



Ulla Mannering

Skin Clothing from the North

26-27 November 2009, the National
Museum of Denmark, Denmark

'Northern Worlds' is the theme of a new research program at the National Museum of Denmark, including Skin Clothing from the North. Throughout the next four to five years about 35 scholars from all departments of the National Museum of Denmark will coordinate their research in order to explore relations between man, climate and environment from the late Paleolithic until present in the circumpolar and northern temperate zones.

Skin Clothing from the North focuses on the National Museum of Denmark's unique circumpolar collection of skin artefacts from the Inuit, Yupiit and Aleut in Greenland, Canada and Alaska, the Sami in

Scandinavia and Siberian people in Russia. The 26th to 27th of November an opening seminar was held at the National Museum of Denmark. Researchers from Scandinavia and Greenland were invited to give perspective to the research program.

This interdisciplinary research program studies skin materials, methods of sewing, cutting and design from both technological and anthropological viewpoints. The focus is on geographical use of materials, cultural values including visual communication, women's importance in circumpolar cultures and commerce's influence on the appearance and manufacture of the clothing. The major purpose is to in-

investigate whether there are connections between skin types, manufacture, sewing and design while also studying circumpolar peoples' lifestyles, geographical alliances, interaction and the influence of trade. The circumpolar collections comprise around 2000 pieces of skin clothing made from mammals, birds and fish, collected between 1800 and 1950. Skin Clothing from the North introduces new research. By means of newly applied techniques, animal species, sewing technique and pattern design will be revealed. High quality digital images will document the components of each artefact.

A network of international scientist and skin experts is being established. The network will contribute to a seminar, a discussion forum on the internet and a conference. A catalogue of the circumpolar skin clothing and an anthology will be published. Research programme manager is Conservator Anne Lisbeth Schmidt, The National Museum of Denmark (anne.lisbeth.schmidt@natmus.dk). More information on: http://nordligeverdener.natmus.dk/forskning-sinitiativer/projektoversigt/dragter_fra_de_nordlige_verdener/