



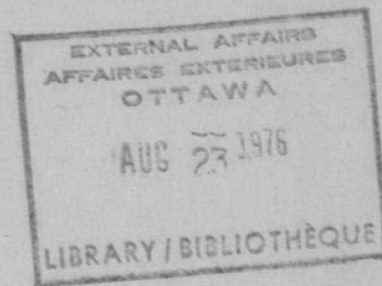
CANADA

COMMUNIQUE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
AUGUST 6, 1976

No. 82

"GROUP OF SEVEN" EXHIBITION  
ON TOUR TO U.K. AND U.S.S.R.



DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, announced today an international tour of a major collection of paintings by THE GROUP OF SEVEN - CANADIAN LANDSCAPE PAINTERS, from the McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario. Mr. Robert McMichael, C.M., founder and curator of the gallery in Kleinburg, will travel with the exhibition to Scotland, England and the U.S.S.R. The tour is under the joint auspices of the Department of External Affairs and the Government of the Province of Ontario, with the assistance of Air Canada.

In co-operation with the Scottish Arts Council, the Canadian paintings will be shown at the Kelvin Grove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow from August 24 to September 19, the Talbot Rice Centre at Edinburgh University from September 29 to October 29 and at the Aberdeen Art Gallery from November 24 to December 18. The GROUP OF SEVEN collection will then go to London for display at the Canada House Art Gallery, Trafalgar Square, from January 11 to February 24. The itinerary for the U.S.S.R., to begin in March and include two or three major centres, will be announced at a later date.

The collection is a study of an art movement which had its official beginnings nearly sixty years ago when seven artists exhibited together at the Art Gallery of Toronto. The original "Group of Seven" eventually included 10 landscape painters, and the touring collection of forty-four works includes paintings by eight of them: Tom Thomson, a catalyst for the movement who drowned before the Group was actually formed; Frank Carmichael; A. J. Casson; Lawren Harris; A. Y. Jackson; Frank Johnson; Arthur Lismer; J. E. H. MacDonald and F. H. Varley. Only A. J. Casson is alive today and maintaining an active career as a painter at 78 years of age. Although they last exhibited together in 1931, the painters of the Group remain the best known exponents of a distinctively nationalist movement in the history of Canadian art.

The Group of Seven saw their role as fundamental to a sense of identity. They believed that the art societies of the period, with their basically elitist European-oriented view of the painter's profession, were doing little or nothing to foster a true cultural awareness in Canada. "It is bad enough to have to live in this country without having pictures of it in your home", one Canadian collector is said to have pronounced in 1925. The Group was dedicated to a direct and unaffected mode of painting derived from an experience of the Canadian land that all Canadians could recognize. "The great purpose of Canadian art", said A. Y. Jackson, senior member of the Group, "is to make us feel at home in our own country". From their many sketching trips to the northlands, these artists brought views of the brilliant colours and the drama of the Canadian woodlands which were romantic and revolutionary statements of "the true north strong and free". Their styles varied, but the artists shared a common dependence upon the inspirational quality of the landscape. Their works became accepted, and purchased by enthusiasts in Canada (among them Robert McMichael) and in the U.K. The Tate Gallery in London bought one of A. Y. Jackson's paintings following the Group's showing at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924. The Group of Seven approach to nature in art established a unique style of landscape painting that has made an indelible impression on the Canadian consciousness and sense of national pride.

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