



# Nuvisavik: The Place Where We Weave

*Maria Von Finckenstein*

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## **Nuvisavik: The Place Where We Weave** Maria Von Finckenstein

In 1970 a small group of young Inuit women in Pangnirtung on Baffin Island began to tell a story - a story about their past, their culture, their lives - a story told through woven pictures. The first book dedicated to the art form of tapestry weaving, Nuvisavik shows how weaving became a bridge between nomadic camp life and life in a permanent settlement. The tapestries, meticulously woven by women trained by their mothers as seamstresses, portray images wistfully remembered by elders in the community and captured by local artists. Both the drawings and the tapestries convey the pride of the Inuit in their culture. The tapestries are presented against a rich cultural and historical context. Two of the essays in the book are based on interviews with elders and reflect the colourful history of the Cumberland Sound, where sustained contact between Inuit and Americans and Scots began as early as the mid-nineteenth century. The cultural content of the tapestries is discussed by members of the Inuit community, decoding otherwise enigmatic and puzzling images. A wonderful blend of art history and cultural history, Nuvisavik will entertain the scholar and art collector as well as readers with a special interest in the history of the Canadian North. Contributors include July Papatsie, a well-established artist from Pangnirtung who brings his personal background and knowledge of his culture to his writing; Deborah Hickman, a tapestry weaver herself, who was general manager and artistic advisor to the Pangnirtung Tapestry Studio from 1980 to 1983; Cathleen Knotsch, a researcher who specializes in issues pertaining to the Canadian Eastern Arctic; and Maria von Finckenstein.

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