

## Al Pace

My fascination with Inuit Art began in 1977 after completing my first arctic canoeing adventure on the fabled Coppermine River. At the Hudson Bay Store in the Hamlet of Coppermine (now Kugluktuk), I purchased a small bone carving of a hunter in a kayak and gave this to my Mom & Dad. Decades later this small carving has circled its way back into my life, and I cannot express how much enjoyment it brings me.

In the 1980's, with my career as a Studio Potter in full-flight, I discovered that my primary sources of inspiration were connected to my northern adventures. I remember the day when a customer in my gallery exclaimed, "your pottery designs and glazes feel so Canadian". As a young artisan, I considered this as the ultimate compliment. One of the things I love about Inuit soapstone carvings is the sense of permanence in each piece and the inherent beauty in the actual stone itself. This became a standard of quality that I pursued in my own craft – "will the vessels I am creating stand the test of time?"

In the 1990's, I acquired a collection of Soapstone Carvings created in Cape Dorset, located on Baffin Island. In my gallery, I proudly displayed this collection of carvings amongst my stoneware vessels and loved the interaction and energy-force between these two mediums made of the earth. My fascination and understanding of Inuit Art, Mythology and Design has grown over the years and provided me with immense pleasure and sense of connection to the far north.

In August 2026, I will be hosting a group on an Adventure Canada small-vessel cruise, "Heart of the Arctic", which includes a visit to Cape Dorset to experience the world-renowned Kenojuak Cultural Centre and Print Gallery and meet many of the local print-makers and stone carvers. So much of an artists' personality is communicated through their art, but I cannot tell you how excited I will be to meet Inuit carvers and print-makers in-person!