

Final Report to the Culture and Heritage, Province of Manitoba May 1, 2014



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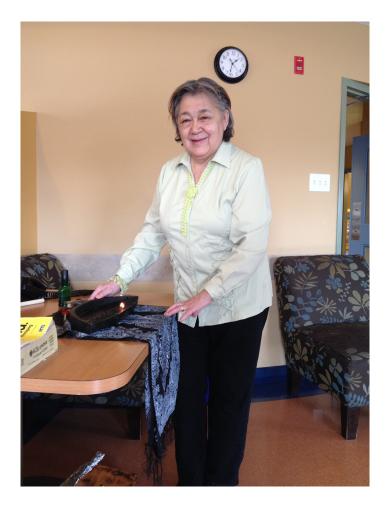
1 Title: MUIA: ▷σ
 'b Tells a Story"

1.1 Project Background

The Manitoba Urban Inuit Association is very fortunate to have the ear of its membership and in turn we like to be responsive to our membership when they provide feedback. The Inuit community has told us that they enjoy the large-scale cultural events that MUIA offers and many have asked about the possibility of hosting smaller events such as classes in learning the Inuktitut language, traditional Inuit carving and sewing. We fulfilled that request by offering a 2-month program called, $\triangleright \sigma < \dot{b}^{5b} \supset^{5b}$ "Tells a Story".

MUIA offered the community an opportunity to learn the art of creating traditional Inuit wall hangings and then present them with the oral tradition of storytelling. Storytelling in the Arctic is a means not only to entertain, but also to educate and inform, this will allow youth to learn this. The purpose of the project was to keep Inuit culture alive in Winnipeg, enhance the connections between Inuit Elders and Youth through the inter-generational transference of culture through the traditional Inuit oral traditions and the creation of Inuit traditional art. In addition, it is of great importance to support and enhance the Inuit living in Winnipeg to maintain their Inuit traditional values and culture as practiced in the Arctic regions of Canada – their homelands. The connection with culture is a protective factor and one that increases successful outcomes in a person's life journey in that it creates balance and wellness. This ultimately is an outcome that favours all citizens both corporate and private, living in Winnipeg because a healthy community provides long-term economic stability and growth.

MUIA organizes and host cultural events with the Inuit community in Winnipeg, throughout the year, and we partnered with Kivalliq Inuit Centre to host the workshops and the community celebration and presentation of the wall hanging to MUIA. Levinia Brown, Inuit Elder and project coordinator shared traditional stories of the importance sewing, its meditative and healing properties and how traditionally sewing was a time for young men and women to learn about Inuit culture, language and the tools of survival living out on the land.



This project "brought back childhood memories, how it used to be to sit around with mothers, grandmothers, and they would do story telling while we all listened as children and while they all sewed together, and we watched and learned. Our Elders would teach us about survival and the importance of sewing while we gathered together, there would always be laughter, so the children would learn about love and affection. The memories just came and were so strong. Very good feeling to be in a safe environment and to belong, and also to feel wanted, and cared for to be taught about belong, and most importantly the survival and to have self respect, to have pride with our time, and how our time is spent, to have pride for our belongings." (Levinia Brown)

2 Goals and Achievements

The three main goals for $\triangleright \sigma^{<\dot{b}}$ "Tells a Story" were to:

- 1. Increase Inuit traditional knowledge with in the Inuit community of Winnipeg and most importantly for Inuit individuals and families.
- 2. Increase opportunities for the intergenerational transference of culture and language by re-establishing connections between Inuit Elders and Youth
- 3. Enhance the art of Inuit traditional story-telling and of Inuit tapestry/wall-hangings

Achievements toward Increase Inuit traditional knowledge with in the Inuit community of Winnipeg and most importantly for Inuit individuals and families include:



The following are a list of achievements:

- The workshops were attended by both the Inuit community of Winnipeg and the Kivalliq residents of the KIC;
- KIC provided one staff person to help coordinate the program with Levinia Brown:
- Families and individuals attended;
- Youth and their caregivers/parents/guardians attended:
- Young expectant mothers who were residents of KIC attended the workshops;

- Family/social services agencies attended with clients to enhance both their Inuit client's and workers' knowledge of Inuit culture;
- MUIA staff attended the workshops, as well as Board members attended the celebration/presentation on March 31st.

"There was a fourteen year old Inuk girl who is fostered out to a family in Winnipeg, and wishes to keep in touch with her Inuit heritage and culture who came to do her piece of art work. It was very evident the acceptance that was shown between the young girl and her foster relative. They both enjoyed sewing with us." (Levinia Brown)

Achievements toward increased opportunities for the intergenerational transference of culture and language by re-establishing connections between Inuit Elders and Youth:



The following are a list of achievements

- Youth as young as 7 and 8 years old attended the workshops
- Both boys and girls attended
- Youth interacted with the adults and Elders in order to learn how to sew and the exchange of knowledge was very evident throughout the workshops

- Young expectant mothers attended the workshops and they interacted with the Elders. It was evident that they had a lot on their mind, things that were upsetting/stressful and they were able to take this an opportunity for relieving stress through the meditative qualities of sewing as well as seeking advice from Elders
- The celebration on March 31st also brought Youth and Elders together as they played Inuit traditional games together

"there was 70 plus year old Elder who joined us for the two hour period, and she completed a square to add on the master piece, she was so excellent and did a story telling and some advise to younger ladies" (Levinia Brown

Achievements toward enhancing the art of Inuit traditional storytelling and of Inuit tapestry/wall-hangings



2.1 Outcomes

This project generated planned and unintended outcomes, which include:

- KIC and MUIA will be partnering on future Inuit cultural and educational projects that emphasize Inuit traditional knowledge and healing that will enhance Inuit health and wellness outcomes. partnerships; Macdonald Youth Services, with in our stakeholder community;
- MUIA will be seeking targeted funding to provide an Inuit specific Prenatal/post-natal program for young Inuit mothers in Winnipeg and for the KIC residents;
- MUIA will be working with existing family services organizations to strengthen their Inuit cultural competencies of staff and programs, e.g. Metis Child and Family Services, Macdonald Youth Services;
- Implement a marketing and communication strategy to further reach Manitoba's Inuit and as well as other community groups and sister organizations.

3 Activities

Activities of project carried out between Jan 6, 2014 to March 31, 2014:

ACTIVITY	START	END	STATUS	
Contact Levinia Broun, Inuit Elder in Winnipeg to discuss project.	Jan 6	Jan 10	Meetings and communications with Levinia about project.	
Create partnership and determine location of project	Jan 13	Jan 17	Kivalliq Inuit Center (KIC) is partner on project and is the location for the program	
 Produce communications materials; distribution of materials 	Jan 27	Feb 7	Completed project posters and distribution	
7 tapestry workshops with Levinia	Feb 10	Mar 24	7 two-hour tapestry workshops delivered by Levinia with the support of staff from KIC	
Community celebration and presentation of tapestry	Mar 31	Mar 31	Community celebration and presentation of tapestry to MUIA. Inuit community of Winnipeg and residents of	

	KIC were present, as well as
	MUIA board members.

4 Outputs

- 1. Provided seven (7) hands-on workshops with Inuit from the community of Winnipeg and Inuit residents from the Kivalliq region of Nunavut that were residents at the KIC; Workshops held on February 10, 17, 24, 2014 and March 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2014
- 2. Project coordination was from the Inuit community. Inuit Elder, Levinia Brown and Inuit activities coordinator from KIC Grace Tookoome
- **3.** Prepared communications materials to reach Manitoba Inuit as well as other community organizations; *English version of MUIA project poster complete with logos of MUIA and funders*.
- **4.** Completed community celebration and unveiling and presentation of tapestry. *Completed March 31, 2014*

5 Project Evaluation Plan

5.1 Evaluating Goal 1: Increase Inuit traditional knowledge with in the Inuit community of Winnipeg and most importantly for Inuit individuals and families.

The plan for evaluating whether Goal 1 has succeeded will be based on the following measures:

- 1. Did the MUIA provide the tapestry workshops? Yes
- 2. How many workshops were provided and how many people participated in total? Yes, 7 workshops in total followed by a community presentation and celebration hosted by MUIA and KIC.
- **3.** Did the project have attendance by other agencies? Yes, social service agencies brought their clients (families/children) to the program, e.g. Metis Child and Family Services, Macdonald Youth Services
- 5.2 Evaluating Goal 2: An opportunity for Intergenerational transference of culture and language by the re-establishing connections between Inuit youth and Elders.

The plan for evaluating whether Goal 2 has succeeded will be based on the following measures:

1. The MUIA will employ Inuit Elders and artisans as part of the program delivery. Inuit Elder Levinia Brown was hired to Co-ordinate the project and Grace Tookoome was the co-facilitator – also Inuk

- 2. The MUIA will provide communication material related to the project in areas the Inuit community frequent. A poster was developed that communicated the dates/times/locations of the program. These were placed at the KIC, MUIA and DMSMCA offices, Neeginan Centre and United Way.
- 5.3 Evaluating Goal 3: Enhance the art of Inuit traditional story-telling and tapestry/ wall-hanging

The plan for evaluating whether Goal 3 has succeeded will be based on the following measures:

- **1.** Was there a tapestry created? Yes.
- 2. Was the tapestry created using traditional sewing? The Tapestry was created through collaborative community efforts, i.e. each individual sewed a square and each square was sewn together to create a tapestry.
- **3.** Was there story telling involved? Levinia Brown who told the story of many of the individual squares and the traditional impacts sewing presented the tapestry to MUIA and community has on Inuit wellness and balance.

5.4 Project Budget Report

Expenditures related to this project in April 2013-March 2014 are included below.

Income	Budget	Actual	Variance	
			(Over)	
			Under	
Provincial Government Heritage	\$1,640	\$1,640	\$ 0	
Core funding matching funds	1,640	1,640	0	
Total Income	3,280	3,280	0	
Expenditures				
Elders Honoraria	480	450	30	
Materials and Supplies	1,000	605	395	
Consulting Fees	1,800	1,800	0	
Total Expenditures	3,280	2,855	425	
Excess of revenue over expenditures	\$ 0	\$ 425	\$ 425	

Appendix 1 – Unedited Reports Prepared by Levinia Brown, Project Coordinator

Hi Rachel,

The following is my report from our first Sewing Project:

Feb, 3/14 was the First day of our sewing project with Inuit people, and was trying to attract the Urban Inuit, as it turned out, we did have four urban Inuit attend the sewing, which I thought was great as it is hard to get the urban Inuit for different reason, some work, some are hard to communicate with, as a lot of them have no way to communicate and there are some Inuit who are homeless, and one major challenge is transportation, getting around from point A to point B, I have talked to many urban Inuit people when I see them, and they say, they have problems getting around, no bus passes no money!!!

On February 3, our sewing class started off with about healthy twenty plus participants......everybody attending was so eager to start their project, as people mixed and mingle, one could feel the mood of togetherness, and friendliness. Tables all set up and chairs and the place at the Inuit centre was very roomy, with couches in the living room. All the materials scissors needles and everything needed to start a large project was steadily made available and no shortage of anything. It was wonderful to see plenty of stuff to work with, which made it, that much more

plenty of stuff to work with, which made it, that much more attractive for participants want to join.

I as one of the leaders for the project of sewing was welcomed so warmly, and Rachel was on hand to guide us all to the materials and tools needed to lift off the project. Without properly prepared and not having enough materials and stuff, only makes more challenge from being productive and to enjoy our gathering, so it is greatly appreciated we all have proper essentials to carry on, also knowing we won't run out of materials is a reassurance to be able to complete the project from start to finish.

As introduction and preparation and instructions had been said and laid, a phone call came in for one of the participants. As it happened too often in Nunavut communities, one of the participants received a call from one of the communities from Nunavut, and passed on the news that there was a suicide and affected half of the participants, so our group dropped to about a dozen or so.

The people who stayed to do their sewing, tried their best to keep going and to keep up their spirits, Grace the Rec, Coordinator was present to guide us, and she was the most helpful person.

The Inuit Centre Staff were also available to assist in anyway they can. We all felt right at home. People mixed well, and helped each other.

The two hours slated for the sewing went very fast and some participant completed their small square of art, and ready to be placed on to the major piece, the large piece shall be the

master piece, and the idea is to fill it, the size is about one meter wide and one meter long. That is our vision, to do a major piece as a group of different people working on it.

Point of interest, there was a fourteen year old Inuk girl who is fostered out to a family in Winnipeg, and wishes to keep in touch with her Inuit heritage and culture who came to do her piece of art work. She is a very cheerful happy young girl, who came with her chaperon, who is very friendly and shows so much affection to the young 14 year old girl. It was very evident the accepting that was shown between the young girl and her foster relative. They both enjoyed sewing with us.

All the participants were ever relaxed and I felt that they were all ready for the project to start. It even brought back childhood memories, how it used to be to sit around with mothers, grandmothers, and they would do story telling while we all listened as children and while they all sewed together, and we watched and learned. Our Elders would teach us about survival and the importance of sewing while we gathered together, there would always be laughter, so the children would learn about love and affection. The memories just came and were so strong. Very good feeling to be in a safe environment and to belong, and also to feel wanted, and cared for to be taught about belong, and most importantly the survival and to have self respect, to have pride with our time, and how our time is spent, to have pride for our belongings.

I left the afternoon and the Inuit Centre leaving behind the cheerful crowd, I felt very rewarded with every one worked

so hard and well together. Even thought they worked hard, it was something everyone appeared to enjoy as they all seemed relaxed......looking very much forward to our next gathering.

Thank you Rachel, for the good deed and your thoughtfulness to have this project going,

Now to do my teachings about "The Importance of Belonging" using the tool of Sewing!!!

Date: Mon, 17 Feb 2014

Hi Rachel, I just wanted to report to you of our successful sewing class today.

I was just so marvelous and enjoyable, all different group of participants, except that nice young girl, the 14 year old girl who joined us last week. So adorable to see her come back for a second time. And this time she bring with her few older women, perhaps they were her chaperon and three other young girls. There was another urban young woman who came also with a chaperon, and another urban elder Inuk woman. This group had just came from celebrations and they each wore very beautiful distinctive outfits, and added different type of welcoming culture. They mixed very well with the rest of the participants. It was so plain to see, these group were most interested in joining with the sewing class. From this group they all were so eager to sew, I saw the older Inuit ladies helping to threat the needles for the young girls and just coax them along with the sewing. It was

just blessing this group came along. I believe we had 15 to 17 participants all together. There were three expectant moms sewing, and older women. The two staff from the centre set up tables and chairs, Lesley and another staff member brought out more folding tables, and some just sat on the couch sewing. The group we had today were larger than last week. Lesley took quite a few photos of this afternoon's activities, it was quite evident the participants were very enthusiast and raring to go Today's activities proved a lot of mixing and mingling. The high light for me were all the little girls enjoying themselves and Inuit women wanting to teach their talent to them. It was very Healthy, welcoming and warm environment and atmosphere. The staff at the Inuit Centre must be commended for their friendliness, helpfulness and mingling well with all of us. I truly m pleased with the great turn out.

Next I wish to jot down what the true meaning and the inspiring sense of Inuit Traditional sewing.

For now, I shall stop here.

Levinia.

Date: 3 Mar 2014

Hi Rachel

Thank you so much for the materials. The ladies enjoyed them. And ohhh, the back ground material you have picked out is just so gorgeous....just love them! Thank you, once the large wall hanging is completed, it will look so beautiful.

I did received your e-mail, and I am sorry I was a little late in responding!

Yesterday's sewing class was another success story. Not many participants, however very solid participants and was needed very badly and I shall tell you why, down below.

Of course good faithful Grace, had set up tables and chairs and all the materials to go, so much appreciated and I am sure glad you have arranged with the right people to connect and get approved for space etc. as it certainly is working out very well and positive. Thank you for your prompt and quick thinking, in which everything came together, and going strong.

Grace wrote down the names and number of participants.

There was a ten year old, who stayed sewing with us for the duration of two hour class, Grace was guiding her and she was ever cute and working so hard, she enjoyed the session very much as she would be so satisfied with smiled and doing her sewing.

Another point of interest on this day, there was 70 plus year old Elder who joined us for the two hour period, and she completed a square to add on the master piece, she was so excellent and did story telling and some advise to younger ladies.

Also two expectant mothers had joined us, which was so pleasant to have them attending. Grace sat with us in between her work at the office and she assisted others to

who needed a hand.

The numbers were small, however few ladies took their materials and work on them during the evening and night when they can't sleep they said, as a lot of productions is very evident, as completed pieces of art work are being turned in by quite a lot, more than what I have expected.

A lot of the ladies have stayed with us, around us and even follow me around while I am at the Inuit center, I could sense the loneliness that some may going through, as some are long term patients.

I am always glad when we get the urban Inuit to join us, but unfortunately there were none yesterday that I know of.

Yesterday, there was young mother of a three months old infant who was quite in distress situation, and could not stop crying, once she contained herself she would smile and talk about general stuff, I am adding this piece on as it is so real and it will come in as a very handy piece of tool why sewing and other type of art work are so important to our culture, and as I have mentioned to you, that component is a missing piece of the cycle in our every day life.

I am even scared to bring it out as, it is a very important aspect of Inuit way of life for many things.

As I see so many young people, struggle, depress and starving for proper attention and love, I just wish to come up with some solution if that will be supported. I am about to write down some very import suggestions, and like I mentioned to you, you may use this information in anyway you wish to,

add, delete, para phrase, or what ever is needed.

In my growing up days and experience, as children we sat around during our grandmothers, mothers, aunts and other women, did their story telling during their sewing sessions. We watched, we listened, and sometimes given instructions, and sometimes given discipline when we needed it and spoken to in a voice that was kind and strong so that we hear those voices and not forget about the voices, and whom the voices belong to!!!!!as those voices come back to us time and time again, those voices were our everything for learning, and our eyes taught us about movements and remembered the movements, the importance of each piece of art work, or sewing. we didn't have to be perfect, as our elders told us, in time we can accomplish our goals, and we need not to rush at all, as timing is very important and never to rush for anything, as nothing is an emergency unless we make it that.

As we would sit around together, there were boys and girls, and all welcome, boys were told they need to learn basics too as hunters and if they are far away, and rip their kamiks or attigik, (parka) they must be able to mend them so to keep warm until they can get to their camps!!!! with holes on kamiks or attig, there would be too much draft (very cold air) coming in through the rip, could cause the hunter to get cold very fast!!And there was no shaming boys to be allowed in the circle. it was all to do with acceptance. no teasing was allowed as it was to do with joining together and learning together.

Our Elders' wisdom was to always "treat your time with respect" always fill your time doing something positive, always remember not to waste time doing "nothing". so as very young people we were taught to have some type of an activity so that our body, mind and spirit were filled with positive outcome, in that way, our Elders said we would have a healthy mind which would help us with healthy body.

Levinia.

Date: 10 Mar 2014

Hi Rachel,

Here is the report from yesterday, March 10/14 regarding the Sewing Project.

There were 11 participants who had registered, however there were four to five who were floating, coming and going and did some sewing. There were three expectant mothers who joined us in sewing.

One very young girl was sewing, and was really enjoying herself.

The ladies were very involved in sewing, I saw much interaction with each other, laughter, and participants really getting into sewing, with serious thoughts and relaxations....few ladies ask for some directions and help. What I witness was so admirable because young and old alike were mingling well and sharing information and some story

telling.

I note that, the sewing sessions are very position and are progressively achieving the goal we want to reach, to have a completed project that shall be viewed by many in the future and enjoy the art, that was made with care, and with enjoyable company. I saw that all the participants are at ease while they are into sewing and developing their own creation, using their own imagination, of their own talent and skills. The colours were mixed and mingled as there was plenty of colours to chose from.

Levinia.

Date: 17, March 2014

Good morning Rachel,

This is the report from March 17, 2014 at the Inuit Center:

On this day there were about 7 participants, some sewing steady at the tables, some coming and going.

I found on this day, the ladies wanted to just sit around, visit, talk, mix and mingle. There was a lot of sharing of their struggles, dealing with homesickness, and some laughter. Few of the per-natal ladies were very home sick, so we just sat around and supported each other, a lot of

so we just sat around and supported each other, a lot of younger ladies do enjoy talking to the Elders.

Three ladies had handed in their small completed squares and that is what is need to complete the large

wall hanging, we attached them on to the large wall hanging, and the large wall hanging is almost done now.. One more full day will see the completion of the project.

The ladies and Grace have been wonderful and very very helpful.

Our manager of the project have been our positive leader who is always with us at the classes and when Rachel is present, she makes a difference as she just shines and appears so amazes at all the participants sewing.

Rachel has always been so positive that the project will be a positive thing, and that it will help all those attending to entertain themselves in which is happening, and everyone attending is absolutely enthusiastic and so eager to do their small sewing..

On this day was the least we did any sewing, and yikes we are almost done and hope we meet our target....

but I must say it is so enjoyable to be with all the people and some times sad, as some feel so sad being away from their community and from their loved ones too.

Levinia.

Date: 24 March 2014

Hi Rachel,

The following is a report from March 24, Monday 2014.

Sewing class at the Inuit Center was well attended.....and was

fun

The participants and I were just stitching and putting all the finally squares together to the master piece.

The masterpiece is looking really good now that is almost completed.

Today we had a ten year old boy sewing with us...and it was just enlightening and so warm to see the little boy sitting down with us as he was all smiles and his stitching was great as he learned and did what he could do, some ladies were helping him and the smiles and joyful look on his face told the whole story that he truly enjoyed his time with us.

It is not unusual for boys to be taught sewing, as it was essential in our days that the men had to know about basics

in sewing for part of their survival. In an event in -50 below zero, their kamiks (caribou skins footwear or their atigi caribou skin parka) rips, they have to be mended right away because the rip and the hole could create a major

cold drift coming in through that rip and tear which could cause a major chill which could affect the whole body to chill rapidly......so to remain wear and keep out the drift the hunter must be watchful for rips and tears, as he hunts and be out on the land at no man's lands for days, some times weeks, and even months......

So the Inuit women always welcome little boys youth and men to join us to sew along.....

Since the project have started in Feb 3rd, or the 10th, on

every Monday from 1pm to 3 pm, today, we have seen many participants from all across Nunavut who stay at Inuit Center for various of reason. And their reasons are for them to know and for us to guide them along with the project of sewing together..

Most ladies have even guided us along as well, as they are so professionals in sewing...some were anyway, we had mostly different ladies joining us each week, and we had attracted quite a few per-natal as those are the groups who we wanted to see.....in the two months the project was happening I witnessed 5 mothers who had their babies, of course there might have been more, how ever those are the ones I know about as they sat with us and did their sewing..

The sewing classes proved to be ore that sewing, a lot of attenders loved to share their stories, and the company, as well as being able to belong together in a room to sit and just relax and have the feeling of togetherness and belonging together....none one was a stranger as I saw Elders helping very young people, few who were 9 years old and another being 14 years old, and the Elders helping other races, as few times different nations came to join us. It was also proven through sewing we all work as a team, and welcome those who wanted to come.

It was also proven that the sewing glasses were very powerful for the purpose of healing, from illness, from pass trauma, from spousal abuse, and mostly from homesickness. I truly thanks the openness that some of the ladies shared with us and each other, I truly believe that having Elders mixed with everyone in a very safe environment, the participants felt very safe and it a healing journey we used to used as healing circle in our days.

Levinia.

Date: 31 March 2014

Hi Rachel,

Just wanted to add some highlights from our yesterday's Celebrations.

March 31st was set for the unveiling of the large "Wall Hanging" along to celebrate the project's success.

The celebrations were held at the Inuit Center on March 31st, and everyone attending got to see the finished product.

Short speeches were given. Rachel the founder of the project was present, the manger from Inuit Center was also there, Stacy, Grace the coordinator from the Inuit Center was there, myself and was grateful a member from the MUIA Board was also attending. I was excited to see Lorraine Thomas.

I had mentioned that the funding was so important to get the project going, without materials, tools and what ever was needed to get started was so appreciated as without all those supplies ready and steadily available, the project could not have started.

Another important element and factor was a space and location as to where to hold the sewing classes. It was Rachel who had drummed up the idea, way back in January and

started to form partnership with Inuit Center, thus the negotiating between two groups started, Stacy the manger at Inuit Center, and Rachel from Manitoba Inuit Association.

Every piece of the puzzle to materials, a place and participants, the funders, etc., unfolded so fittingly and gracefully, that the whole project transformed into a reality, with successful results.

Game were truly enjoyed with wonderful give aways and prizes. Very lovely finger foods and drinks were provided by the Inuit Center. It certainly was entertaining that one will not soon to forget. Our togetherness and belongingness was so evident.

Thank you so much to Rachel who saw within her that something like this project would work and it did. Also thank you so much to Grace who was so helpful, always had the tables and chairs set up before on, and she had a major impact on this project as she was always their with her artist skills she also helped many.. And finally thank you so much t Stacy the manager of the Inuit Center for making comfortable, roomy, and a safe environment space available to us all.

The master piece is completed now for everyone to enjoy.

The home of this artwork shall be at the Manitoba Urban Inuit Association office.

Levinia.

Appendix 2 – Project Poster

