

## Scandinavian and North American landscape linked in major art exhibit

A major exhibition, showing for the first time the striking parallels of style and subject in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century northern landscape art, opened recently at the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) in Toronto.

The exhibit, *The Mystic North: Symbolist Landscape Painting in Northern Europe and North America, 1890-1940*, offers the public a first opportunity to see the work of Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven alongside the work of the Scandinavians who directly or indirectly influenced them.

Organized by Dr. Roald Nasgaard, chief curator at the AGO, the exhibition has broad international perspective. It proposes a definable category of symbolist landscape painting practised between 1890 and 1940 throughout the north, on both sides of the Atlantic. It is based on a shared interest in wilderness and subject matter, on a common desire to find transcendent meaning in it, and on a similar decorative and expressive stylistic approach.

*The Mystic North* includes 129 works by 31 artists from Scandinavia, northern Europe, Canada and the United States. Several artists are celebrated internationally — Edward Munch, Piet Mondrian, Ferdinand Hodler, Georgia O'Keeffe and Marsden Hartley. Others, such as Canadians Tom Thomson, Emily Carr and Lawren Harris, are known primarily in their own countries. The first phase of the exhibition between 1890 and 1910, is European, confined to Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland and Switzerland. The second phase, from 1910 to



*Northern River (1915)* by Canadian painter Tom Thomson.

1940, is almost entirely North American.

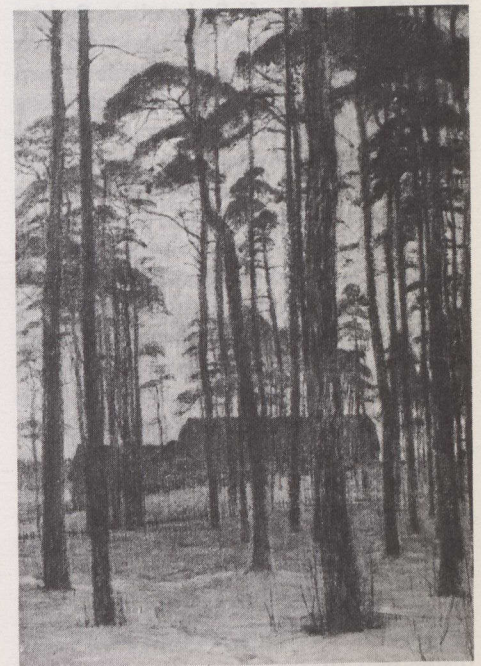
The exhibition title is drawn from a lecture given by Canadian Group of Seven artist J.E.H. MacDonald at the AGO in 1931. He recounted a visit he and fellow artist Lawren Harris made to Buffalo in 1913 to see an exhibition of contemporary Scandinavian art at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery. Mr. MacDonald said the paintings "seemed to us true souvenirs of that mystic north round which we all resolve".

During the exhibition, several events are being held to highlight the same theme. On March 9 and 10, distinguished scholars from Europe and North America will participate in a symposium at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Dr. Robert Rosenblum of New York University's

Institute of Fine Art will deliver the opening lecture and speakers from Sweden, Finland, the United States, and Canada will present papers.

A series of 18 films, including early German and Scandinavian works relating to the subject, will be shown in conjunction with the exhibition. Also, a 264-page book by Dr. Nasgaard, co-published by the AGO and the University of Toronto Press, is available in two editions at \$47.50 (cloth) and \$19.95 (paper). It includes 120 black and white and 40 colour reproductions.

*The Mystic North* is open until March 11, 1984. It then travels to the Cincinnati Art Museum where it runs from March 31 to May 31, 1984.



*Forest Clearing (1892)* by Swedish artist Prins Eugens Waldemarsudde.



*Melancholy, The Yellow Boat (1891-92)* by Edward Munch.



*Falls (1920)* by Canadian artist J.E.H. MacDonald.