



***Cultural Industry and Political
Expression:***

***The Rise of Canadian Inuit Film
Making***

Friday–Saturday April 22–23, 2011

**The Gifford Room, 221 Kroeber Hall, UC
Berkeley**

A Symposium and Film Festival

organized and hosted by

the Canadian Studies Program,

UC Berkeley

**co-sponsored by the Doreen B. Townsend Center
for the Humanities,**

the Department of Anthropology,

and the Bluma Appel Fund in Canadian Studies

with the support of the Government of Canada

Background

The Canadian Inuit have creatively endured and prospered in the face of climatic and demographic challenges for more than a thousand years. In recent decades they have countered threats to their language and culture—due to massive assimilation by Canadian bureaucratic, educational and economic systems, and by North American popular culture via the media—by developing their own radio and television programs, e.g. government-run IBC (Inuit Broadcasting Corporation), Taqramiut Nipingit, and local studios. This has been followed by a boom in independent films especially by Isuma Productions (Igloolik) showing Inuit mythology *Atarnarjuat/the Fast Runner*, their recent history *The Journals of Knud Rasmussen* and demonstrating traditional skills, e.g. *Kamik* [Making skin boots]; and *Saputi* [Fishing at the weir].

Other film makers more directly attack the colonial condition: *Starting Fire with Gunpowder* [Inuit taking control of TV], *Kakkalaakkuvik* 2010 [boarding schools] and *Ullumi* 2008 [Inuit problems today]. *Qallunaanik Piusiqsiuriniq* [Why Whitemen Are Funny] (2006) which presents the Inuit as anthropologists studying white people, running tests on specimens brought back from the South, and presenting papers on their research at a conference! The Festival has invited film makers including Mini Aodla Freeman, John Houston, Lena Ellsworth, and Jobie Weetaluktuk to be with us.

Inuit film and video making is a new form of cultural and political engagement with the outside world, of significance equal in many ways to their more famous graphic and sculptural arts. Local scholars and the public are invited to join the film makers and each other in discussion of the cultural, political and economic importance of this remarkable film industry.

Participants

Lena Ellsworth, film maker

Mini Aodla Freeman, film maker

Nelson Graburn, Anthropology and Canadian Studies, UC Berkeley

John Houston, film maker

Jobie Weetaluktuk, film maker

Link to [participant bios](#)

Link to [works shown](#)

Link to [rapporteur's summary \(PDF\)](#)

AGENDA

FRIDAY

1:00 Welcome, David Stewart, Academic Affairs Officer, Canadian Consulate General San Francisco/Silicon Valley

**Nelson Graburn,
“Introduction to
Inuit Media
Developments”**

**Introduces the
film:**

**1:30–2:30 *Starting Fire with Gunpowder*
(1991: 57 min.)**

2.30–3:30 Panel Discussion: “Inuit Economic Development”

- 3:30–3:45 Discussion**
- 3:45–4:00 Break**
- 4:00–4:15 Mini Aodla Freeman, “On the Origins of Inuit TV and Film Making”**
- Introduces her film:**
- 4:15–4:45 *Najursitiit* (The Keepers) (1994: 29 min.)**
- 4:45–4:50 Nelson Graburn and Mini Aodla Freeman introduce the film:**
- 4:50–5:15 *Ilisaat Amiayikami—Berkeley Studies Inuit* (1993: 25 min.)**
- 5:15–6:00 Plenary Discussion**

SATURDAY

- 8:30–9:00 Continental breakfast**
- 9:00–9:15 Ellsworth, Houston, and Graburn introduce the film:**
- 9:15–10:15 *Qallunaanik Piusiqsiuriniq—Why Whitemen are Funny* (2007: 57 min.)**
- 10:15– 10:20 John Houston introduces the film:**
- 10:20 –11:10 *Diet of Souls* (2004: 50 min.)**

11:10–11:20 Break

11:20–11:25 Lena Ellsworth introduces the film:

11:30–12:30 *Ullumi (Today)* (2007: 50 min.)

12:30–1:30 *Lunch*

1:30–1:45 Jobie Weetaluktuk introduces his films:

1:45–2:10 *Umiaq Skin Boat* (2008: 25 min.)

2:10–2:35 *Kakalakkuvik (Where The Children Dwell)* (2010: 25 min.)

2:10–3:00 Discussion

3:00–3:15 John Houston introduces his film:

3:15–4:05 *The White Archer* (2010: 50 min.)

4:05–4:20 Lena Ellsworth introduces the film:

4:20–5:15 *Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change* (2010: 54 min.)

5:15–6:00 Plenary Discussion

[UCB Canadian Studies Home Page](#)
[Activities and Calendar Page](#)

