

PRESS RELEASE



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JULY 22, 2023

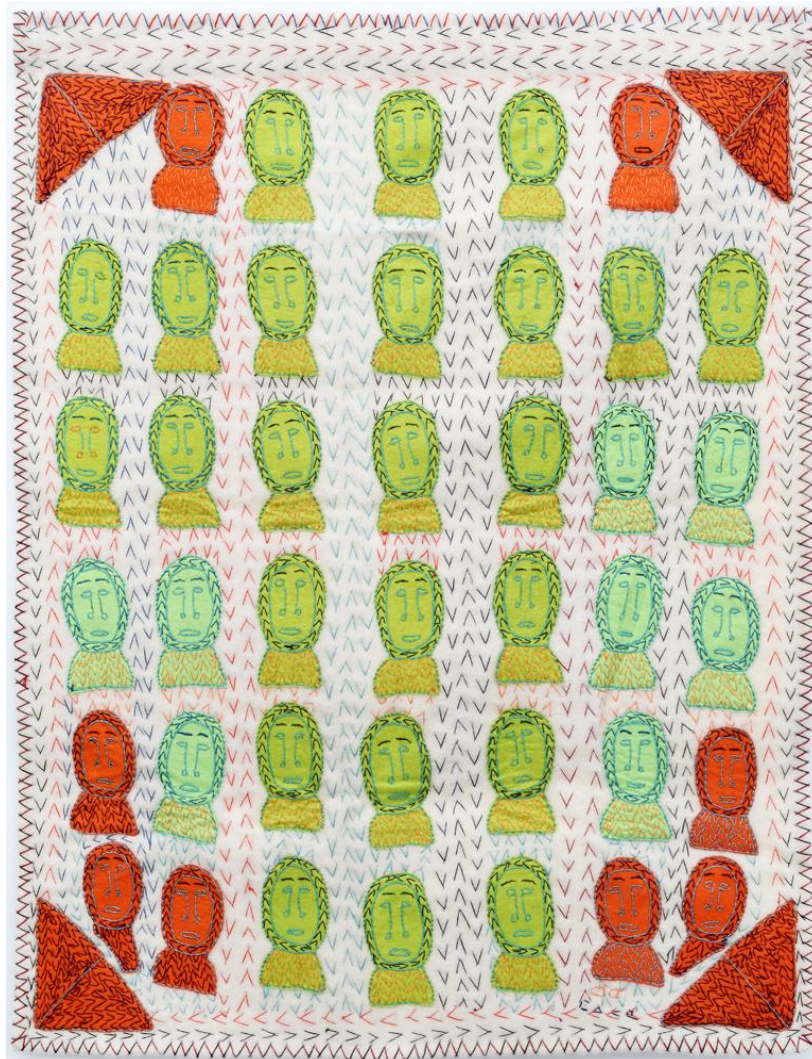
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TAIPANA: CLOTH AND STONE

July 22 — August 12, 2023



Vancouver, BC — Marion Scott Gallery is pleased to announce *TAIPANA: Cloth and Stone*, opening on July 22 and continuing until August 12. The exhibition features the work of husband-and-wife duo, sculptor Jimmy Taipana and textile artist Annie Taipana, presenting their artistic output, each of radically different mediums, in context and conversation together. Featuring a series of Annie Taipana's colourful, vibrant *nivingajuliat*, or wall-hangings, alongside Jimmy Taipana's austere, elegant stone carvings of faces, the show presents a holistic view of the dynamic work produced by the artistic couple, who often created both in tandem and in collaboration with one another.

The energetic and expansive nature of Annie Taipana's compositions reveals the influence of her mother's style, celebrated textile artist Elizabeth Angrnaqquaq (1916–2003), who first taught Annie how to sew and stitch. Replete with human and animal forms, Annie Taipana's wall-hangings are uniquely detailed and instantly recognizable for their dense, zig-zagging stitches and vibrant, contrasting colours. In her busy compositions, a variety of Arctic animals and individuals appear in tight-knit arrangements, often in elongated, oblong silhouettes which exude a sense of playfulness and whimsicality. A prime example is *Untitled (people & shamans)* (pg.4), where a sea of people wearing brightly coloured parkas wade amongst one another; some are depicted in profile while others are defined by the bulky shape of their outerwear. Another untitled wall-hanging (cover image) presents an exception to Annie Taipana's penchant for silhouetted figures. It depicts a variety of neon faces, clad in fur-lined parkas and arranged in rows on a beige backdrop decorated with V-shaped stitches. While largely standardized in appearance, the visages reflect subtle changes in expression through upturned and downturned mouths and eyebrows, some seeming to portray a sense of bewilderment or confusion, while others appear with wide smiles.

Forming a stark contrast to Annie Taipana's elaborate textiles, Jimmy Taipana's mask-like sculptures reflect a minimalist sensibility, showcasing his signature semi-abstract style which relies on dense, geometric forms and often emphasizes the natural roughness of the carved stone. Jimmy Taipana's asymmetrical faces are recognizable for their use of circular punctures as eyes, their rough, unpolished surfaces, and the stoic facial expressions they convey. His largest work in the exhibition, *Untitled (tattooed face)* (pg.5), is unique for its depiction of *kakiniit*, traditional Inuit facial tattoos, with incised lines that cut across the cheeks and chin, while an upside-down triangle decorates the forehead area. In another, smaller face carving (pg.6), the features are more subtle, while the overall flatness of the work lends it a certain naturalism. With a slight rectangular bump forming the nose and a craggy, lopsided indent serving as the mouth, it is almost as if the rock has become animated and taken on this anthropomorphic form on its own.

Annie Taipana was born in 1931 in the Back River region north of the Arctic Circle and is a member of the Utkusiksalingmiut (“people of the soapstone pots”). Originally known as Pikla, she grew up in a highly traditional milieu, learning the customs and skills of her people, who still lived semi-nomadically at that time, hunting and fishing for their food and clothing. While still in her teens, she married Jimmy Taipana, a hunter and shaman healer who would later become a noted sculptor. The couple continued to live on the land with their children, but in the late 1950s widespread starvation forced the entire family to relocate, along with other members of their group, to the inland community of Qamani’tuaq further south. In the early 1980s, Taipana began making appliquéd cloth works (“wall-hangings”) for sale to the local co-op, joining the settlement’s impressive cadre of women textile artists. Unlike many of Qamani’tuaq’s textile artists, Taipana has rarely made drawings, nor does she carve, suggesting that her practice is inseparable from the sewn medium in which she exclusively works.

Jimmy Taipana was born in 1919 and grew up around the Kuunajuk (Ellice River) and Kuugjuaq (Perry River) area in the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut. A talented hunter, fisher, and shaman healer, he led a traditional lifestyle for decades, living off the land before eventually settling in Qamani'tuaq with his wife Annie and their large family of ten children. Jimmy Taipana is best known for his carvings of mask-like faces, often dotted and incised with lines that represent traditional Inuit tattoos, although he occasionally created smaller figurines and animals. He passed away at Qamani'tuaq in 2000.

Cover image: Annie Taipana, *Untitled (composition of faces)*, wool & embroidery floss on wool duffel, 37.5 x 29 in.

PRESS INQUIRIES: Please contact Robert Kardosh at robert@marionscottgallery.com or by phone at 604-685-1934. High-resolution images are available upon request.



Annie Taipana
Untitled (people & shamans)
Wool duffle, felt, and embroidery floss
37.25 x 54 in.



Jimmy Taipana
Untitled (tattooed face)
Stone
9.25 x 6.25 x 1.5 in.



Jimmy Taipana
Untitled (face)
Stone
4 x 3 x 0.5 in.