Harris and the others helped define a Canadian style by looking with fresh eyes at the wild land-scape and giving passionate expression to its force in an explosion of vivid colours. The Group was the first to articulate a pictorial nationalism and a Canadian Impressionism.

At the end of the Thirties, Montreal became a new centre of Canadian painting with the emergence of the Automatiste movement in Quebec. Among its "explorers of the imaginary" were Alfred Pellan and Jean-Paul Lemieux. Another contemporary, Paul-Emile Borduas, co-authored the artistic and political manifesto Refus Global in 1948 as a revolt against a mechanistic and rational civilization. One of Borduas' generation, Jean-Paul Riopelle, was loudly acclaimed in London and Paris in 1948, the first time a Canadian stood out as a world leader in abstract art. In the wake of Automatism came a new wave known as Espace dynamique (whose members included Claude Tousignant and Guido Molinari), which examined structures, rhythms,

