

## Early Works by Group of Seven presented at Kelowna Art Gallery

*Northern Pine: Watercolours and Drawings by the Group of Seven  
from the McMichael Canadian Art Collection*  
October 24, 2020 to March 7, 2021

**October 21, 2020 – Kelowna, BC:** Okanagan audiences will soon be able to explore a seldom seen side of Canadian art history at the Kelowna Art Gallery.

Organized by the Gallery to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Group of Seven exhibition in 1920, *Northern Pine: Watercolours and Drawings by the Group of Seven from the McMichael Canadian Art Collection* presents sixty-six of the Group's largely unknown works, including a selection of watercolour studies, graphite sketches, and a rare portfolio of lithographs.

"The works are very accessible," says Nataley Nagy, Executive Director at the Kelowna Art Gallery. "We hope visitors will be as fascinated as we were to see these stripped-down working sketches and studies — they truly give us a window into who these seven artists were and how they came to influence the Canadian artistic landscape."

The Group of Seven was formed by artists Franklin Carmichael, Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Frank Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J.E.H. MacDonald, and F.H. Varley. They were responsible for the first major national art movement in Canada and are perhaps best known for their vivid oil paintings showcasing the Canadian landscape.

Before they were recognized as accomplished artists, the members of the Group of Seven plied their trade as draughtsmen and found work as commercial artists, while still sketching and honing their artistic practices. It is this intimately revealing aspect of their work that visitors will get a chance to see.

Ian M. Thom (former Curator at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, and McMichael Canadian Art Collection), who has organized over 100 exhibitions across Canada and published extensively, is the guest curator responsible for the exhibition, hand-picking the art that will be on display, the majority of which was borrowed from the McMichael's collection in Kleinburg, Ontario.

"The McMichael's collection of drawings and other works on paper by the members of the Group of Seven is a glory of our museum's holdings too often hidden from view," says Sarah Milroy, Chief Curator at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. "Often accomplished works of art in their own right, these works provide us a backstage pass to the workings of the Group, and they challenge the canonical gravity with which their paintings have increasingly been viewed. This was a band of upstarts and adventurers after all, and their drawings return us to that fact."

Audiences will be treated to a variety of these works, including a 1912-13 sketch by Arthur Lismer of colleague and fellow artist Tom Thomson, and a series of visceral studies by Lawren Harris of mountainous landscapes that point to some of his future paintings.

*Northern Pine* is guest curated by Ian Thom and organized by the Kelowna Art Gallery, with the support of Rogers' Family Charitable Trust, and Pushor Mitchell LLP Lawyers. The exhibition runs from October 24, 2020 to March 7, 2021. It will be accompanied by a 116-page full colour catalogue that features several essays and reproductions of the works presented in *Northern Pine*.

The Kelowna Art Gallery is located at 1315 Water Street in the heart of the downtown Cultural District. For more information, please visit them online at [www.kelownaartgallery.com](http://www.kelownaartgallery.com) or call 250-762-2226.

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