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ROCKY GRASSY MOUNTAIN IN JUNE: DRAWINGS BY TONY ANGUHALLUQ
MAY 16 – JUNE 16, 2015

Vancouver, BC—The Marion Scott Gallery and Kardosh Projects are pleased to announce an exhibition of recent works on paper by Baker Lake’s Tony Anguhalluq. Opening May 16 and continuing through June 16, Rocky Grassy Mountain in June: Drawings by Tony Anguhalluq is the artist’s first exhibition at the gallery in seven years. The show comprises 35 works on paper in a variety of media, formats and scales. The majority of Anguhalluq’s colourful images represent the abstract forms and silhouetted contours of the Arctic landscape, both peopled and unpeopled. Eschewing such conventions as uniform perspective and imitative shading to suggest the illusion of depth, Anguhalluq’s energetic drawings bristle with movement and experimental techniques. Included in the spring presentation is a major 20-foot mural-like drawing in oil stick, one of the largest works on paper ever produced by an Inuit artist. A live drawing performance and reception for the artist will take place in the gallery on Saturday, May 23 from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

At 44, Tony Anguhalluq is part of a new generation of Inuit drawers and printmakers who are reinventing the North’s artistic traditions. The adopted son of legendary Inuit artists Luke Anguhadluq and Marion Tuulluq, Anguhalluq’s unconventional work differs markedly from the expression of an earlier generation of northern artists, many of whom rarely represent the land directly in their work, choosing instead to isolate figures and animals against the blank paper. Anguhalluq, by contrast, makes the northern landscape his principal subject. In these works, Anguhalluq visualizes the treeless hilled terrain and flowing waterways in and around his Baker Lake hometown as a series of overlapping, abstract contoured blocks of solid colour. Eschewing such

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conventional (i.e. southern) techniques as uniform perspective and shading to suggest sculptural volume, Anguhalluq’s deceptively simple drawings resemble Japanese woodblocks, relying on striking colour contrasts and economical stylized lines to suggest depth and spatial recession within each image.

Colour plays a crucial role in Anguhalluq’s distinctive expression, as the works in the exhibition amply demonstrate. Working with both pencil crayons and more heavily applied oil sticks, Anguhalluq revels in producing surprising juxtapositions of colour, creating compositions that alternate between combinations of bright reds and yellows and deep blues, purples and blacks. Described by the critic Lloyd Dykk as “ravishing,” Anguhalluq’s colour choices may seem to a southern viewer to be either arbitrary or largely guided by aesthetic or purely formal considerations. In fact, Anguhalluq’s innovative use of colour is reflective of a kind of naturalism, providing an accurate portrait of the land under varying seasonal conditions. (According to the artist, northern skies often do appear purple in winter, while mountains viewed from a distance can seem red, yellow or black.)

Many of the landscapes in the exhibition are unpeopled, while others feature human figures and/or animals, including fish, caribou and musk oxen. For the most part, the figures are shown either camping or hunting, their diminutive forms rendered insignificant against the vast rocky terrain. Animals are often portrayed as larger silhouettes roaming over distant hills. Despite the traditional nature of the activities portrayed, the scenes are clearly contemporary: Anguhalluq’s reductive people wear brightly coloured manufactured clothing instead of skin garments and carry rifles instead of bows and arrows. Such works reflect the importance of the land to the Inuit and their identity, a relationship that continues to define northern culture today.

Included in the exhibition is a 20-foot long drawing entitled Two Inuks are stalking the musk ox in July. Made with oil sticks on specially prepared paper, the richly coloured work portrays two small Inuit figures scurrying over continuously undulating hilly northern terrain. At the far right of the composition, a lone musk ox grazes on some black branches, unaware of the two hunters’ furtive approach. Produced during a 2010 artistic residency at a printmaking facility in Montreal, Anguhalluq’s ambitious panorama is one of the largest works on paper ever made by a northern artist.

For more information about Rocky Grassy Mountain in June: Drawings by Tony Anguhalluq, please contact Robert Kardosh at art@marionscottgallery.com or by phone at 604-685-1934. High-resolution images are available upon request.

About Tony Anguhalluq
Tony Anguhalluq was born in 1970 in Churchill, Manitoba. Adopted at a young age by well-known artists Luke Anguhadluq and Marion Tu’uluq, Tony grew up during a time of change and disruption within Inuit culture. His adoptive parents, both members of the inland dwelling Utkusiksalingmiut, were determined to maintain aspects of their former semi-nomadic lifestyle. As a result, Anguhalluq spent most of his childhood

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summers at a camp north of the Baker Lake settlement, where he learned to hunt and fish. Inspired by his parents’ artistic success (Luke Anguhadluq was a drawer while Marion Tuu’luq is known for her fabric works), he decided to participate in a series of experimental drawing and printmaking workshops that were held in Baker Lake in the mid 1990s. These experiences marked the beginning of his career as a graphic artist. Anguhalluq had his first solo exhibition in 2007 at the Marion Scott Gallery. His work is found in many important private and public collections in Canada and the USA, including those of the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. Anguhalluq lives and works in Baker Lake, Nunavut.

About Marion Scott Gallery/Kardosh Projects
Now in its 39th year of operation, the Marion Scott Gallery has a long history of showcasing the best of contemporary art from the Canadian North. Specializing in both new and historical expressions from the Arctic in a range of media, the family-run gallery is committed to positioning the work of Canada’s Inuit artists within a national and international contemporary artistic framework. Now located in Vancouver’s South Granville gallery district, the Gallery has recently expanded its activities to include, under the name Kardosh Projects, a series of sponsored initiatives with some of the Canada’s most innovative artists.

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Images
Page 1 (left to right):

Rocky Grassy Mountain in June (detail), 2012, oil stick and coloured pencil on paper, 24.75 x 35.5 in.
Five Inuit art camping during the summer, in June (detail), 2010, oil stick and coloured pencil on paper, 24.75 x 35.5 in.
Four-sided Mountain with Black Pond in Aug (detail), 2007, coloured pencil and graphite on paper, 10.5 x 13.75 in.
Muskox Caribous and Wolverine are migrating in Aug (detail), 2013, coloured pencil and graphite on paper, 14 x 11 in.
Rocky Grassy Mountain in June, 2012
oil stick and coloured pencil on paper
24.75 x 35.5 in.