

## **Learning from the Top of the World: 18th Inuit Studies Conference, hosted by the Smithsonian**

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(Washington, DC) The Arctic Studies Center of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History will serve as host to the Inuit Studies Conference from Oct. 24-28, 2012. This premier scholarly conference, held biannually, will focus exclusively on the Inuit people of Canada, Greenland, Alaska and Russia. Conference themes will focus on Arctic governance, climate change, cultural studies, Inuit art, globalization, and museums.

Transformative changes taking place across the Arctic region today are dramatically altering the Inuit world. Rapid shifts in polar environments as well as various social drivers, are profoundly changing northern landscapes, animal distributions, and sea ice cover, and are having an equally transformative impact on Native cultures and subsistence patterns, as well as on political and economic relations with the global society. This conference, supported by the Smithsonian Institution, will inspire scientific discourse on and interest of current and future developments in the North.

The Arctic Studies Center is a unit within the Anthropology Department of the National Museum of Natural History and has been a key resource for scholars and the public since its founding in 1988. William Fitzhugh the director of the Arctic Studies Center explains, "the Arctic Studies Center is proud to host the Inuit Studies Conference which will stimulate interdisciplinary discussion about the changing arctic world from the native, scientific, cultural and arts viewpoints"

"We are planning a Washington, D.C. event, not just a Smithsonian event" says Conference Secretariat Lauren Marr. The four-day conference will also include a number of exhibitions at the National Museum of the American Indian and the S. Dillon Ripley Center. Also, Northern performance groups like the Paulatuk Moonlight Drummers and Dancers (PMDD) who have recently performed for the Royal Family will take the Millennium stage at the world-renowned The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. A film festival will also be offered to the public on Oct. 28. For more information or to register for the conference visit: <https://www.mnh.si.edu/arctic/ISC18/index.html>.

The Arctic Studies Center, established in 1988, is the only U.S. government program with a special focus on northern cultural research and education. The center is a part of the National Museum of Natural History. Having pursued northern studies since the 1850s, the Smithsonian possesses one of the world's finest anthropological collections from arctic and sub-arctic regions. Research at the ASC in Washington, D.C. and in its Alaska Office at the Anchorage Museum seeks to bring its researchers together with community scholars in the collaborative exploration of the cultural heritage represented in these impressive collections. For more information about ASC, visit the website at [www.mnh.si.edu/arctic](http://www.mnh.si.edu/arctic).

The Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History is located at 10th Street and Constitution Avenue N.W. in Washington, D.C. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., except Dec. 25, and admission is free. More information about the museum is available at [www.mnh.si.edu](http://www.mnh.si.edu) or (202) 633-1000, TTY (202) 633-5285 as well as our social networks: Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Youtube, Pinterest, Quora, and iTunesU

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