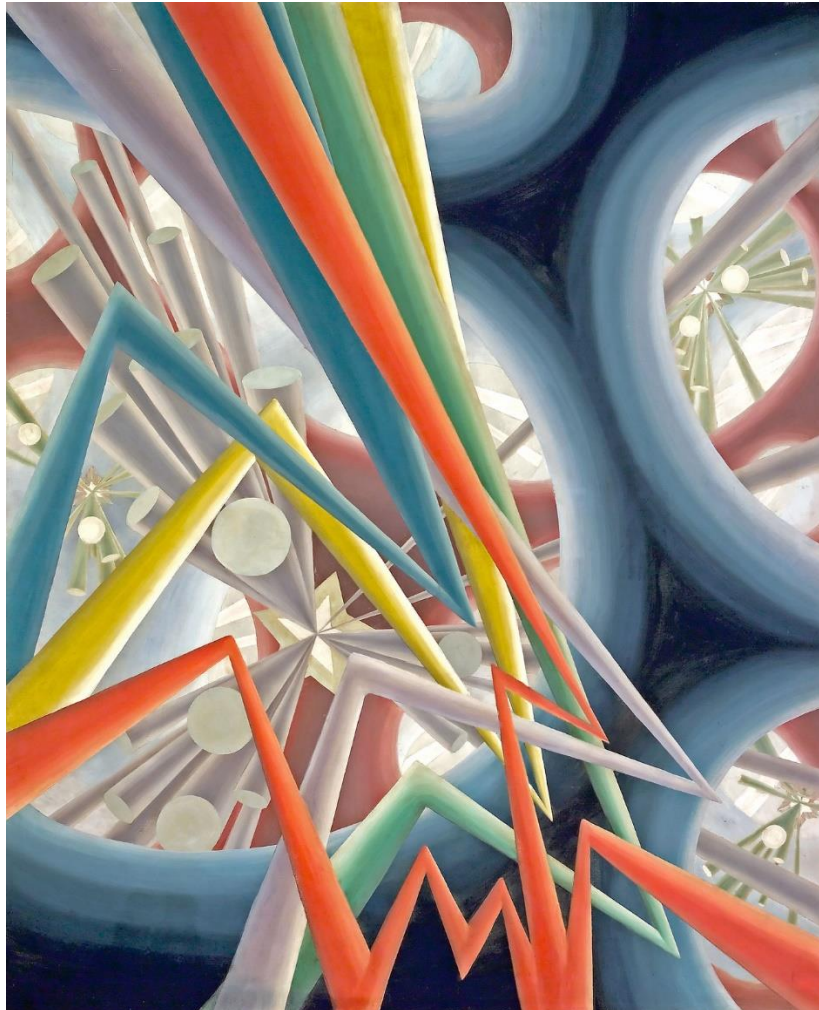


McMichael Canadian Art Collection Announces 2024 Exhibitions

*Bertram Brooker, John Scott, A.Y. Jackson and
Quebec Impressionists at the McMichael*



Left: Bertram Brooker (1888–1955), *Sounds Assembling*, 1928, oil on canvas, 112.3 x 91.7 cm, collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery, L-80. Photo: Ernest Mayer, courtesy of WAG-Qaumajuq;

January 26, 2024. Kleinburg, ON—The McMichael Canadian Art Collection today announces its 2024 exhibition program, a series that will explore some lesser-known moments and figures in Canadian art including the work of **Bertram Brooker**, one of Canada’s first abstract painters; early paintings by **A. Y. Jackson** (including his war art and other works painted in Europe); and the photographs of John Macfie, a settler trapline manager and amateur photographer who worked in Northern Ontario in the 1950s and 1960s recording life in Anishinaabe, Cree, and Anisininew communities. The legacy of Montreal artist

Betty Goodwin will be honoured in a small exhibition marking the centenary of her birth. Opening in summer 2024 is a large-scale exhibition of Impressionist art from Quebec that traces the movement's flourishing among artists working up and down the St. Lawrence River. As well, in November, the McMichael's beloved collection of illustrations by **Clarence Gagnon** for the 1933 novel *Maria Chapdelaine* will go on view. Finally, in December, a solo exhibition of **John Scott** will explore the artist's images of military machines and surveillance technologies, reflecting his distinct perceptions on the threat of war.

"We seek out these distinctly Canadian stories that make up our rich visual legacy," says Sarah Milroy, Executive Director and Chief Curator. "Whether it is the contribution of a long-overlooked contemporary of the Group of Seven, Bertram Brooker; the cutting edge contemporary contributions of artists like Moridja Kitenge Banza or Marcel Dzama; an underappreciated episode from the life of one of our most legendary artists, A.Y. Jackson; the stirring works of legendary artist Betty Goodwin, marking the centenary of her birth; or a sumptuous feast of Quebec Impressionist painting too little known in English Canada, the McMichael is the place where it all comes together."



Left: Bertram Brooker (1888–1955), *Phyllis (Piano! Piano!)*, 1934, oil on canvas, 101.9 x 76.5 cm, Art Gallery of Ontario, purchased with assistance from Wintario, 1979, 79/59. Photo © AGO; Right: Bertram Brooker (1888–1955), *Oozles*, 1922, tempera on paper, 22.8 x 17.8 cm, collection of Agnes Etherington Art Centre, purchase, Consolidated Fund, 1976, 19-004.

Bertram Brooker: When We Awake!

February 10 to June 2, 2024

Bertram Brooker: When We Awake! examines the career of **Bertram Brooker** (1888–1955), the first Canadian artist to exhibit abstract paintings, in 1927. Guest curated by Michael Parke-Taylor, the exhibition is the first comprehensive presentation of Brooker's oeuvre in almost half a century, gathering his diverse work in painting, drawing, and sculpture and highlighting his activities as one of the country's leading art critics and journalists. The exhibition emphasizes Brooker's variety in style and subject matter, and includes lyrical abstractions, exacting realistic nudes, geometric cubist still-lives, and surreal graphic

illustrations. *When We Awake!* will offer a rare vantage point on a pivotal figure in Canada's cultural history.



Betty Goodwin (1923–2008), *Untitled (La mémoire du corps)*, 1995, oil stick over silver gelatin print on mylar, 161.3 × 115.8 cm, Gift from the Collection of Salah Bachir and Jacob Yerex, McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 2023.18.8

The Subtle Body: Betty Goodwin and David Altmejd from the Collection of Salah Bachir and Jacob Yerex

February 17 to June 30, 2024

Highlighting an important recent gift from Salah Bachir and Jacob Yerex, this exhibition pairs the work of the late Montreal artist **Betty Goodwin** (1923–2008) with contemporary artist **David Altmejd** (b. 1974). Both artists express a deep humanism through their artwork, relying on inventive use of materials and imagery to reflect on memory, loss and the ephemerality of life. The exhibition includes works by Goodwin from the 1950s through to the 2000, to be exhibited alongside and a major sculptural work by Altmejd produced in 2007, the year he represented Canada at the Venice Biennale.



John Macfie (1925–2018), *Child in a tikinagun, Lansdowne House, 1956*, Archives of Ontario, John Macfie fonds, C330-14-0-0-63

People of the Watershed: Photographs by John Macfie

May 11 to November 17, 2024

People of the Watershed: Photographs by John Macfie includes more than 100 photographs taken by **John Macfie** (1925–2018), a settler trapline manager who worked in Northern Ontario in the 1950s and 1960s. Macfie travelled with a camera, recording life in Anishinaabe, Cree, and Anisininew communities during a period of intense and rapid change. Curated by nîpisiḥkopâwiyiniw (Willow Cree) curator, writer, journalist, cultural advocate, and commentator **Paul Seesequasis**, the exhibition centers the lives and resiliency of the Indigenous people represented, many of whom were identified by Macfie and, later, by Seesequasis. This exhibition is part of the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival.



Robert Pilot (1898–1967), *St. Patrick's Church, Montreal*, oil on canvas, 71.7 x 91.4 cm, Comsatec Inc. Photo: Heffel Fine Art Auction House.

River of Dreams: Impressionism on the St. Lawrence

June 29, 2024 – January 13, 2025

In the late 19th century, the Impressionist movement found a footing in Canada, and Quebec artists quickly responded with works of rare beauty and sophistication. Many Quebec artists trained in France during this period, carrying the pollen of European modernism back with them to Canadian soil. Landscape and city scenes were staples of their work, and this show will assemble a choice collection of master works that trace a journey from the bustling streets of Montreal—then Canada's financial capital—down the St. Lawrence River to Quebec City, and the beloved regions of Beauport and Charlevoix.

The exhibition will offer not just a magisterial statement on the outstanding quality of Quebec painting, but also a glimpse into the heart and soul of a culture, seen through the eyes of her most beloved and foundational artists. The survey will include works by **William Brymner, Ozias Leduc, James Wilson Morrice, Henrietta Mabel May, Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Coté, Maurice Cullen, Clarence Gagnon**, and others, and will be drawn from a host of public and private collections. To accent these works, archival photography and objects of material culture from the period will be added to deepen the viewer's experience of the historical period, a century ago, augmented by historic recordings drawn from Quebecois musical culture. The result will be an immersive time-travel experience like no other. Drawing heavily from the collections of the Musée national des beaux-arts de Québec and the National Gallery of Canada, this exhibition is co-curated by Anne-Marie Bouchard, Curator of Modern Art (1900-1949) at MNBAQ, and Sarah Milroy.



A.Y. Jackson (1882–1974), *First Snow, Algoma*, between 1919 and 1920, oil on canvas, 107.1 x 127.7cm, In memory of Gertrude Wells Hilborn, McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 1966.7

Jackson's Wars: A.Y. Jackson before the Group of Seven

July 2024 – January 2025

Jackson's Wars: A.Y. Jackson before the Group of Seven is a rare examination of the work of painter **Alexander Young (A.Y.) Jackson** (1882–1974) in the decade before the Group of Seven's formation in 1920. Curated by historian Douglas Hunter, *Jackson's Wars* will feature rarely seen paintings made during the artist's trips abroad to study painting in Italy, Belgium, and France, as well as his evocative depictions of rural Quebec and Ontario made upon his return. Of particular note will be a handpicked selection of Jackson's paintings made during the First World War depicting the devastation of the battlefields in France, which would have a lingering impact on his interpretations of the Canadian landscape. *Jackson's Wars: A.Y. Jackson before the Group of Seven* provides an opportunity to reframe the legacy of one of Canada's most significant artists.



Clarence Gagnon (1881 - 1942), *Sugaring*, 1928 / 1933, pastel and/or coloured pencil with gouache on paper, sheet: 24.9 x 25.8 cm; image: 22.1 x 22.5 cm, Gift of Colonel R.S. McLaughlin, McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 1969.4.51

Maria Chapdelaine

November 2024 to February 2025

Among the great treasures of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection is a group 54 jewel-like miniature paintings by the Quebec artist **Clarence Gagnon** (1881–1942). Completed in the early 1930s, these are the final paintings made for what is arguably the most famous illustrated book by a Canadian artist: *Maria Chapdelaine*, a novel written by the French novelist Louis Hémon and published in 1933 by Éditions Mornay in Paris. These paintings were gifted to the McMichael in 1969 by Colonel R.S. McLaughlin and were the first works by a francophone Quebec artist to enter the collection. Due to conservation concerns, these artworks can only be displayed once every three years and the McMichael is delighted to have them on view for the 2024 holiday season.

John Scott: Firestorm

December 7, 2024 to April 2025

John Scott: Firestorm is a solo exhibition of the late Canadian artist **John Scott** (1950–2022). *Firestorm* gathers paintings, drawings and sculptures made by Scott from the 1980s through the 2010s, focussing on works that explore machine imagery, conflict, violence, and surveillance. Growing up on the Canadian/American border in Windsor, Ontario, in the 1950s and 1960s, Scott developed an acute awareness of American politics and militarism. Stealth bombers, firearms, and tanks were used by Scott

to comment on human vulnerability and oppression—images expressed in his raw and urgent graphic style.

Firestorm is guest curated by Dr. John O'Brian, who has undertaken significant research to position Scott's accomplishment within a global political and cultural context. The exhibition celebrates a unique and singular voice in the history of art in Canada, one grappling with the acute threats to humanity in our times. *Firestorm* will be accompanied by a multi-authored catalogue.

Ongoing Exhibitions



Bess Harris (1890–1969), *Old Mine Shaft, Cobalt*, c. 1930, oil on canvas, 81.3 x 101.6 cm, Collection of John and Katia Bianchini

Cobalt: A Mining Town and the Canadian Imagination

Through April 21, 2024

Cobalt, Ontario—some 500 kilometres north of Toronto—was established in 1904 following the discovery of rich silver, cobalt, ore, and nickel deposits. At peak production in 1911, Cobalt provided approximately one eighth of the world's silver. In its heyday, the story of Cobalt was known around the world, and the town attracted miners, scientists, scholars, and of course, artists. This exhibition showcases the work of the artists who visited between the First and Second World Wars, after most of the deposits had been depleted. Among them was a rising generation of Canadian modern painters, including **Yvonne McKague Housser**, **Bess Larkin Housser Harris**, **Isabel McLaughlin**, **Frederick Banting**, **A.Y. Jackson**, and **Franklin Carmichael**. These artists created works that depicted Canada as a new,

modern industrial nation in step with the future—a contrast to the better-known works from this period that picture Canada as untouched wilderness. While some artists conjured Cobalt as a heroic bastion of industry and enterprise, others focused on the town's grit and dishevelment. This exhibition and its accompanying publication explore both perceptions of the place, shining new light on the settler relationship with the natural world. This exhibition is guest curated by Dr. Catharine Mastin.



Moridja Kitenge Banza (b. 1980), *Chiromancie #14 n°1*, 2023, acrylic on canvas, 152.4 x 106.7 cm, private collection. Photo courtesy of the artist and Galerie Hugues Charbonneau, Montreal © Moridja Kitenge Banza

Moridja Kitenge Banza: Topographies

Through April 21, 2024

Using gestural brushwork, bold colour, and the contours observed in the palm of his own hand, the lush paintings of Montreal-based artist **Moridja Kitenge Banza** (b.1980) reveal the impacts of resource extraction in his home country of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and in his current home in Canada. His large format abstract paintings prompt us to consider the treatment of workers who labour in mines in the Congo, unearthing diamonds, gold, cobalt, and other materials exported for consumption in

markets around the world. Banza's imagined topographies suggest river systems and agricultural zones tainted by the waste of the mining industry, as well as the mass burial sites that can be detected on Google Earth and other surveillance platforms.

Moridja Kitenge Banza: Topographies is presented at the McMichael as a contemporary response to *Cobalt: A Mining Town and the Canadian Imagination*. While an earlier generation of Canadian artists depicted the mining industry as picturesque and even sublime, Banza asks us to consider the environmental and humanitarian impact resource extraction has on communities around the world.



Marcel Dzama (b. 1974), *Waiting on Tom's Ghost*, 2023, pearlescent acrylic, ink, watercolor, and graphite on paper, 36.8 x 36.2 cm, Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner © Marcel Dzama

Ghosts of Canoe Lake: New Work by Marcel Dzama

Through June 9, 2024

Ghosts of Canoe Lake: New Work by Marcel Dzama is the triumphant Canadian homecoming of internationally acclaimed, Winnipeg-born contemporary artist **Marcel Dzama** (b. 1974), best known for his fantastical and imaginative ink and watercolour drawings. His multimedia installation at the McMichael celebrates a new body of work inspired by the artist's interest in Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven and harkens back to his childhood spent in the landscapes of Manitoba and northern Saskatchewan.

A blend of paintings, installation, and film, *Ghosts of Canoe Lake* is the first major exhibition of Dzama's work to be presented in Canada in nearly a decade and is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with contributions from Winnipeg filmmaker Guy Maddin and an interview with the artist by Sarah Milroy. The exhibition is organized in collaboration with Contemporary Calgary, and is timed to coincide with the McMichael exhibition *Bertram Brooker: When We Awake*, which highlights the contribution of another famous Winnipeg artist from a century ago.

Ces informations sont aussi disponibles en français.

To obtain high-resolution images, request an interview, exhibition tour, or obtain a review copy of a publication, please contact Sam Cheung, Media Relations and Communications Associate at scheung@mcmichael.com or 905.893.1121 ext. 2210.

ABOUT THE McMICHAEL CANADIAN ART COLLECTION

The McMichael Canadian Art Collection is an agency of the Government of Ontario and acknowledges the support of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, and the McMichael Canadian Art Foundation. It is the only major museum in the country devoted exclusively to Canadian art. In addition to touring exhibitions, the McMichael houses a permanent collection of more than 7,000 works by historic and contemporary Canadian artists, including Tom Thomson, the Group of Seven and their contemporaries, Indigenous artists and artists from the many diasporic communities. The Gallery is located on 100 acres of forested landscape and hiking trails at 10365 Islington Avenue, Kleinburg, north of Major Mackenzie Drive in the City of Vaughan. For more information, please visit mcmichael.com.

Media Contacts

Sam Cheung

Media Relations and Communications Associate
McMichael Canadian Art Collection
905.893.1121 x2210
scheung@mcmichael.com

Grace Johnstone

Director, Marketing, Communications and Sales
McMichael Canadian Art Collection
905.893.1121 x2265
gjohnstone@mcmichael.com