

## □ THE MYSTIC NORTH TAKES ROOT □

The European galleries, on the second floor, present a number of important works, including Bernini's marble bust of Pope Urban VII, Benjamin West's *Death of General Wolfe* (1770), and paintings by Constable, Turner, Van Gogh, Monet, Degas, and Picasso. The Asian collection features a large collection of Indian sculpture, and the American collection includes both historical and modern works.

The contemporary galleries are also expanded and present a selection of installation art, as well as works by George Segal, Jackson Pollock, and others. The prints and drawings collection, and the photography collection, now have their own exhibition spaces; and the collection of Inuit prints, drawings, and sculpture will be on display for the first time.

State-of-the-art electronic security, fire alarm, and environmental monitoring systems will protect the building's visitors, staff, and treasures. In the basement vaults and art storage areas, a pressurized gas system will activate in the event of fire and prevent water damage to the collections.

All in all, the opening of the new National Gallery of Canada is the event for which art lovers have been waiting for a long, long time. With its exciting new building, expanded exhibition space, and high-tech systems of climate control, the National Gallery has the promise to become an art gallery of international stature.

Dates to remember: *The Works of Degas*, June 16 — August 28, 1988 □

*National Gallery of Canada*

Photo: Cover — Claude Lupien

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In the lee of the National Gallery's giant glass candelabrum, a very special garden is taking shape. Under the supervision of landscape architect, Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, the terrain immediately to the south of the Gallery is being transformed into a reproduction of the rugged northern landscape that often was the subject of paintings by the Group of Seven.

Stunted and dwarf mugho pine, native dogwood shrubs, red-leafed rose and bog rosemary make their home in this hardy, little eco-niche. Arctic blue grass, cotton grass and blue flag iris cling to limestone out-croppings, exposed to the chill northern winds that blow from the Ottawa River below.

As the garden matures, visitors to the Gallery will be able to share an appreciation of the natural beauty of the northern landscape that so excited Tom Thomson, A.Y. Jackson, Lawren Harris, and other members of the Group of Seven. Members of the Group made frequent journeys to Algonquin Park, the Algoma region, northern Lake Superior and the Canadian Rockies to capture the essential spirit of the Canadian North in their sketches and paintings. Their work was often charac-

terized by an astonishing immediacy between the painter and his subject. This style reflected the sense of spiritualism, almost mysticism, that members of the Group of Seven found in the Canadian landscape.

The National Gallery's decision to feature a northern landscape on its grounds is particularly fitting. While paintings such as Tom Thomson's *"The West Wind"* and *"The Jack Pine"* have become icons of the Canadian national experience, the Group's work was initially a radical departure from the more formal academic painting that was popular in Canada in the years following World War I. Eric Brown, Director of the National Gallery of Canada at the time, took an early interest in the Group's work, purchasing paintings for the Gallery's collections and ensuring that the artists were well represented in international exhibitions of Canadian art.

The Gallery's Northern Garden is a fine tribute to the important role played by the Group of Seven in the development of a national school of art, and to the majesty of the great wilderness that has left an imprint of its haunting beauty on the soul of every Canadian □

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- *The Works of Degas*, a major new international exhibition, makes its North American debut at the new National Gallery, June 16 — August 28.
- The National Library of Canada hosts a moving tribute to Glenn Gould, April — September.
- Museum of Civilization hosts *The Spirit Sings*, June 30 — November 6.