# McMichael collection focuses on Canadian landscapes



Edward Burtynsky's CN Track, Shihist Provincial Park, BC, 1985.

by Joanne White

The McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg, Ontario is noted for its extensive collection of art by the Group of Seven and other Canadian artists. This fall, the McMichael presents a landmark exhibition of Canadian photography. The showing, appropriately named The Canadian Landscape, features the work of eight acclaimed Canadian art photographers: Robert Bourdeau, Edward Burtynsky, Lorraine Gilbert, Richard Holden, Thaddeus Holowinia, David McMillan, Mark Ruwedel and Gary Wilson.

David Barbour, the curator of the exhibit and author of the catalogue, stated his motivation for the special presentation: "I wanted to show people who have made a strong commitment and contribution to the art of photography in this country." It is the first group photography exhibition to be presented at the McMichael Collection.

The prints truly depict "the Canadian landscape" and in some cases are very impressive. It is obvious the theme of environmentalism, so frequently associated with the 90s, was not overlooked by Barbour or the artists when the pieces were chosen, but it is not at the forefront of the work in general. Rather, the Canadian concern for the environment is a subtle theme that ties the artists together.

The photographs vary in size and shape from Edward Burtynsky's large British Columbian dyecoupler prints (in colour) to the soft-lighted prints of Robert Bourdeau. There are 76 pictures in the exhibition, about 10 prints per artist on show.

Each artist generally represents a specific area of the Canadian landscape. By far the most striking photographs are David Holden's Cibachrome prints which capture the Arctic panorama in brilliant, often surreal, colours.

To my untrained eye, the work of Edward Burtynsky is the most interesting of the exhibit. The landscapes he has chosen tend to be bland; but, the photographs, although lacking the vibrancy of Holden or the shadowed images of Mark Ruwedel (a photographer who really knows how to use fading light and shadows to set off areas in his work), are more artistic in their form.

The process of the dye-coupler print leaves an image that has the qualities of a watercolour or painting. In fact, it is almost impossible to tell that a picture of the print is not a photo of a detailed, well exe-

cuted painting

The exhibit is definitely worth your time if you have even the slightest affinity for photography as an artistic medium. The price of admission gives you free run of the gallery, so that you can take in other exhibits as well. There is, for instance, a special painting exhibit of the Group of Seven celebrating *Autumn* in the adjoining room that is also worth your time.

The McMichael Canadian Art

Collection has a spectacular setting, and the views of the Humber River Valley can be seen through the many windows of the gallery. If you've never been there, it's just about 10 minutes northwest of Canada's Blunderland and is much better value for your time and money. Check it out.

The Canadian Landscape will be part of the McMichael Collection until December 2nd, 1990. For more information, call the gallery at (416) 893-1121.

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#### R•E•S•I•D•E•N•C•E B•B•O

The J.S.F. will be grilling (kosher) burgers and hot dogs at the Vanier B.B.Q. on Thursday, September 6, at 5:30 pm at the Open End Pub. But don't just come for the food. It's your chance to meet some of the great people that make the J.S.F. what it is — see you there! If you live in residence, don't forget to ask for your free campus kits.

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