

established of showing only in the three major centres — Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto — on a rotating basis.

Since Lorne was also determined to establish a national gallery, he stipulated that a condition of acceptance into the RCA would be the deposit of a "diploma painting" in Ottawa, this collection to be the basis of a national gallery. Space for the growing collection was found in a government building and, in May 1882, Lorne officiated at the opening of the National Gallery of Canada. Its growing collections have been housed in temporary locations in Ottawa ever since. Toronto finally got a permanent public gallery in 1900 with the establishment of the Art Museum of Toronto, later the Art Gallery of Toronto, and now known as the Art Gallery of Ontario.

During the 1860s and 1870s virtually all the artists involved in working toward the national purpose represented by the RCA were landscape painters. Most were British immigrants, although some Germans — notably Otto Jacobi (1812-1901), a Prussian trained at Dusseldorf who was court painter to the Grand Duke of Nassau for almost 20 years before settling in Montreal — as well as some Americans — particularly Robert Duncanson (1817-72), one of the earliest black painters in the United States, and the German-born Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902) — had direct influence on the heroic Canadian landscape paintings that dominated exhibitions in the 1870s and 1880s.

In his painting, as in his organizational and administrative abilities, Lucius O'Brien was the natural leader. Canadian-born, he was open to both late Hudson River School work in the United States and landscapes of the highly developed watercolour style popular in England in the 1860s and 1870s. This resulted in broad, light-filled images of vast scale yet with multiplied detail, perfectly suited to the aggressive, expansive spirit then in the air in Canada. Once the transcontinental railway was complete O'Brien and his colleagues flocked to the newly-opened Rocky Mountains, creating hundreds of breathtaking scenes, moving symbols of the potential strength and wealth of this new but rapidly growing nation. It was bombast, but bombast that throbbed with the conviction of genuine aspirations. The future was Canada's and pictures of rail and steam penetrating impossible natural barriers seemed to be the very images of progress.

Art instruction

The RCA maintained the concern of its predecessors for the education of artists, and soon there were art classes in virtually every city in the country. By the early 1890s, the largest and best schools were those run by the AAM in Montreal, and the Ontario School of Art, founded by the OSA in Toronto in 1876. Taken over by the provincial government, and modelled more closely on the South Kensington School in London, the Ontario School