

THE INTERNATIONAL SAMI JOURNAL SPECIAL ISSUE #1 SPRING 2017















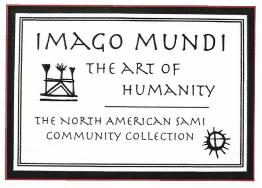




Imago Mundi ~ The Art of Humanity
North American Sami Community Collection

IN THIS ISSUE

This special issue of Báiki: the International Sami Journal serves as a catalog and record of the North American Sami community participation in the Imago Mundi worldwide art project and an historical overview of North American Sami art activity. The 36 Imago Mundi pieces included here were exhibited in a preview of the work on December 6, 2016, at the Sami Cultural Center of North America in Duluth, Minnesota. The work was then shipped to Italy to become part of the larger Sami Collection and the works of the world. The work will be photographed and digitized for publication on the web site http://www.imagomundiart.com and in a catalog and may be seen in selected exhibits in various parts of the world.



<u>Báiki: the International Sami Journal</u> © 2017

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We are grateful for the ongoing and generous support of the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation.



THE HOME THAT LIVES IN THE HEART

"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 the Mother Earth, and the njalla [storage shed] symbolizes traditional knowledge preserved for new 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 Finno-Ugric, 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 well over 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 Peninsula of Michigan, 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.

Sámi history parallels that of the earth's other Indigenous Peoples. Colonization and genocide increased in the Middle Ages after contact with missionaries, traders, and scientists. 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 Sámi natural resources.

Today the Sámi are incorporating new technologies in the revival of their languages, the yoik, and other traditional arts, and the Sámi 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.



About Imago Mundi ~ The Art of Humanity

Imago Mundi ~ *The Art of Humanity* is the collection of works commissioned and collected by Luciano Benetton on his travels around the world, involving, on a voluntary and non-profit basis, established and emerging artists from many different countries and indigenous peoples of the Earth. Each of them has created a work whose only restriction is its 10x12 cm format, contributing to the creation of a remarkable artistic geography.

The collection, under the auspices of the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche (established upon the wishes of the Benetton family to support and raise awareness of the wealth of landscape, cultural, and artistic heritage), has no commercial ambitions, but aims to unite the diversities of our world in the name of common artistic experience. The goal is to catalogue works, inspirations, and ideas in order to pass down to future generations the widest possible mapping of the situation of human cultures at the start of the third millennium.

The social ambition of Imago Mundi is to promote a knowledge and awareness of art and, through this art, of the world. The numerous collections will be taken on a tour without frontiers to present them to the widest possible number of people through a web platform (www.imagomundiart.com), catalogues, and exhibitions in collaboration with private institutions, international organizations, and public museums.

The Sami people are being included in the project, which will include Nordic and Russian Sami artists, and the North American Sami Community Collection.

The North American Sami Community Collection

For over twenty-five years, the North American Sami Community has been on a quest to discover and reclaim our often hidden Sami heritage and our connections to Sami relatives and the history and culture of Sápmi. We are a widely scattered and disparate group brought together as community largely because of this ongoing search. In some cases the search extends over a lifetime and for others it is a more recent awareness.

North American Sami Community artists were first seen as a group in *Buohkat: An Exhibit of Sami-American Art* in 1997 in Superior, Wisconsin. This exhibit was soon followed by exhibits at Ironworld (now the Minnesota Discovery Center) in Chisholm, Minnesota, and the North House Folk School in Grand Marais, Minnesota. An exhibit, *Sami American Artists*, was also held at Indigenous Days, Tromsø, Norway, in 2000, with several of the artists from the first Superior exhibit represented. Many North American Sami Community artists exhibit in a variety of one-person or group shows or publish work throughout North America and internationally.

The featured artists in this collection are representatives of mixed heritages and varied life stories connected by the common thread of Sami and Indigenous culture. The artists range in age from 10 to over 90 and they live in many areas of the United States and Canada. Their artistic expression is as varied and vibrant as their experiences and takes many forms—painting and drawing, fiber, wood, photography, and various types of *duodji*. Some are established artists with long exhibition records and others are just starting artistic careers or have worked quietly in their chosen media. The collection is a celebration of our community and represents both our diversity and our connectedness.

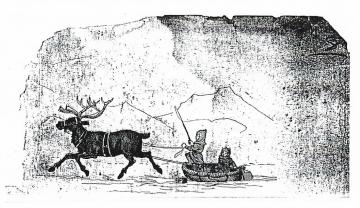
It has been a priviledge and a joy to work with the artists for this project. Many, many thanks go to each of them for their generous sharing of their art and writings and information about their work and lives. I would like to express very special thanks for the wonderful support, encouragement, and enthusiasm of Guja Mabellini, curator with the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche. Guja's unwavering support for the inclusion of Sami artists in the project is what has made it happen. And of course a multitude of thanks to Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche and Luciano Benetton for your wonderful project of bringing the art of peoples of the world to the world.

Marlene Wisuri Guest Curator, North American Sami Collection December 2016

An Overview of North American Sami Art and Artists

There has been a high percentage of creative people involved in the North American Sami reawakening—writers, musicians, artisans, and visual artists. The first North American Sami art exhibit, *Buohkat: An Exhibit of Sami-American Art*, was held in Superior, Wisconsin, February 27-March 2, 1997, as part of the the '97 Giddadálvi Siidastallan at Spirit Mountain in Duluth Minnesota. In a review of the exhibit in the April 1997 Finnish American Reporter, Lisbeth Boutang writes, "The Sami palette is brilliant primary colors to brooding earthtones. Technique is expansive also. Images emerge in watercolors and clay, feathers and birch bark, threads and metal, film and wood." Lis concludes her review, "In a culture of barely 160,000 people, including North American descendants of immigrants from Samiland, the

Siidastallan Buohkat '98 * Sami Art Exhibit



Brochure cover for one of the early art exhibits.

first North American Sami/Sami-American Art Exhibition carries another important message: A culture that is shared does not diminish; it enlarges. Both Sami and non-Sami can take from this generous, perceptive way of life and be enriched."

This first exhibit was followed with exhibits at Ironworld (now Minnesota Discovery Center) in Chisholm, Minnesota, and at the North House Folk School in Grand Marais, Minnesota, as part of the 1998 Winter Siidastallan. Many of the participating artists were already well-recognized in their fields and others were at the beginning of their careers. A general call was sent out for art work and there were no entry fees for any of the exhibits.

An exhibit, *SAMI AMERICAN ARTISTS*, was held at Indigenous Days, Tromsø, Norway, summer 2000, with several artists represented from the first exhibition in Superior. North American Sami artists have also been included in a number of FinnFest and other festival art exhibits including *Honoring Tradition: Finnish and Sami-inspired Textiles* at Tweed Museum of Art at the University of Minnesota Duluth as part of FinnFest '08. The North American Sami community is rich in talent and creativity.



On right: Solveig Arneng Johnson with art work from *Buohkat* on February 27, 1997, Superior, Wisconsin,

Below and left: The *Buohka*t exhibit at Ironworld in Chisholm, Minnesota, c. 1997.



Artists Participating in the First Sami American Art Exhibits

Karen Hilja Anderson ❖ Duluth, Minnesota +
Eric Bergland ❖ Blue River, Oregon
Per Eidspjeld ❖ San Francisco, California
Hollister Elkhart ❖ Oakland, California
Lorna Hanhy ❖ Troutman, North Carolina
Linda Helander ❖ Duluth, Minnesota
Dennis Helppie ❖ Freeland, Washington *
Solveig Arneng Johnson ❖ Duluth, Minnesota +
Earl Juntunen ❖ Esko, Minnesota *
Joyce Koskenmaki ❖ LaCrosse, Wisconsin +
Gladys Koski Holmes ❖ Angora, Minnesota *
Charles Mayo ❖ Pengilly, Minnesota +
Wendy Miller ❖ Superior, Wisconsin +
Brad Nelson ❖ Knife River, Minnesota +

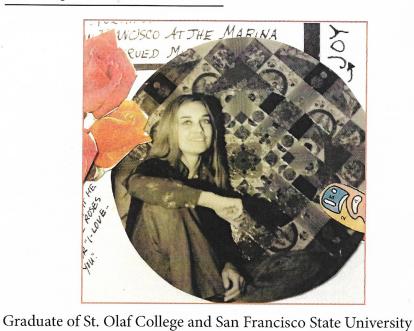
Kathryn Nordstrom ❖ Duluth, Minnesota + Gladys Muus ❖ Grand Marais, Minnesota * Mel Olsen ❖ Wentworth, Wisconsin * Albin Seaberg ❖ Highland Park, Illinois * Kurt Seaberg ❖ Minneapolis, Minnesota Margaret Webster ❖ Tamarack, Minnesota + Marlene Wisuri ❖ Duluth, Minnesota +

- * Deceased
- + Imago Mundi Artists

Artists are listed in the places they were living at the time of the exhibits and with names they were using then.

Remembering Sami American Artists...

Faith Fjeld (1935-2014)

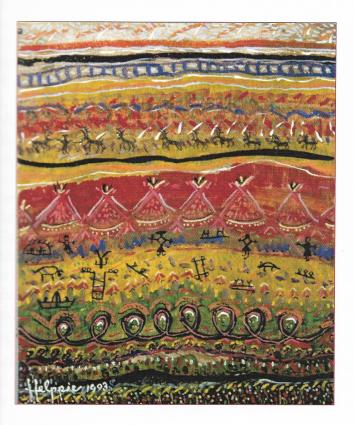


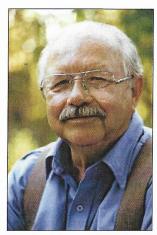
Artist
Graphic Designer
Writer
World Traveler
Founding Editor of *Báiki: the International Sami Journal* (1991-2014)

Faith Fjeld was instrumental in inspiring the North American Sami Reawakening through her writing, editorial work, and support of the artistic efforts of the North American Sami community especially in her role as editor of *Báiki*. She maintained a vast network of friends and associates throughout the United States, Canada, and Sápmi.



Dennis Helppie (1926-2012)





Graduate of Michigan Normal College and University of Washington Artist Art Educator Historian/Writer

Dennis Helppie had early interests in both art and the Sami culture. Much of his artisic output was influenced by his Finnish Sami heritage. He continued to study, produce, and teach art throughout his lifetime. He inspired the creativity of young artists through volunteer work in his later years.

Gladys Koski Holmes (1932-2005)

Graduate of University of Wisconsin-Superior Artist Writer Poet

Gladys Koski Holmes was a bright light in the North American Sami Community with her vibrant paintings, incisive writing, and cheerful nature. She traveled to Sápmi to reconnect with her Sami heritage, do research, and find inspiration for her work, which was exhibited and published in many venues. On one of her trips to Sápmi she represented the community at the Sami Council.



Self Portrait



Mel Olsen (1938-2007)



Graduate of University of Wisconsin-Superior and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Artist/Graphic Designer Writer/Historian Art Educator and Administrator

Founding Editor of Árran: the Newsletter of the Sami Siida of North America

Mel Olsen's contributions to the North American Sami Reawakening was immense as one of the founders of the Sami Siida of North America; exhibitor in all of the North American Sami art exhibitions; researcher, writer, and illustrator of many articles on Sami topics; and founding editor of *Árran*.



Albin Seaberg (1916-2005)

Studied at the Minneapolis School of Art and Graduate of the University of Minnesota Graphic Artist
Illustrator

Albin Seaberg was the head of a three generation family of artists. His son Kurt Seaberg produced the *Saami Spirit Calendar* for many years using his own drawings and illustrations along with Albin's. Albin was the author of the classic book *Menu Design: Merchandise and Marketing*, which went through 4 editions and is still available in rare book collections. He was active in many Sami American activities and his work was exhibited at the American Swedish Institute and many other places.

Author



THE IMAGO MUNDI ART WORK & ARTISTS



Sami Silver
Alison Aune
Duluth, Minnesota
Paper and Acrylic on Canvas

I celebrate the colors and patterns of traditional Gakti and silver as a spiritual aesthetic. In my Nordic inspired mixed media paintings, I have been exploring women's symbolic textile designs as significant sources of artistic inspiration and cultural celebration. Through the process of critical inquiry and research, I have been referencing and reinterpreting patterns, visual symbols, and ancestral artifacts into my artwork. In this painting, I presented Sami patterns, colors, and a silver pendant as a way to honor my arctic Norwegian ancestors.

Dr. Alison Aune is a Professor of Art Education at the University of Minnesota Duluth. Her scholarly interests include museum-based teacher training, women artists in history, and Nordic art education. She and her students have developed curriculum and intergenerational learning experiences using Scandinavian, Portuguese, Turkish, Finnish, and American Indian art. She has exhibited her artwork in over 70 solo and group exhibitions in the U.S, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark and she regularly presents guest lectures and workshops internationally, nationally, and regionally.



Arctic Memory
Mary Erickson
Mountain Iron, Minnesota
Handwoven Wool Belt, Wool Needle Felting,
and (on Back) Mica Embroidery

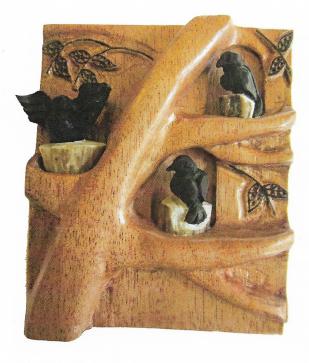
Mary Erickson joined the Sami community when the Sami Camp at Minnesota Discovery Center at Chisholm, Minnesota, was created. She was an exhibit interpreter/ethnic demonstrator in the *goahti* (dwelling)



and she wove the Sami grene (blankets) for the exhibit. Mary is a fiber artist interested in the influence of landscape and place. She has been active with the Lyric Center for the Arts in Virginia, Minnesota, and her work has been exhibited both in the United States and Finland.



Landscape, history, and family influence who we are. The past is often forgotten, yet strands of the past remain with us and shape our present.



Antlers or Nuts
John Frandy
Lake Mills, Wisconsin
Wood and Deer Antler

If it grows dark
while you are tracking
a wounded deer,
come back to the woods
the next morning and look
for the circling crows
to guide you to it.
To thank them, you can
carve tiny crows
out of the deer's antlers.
But they also like
unshelled peanuts.



John Frandy grew up in northern Wisconsin. All his paternal great-grandparents were Finnish/Finnish-Sami immigrants that had settled in the mining communities of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. From this side of the family, he learned that if you can make something yourself, you should. And then you should have a pot of coffee. A dedicated woodworker, he builds furniture for his house, toys for his children, and skis for family members that are willing to sacrifice performance for aesthetics. On his Norwegian wife's suggestion, he carved a life-sized troll to guard their apple orchard. At least he claims it to be life-sized, and will desist only if someone provides him with a living specimen to prove otherwise. He received his Ph.D. in nuclear physics from UW-Madison in 2002. He lives with his wife and three children in Southern Wisconsin, where he currently teaches at a small technical college.



Nils Gransberg has a masters degree in Geological Engineering and lives in Norman, Oklahoma. with his wife and two daughters where he works at the University of Oklahoma. He has South Saami roots in Hedmark, Norway.

Flit swift, darter,
Dancer,
Walk the breezes, 'tween grass and sky.
Drop,
Snap, Two-Feather,
Under rays burnt flame-cloud.

The scissor-tail flycatcher, native to the southern Great Plains and Cross Timbers of Oklahoma, is a beloved bird of the people here. It is portrayed on an amulet in traditional ditne couching (South Saami spun pewter wire thread couching). Tucked underneath is a green gievrie (Saami drum) the color of the grass and all growing things, opposite the yellow sun above the scissor-tail as it flies between the two. The background is a traditional geometric pattern usually seen on knives and other carved objects that can have various meanings, depending on the decoration, but it exemplifies a Saami ideal of living beautifully, functionally, and practically for the artist.

Scissor-Tail Protector
Nils Gransberg
Norman, Oklahoma
Mixed Media, needle felted wool with
traditional south Saami ditnie couching,
beadwork, leather and ink.





This work is a visual inspiration from the natural world; combining nature with the surreal world of imagination.

Solstice Sarah Heimer Duluth, Minnesota Acrylic on Wood

Sarah Heimer is a registered nurse and a native of the Clover Valley area of Duluth, Minnesota. Her great grandmother had Sami heritage in Finland. She is a mainly self-taught artist working in acrylics. She writes

of her art, "My work is focused on the mysticism of the natural and supernatural world. I'm intrigued by mythology of various cultures. I try to portray secret magical things. I've been painting since I was a kid."

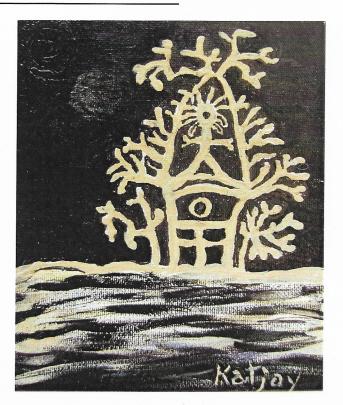


To me, Sámi is a feeling I have deep within me. My grandfather talked about his father herding reindeer and, especially clear in my memory, is his description of a walnut-shell-shaped sled that was pulled by the deer. Laplander is the designation I remember from then. It is not until I encouraged my brother to 'swab' for his DNA that we found out for sure that we are genetically Sámi. I was interested to see that we were placed among the Northern Sami within the geo-political boundaries of Sweden.

Some time ago I started researching my Arctic Circle ancestors. I am so fascinated that I continue today. My only regrets are that so much information available was reported and written though the lenses of non-Sámi. The same goes for their religion. After contact with missionaries of Christianity, I'm sure that some practices and beliefs were affected by that interaction so it is hard to know exactly what and how the ancients practiced their religion. An asset of the Sámi culture that I appreciate is the equality between men and women. I have always felt that way; now I know that it is in my genes.



In my drawing for Imago Mundi, I chose to represent a Sámi shine built of reindeer bones and antlers because the deer were extremely important for clothing, food, shelter, and transportation. They were the lifeblood of the culture. When looking for a title, I turned to an online Sámi dictionary. When I came to the word aða meaning marrow I knew I had the title. For living beings, marrow is where our red blood cells are produced. We cannot live without it, just as the Sámi could not live without the deer. Furthermore, my mother's name is Ada. She was my giver of life.



*A∂a: Marrow*Katharine Johnson
Cloquet, Minnesota
Acrylic, Ink on Canvas

White Mountain, Alaska, a small Inupiat village surrounded by spruce trees is my birthplace. Dog teams were necessary to maintain our lifestyle. One sunny, windless day in winter, I remember my father fed the dogs squares of frozen meat. Then he harnessed each to his sled, anchored to the ground. After placing a reindeer hide, fur side up, on the sled my mother and I sat, wearing our warmest winter parkas. Dad folded the hide over us and strongly lashed us criss-cross to the frame preventing us from injury if it flipped over. Following the winter trail, we visited Ole and his wife Elvira Olsen, an aunt at Golovin. Those were some of my happiest childhood memories.

I was told that Ole Olsen was a Saami reindeer herder whose people taught us reindeer herding skills which are being used



to this day. The Olsens taught my mother how to make the reindeer boots with the pointed and uplifted toe, the *skaller*. By 1952 we lost our team to a rabid fox and then we moved to Nome for education.

I have since learned to sew reindeer leather and have made a Saami handbag and a salt pouch and have tufted caribou fur, sewing porcupine quills and beads on smoke-tanned moose hide.



Tuttupiaq Nautchiaq – Caribou Flower Pearl Johnson Anchorage, Alaska Porcupine Quills, Colored Beads, Tufted Caribou Hair on Moose Hide

I create art using Arctic game animals.



Mother and Child Longing for Family Across the Sea Solveig Arneng Johnson Duluth, Minnesota Print from an Oil Painting

This piece expresses a longing for the country of my birth. My colors come from growing up in the arctic—very clear.

Solveig Arneng Johnson was born in 1925 in Kirkenes, Norway, studied art in Oslo, and emigrated to the United States after her marriage to Rudolph (Rudy) Johnson. She raised her family and did her art in Duluth, Minnesota. She is the subject of the beautiful film Solveig: The Life and Artwork of Solveig Arneng Johnson produced by Kiersten Dunbar Chase, which documents her life and work as an artist. Solveig's work has been shown in many exhibitions in the United States and Norway including a

retrospective exhibit at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Duluth in 2012. Her *Imago Mundi* painting appeared on the cover of *Báiki*, Issue #35.



My relatives were involved with making rag rugs and my job was cutting off the buttons from the clothing that was being recycled. I enjoyed sorting through all the button tins and have used them in other works of art. My mother was an excellent seamstress and all my aunts crocheted, embroidered, knit, and made quilts. It was a tradition passed on until consumerism took over in America.

Everyone was frugal with what they had. My grandfather was a blackmsith and could create just about anything both functional and utilitarian by combining simplicity with aesthetic beauty. We went out deep into the woods gathering birch branches during midsummer. The branches tied together are used as vihta/vasta in the sauna as a health benefit.

This piece gives praise to 48 years of living in Minnesota.



Connie Kampsula is a visual teaching artist from St. Louis Park, Minnesota, now residing in Catalina, Arizona. She proudly considered herself 100% Finnish/American her entire life, until a curious stranger asked if she was a Sami in 1994. She began researching the Sami culture and her families' roots, connecting the dots and meeting fellow Samis in her search.

Connie tells stories of humanity, understanding, and beauty through bookarts and mixed media (painting, papier-mâché, fibers, found objects, collage, and photography). In 2012 she received a Finlandia Foundation Grant to complete two books: *Are You a Sami* and *Sami Drum Symbols*.





Arctic Birches
Joyce Koskenmäki
Hancock, Michigan
Casein/Wax Crayons

One of the things I remember most from the summer I spent in Samiland was how short and bent the birch trees were from living so far north. I loved being there with the people I interviewed for my project, which was collecting indigenous textiles, and felt a real emotional connection.



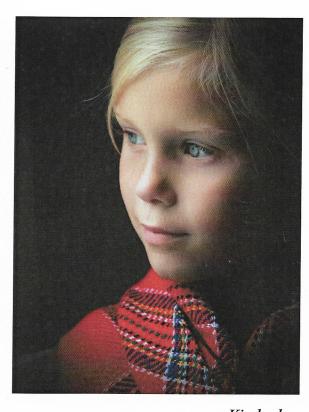
Joyce Koskenmäki's art work was recently featured in a retrospective exhibit at Finlandia University Gallery, Hancock, Michigan, where she taught at the International School of Art and Design. Her work has been included in the collections of the National Museum of Women, Washington DC, the Nelimarkka Museum in Alajärvi, Finland, and at the American Embassy in Helsinki. She says of her work, "My subject matter reflects my connection to nature—water, rocks, trees, wild animals, and my concern for their preservation and safety." Joyce's painting *Birches and Sunset* appeared on the cover of *Báiki* Issue #37.

Over the years, I had dabbled in many mediums of art, such as painting, drawing, basket weaving, folk art, etc., until I picked up a small digital camera 6 or 7 years ago. I really liked photography. Over time I've realized my photos are the result of a feeling that comes over me when I "see" something that I want to photograph. Editing is relaxing for me. It takes my mind off more serious things. I enjoy it just as much as photographing.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer in early 2012, and my camera sort of saved my sanity during that time. I took photos every day and documented my experience.



I continue to learn and like experimenting with a variety of techniques and editing styles. My favorite things to photograph are my grandchildren and details in nature. Street photography is also an interest.



Vicki Lantto
French Lake, Minnesota
Photograph

Honoring my Saami ancestors in each new generation.

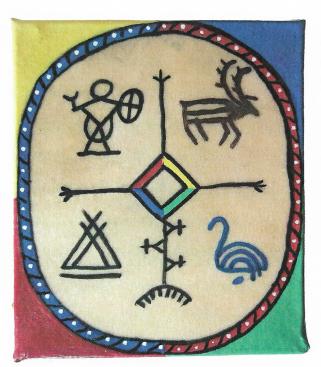
LAADTEGE GIETSKIE TJIDTJAAHKA Cloudberries for my Mother's Mother Nanna-Sofia (Nani) Löfström Oakland, California Mixed Media



Nani Löfström is a native of Berkeley, California, and has traveled frequently to her family's homelands in Sweden where she studied tin thread techniques with Sami artisans. She often lectures about Sami *duodji* in the San Francisco Bay area and at Scandinavian festivals. She has been actively involved with the California *Báiki* community for many years.



I created the cloudberry design in 1994 to honor my Mother's Mother, Nanna-Sofia, with whom I lived as a child. As a child she would tell me stories of Sápmi and her hometown of Wilhelmina in Swedish Lapland and the cloudberries she would pick with her family. She and my Mother taught me traditional embroidery. My Grandmother and her teachings live on every time I create a variation of the cloudberry motif.



Sami Drum Mel Mattson/Pamela Capin Eveleth, Minnesota Acrylic on Stretched Hide

This is a depiction of a Sami ceremonial drum with religious symbols. Traditionally drums were made of rawhide deerskin over a bent wood frame.

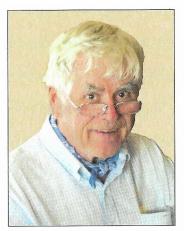
I first met Mel at the Laskiainen years ago. He was known for the birch bark canoes and Sami drums he made by hand—from the wooden frame he cut, to the raw hides he scraped and prepared. I was fascinated by the drums he had on display. Since I was eager to find out more about my heritage, I signed up for a class he was giving on drum making. I did a bit of research online and decided I would paint my drum with the old Sami symbols.

Mel really liked my painted drum, and asked if I would be willing to paint drums if he made them. We combined our treasure trove of drum information, and started our collaboration; Mel making drums, and me painting them. We both learned a lot about our Finnish/Sami ancestors and the old customs and beliefs centered on the





drum. We have displayed drums at Laskiainen, Kaleva Hall in Virginia, MN, Mesaba Co-op Park near Hibbing, Salolampi Language Village in Bemidji, and the Minnesota Discovery Center in Chisholm. It has been wonderful to see people interested in Sami culture, and a privilege to work with someone as dedicated as Mel. As a result, I have become more in touch with my ties to Finland and the Sami. *Pamela Capin*



Charles Mayo is a retired physician, who has traveled to Scandinavia and Finland many times to study the art of birch bark. He teaches many workshops including at the North House Folk School and in Alaska. His work was featured in the book *Celebrating Birch: The Lore, Art, and Craft of an Ancient Tree.* He assisted in the construction of the *goahti* at Ironworld (now Minnesota Discovery Center) and at Salolampi Language Village. Charlie has participated in North American Sami activities for over 25 years.

Kinetic Ball: A Spreader of Good Thoughts and Wishes Charles Mayo St. Croix Falls, Minnesota Birch Bark

Held by a story teller to make ideas a reality! Hold in any hand by thumb and third finger.



I feel very connected to the earth, and more than anything with animals. This piece is a bit of a metaphoric self portrait. It represents the connection I have with not only the earth, but also the connection I have with my Sami ancestry. My mother found out we were most likely of Sami ancestry, and while most of our history is a mystery, I have felt the connection ever since.

Art is so much a part of who I am and has been something that I have been immersed in since I was very young. It is hard to think of a life without this. I have never thought it something separate from who I was or am, and knew at a very young age that I wanted to "grow up to be an artist." My art is simply a means of expressing of emotion, connection, and imagination.

Chelsey works at the University of Wisconsin Superior and also as an artist and freelance graphic designer.





Untitled
Chelsy Miller
Superior, Wisconsin
Acrylic on Wood



I was born in Superior, Wisconsin, in December of 1959. I have resided here all of my life. Much of my early inspiration came from living in this area. I began doing art as soon as I could hold a crayon/pencil. I recall drawing a picture when I was in kindergarten that showed myself as being an artist when I grew up. Most of my art skills have been self-taught. I have painted a variety of items. My most "notable"

work, was a mural in a church "lift" elevator. The painting spans 3 floor levels. It is my version of Creation and includes much of the environment of this area I live in. Although I have struggled a bit with creativity in the past few years, once again, I am painting. I now am inspired by heritage, myths, and dreams. In 2012 I went to college to become a Licensed Massage Therapist.

I am a Norwegian/Finnish American. I feel that I am also Sami, but have not found solid proof. Many Sami friends speak to me about "invisible ties" that connect us. I may not have proof on paper, but it does not mean it is not there.

Invisible Ties
Wendy Miller
Superior, Wisconsin
Acrylic/Color Pencil/Pen





Heart of the Sami People Marlene Miller Duluth, Minnesota Acrylic

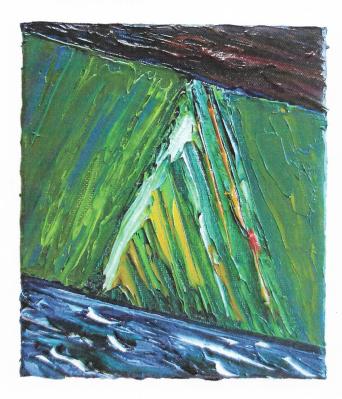
When the National Geographic article and photographs by Erika Larsen about the Sami culture was published in 2014, I was fascinated and wanted to learn more. Later, through information gleaned at Duluth's Sami Cultural Center of North America and through genealogy research, I was surprised to learn of my own Sami ancestry! My affiliation with the Cultural Center has enabled me to learn more about the Sami people and their culture. One day I hope to share with others by integrating more of this knowledge and imagery of the Sami people into my art work. I believe it is a culture that should not be forgotten.

I was raised on the Minnesota Iron Range, an area of ethnic diversity spurred by mining activity. My interest in art

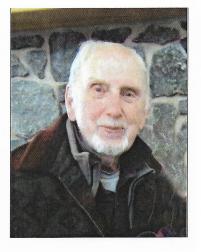
emerged early, sparked by my sister's involvement and assistance in creative activities in school. My interest in drawing and painting continued into adulthood; focusing on watercolor, mixed media, and acrylic painting. I continue learning by attending art workshops and belonging to three art organizations. I strive to evolve as an artist.



Sami Lavvu at Waters Edge Ham Muus Grand Marais, Minnesota Oil on Canvas



It was at the historic premier meeting of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in 1975 that I was first made aware of familial Sami roots. Fort Alberni, British Columbia, was the host site for this gathering of indigenous peoples from around the world. I was honored as "observer" designated by the Lutheran World Federation.



It was my son Nathan who brought historical perspective and authenticity to our Sami heritage. Through word, music, and art, he has vibrantly enriched my Sami Epiphany.

As a Lutheran pastor, I am particularly drawn to notions of "home is where the heart is." The spiritual dimension of life is grounded and moves within this concept. My palette knife painting is an attempt to affirm that place which invites, embraces, and sustains creative Spirit.



Nathan Muus is the longtime co-editor of *Báiki*, the North American/International Sami Journal. He has been deeply involved in the over 25 year contemporary Sami North American re-awakening as a musician/yoiker, writer, artist, and activist. The Sami Reindeer People of Alaska exhibits and North American Sami organizational efforts and communi-

cations have been important inclusive goals. His ancestors come from the Snåsa and Lofoten Island Sami-Norwegian areas, among other places. Nathan has done art for covers and interior stories for several issues of *Báiki*.

I have worked with many forms of art. Feeling that I wanted something special here, I asked my materials who wanted to represent. This reindeer antler piece with three points spoke to me. He stated he was an eagle. As I did simple scrimshaw, I saw that the feathers also represented suture like design. This flying eagle has been wounded, and is in the process of healing in a divided world.



A Healing Eagle
Nathan Muus
Oakland, California
Scrimshaw on Reindeer Antler

I'm a photo-based printmaker, book artist, and writer. My photographs are about place—interior spaces and exterior landscapes, natural and built, real and constructed, where they intersect and what happens when they do. Because of the mutability of place, my work is also about time through observations of transformation and the ephemeral. I return to specific locations over months and sometimes years, observing and photographing the changes with the intent of offering a portrait of the place. The resulting images are often evocative and somewhat mysterious despite my straightforward approach. My artistic practice comes from a deeply personal trajectory. I'm not pursuing styles or trends, but am engaged in durational and active seeing.



Paulette's South Sami Ancestors arrived in Kenyon, Minnesota, in 1856 and were ministered in the Holden Lutheran church by the Rev. Bernt Muus, ancestor to Ham and Nathan Muus, and she values their ancestral connection.



Black Ice Specimen
Paulette Myers-Rich
New York, New York
Photogravure on Handmade Abaca Tissue

The extinction of winter ice—due to climate change—photographed on the Upper Mississippi River in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 2009.

Aidnu Nastas Nakai (Saami/Navajo) is a singer, storyteller and fiber artist who is inspired in her art and activism by her indigenous heritage. Anno has a Masters in Arts and Consciousness from JFK University, and coordinates cultural arts and environmental projects in her work as the Executive Director of the Sierra Native Alliance in Northern California. Her piece in the Imago Mundi show is based on a beadwork pattern from the Eastern Saami (Kola) side of her family.





Sun and Wind Aidnu Nastas Nakai Placerville, California Indignenous Saami Beadwork on Wool

Family beadwork design used by Eastern Saami for embellishment of clothing.

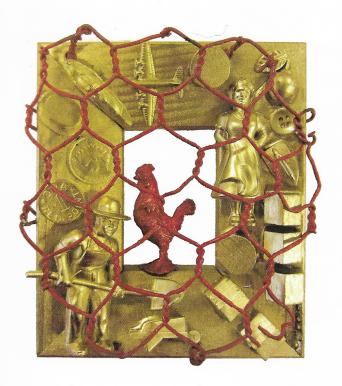
Self Portrait — Bear Girl Ursa Elkheart Nakai Placerville, California Photo Print of Watercolor and Ink Self-portrait mandala exploring my indigenous Saami and Navajo heritage, and my name Bierna Nieda —Bear Girl.



Ursa Elkheart Nakai (Saami/ Navajo) is a 17 year-old senior at El Dorado High School in California. Her piece, *Self Portrait*, is an exploration of identity in relation to both her Saami and Navajo heritage. Ursa is active in cultural and environmental projects and enjoys creating artwork for the benefit of her community. Her series "Mni Wiconi-Water is Life", which



reflects a youth perspective of the Standing with Standing Rock indigenous water protection movement, is currently showing at the Roseville Maidu Museum and Interpretive Center.



Brad Nelson graduated from the University of Wisconsin -Superior with a degree in art. He is a silversmith specializing in Scandinavian and Sami-inspired jewelry. His studio and traditional Norwegian *stabbur* retail shop are near the North Shore of Lake Superior and his work often encorporates natural elements such as Lake Superior agates and other stone. He has also used local stone in building imposing rock walls on his property. His *Sami Day Collage* was featured on the cover of *Báiki*, Issue #36.



Toiling for tokens while the red rooster crows.





I have always felt a deep connection to photographing the people and animals in my Northern world. I believe this is a powerful flow from my family and heritage. This photograph was part of a 365 "photo a day" project examining my life and the lives of the animals around me.

Athena Kathryn Nordstrom Duluth, Minnesota Photograph

Kathryn Nordstrom studied photography at the University of Minnesota Duluth. She has been a professional photographer for many years and is currently specializing in portraits of women over 50. Her work has been seen in many exhibits across the United States and in Sweden. She is the author of the award winning book, *The Fish House Book: Life on Ice in the Northland*, which documents fish houses and winter fishing culture in Minnesota. She lives on the North Shore of Lake Superior and spends much of her free time with her two horses.



The artwork was created in the traditional Sámi story-telling technique of telling several stories at once. The artwork represents the Noiade Travels (Sámi shaman) through time and space and history. The Noiade is aware of several environments (corporeal and spiritual) while humans, as evident in the act of how we once disposed of our garbage, are concerned with immediate physical acts. This art was created from vintage and antique seapottery and glass shards found on a decommissioned garbage dump beach in Southeast Alaska (Wrangell Island). The deeper story is also how Sámi-Americans sometimes must unearth or look deeper in order to understand their Sámi traditions and



heritage. This art deconstructs and decolonizes using the colonizers materials, and

reshapes that brokenness. Ultimately, the observer of this Noiade Travels can enjoy a simultaneous storytelling experience.



Noiade Travels Vivian Faith Prescott Wrangell, Alaska Mixed Media

Vivian Faith Prescott lives, writes, and creates art at Mickey's Fishcamp in Wrangell, Alaska. Her volume of stort stories *The Dead Go To Seattle* is due out in the fall, 2017.



Oainnáhus (Vision)
Mervi Maarit Salo
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Acrylic paint, metal, drum skin, and
dye on wood

I work in a variety of artistic media to express my ideas about intersections of history, culture, story, and mixed-identity with modern socio-political contexts. Although I work with many different styles and media, my paintings often contain bold iridescent colors. This piece plays with intersection of traditional and digital "visions."

Mervi Maarit Salo was born in Finland in 1969 and now lives and works in Toronto, Ontario. She is currently pursuing a graduate degree at University of Toronto. She is an award winning educator, writer, and artist launching new programs such as CyberARTS. She has been an Arts Consultant, and

Arts Education Officer for the Provincial Government of Ontario. She presented at the 2nd UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education. She is also involved in media projects such as "Debwewin Digital Stories" and provincial "Student Voice" projects. Her work has been exhibited in numerous exhibitions. She is the Chair of the North American Sámi Searvi.





The artwork for this project is inspired by a story I wrote in which a young girl befriends a white wolf. The girl discovers that the wolf is actually a Noiade (Shaman) in wolf form. The wolf becomes the girl's teacher, helpful spirit, and companion.

Bures boahtin mu meahcci Welcome to my Forest Amelia Hergott Toronto, Ontario Acrylic on Canvas





The artwork for this project is inspired by traditional stories about the soul of a Noiade (Shaman) taking the shape of a raven to travel to the spirit world.

Lex Hergott has had work shown in several exhibitions including *The heART of the Games*, Toronto Archives; *Sketchbook Project*, touring exhibit; *100th Anniversary*, book cover and exhibition, Runnymede; *Art House Sketchbook Project*, Brooklyn Art Library, New York.

Nurturing the Generations...

Lex and Amelia Hergott are students from Toronto, Ontario, and the children of Mervi Maarit Salo. They represent the next generation of artists in the North American Sami community. They are one of seven pairs of parent/child artists among the participants in North American Sami Community Collection indicating lively creative connections between generations.

The other parent/son/daughter pairs in the collection include... Marlene Miller/Sarah Heimer, Wendy Miller/Chelsey Miller, Ham Muus/Nathan Muus, Aidnu Nastas Nakai/Ursa Nakai, Eric Seaberg/Anna Seaberg, Marlene Wisuri/Kathryn Nordstrom



Vuoražas Vuoigŋa Raven Spirit Lex Johannes Hergott Toronto, Ontario Acrylic on Canvas



Dancing With the Northern Lights
Patty Salo Downs
Duluth, Minnesota
Nuno Felting Technique

"Are you dancing with the Northern Lights?" he asked. This powerful question helped me to understand myself better and connect me to my true spirit. The art piece that I created represents the joy that I experienced when I found the courage to say out loud to the universe, "I am an artist!"

Patty's lifelong interest in fiber arts began at age 6, when an aunt taught her how to knit and her mother taught her how to sew. In 2002, she fell in love with felting and started knitting and designing one-of-a-kind felted handbags. Several years later she began Nuno felting; a process of coaxing wool fibers into silk fabric using soapy water and a gentle agitation to create a durable, lightweight fabric. Learning this technique launched Patty into a new direction creating wearable art;

one-of-a-kind felted scarves, wraps, and clothing. She enjoys sharing her love of Nuno felting with others by teaching classes in person or via Skype. Patty's designs are inspired by nature and summer is her favorite time of year to felt.

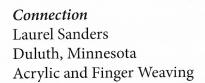
The abundant blooms of her flower gardens and the energetic activity of the many wild birds that she feeds in her backyard inspire her muse and create the perfect setting for creating beautiful things for people to wear. "It is a time when my soul is at total peace."



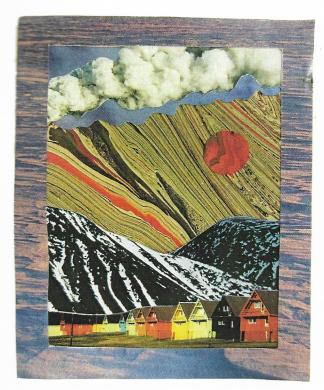
I have had a lifelong interest in indigenous communities and rights. My children are Anishinaabe. I first learned about the Sami at a presentation by Marlene Wisuri at the Carlton County Historical Society. This corroborated information in family letters and genealogy about our Norwegian family having connections to the South Sami. I treasure this heritage and look forward to learning ever more about my family and Sami culture. I especially enjoy learning about band weaving and other *duodji*. My work is interwoven with the concept of community, both natural and human. I have worked as an art instructor and in numerous community art programs. My paintings in oil, acrylic, and watercolor reflect the movement and rich colorings of the natural world and traditions of the earth's people. My recent work focus has been on indoor and outdoor murals and community theater scenery. I believe in the power of public art to provoke thought, inspire action, and lift hearts.



The woven ties on the world map show that although we do not live in Sápmi, we are connected by blood and spirit to our heritage.







Arctic Psychedelia Anna Seaberg Minneapolis, Minnesota Paper collage

Using dynamic hues and textures, Arctic Psychedelia explores the vibrant wonders of the tundra. Through the mesmerizing landscape and ethereal atmosphere, the far north extends its polar soul through brilliant colors in a way unlike anywhere else on earth.

Being both of Swedish and Sámi descent, I was raised in a family of artists that recognized our roots. Whether through art, folk music, or dance, it was always conveyed to me that remembering our ancestors and finding inspiration through familial history were important and worth celebrating. Living in a society where certain cultural traditions are slowly fading, I instilled these remnants in my mind and consequently they have attested to part of my personality and my own artwork. With that endeavor, I

am constantly undertaking explorations in various mediums to express these personal experiences within my family and my indigenous lineage, hoping to bring together an intimate exposure of history and time. I am a student at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design following in my grandfather Albin Seaberg's footsteps.





Self-Portrait

I am deeply influenced by Scandinavian traditions of design, craft, and nature. I consider myself an indigenous Sami and Swedish-American artist working in a magic realist mode similar to contemporary Inuit and other Native American and Sami artists.

Tree of Life
Eric Seaberg
Middleton, Wisconsin
Pen and Ink, Pastels

Eric Seaberg is a Sami and Swedish American from a multi-generational family of artists. He has been a participant in the North American Sami Siida since its inception and is a long time Native Ministry Specialist for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. He also has been an active part of the global indigenous revival via the World Christian Gathering of Indigenous People and the North American Institute of Indigenous Theological Studies. Eric's artistic style can be described as "magic realism" and is strongly influenced by the work of other indigenous artists like Germaine Arnaktauyok and her paintings based on Inuit myths and traditions.





Sweetgrass Portrait
Eileen Marie Sundquist
Hancock, Michigan
Felted wool

Twenty-one days of sweetgrass prayers for the water protectors... honoring the sacred...100% wool, soft-sculptural small work, Sweetgrass Portrait is a plea for sustainability and stewardship of our planet, reflecting the textile teachings of my grandmother, Mildred Olli Sundquist, who sat patiently, day after day, while my cousin, Phyllis, and I learned to braid her thick red hair. In summertime, I sit, day after day, beneath the forever blue sky of the Keweenaw, braiding sweetgrass while whispering secrets to the earth, our mother.

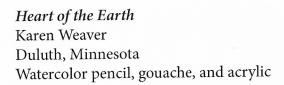
My work is a link between the past and the future. My grandmother set me on this path when she taught me to make lace as a child. She passed this knowledge to me, and with it, the responsibility to share it with others. My father reinforced and extended her teachings. I prefer to work with natural materials, predominantly fiber, wood, stone, and metal because they keep me connected to the planet. The oral traditions of



our ancestors, as stories shared for entertainment and instruction, reveal important cross-cultural similarities. My interest is in finding and sharing the common beliefs of early people, to emphasize the similarities between cultures. I weave magic to share with the world.

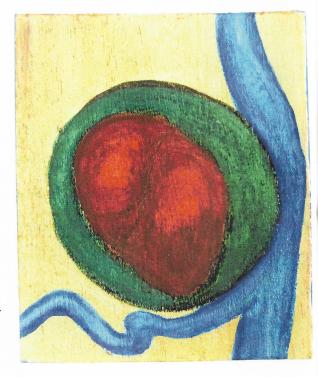
This piece is a small prayer in honor of Standing Stone Camp on the Cannonball River in North Dakota. Sending thoughts and prayers to the thousands of people representing the Earth, the Water, and the People; including members of 100s of indigenous tribes, military veterans, and citizens from around the world.

The heart represents the heart of the female reindeer calf that was sacrificed and buried when the Sami people came to Earth, that we might always be able to put our ear to the ground to hear the heartbeat of the Earth and to remind us of the sacredness of all life. The green circle represents Earth. The River is the Cannonball River in North Dakota, USA.





Karen Hilja Weaver lives in Duluth, Minnesota, with her daughter. Karen's cultural background includes ancestry from Sápmi as well as almost every other country in western Europe and Oglala Lakota. Themes of nature, community, interconnectedness, and reciprocity are an important part of her work in the world as an artist, writer, and health care professional.



Evening Sauna depicts the Finnish American practice of settling by a lake and building the family sauna first before any other building. I grew up with the traditional wood sauna as a centerpiece of family life on the small farm common to Finnish-American communitites scattered throughout the northern landscape.





Margaret Webster is a retired educator and artist who has written and illustrated several books including *A Funny thing Happened on the Way to the Cemetery* and *Are All the Heroes Gone?* She has participated in many Sami American events over many years and has been known to yoik on special occasions.

Evening Sauna Margaret Webster Tamarack, Minnesota Acrylic on Canvas

As a North American Sami descendant, I am always trying to bridge the distance between my distant ancestors in Finnish Lapland with the people and culture of contemporary Sápmi. This piece is an abstract representation of my grandmother's ancient reindeer antler resting on the earth of North America.

Marlene Wisuri has had careers as a college teacher, artist/photographer, historian, author, and book publisher. Her photographs have appeared in over 100 exhibitions throughout the United States, and in Finland and Norway. She is the co-author/photographer/photo editor of numerous books dealing with immigrant issues, local history, and Ojibwe history



and culture. Her work is heavily influenced by personal history and the natural world. She is currently the Chair of the Sami Cultural Center of North America. Her black and white photo taken in Finnish Sápmi was on the cover of *Báiki*, Issue #9.

Ancient Antler on North Shore Moss Marlene Wisuri Duluth, Minnesota Photograph on Aluminum



The Imago Mundi Featured Artists

Alison Aune > Duluth, Minnesota Pamela Capin ♦ Eveleth, Minnesota Mary Erickson ♦ Mt. Iron, Minnesota John Frandy ♦ Lake Mills, Wisconsin Nils Gransberg ♦ Norman, Oklahoma Sarah Heimer & Duluth, Minnesota Amelia Hergott ♦ Toronto, Ontario **Lex Johannes Hergott ♦ Toronto, Ontario** Katharine Johnson ♦ Cloquet, Minnesota Pearl Johnson & Anchorage, Alaska Solveig Johnson ♦ Duluth, Minnesota Vicki Lantto ♦ Annandale, Minnesota Connie Kampsula & Catalina, Arizona Joyce Koskenmäki ♦ Hancock, Michigan Nani Löfström ♦ Oakland, California Mel Mattson ♦ Eveleth, Minnesota Charles Mayo ♦ St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin Chelsey Miller ♦ Superior, Wisconsin Marlene Miller > Duluth, Minnesota

Wendy Miller ♦ Superior, Wisconsin Ham Muus ♦ Grand Marais, Minnesota Nathan Muus & Oakland, California Paulette Myers-Rich ♦ New York, New York Aidnu Nastas Nakai & Placerville, California Ursa Nakai & Placerville, California Brad Nelson ♦ Larsmont, Minnesota Kathryn Nordstrom ♦ Duluth, Minnesota Vivian Faith Prescott ♦ Wrangell, Alaska Mervi Maarit Salo & Toronto, Ontario Patty Salo Downs & Duluth, Minnesota Laurel Sanders ♦ Duluth, Minnesota Anna Seaberg ♦ Minneapolis, Minnesota Eric Seaberg ♦ Middleton, Wisconsin Eileen Sundquist ♦ Hancock, Michigan Karen Weaver ♦ Duluth, Minnesota Margaret Webster ♦ Tamarack, Minnesota Marlene Wisuri & Duluth, Minnesota



Installation views of the Imago Mundi Preview Exhibit, December 6, 2016, Sami Cultural Center of North America, Duluth, Minnesota.





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Sami Cultural Center of North America 4915 East Superior Street, Suite 205 Duluth, MN 55804 USA Telephone 218-525-4757

samicenterna@gmail.com www.samiculturalcenter.org

The Shared Mission of the Sami Cultural Center of North America and Báiki

Fostering an awareness of Sami culture through education, communication, research, and the arts Facilitating connections between Sápmi and descendants of Sami immigrants to North America Maintaining relationships with indigenous and environmental communities

Báiki: The International Sami Journal was founded in 1991 by Faith Fjeld, who served as editor for 37 issues until Issue #37, Autumn 2013. Issue #38 was published in Summer 2015 as a memorial issue dedicated to Faith following her death in October 2014. Although the subscription series of Báiki has been discontinued as Faith requested, special issues may be published from time to time on a single topic. This issue is the first of the special issues and is devoted to art in the North American Sami community.

The mission of Báiki continues through the Báiki archives and library in Oakland, California, web site and Facebook groups, sponsorship of exhibits, participation in various festivals, and other community activities.

Báiki and the Sami Cultural Center have jointly provided *The Sami Reindeer People of Alaska* exhibit to the Vesterheim Norwegian American Museum in Decorah, Iowa; Minnesota Discovery Center in Chisholm, Minnesota; and Nordic Northwest in Portland, Oregon, with other locations being planned in 2017. An exhibit catalog is available; call or email the Sami Cultural Center to order a copy.

A view of *The Sami Reindeer People of Alaska* exhibit at the Vesterheim Norwegian American Musesum,

The non-profit Sami Cultural Center of North America was organized in 2011 and opened its doors in August 2014 in Duluth, Minnesota. The Center houses an office, library, collection storage, a display area, and a classroom/meeting room/project room. The Center has a sizable library of books and other materials about Sami topics and the Alaska Sami projects that are available for research on site. The library has been named the Faith Fjeld Memorial Library.

The Center maintains an active schedule of classes, exhibits, special events, and presentaions. It serves as a resource center for those seeking information about a variety of topics. It has a web page and maintains a Facebook page. It is serving as a community gathering place for events such as the *Imago Mundi* preview exhibit and Sami National Day Open House.

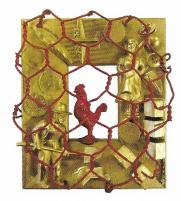


The Sami Cultural Center and Báiki and are so appreciative of generous donations from many individuals and grants from Finlandia Foundation National and the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation that help support our many activites.

Donations in support of the work the Sami Cultural Center and Báiki are gratefully accepted and can be sent to the Sami Cultural Center, 4915 East Superior Street, #205, Duluth, MN 55804 or made on-line at www.samiculturalcenter.org. The Sami Cultural Center is a 501(c)(3) organization and donations are tax deductible.

Imago Mundi ~ The Art of Humanity ~ North American Sami Community Collection





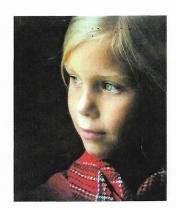


























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