

Murals of the rails on display

The one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of rail travel in Canada is being marked by an exhibition of murals painted for *The Canadian* passenger train which travels across the country west from Montreal and east from Vancouver.

Introduced by Canadian Pacific (CP) in April 1955, *The Canadian* was conceived as a luxury train and special efforts were made to ensure that it reflected Canada's identity.

Eighteen oval glass dome cars, each named for a national or provincial park served by the CP rail line, were built for the rear of the train, from where passengers could enjoy a panoramic view of the Canadian landscape. The "Park" cars, as they became known, also boasted a comfortable lounge area where two paintings by a Canadian artist depicted the park for which each car was named.

The exhibition, *Murals of a Great Canadian Train*, marks the first time the works have been displayed together as a collection. Only 30 murals by 17 artists have survived. They have been restored and will be preserved as part of Canada's national heritage while reproductions will be produced for the Park cars.



Strathcona Park, Walter J. Phillips.

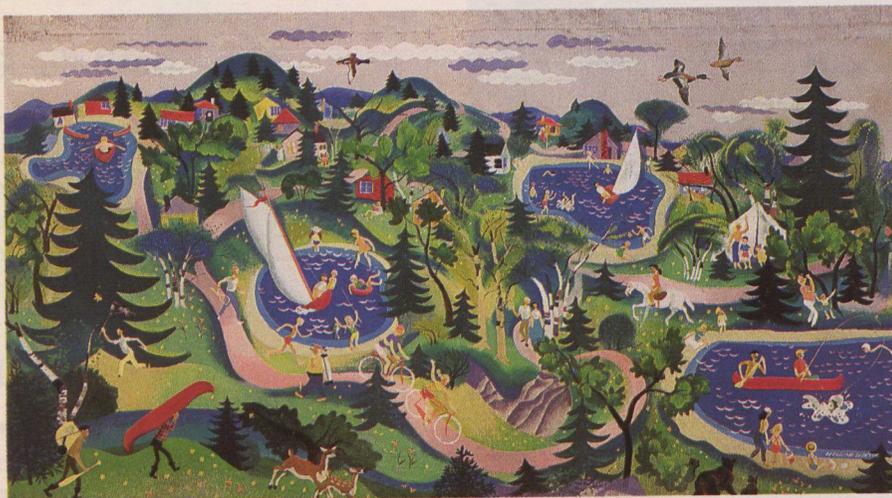
In the murals, each artist reflected a personal view and style from the same concept and within the same amount of space. A peaceful fishing camp deep in the multi-hued mountains of BC's Kolanee Park, painted by renowned Group of Seven member A.Y. Jackson, contrasts with William Winter's whimsical portrayal of families at play in Manitoba's Riding Mountain Park. Other contrasts include E.J. Hughes' outboard motor boat chugging through the rippling waters of BC's Tweedsmuir Park with A.J.

The Park car murals and their artists

Algonquin Park - A.J. Casson	Kootenay Park - George Pepper
Kolanee Park - A.Y. Jackson	Waterton Lakes Park - Llewellyn Petley-Jones
Tweedsmuir Park - E.J. Hughes	Prince Albert Park - Frederick Finley
Strathcona Park - Walter J. Phillips	Sibley Park - Yvonne McKague Housser
Mont Tremblant Park - Edwin Holgate	Riding Mountain Park - William Winter
Banff Park - Charles Comfort	Mount Revelstoke Park - Robert Pilot
Mount Assiniboine Park - Franklin Arbuckle	Yoho Park - Harold Beament
Evangeline Park - Harry Leslie Smith	Glacier Park - Adam Sherriff Scott
Laurentide Park - Albert Cloutier	Fundy Park (missing) - Lawren P. Harris

Casson's portrayal of a moment in time in the wilderness of Ontario's Algonquin Park, or Edwin Holgate's lone skier on the sunlit snow of Quebec's Mont Tremblant.

The exhibition was organized by VIA Rail Canada, which acquired *The Canadian* and the Park cars after it became responsible for rail passenger service in Canada in 1977, in conjunction with The McMichael Canadian Collection at Kleinburg, Ontario. It opened at The McMichael Canadian Collection in the summer and will be on view at the Vancouver Art Gallery until November 16 ■



Riding Mountain Park, William Winter.