in the same place before the country was invaded or colonized. They have their own culture, language and customs that differ from those of the rest of society. This is a common history that the Sámi share with other people globally and their concerns are addressed at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

The oldest traces of Sámi culture go back 8,000 years to a hunting, fishing, and gathering culture which later progressed to reindeer husbandry. Traces of these livelihoods can still be seen. Sámi life today is adapted to modern society but there are ways and traditions that bind generations together over time. Our purpose with the exhibition is to tell today's stories about traditional Sámi reindeer herding life and handicraft.

Ájtte Museum's presentation will be an adventure filled with knowledge about the Sámi people using installations based on traditional tripod construction and the vivid Sámi colors of red, yellow, blue, and green. Through photos, text, and artifacts the story of the Sámi people is told and how they live today. Objects to touch and feel are included, which are useful for educational activities.

The Sámi Duodji presentation will tell the story of the complexity and richness of Sámi handicraft. Every duodji article has an historical background based on Sámi traditions, ancient designs, patterns and colors — the techniques dating back to a time when the utensil began to be used. Previously the Sámi themselves produced almost all the utensils necessary for survival and many objects still fit the needs of today. This includes knives, cups, and wooden bowls. The making of handicraft has also become an important source of part-time employment along with reindeer herding, and duodji is appreciated as art outside of its own Sámi circle. With this background it is a very strong and unmistakable ethnic identity marker.

The photographer Birgitte Aarestrup documents her personal journey of discovery among the Sámi people. The exhibit contains 40 of her photos, and her book, *Eight Seasons Above the Arctic Circle — the Sámi of Lapland* will be available at the exhibit. Alone with her camera, she travelled above the Arctic Circle to Swedish Sápmi to the last wilderness in western Europe, where there are no roads. When flying in a helicopter over an area, communication was by radio. Birgitte lived with the reindeer herders and listened to stories told around the fire in their kåta and lavvus. She also travelled to the colorful 400-year-old Jokkmokk Winter Market and was welcomed into the homes of well-known artisans who are still creating duodji the way their ancestors did.

Eight Seasons in Sápmi will be at the Nordic Heritage Museum August 31 to November 4. The museum is located at 3014 NW 67th Street in the Ballard neighborhood of Seattle. For further information contact:

www.nordicmuseum.org

DULUTH: A SCREENING

SOLVEIG

an interview with Kiersten Dunbar Chace

"I took a story that very few people knew about and made it beautiful."
— Kiersten Dunbar Chace

photo: Antoni Commodore

Solveig Arneng ("Sally") Johnson and Kiersten Dunbar Chace.

Kiersten Dunbar Chace is the founder, producer, and director of Mondé World Films. On Saturday, February 11, 2012, her documentary *Solveig* opened in Duluth, Minnesota to a sellout crowd. It has created a stir in the North American Sami community. The following interview took place shortly after the screening.

Kiersten calls Minneapolis home, but she spent many years in Capetown, South Africa where she produced the award-winning film *I'm Not Black, I'm Coloured: Identity Crisis at the Cape of Good Hope*. It was one of the first documentaries to look at apartheid from the viewpoint of the Cape Coloured who are the descendants of the indigenous KhoiSan People, as well as having ancestry from Europe, the Dutch East Indies, and other African nations.

Faith Fjeld: How did you meet Sally?
Kiersten Chace: I met her while working on my South Africa film. In 2008 I was invited to attend an indigenous peoples' conference in Bodø, Norway. We were taken into the villages of indigenous Sami people deep in the fjords. I became curious about the Sami and realized that they often have the same identity issues as the Coloured South Africans. I was told that there was a center for North American Sami cultural activities in Duluth. As soon as my cinematographer William Diedericks (KhoiSan descent) and I returned from a film festival in Bermuda we drove north from Minneapolis to Duluth.

FF: It was April 3, 2010. You and William came to the *Báiki* office for lunch and I invited two North American Sami elders, Marlene Wisuri and Sally Johnson, to join us.
KC: That is when I met Solveig for the first time. There was something special about her spirit that captured my attention and I felt led to create a small biography type video for her family. After confirming my first film shoot with Solveig, I was told she was an accomplished painter which was a great surprise. My son Antoni Commodore came up with the idea to pull her signature off of her paintings and use it as a logo.

FF: You wrote in an email that you wanted to "visually evoke this beautiful woman and her quiet spirit in her comfortable surroundings" and this is exactly what you did.
KC: It was important for me to include images of her home, her daily life, the fish mobile in the kitchen, the blue glass on the sun porch, the small meaningful accessories she placed around, and the sunlight reflecting on her paintings in the early morning. These are the images that her

(**Kiersten Chace** *continued on page 17)*

THE COVER ARTIST

This beautiful thirty-eight minute documentary about the life of Sami American artist Solveig Arneng "Sally" Johnson includes the oil painting that is on our cover. The film, directed by Kiersten Dunbar Chace, captures Sally's love of Arctic Norway where she was born in 1925, and reflects on her youth during the throes of World War II, her indigenous Sami identity, her art studies in Oslo, her immigration to America with Rudy, the love of her life, and the constant artistic inspiration of living in Duluth on the north shores of Lake Superior.

Duluth was the setting for the film's first public screening. *Solveig* will next be screened at the Finlandia Heritage Center in Hancock, Michigan April 12; the Scandinavian Festival, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks April 14 and 15; and at Norway Days, Fort Mason, San Francisco May 5 and 6.

To order copies of the DVD or to arrange a screening, visit:

www.solveigarnengfilm.com

SÁMI JIENAT: FIRST TRANSNATIONA

by Lisa Marika Jokivirta, Niilo Vuomajoki and Synnøve Angell

A warm, rich symphony of voices fills the rehearsal room. Tenor voices blend with soprano overtones to the words of Nils-Aslak Valkepää to give thanks for the earth's many gifts – joy as well as sorrow, moon as well as sun, a celebration of life in its many contrasting and transient forms. We, too, are overcome by a deep sense of gratitude to be in the presence of the Sámi Jienat as we prepare for our final concert as part of the Sámi People's Day celebrations in Bjerkvik, Norway. Our performance is devoted in memoriam of Sámi artist, activist and yoiker Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, or Áillohas as he is perhaps better known by his Sámi name.

The Sámi Jienat is an indigenous choir bringing together members from all regions of Sápmi – Sweden, Finland, Norway as well as Russia – to yoik and sing Sámi songs and hymns. The choir was founded in 2002, and within less than ten years of existence, the group boasts an impressive list of performances. These include the Barents International Choir Festival, the 46664 AIDS charity concerts in honor of Nelson Mandela, and the *Vox Pacis* ("Voice of Peace") concert bringing together no fewer than 130 invited artists from Asia, Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and North America together with 235 singers, musicians and dancers from Sweden – a unique collaboration between the great religions and cultures of the world.

The choir's main mission is to share and spread yoik and Sámi songs and hymns, as well as to maintain and strengthen Sámi culture, identity, and languages. This can sometimes involve travelling to smaller or more remote areas outside of the core Sámi areas, where the consequences of assimilation or segregation policy still have a stronghold and people may need additional support. The choir also likes to come together to share music with other cultures as well as other indigenous peoples and minorities.

"A very special memory for me was the Vox Pacis concert in 2008, when musicians from around the world came to Stockholm to perform the newly written cantata 'A Challenge to Humanity' in the name of peace. Music can help bring people together, it can help heal our world," notes longstanding choir and board member Niilo Vuomajoki from Utsjoki in northernmost Finland.

The Sámi Jienat is comprised of about 65 members from across Sápmi, and over the years has attracted guest musicians from a range of countries including Japan, Romania, Tibet and Canada. The singers meet four or five times a year, happily commuting by car, train and even plane to take part. In 2005, the Sámi Jienat released a CD (*Sálmmat Sámis*) of Christian Sámi spiritual hymns, and demos have already been recorded for a CD compilation of yoiks hopefully to be released next year.

Sámi Jienat (Voices of Sápmi) hits the stage at the 2007 Easter Music Festival i

"Giitu buot du attáldagain
Giitu ilus, morrasis
Giitu mánus, beaivvis, ijas
Eallimis ja jápmimisnai"

Rehearsals are filled with warmth, laughter, dedication, and of course, yoik and song. The group has been known to engage in spontaneous yoiks after rehearsal hours. A favorite is the yoik composed especially for the choir by Sámi composer and musician Frode Fjellheim. Choir members often switch between Sámi, Norwegian, Finnish and Swedish to communicate during rehearsal hours, and all singing is in the Sámi language. The selection of music is diverse, and one of the aims of the choir is to include songs in all Sámi dialects, including Northern, Lule, South, Skolt and Inari. Music, of course, serves as the language that unites all.

It has been said that Sámi Jienat represents a sort of microcosm of life in modern-day Sápmi. Some members speak Sámi, whilst others were never taught at home or are still learning the language. Some singers have been actively involved in Sámi culture and music for years, whilst others have come to learn more through their involvement in the choir.

INDIGENOUS CHOIR IN THE WORLD

utokeino, Norway

"Thank you for all your gifts
Thank you joy, sorrow
Thank you moon, sun, night
Life and death" — Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, from "Giitu Buot Attáldagain"

Synnøve Angell only found out about her Sámi heritage at the age of 23, when her father confirmed that his mother had indeed spoken Sámi, although never in public. The next few years became a journey of re-tracing her roots, culminating in a move to Kautokeino twenty years later. In 1991, now fellow Sámi Jienat choir member Ante Mihkkal Gaup introduced Synnøve to yoik. She joined the local Sámi choir in Kautokeino, and would eventually dare to open her mouth using the "secret" language of her grandmother.

"I'll never forget my first gathering with the Sámi Jienat. It was May 22, 2003. I had driven 560 km to Karasjok, and I was a bit late. When I arrived, the choir was lined up and what a big, happy group they were, getting ready to yoik with Frode Fjellheim. oiking in a choir was not that common. Some of us were professionals, most of us amateurs, but Frode is not only a great musician but also an excellent pedagogue. I remember Frode made us imagine we were in Canada yoiking to an audience of 700, and what sounds he got out of us! We ended up performing together with Frode at the Barents Choir Festival and the Easter Music Festival in Kautokeino. What joy and energy we conveyed. It was an amazing experience. The audience loved it, and so did we."

One of the most impactful experiences that Synnøve recalls from her time with the choir was their performance during the 2004 Sámi church days in Jokkmokk, Sweden.

"What made the strongest impact were the tears running down the cheek of an elder from Inari. We had sung a hymn in his language, Inari Sámi, now only spoken by some 300 people. It was the first time he had ever heard a hymn in his own language sung like this and he was deeply touched. This is what often happens when we travel to small communities both in and outside the Sámi core areas, the audience is moved and so are we."

Through her involvement in Sámi Jienat, Synnøve describes how she has been able to explore her own Sámi identity, whilst contributing to the choir's broader mission of promoting Sámi culture and music. She now serves as both an alto in the choir and as the current manager of the group.

"The energy created through vocal expression, like yoik, floats between the choir and the audience. It speaks to our hearts, and I believe that it creates and affirms a feeling of identity and belonging. Expressing identity is essential to all human beings. And yoik sure is good medicine!"

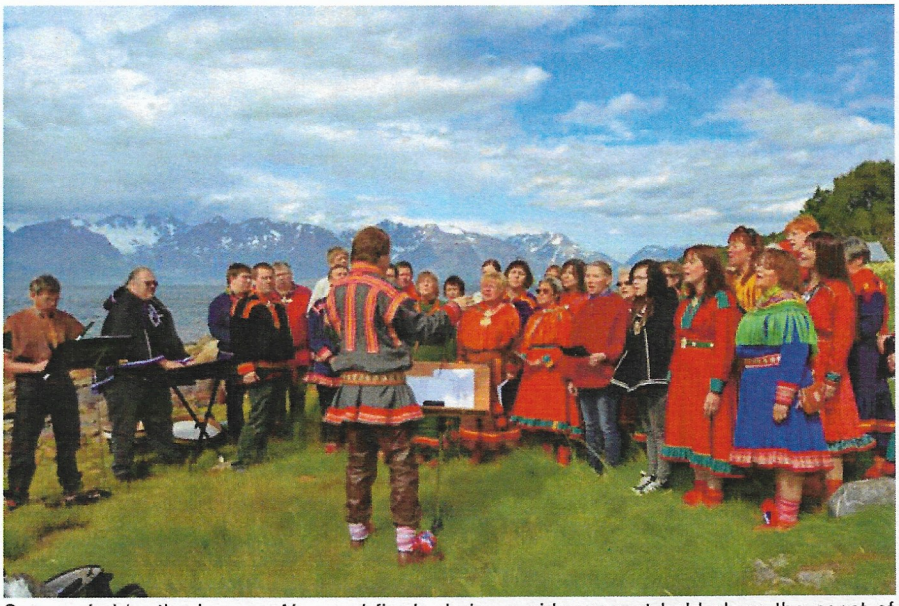
The tradition of Sámi choral music is relatively new. The first Sámi choirs have only come into being within the past 15-20 years. Sámi Jienat is the only transnational Sámi choir that exists, and a few smaller groups are based in Norway. Since choir music is relatively new to Sápmi, this has meant that not very many musical arrangements are available. The Sámi Jienat have thus assumed the additional role of creating, developing and promoting new musical arrangements for yoik, hymns and songs in Sámi.

Over the years, long-time choir member Bernt Mikkel Haglund has grown into his role as current musical director of the Sámi Jienat. Haglund is actively involved in composing new musical arrangements for the group as well as helping to find and develop the talent of new and particularly younger yoikers, composers and musicians. "Sámi Jienat is the best yoiking choir in the world, and it is always inspiring to gather and work together again," adds Haglund, with a sparkle in his eye.

2011 was a busy year for the choir, and 2012 promises to be an equally full year. In July 2011, the choir was invited to perform as part of the Riddu Riđđu International Indigenous

(**JIENAT** *continued overleaf)*

(**JIENAT** *continued from previous page)*



Surrounded by the Lyngen Alps and fjords during a side concert held along the coast of Kåfjord, Norway, as part of the 2011 Riddu Riđđu International Indigenous Music Festival

Music Festival in Kåfjord, Norway. This performance at Riddu Riđđu was a special one, not only because it marked the 20th anniversary of the festival but also because of the memorial concert devoted to Áillohas, often credited with helping to re-establish the yoik. The Riddu Riđđu Festival also featured other indigenous artists from around the world, including Blue King Brown from Australia, Sápmi's Sofia Jannok and Tibetan high tone singer Chime Arkhang.

The Sámi Jienat performed only hours before the 2011 Oslo shootings, after which all concerts were canceled. A memorial concert was held the following day in memory of the victims. As one audience member commented, "This was a powerful moment. If silence speaks louder than words, than music surely speaks louder than silence. During the memorial concert, a powerful message was sent. A message of hope, of rising above this, of love rather than loss."

The Sámi Jienat started 2012 in full swing with its first weekend in Bjerkvik, and what a weekend it was! The communal bus transporting the singers broke down in Kautokeino en route to Bjerkvik, but as per the nature of yoik itself, this group is no stranger to the art of improvisation. The choir simply found a close-by café in which to gather, one of the members offered to conduct, and soon the restaurant was filled with the sound of yoik until the new bus arrived. The group arrived in Bjerkvik at around midnight – it was too late to rehearse, so everyone joined forces to pull out all the mattresses onto the community center floors. Most slept on the auditorium floor, others in the cloakroom or changing rooms, and even a few on sauna benches. The singers woke up the following morning to find out that there was no hot water for showers, but not a complaint was heard. Instead, off to rehearse! The only rehearsal and concert were on the very same day.

"If there's ever a problem, Sámi Jienat always rises up to the occasion. When there are no showers, surely there are some buckets. When the bus breaks down, surely there is a café nearby where we can practice. It's sometimes in the harder times that Sámi Jienat simply rises up, laughs, and shines," notes alto and choir co-manager Heidi Salmi with a smile.

"Despite the lack of sleep and rehearsal time, our concert in Bjerkvik church was a moving one. We were told that the church hall was full of 'good energy,' and a few of those in the audience were moved to tears."

Signe and Jens Kristian Sollien, the parents of soprano Sylvia Sollien, drove over an hour to come to the concert: "This was a very special night for us. It was the first time in our lives hearing yoik performed in a church. In our time, and still in many places today, this has simply not been allowed."

What does the future hold for the Sámi Jienat? The choir has several concerts lined up, and has been invited to the U.S. Depending on funding, the choir dreams of performing as part of FinnFest 2013 in Michigan. The group also hopes to perform at the next U.N. Conference for Indigenous Peoples to be held in Alta, Norway, in 2013. Two filmmakers from the U.K. recently joined the choir to start making a documentary film about the choir, with filming set to continue in 2012. As one choir member observes, "Sámi Jienat just somehow manages to draw good people at good moments, so who knows what might be next?"

The sun begins to set, but inside the church hall, the energy levels remain high. Our concert eventually winds down with an encore of Áillohas' *Sámi eatnan duoddariid* (*Wide Open Tundra of Sámiland*), a canon of yoik accompanied by piano, violin and flute. Both the choir and audience join in. This yoik is not only a description of the mountain plateaus of Sápmi — the plateaus represent themselves and come to life through the yoik: An exploration of the connection and closeness between people and the land; a call to take care of our Mother Earth.

As perhaps best expressed by Áillohas himself in a short poem from *Trekways of the Wind*:

Can you hear the sounds of life
In the roaring of the creek
In the blowing of the wind
That is all I want to say
That is all

For more information about Sámi Jienat:
http://www.samijienat.com

History at a Glance

2002-Sámi Jienat is founded
24-27 August 2002-Randers International Choir Festival (Randers, Denmark)
18-19 October 2003-Barents International Choir Festival conducted by Frode Fjellhelm (Tromsø, Norway)
18-20 June 2004-Sámi Church Days (Jokkmokk, Sweden)
2005-CD release (*Sáimmat Sámis*) directed by Liv Mesel Rundberg
4-6 February 2005-Jokkmokk Winter Market (Jokkmokk, Sweden)
11 June 2005-46664 Arctic Nelson Mandela Concert (Tromsø, Norway)
30 August 2005-Márkomeannu Cultural & Music Festival (Evenes, Norway)
18-21 May 2006-Ijahis Idja Indigenous Music Festival (Inari, Finland)
April 2007-Easter Music Festival directed by Frode Fjellheim (Kautokeino, Norway)
22-23-August 2008-*Vox Pacis* (Voice of Peace) Concert (Stockholm, Sweden)
6 March 2009-Sámi Cultural Week (Umeå, Sweden)
11-15 June 2009-Sámi Church Days conducted by Liv Mesel Rundberg (Inari, Finland)
2010-Demo recorded for a forthcoming CD of yoiks to be recorded and released under the direction of Bernt Mikkel Haglund
20-24 July 2011-20th Riddu Riđđu International Indigenous Peoples Festival (Kåfjord, Norway)

(**Kiersten Chace** *continued from page 13)*

grandchildren will remember when they are old.

FF: There are subtle references to her Sami ancestry throughout the film and basic indigenous priorities surface — being an artist, a wife, and a mother. For me, this film is about facing the realities of life in a Sami way no matter what. Even in the way she accepts her approaching blindness.
KC: I can't speak on behalf of the Sami culture but her accepting spirit and calm, positive outlook on life was inspiring and I believe that is evident in the film. Especially her attitude towards losing her sight.

FF: How does this story compare to the KhoiSan in South Africa?
KC: Solveig was fortunate to have had a mother who never denied their Sami heritage so she did have an idea of who she was. With further research she found Sami ancestry on both her maternal and paternal side. However, Cape Coloured people did not have access to written information or oral accounts of their ancestry due to slavery. Most parents and grandparents denied any connection to their African tribal KhoiSan heritage in fear of the apartheid government. While genetic DNA testing should not have to be used in defining one's cultural identity, my cinematographer always felt he was indigenous but never knew until DNA results. It was a special moment for him.

FF: The film begins with Sally lighting a candle in her kitchen the way she always starts conversations with her friends. It sets the mood.
KC: I spent a lot of time with Solveig and it was important to capture her spirit. I was so fortunate to also have hundreds of old images that made this film work well visually. Duluth made a wonderful backdrop... the beautiful scenery and nature were the inspiration for many of her paintings so it was important to harness the unique essence of Duluth in this film.

FF: She herself narrates the episodes of her life. Looking over her shoulder as she speaks is a portrait of Sally wearing Sami *gakti*, painted by her granddaughter Hannah. It is as if Sally's Sami self is listening.
KC: The portrait of Solveig that her granddaughter painted was such a great setting. Solveig's image in the painting was actually looking right at Solveig in real life — it was one of those special moments.

FF: She says in the film, "Colors have to be like married. They have to harmonize." The soundtrack is in perfect harmony with the vibrant color of Sally's paintings and the scenes you photographed around Lake Superior. How did this happen, the music, the photography and the paintings?
KC: The soundtrack truly brought this film together. I was fortunate to feature accomplished jazz pianist Benny Weinbeck. My favorite scenes were when Sally was pretending to paint on a blank canvas and Benny captured musically the moment where the sun reflects off the brushes onto the canvas. In other scenes Christina Johnson played a Sami flute called a *njuorggonas* made from reindeer antler, and Todd Madson brought his unique ambient sound to the winter and Nazi scenes. It was magical how the music and the beautiful images came together in editing. Such an honor to feature these great musicians and Solveig's artwork!

FF: How long did it take to make this film?
KC: Two years from the first time I met Solveig in 2010 at that lunch in the *Báiki* office. I have a 9 to 5 job so the editing was done on weekends.

FF: What new projects are in the works?
KC: I am considering a nature short film which would be my tribute to living in Minnesota and my newly discovered Native American ancestry. But I am not sure yet. Otherwise I think I will just see what the universe brings me in the next few years.

For more information visit
www.mondeworldfilms.com

The Yoik Lyrics of

Sami yoiker and song writer Sofia Jannok was born in 1982 in Gällivare in northern Sweden. She has been singing since she was eleven and her songs are in Sami. She draws her inspiration from nature and people and the interaction between them. Her first album, *WHITE / ceaskat* was released in 2007 by DATCD, Kautokeino, and her second album, *ássogáttis / by the embers*, was released in 2008 by Caprice Records, Stockholm. The yoik lyrics on these two pages are from *ássogáttis.* Siri Gaski translated Sofia Jannok's poetry from Samigiella into English, and the Nils-Aslak Valkeapää poem on the next page was translated by Harald Gaski and John Weinstock. The liner notes of both CDs are printed in English and Sámigiella. The photo above is from her website www.sofiajannok.com.

ÁSSOGÁTTIS / BY THE EMBERS

By the embers it is peaceful
The air is mellow
Resting close to you
Northern lights dance
under high heavens
with sundry forms of fire.
The full moon keeps watch
of weak wanderers
so the coldness of winter
won't trick us
beyond the border of eternity.

Surround my world with
radiance and warmth.
Red beauty let me be in
the center of life.
Where does it come from?
Following its path in pursuit
brings me close to your
colors and warmth
which shimmer shine
and seduce me.

DAVÁDAT / WESTBOUND WIND

Where do we go
when even the
leader reindeer
loses its nose for the wind
and can't find its way
back west?

Pastures shrink
when our feet
no longer
tread trails

West wind
shepherd us home
to the familiar
mounds of childhood

West wind
shepherd us
so our ways
remain warm
in our memories

VÁSSÁN ÁIGGIT / BYGONE AGES

Bygone ages will not return
they have gone and I am left behind
bygone ages will not return
transformed into fair memories

Bygone ages will not return
they left with the wind
over the waves into the clouds
resonating in the tundraland

Beams from the sun, our father
shine over the brink of the world
far north under the Big Dipper
there is so much that keeps
reminding me

Sofia Jannok

SÁMI EATNAN DUODDARIID

Sámi eatnan duoddariid,
dáid sámi mánáid ruovttu
Galbma geadge guorba guovlu
Sámi mánáid ruoktu

Beaivi Áhci gollerisku,
aimma allodagas coahkká váibmu
Eanan eatni, eallin eatnun soavvá

Mánu silbbat selggonasat, jietnja
meara márra, guovssahasat
náste boagán, lottit ráidarasas

vuoi dáid Davvi duovdagiid
dán viidis almmi ravdda
garra dáikkit juoiggadaller,
máná vuohttunludiid

vuoi dáid fávrrus eatnamiid
vuoi javrriid cuovgi calmmiid
liegga litna eatni salla,
gievvudeaddji gietka

Biegga buktá Biegga doaivu
Duottar dat lea duottar
Duoddar duohken duoddara askkis
Sámi mánáid dorvu

Sámi eatnan duoddariid,
dáid sámi mánáid ruovttu
searrát gearrá sealggáhallá
Sámi mánáid ruoktu

WIDE OPEN TUNDRA OF SAMILAND

Samiland's wide expanses
home of Sami children
Cold barren rocky realm
Home of Sami children

Sun Father's golden jewel
high in the heaven
Mother Earth's heart beats,
life rushes like a river

Moon's silver glimmer ice ocean's roar
Northern lights starry belt
Birds in the Milky Way

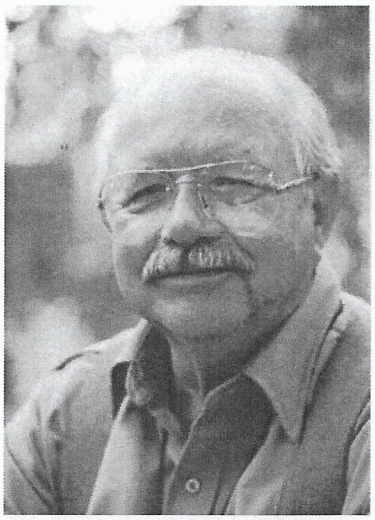
O, these northern pastures
The wide open horizon
Storm and furious weathers yoik
the children's lullaby

O, these beautiful meadows
The lakes' shimmering eyes
Mother's soft warm lap
unrestrained cradle

The wind brings, takes away
The tundra stays the same
Behind tundra in tundra's lap
The Sami children's haven

Samiland's wide expanses
Home of Sami children
Shimmers glitters twinkles home of
Sami children

DENNIS HELPPIE (1926-2012)



"Northern lights...may I somehow, some way see them again."
—Dennis Helppie

Dennis Maxwell Helppie was born September 3, 1926, in Sebeka, Minnesota, beginning his life's journey as a father, artist, athlete, soldier, teacher, public servant, corporate executive, Sami historian, and beloved husband and family member. He was granted his final achievement of angel wings on February 29, 2012, with Sharon Helppie, his wife of 28 years, and family at his side.

Dennis was the son of Everett and Sadie Helppie who were first generation children of Finnish immigrants from Northern Finland (the Rovaniemi and Oulu areas) which are influenced even today by Sami culture. That culture was often a focus of Dennis's artwork, and he was considered an expert on the topic. He spoke at conferences and wrote papers based on his research into the geography, history and politics of the Sami. Visitors to the Helppie home saw Sami artifacts on display, including an authentic *gakti*: a four winds hat, a Sami belt, boots and knife.

The quote at the top of this page is in reference to his painting, "Northern Lights Landscape," that graced the cover of *Báiki* Issue #33.

TELLING OUR STORIES

WHO WAS JOHN SAARI?

by Vicki Lantto

I was doing volunteer work at the Wright County Historical Museum when I came across "Sementtipaa," an article written by the noted historian Ralph Andrist that was published in the Wright County Historical Society Quarterly. *The article featured a man named John Saari who was part of Andrist's study of Finns in Cokato for a 1939 WPA research project. It included an interview with Vernon Barberg, one of the old Finns in the area who may have been Sami. Then I came across another article about John Saari written in 1983 by Pulitzer-Prize winning columnist Larry Batson for the* Minneapolis Star-Tribune. *Batson interviewed several people from the French Lake area, including my father-in-law Ernest Lantto, and when I started to find out that I had Sami roots I began to ask questions about who John Saari was.*

John Saari was almost a figure from the *Kalevala*. He hung out with the Finns, many of whom had Sami ancestry, so John Saari probably had Sami ancestry too. Around French Lake it was said that he received the nickname "Sementtipaa" [Finglish for cement head], when a timber fell on his head. Scorning first aid he dabbed a handful of cement on the injury.

John Saari came from Finland and settled in the Cokato/French Lake area in the early 1900s. He worked for the many Finnish farmers there as the desire struck him. If he didn't want to work he would just say he had no time because he had to "ripen the grain." He talked with the birds and the squirrels who lived in the woods and the men who hired him often found that he spent so much time in these conversations that he did little work.

He was a man unto himself — a hermit. He would dig caves in the hills up and down the Crow River to live in. This was where the Dakota Indians had had their winter camp and so Little Crow's area became John Saari's stamping grounds. He would line the caves with a few timbers and boards to prevent cave-ins and sleep under a cowhide that still had the horns and the tail attached. There were several of these caves scattered around and he would move from one to the other. My father-in-law Ernie Lantto said that [in 1935] he had helped move him into his last cave. "He had dug it himself."

drawing: Lavona Keskey

John Saari had what he called his "power belt." One could not miss him coming down the road in his wide girdle of grey squirrel fur with the tails hanging down all around. His hair and beard were long and sometimes he wore a Scotchman's cap with a hole in the top. He would pull a thick lock of his hair through the hole and let it hang down. Another one of his caps was made of calfskin with the calf's tail hanging down the side. John claimed that besides his belt, he got power from his hair and his beard and that he would never cut them. When my grandfather took him along on trips to Minneapolis, John would walk down the street, power belt and all, and almost stop traffic on Hennepin Avenue.

When he put on this belt he was able to perform great feats of strength that were impossible otherwise. One of his favorites was to grasp a tree trunk with both hands and hold himself out perpendicular to it. He claimed it was because of the belt and not his own strength. Even when he was old, John Saari easily lifted barn timbers that the strongest men in French Lake couldn't budge.

French Lake elder Melvin Erickson tells about the tugs of war between French Lake and neighboring Albion that took place during the annual creamery picnics. French Lake had been enjoying a string of triumphs but the members of its team were getting old and Albion had recruited a team of young giants. French Lake turned to John Saari and said they needed his help. John agreed and the battle was on. Wrapping the end of the rope around his waist and lifting his beard out of the way, he planted his feet on the ground and grasped the

rope. "This rope will only move one direction today!" he proclaimed. And that was what happened. Albion's finest could not budge "Sementipaa."

John Saari was a worker of miracles. He owned a "magic tablecloth" with which he controlled the weather by positioning it in different ways. It could bring rain when needed or create sunshine during haying time. One summer when he was hired to dig a ditch the weather turned dry and stayed that way. People asked him why it didn't rain. "I'll be done digging in three days," he said, "and then you'll get your rain." According to Patrick Pajari that is exactly what happened.

A story is told about the time when John Saari was fixing the roof of Patrick's father Ludwig's shed when black storm clouds rolled in from the west. Ludwig said he could see that John was uneasy about the approaching storm and he climbed down from the roof of the shed and went behind a building where he could not be seen. Soon the storm clouds divided in two parts so that the heart of the storm failed to reach the shed where they were working. John Saari had walked into Ludwig's house with a smile of satisfaction on his face. When asked how he had made the storm break up, he replied that he had merely raised up both hands to the sky and then spread them slowly apart and the storm clouds had instantly divided in obedience.

He carved snakes out of wood and painted them so they were works of art and these snakes had power in them too. He was a musician of sorts and played the fiddle and he carved a drum for himself out of wood, with hair and wires hanging down from it. It wasn't a drum used for music. It was possibly used for predictions, guidance and healing. No one seemed to know for sure. People respected him, valued his knowledge and when they were sick they went to him for treatment and he healed them. Many families mentioned this.

There was a time when John planned to go back to Finland. He made himself an "amphibian," a sort of tricycle on land that floated on three pontoons on water — one in front and two behind. He would paddle away to make the wheels go round. Everyone who saw it agreed that it was well made but it was so heavy that he had a hard time getting around in it. He did demonstrate how it worked going down a hill, but somehow it never took him to Finland.

Often in the midst of a conversation he would interrupt himself and say something like "a woman had died." He would then explain that he had had a vision.

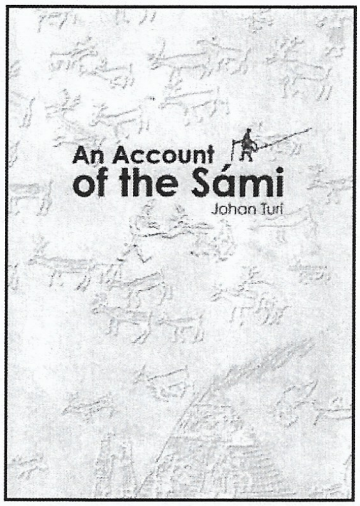
He did not get along with Swedes. Once, during a dry spell, someone asked why it didn't rain and John explained that during a quarrel with some Swedes his power belt had finally come to the end of its earthly usefulness. They had made so much fun of it that he got mad and burned it up and that was the end of his effect on the rain.

Stories about John Saari are still told around French Lake and people still ask each other, "Who was he?"

Permission to reprint these anecdotes has been granted by the *Wright County Historical Society Quarterly* and the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*. I am very grateful to the distinguished authors Ralph Andrist and Larry Batson and I also want to thank Allen Bajari, whose father Patrick was one of those interviewed by Larry Batson.

Vicki Lantto is a third generation descendant of Finnish and Saami immigrants. She is an amateur photographer and aspiring artist. She and her husband Chris own Lantto's Store in French Lake, Minnesota and they have raised nine children. Vicki says, "Now that they've all left home, I have the time to learn about my family's history — which I find fascinating."

NEW TRANSLATION



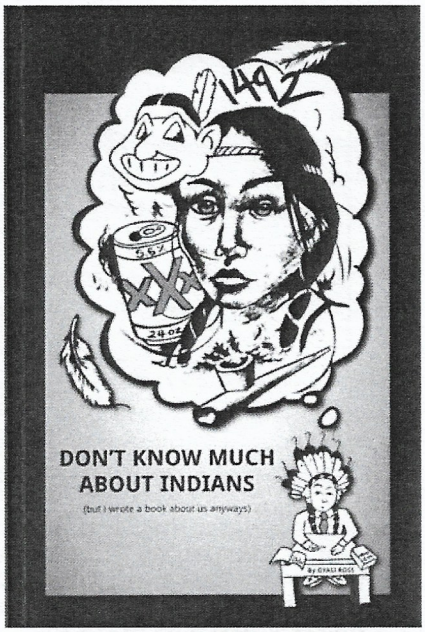
***An Account of the Sámi*. Johan Turi, translated by Thomas A. DuBois. Chicago: Nordic Studies Press, 2011, 198 pages. ISBN 0-9772714-5-5**

In the year 1910 the Sámi wolf hunter and reindeer herder Johan Turi produced
birra, the first secular book ever published in the Sámi language. Turi's work, an eloquent, poignant exploration of Sámi history, livelihoods, and culture, aimed at making state authorities in Sweden and Norway aware of the intricacies and value of the indigenous culture of the Sámi. With the aid of Danish artist/ethnographer Emilie Demant Hatt, Turi's book reached a Nordic public in both its Sámi original and in Danish translation, and in 1966
Mui'talus
English translation by E. Gee Nash as *Turi's Book of Lapland*

An Account of the Sami represents the first direct translation of this work into English. It is an unmatched source of information regarding traditional Sámi lifeways of a century ago and includes the original illustrations which Turi produced to clarify and supplement his text.

The book is $19.95 from www.nordicstudiespress.com.

Anne Dunn: BOOK CRITIQUE



***Don't Know Much About Indians (but i wrote a book about us anyways).* Gyasi Ross. Cut Bank Creek Press: 2011, 125 pages.**

This collection by Gyasi Ross (Blackfeet/Suquamish) offers readers humor, terror, pathos and satire. Here are some harsh and painful messages from another reality. Here are glimpses into the daily lives of an America some people have never visited. Indeed an America that they may not even be aware of although it might be found in their town or on their street. Perhaps, as the author suggests, it's the neighbor that you never greet... the child you never see.

I was nursing a sick dog when I began work on this so I decided to begin by telling the truth the way a dog would tell it if s/he could speak. How do I know a dog is truthful? It is a proven fact that they live above the common lie and are morally incapable of falsehood. As you may or may not know, there was a time when dogs could talk but angry people began beating them for expressing their views and for their impeccable vocabulary. So, to preserve the peace and enjoy a long life, dogs reduced themselves to tail-wagging and sheepish grins. They became speechless, docile curs content to sleep in the sun rather than bite the hands that feed them or embarrass learnéd people by their canine wit.

Dogs are also great historians but being unable to speak are not allowed to tell their own stories. I have often scrambled awkwardly after my dog as he follows his relentless nose. He hurries along gathering fragrant facts and tucks them away for later points of reference. He wraps his thoughts around these tidbits of information and (if he does not suffer from dementia) retains incredible volumes of canine perspectives to the end of his life.

Highly evolved body language and tail wagging expertise is of primary importance in the events of a dog's day. If short stories could be expressed physically a dog would be heralded a literary genius. But since short stories are often relegated to the printed page and held hostage to editorial whims we turn to two-legged beings with eight fingers and two opposing thumbs to write the tales that gladden our days and mesmerize our short term attention.

Although we are well-acquainted with the old adage "Never judge a book by its cover," I often do. Therefore, had I found this book while browsing the library or a book store I would not have picked it up. The illustration is misguiding and appears to promise a collection of political diatribes. So when I opened Gyosi Ross' book I was relieved to read that he did not hold his stories up to a scholar's lofty standard but declared his poems "childish" and his stories "unimportant."

Great, I thought. Let's not get too serious about being Indians. You see... I have been told that many a potential writer gets bogged down in the mire of seriousness and becomes so desperate to produce marketable pages that the story dies before the fingers of the would-be-writer can locate a keyboard. Bear in mind that a dog does not worry a good idea into the grave but nurtures it and savors it until its flavor is totally absorbed. A dog does not smother it with analytical data but sleeps on it until it ripens into a full flower.

I'm sure Ross' collection has been compared to the work of other young Indian writers but I just can't go that way. I want to stand these tales on their own two feet, thrust them out into their own limelight and let them squirm. If Ross believes that these are stories that must be written/read/told then he does not expect less. He sends them forth as little ambassadors in search of understanding and reconciliation.

In the long ago times a story was an oral vehicle to express cultural expectations and guide the children. It also carried history and location in its details. Some of those old stories became epics but they were lost on the journey to this new day. Stories made a vital contribution to the well-being of "the People." When Ross wraps his tales in the ethos of myth for modern days he steps up to a challenge that will test the substance of his tales. Storytellers have permission to tell old tales and also to create new ones but they must maintain the same standard of contributing to the well-being of "the People." He has written a letter to a specific audience but does the audience reply?

There are many characters in this collection that we have encountered on other pages of other books. In fact, I have met most of them. Ross focuses on the glaring faults of a fragile humanity and brings them into our reading corner. They stand near as we consider their difficulties and how to amend the dreams that once pointed them toward a horizon of golden promise. To assume that these are people without dreams is to misjudge them.

In a great many words Ross seems to encourage them to look inward to discover that the answer lies inside of

them. But some of these people are already too flawed and too traumatized to recognize the wisdom of self-evaluation. They need a third person to ask the questions that will open the windows closed by their personal tragedy, grief and loss. Then they can determine if this is a door they really want to enter, a realm to be explored or ignored.

Some people still fail to appreciate the difficulty with which a short story is honed to a brilliant edge. They think because it is short... it is simple. But that is a falsehood. Ross is not telling simple stories to entertain or distract, he is reaching out to a generation of people that got lost on the journey because they have been deprived of stories that express cultural expectations and moral guidance.

This is not to say that his stories will be welcomed in the Native American community and affectionately embraced. But given a chance they might have a positive impact here and there. After all, isn't that the purest goal of the storyteller?

Anne Dunn is an Ojibwe author and storyteller who lives in Deer River, Minnesota. She has been a frequent contributor to *Báiki* and a friend of the North American Sami community since our very beginning.

(**FJELD** *continued from page 3)*

"*Pesticide foggers are next to the cockroach motels in our gardening section.*" The North American Sami community goes down the aisle, finds the pesticide foggers and brings a canister up to the counter.

They open up the plastic bag they have brought. "Vicious gossip is leaving nasty puddles under the sink. Here — look at this," they exclaim, taking out a section of pipe. Ráfi-áhkká takes a look at a leak in the pipe's elbow joint that is dripping goo on the counter. "*You need one of our new no-hub connectors*," she says, and the North American Sami community heads down the plumbing aisle to find one. They place a no-hub connector on the counter next to the fogger.

They consult their list again. "How do we straighten out people who try to take personal credit for what our community has accomplished together?" they ask. "*No problem*," Ráfi-áhkká answers. "*We have something called joint compound that connects the past with the present and that will do the trick. You'll find it across the aisle from the nails and screws*."

There is one last item on the list. "We need something really strong to eliminate any ego-driven behavior that saps our community energy and takes away our happiness and sense of humor." "*You need to jump-start your Sami Spirit with ancient ceremonies of cultural renewal,*" Ráfi-áhkká tells the North American Sami community. She goes over to a locked display case, opens it, and takes out one of the store's top of the line spiritual battery chargers for ancient ceremonies. "*This is the secret for maintaining positive social relationships while working together in a good way,*" she says. The North American Sami community takes the battery charger for spiritual ceremonies up to the counter.

The North American Sami community is finished shopping. They were helped by the Grandmother Spirit of Peace and they thank her profusely. They pay her and she places the solutions to their problems in a paper bag. As they leave, Ráfi-áhkká smiles and calls after them: "*Giitu! Thank you for shopping at Fillmore Hardware*!"

TELLING OUR STORIES

SAMI LIFE IN ALASKA

These two stories first appeared in Petroglyphs: Life Stories from the Rock, *published by the University of Alaska - Anchorage (2000). They were reprinted in* Báiki's *10th Anniversary Issue #23 (2001) with the permission of the authors, Mary (Twitchell) Eyman and Lois (Twitchell) Stover. They grew up along the Kuskokwim River in central Alaska and both women now live on Kodiak Island. Mary and Lois are the descendants of Sami, Yup'ik, and Norwegian reindeer herders. Their grandmother Ellen Marie Nilsdatter Sara, came to Alaska as a teenager in 1898 on the* Manitoba. *She has been featured on posters and fliers for "The Sami Reindeer People of Alaska" exhibits.*

This photo of four of the daughters of Anna Spein and Tim Twitchell was taken in Akiak, Alaska in 1944 near their family's rabbit snares. Lois rides in front of the sled with her sister Becky just behind. Mary pushes it with the help of their sister Esther.

Storyteller petroglyph: Kodiak Island

FISHING FOR THE BIG ONES

by Mary Eyman

In Aniak we had a cutting table that was nailed to our dock and I remember how fast my mother and Aunt Bernie could cut fish. They used the traditional Yup'ik *ulu* knife and with about five swipes they would have the fish head cut off, the belly sliced open and the fish slimed and gutted. They wore hip boots so the waste from the fish went into the Kuskokwim River and not onto them. The heads were saved as they were considered a delicacy by many.

The Kuskokwim salmon are a much oilier fish than the salmon in Kodiak. Nature has provided them with extra fat so they can spawn in the Kuskokwim and Yukon Rivers. You can see the oil dripping from them when you smoke them which makes them very rich and much sought after. We still get our cousin in Aniak to smoke us some strips. The king salmon get huge in this area and sometimes the fish have to be stripped first so they can cure in the smokehouse. Mom's Uncle Peter would first spread the salmon [outside] on racks to air cure before placlng them in the smokehouse. He always did this on a windy day so that flies would not land on them. One time when he had spread his salmon out to dry and his back was turned, seagulls came and pushed all his fish to the ground. Uncle Peter, angrily cussing, heard Grandpa Jens, who was a Norwegian immigrant, say, "Vell, don't yell at me, I didn't tell those seagulls to come take your fish!"

One day, when I was only three or four years old I went fishing from the dock in Aniak with a pole made from a willow branch and a hook made from a safety pin that hung from a string. Suddenly I snagged a big king salmon. I wouldn't let go of my pole and the fish, who weighed between 40 and 50 pounds, pulled me into the river. Luckily Uncle Jimmy and Grandpa were close by and rescued me. I was crying my heart out because I had lost my fancy pole. They consoled me and quickly fixed me up with another one.

Across the river Grandpa and my uncles had a fish wheel which they tended. They would bring me along to club the fish. When I felt sorry for the fish they would say, "You do like to eat them, don't you?" I had to admit that salmon strips were my favorite food.

I also helped Grandpa move the fish around in the smokehouses because I was small enough to place the fish where he wanted them. To this day our old smokehouses are still there and I imagine people still use them. We smoked fish not only for our own use but for trading for other things we needed and for feeding our sled dogs. When you have four or five dogs they consume a lot of fish and many times we just air cured their salmon.

Storyteller petroglyph: Kodiak Island

A TENSE MOMENT

by Lois Stover

The winters were cold in Takotna. We would haul our old square five-gallon gasoline cans down to the creek where we got our water, fill them up and then let them freeze over on top so they wouldn't spill when we carried them up the hill. We'd hitch up the dogs, go back down to the creek for the water buckets and haul them home. But when it had been cold for a long time, the ice would be so thick on the creek that my older sisters Mary and Esther couldn't reach the water level. They would put little me down the hole we had cut in the ice and hold on to my ankles so I could fill up our buckets with a dipper. All this time I would be yelling "don't let go, don't let go!"

We used this creek water for drinking and cooking. Since getting water was such a chore in the winter, we would fill other oil drums with snow and put them next to our big stove, which was also made from an oil drum. The snow would melt down for our dishwashing, bathing, and laundry needs and we were very careful with it. After bathing, the water was often saved for laundry, and then used again for floor scrubbing.

I also remember one December afternoon when Dad took the dog team to get our Christmas tree. He was training a dog named Blackie to be a lead dog. Flossie, our regular lead dog, was so dependable and obedient you never had to worry about leaving the sled, but while Dad was out cutting the tree, Blackie decided he was tired of staying in one place and away he went with the dog team and the sled, leaving Dad and his tree far behind. Dad's hollering "whoa, whoa" had little effect.

Dad started following them, figuring he had a couple of hours of daylight left and would surely catch up. By 11:00 PM he still hadn't caught up but didn't want to turn back because a dog team was so valuable back then. We depended on them for hauling wood and water, for trapping, for meeting the mail plane which came in twice a week, and also for recreation.

Meanwhile back at home we all knew something was wrong when Mom dragged out her old gas-powered washing machine and started doing laundry. That was what she did when something bothered her and there was nothing she could do. Finally she went to our neighbor Willie and asked if he would go and look for Dad. The temperature was 30 degrees below zero. I made the mistake of asking Mom that if Dad died how would we bury him since the ground was so frozen. That was not the right thing to say, I found out.

Willie found Dad cold but okay and the next day the two men went out and found Blackie and the dog team — still pulling the sled. Dad tried a couple of times more with Blackie and finally gave up. Some dogs are just not good lead material.

After having spent a week recording family stories and selecting family photographs for "The Sami Reindeer People of Alaska exhibit," Faith Fjeld, Lois Stover, and Mary Eyman (l-r) have breakfast at King's Diner in Kodiak, Alaska. This photo was taken in 2000.

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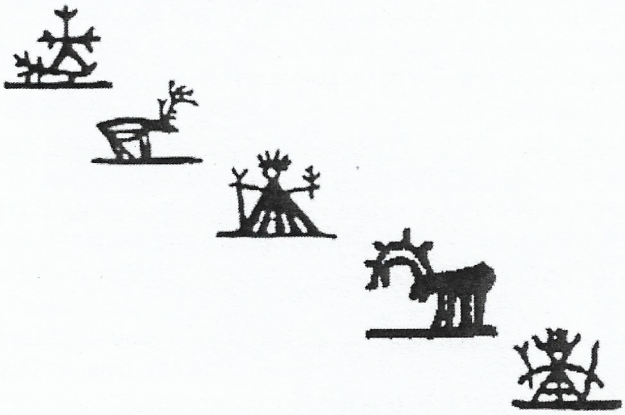
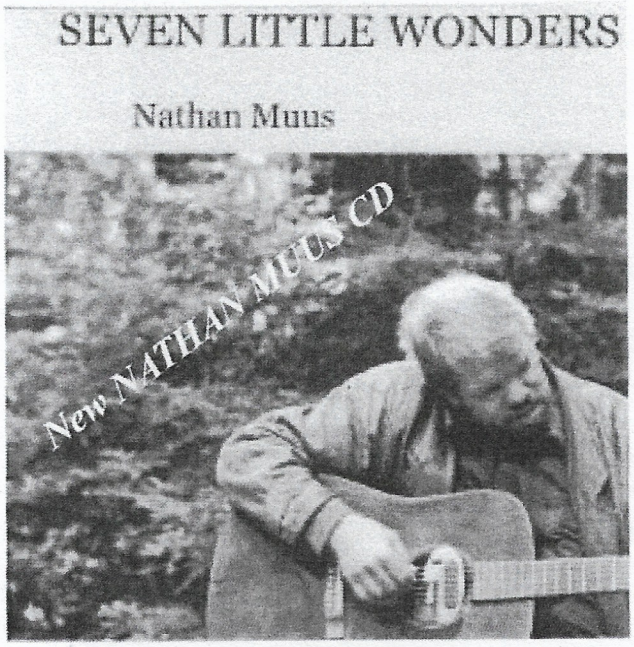


Wow, we loved this CD! The variety is great, the music is lively, beautiful and interesting. We especially liked the yoiking..." Bill Musser, Vesterheim Museum, Decorah, Iowa



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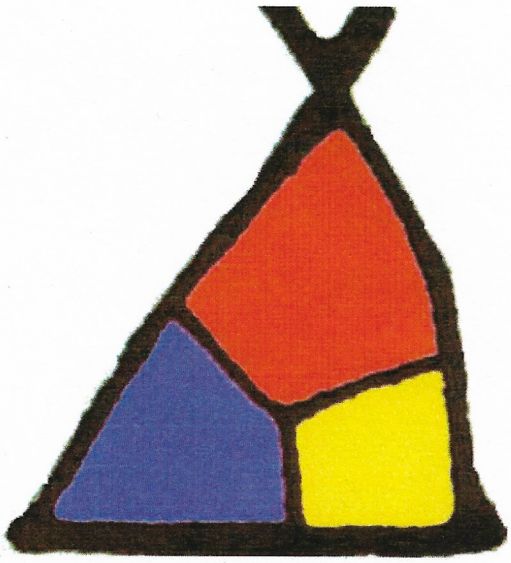

logo: Sami Cultural Center of North America

THE SAMI CULTURAL CENTER OF NORTH AMERICA

The North American Sami community is working to realize their dream of a cultural center. The Sami Cultural Center of North America has been established and is launching a $450,000 capital campaign in order to purchase a property to house a center on the North Shore of Lake Superior near Duluth, Minnesota.

THE CENTER WILL PROVIDE

- **a library and archives** to serve as a place for scholars, genealogists, family and community historians to have access to books, research materials, and artifacts pertaining to Sami culture and history that are now housed in private residences.
- **a venue for classes** on Sami arts, language, and other relevant topics taught by experts that will include partnering with other educational groups for maximum community involvement.
- **an arena for the exchange of cultural information**, by visitors and culture bearers from the Nordic countries, the U.S. and Canada.
- **an opportunity for student interns** from local colleges and universities to gain experience with administrative, research and outreach projects.
- **an exhibit space** for Sami and Sami-American artists to display and market their work.

TO BECOME INVOLVED

Contact **Marlene Wisuri**, Chair, at 218/525-3924 or mwisuri@cpinternet.com. Please spread the word and donate to the capital campaign. Mail your contribution payable to the "Sami Cultural Center of North America" to **Wendy Ruhnke**, Treasurer, 1419 East 2nd St., Duluth, MN 55805. The Sami Cultural Center of North America has applied for 501(c)(3) status with the Internal Revenue Service.

Original Siiddastallan logo: D'Arcy Allison-Teasley

A Siiddastallan is a gathering of people who share Sami ancestry and / or who have an interest in the Sami culture. When possible, reindeer are involved. The First North American Siiddastallan and Reindeer Festival took place March 11-13, 1994 at the Minnesota Zoo near Minneapolis. It was sponsored jointly by *Báiki*, ROBA (the Reindeer Owners' and Breeders' Association), and the Minnesota Zoo. Since then, siiddastallans have become places to make Sami connections in North America as part of our Sami Camps at Finnfests and Scandinavian cultural festivals and as siiddastallans by themselves. Here are some events that are taking place this year. We also include two major Sami exhibits.

WEST COAST SIIDDASTALLAN

Scandinavian Festival, April 14 and 15
California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, CA
<nathanmuus@yahoo.com>

NORWAY DAYS

May 5 and 6
Ft. Mason, San Francisco, CA
<nathanmuus@yahoo.com>

NORDIC MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL

Bayfront Park, June 23
Duluth, MN
<steve@secretserviceconcerts.com>

SAMI SIIDA OF NORTH AMERICA SIIDDASTALLAN

Camp Salie, Stacy, MN July 6 - 8 -
<saamigammi@biegga.com>

EIGHT SEASONS IN SÁPMI

Nordic Heritage Museum
August 31 - September ***(date to come)***
Seattle, WA
<birgittemchlsn@aol.com>

FINNFEST USA

November 8 - 11, Tucson, AZ
<nathanmuus@yahoo.com>

THE SAMI REINDEER PEOPLE OF ALASKA EXHIBIT

December 12, 2012 - November 10, 2013
Vesterheim Norwegian American Museum
Decorah, IA
<faithfjeld@q.com>

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