

## About The Group of Seven



The Group of Seven were Canadian modernist landscape painters who explored and documented the unique character and beauty of the vast Canadian wilderness in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Working as painters, draftsmen, print makers, commercial illustrators, and teachers they were initially drawn together by a common sense of frustration with what they saw as the conservative quality of most Canadian art, at the time.

Moving out of the studio to paint, they travelled to remote regions of Canada: to the stark north shore of Lake Superior, into the impassable reaches of the rocky mountains, to the shores of fishing villages in Nova Scotia, and beyond the untold reaches of forests, for weeks and months at a time, venturing by boxcar, boat, and on foot, carrying their sketch kits on their backs, hiking, camping, canoeing and trekking, through bush, across lakes, up mountains, over tundra, and onto ice, to experience and capture the pristine wilderness and unique landscape that is Canada.

What they found and brought back ignited and contributed to the formation of a Canadian national identity. Their paintings were compelling. The Group of Seven captured a visceral and spiritual quality of the varied landscapes they encountered. Each painting evoked a beauty and majesty that had not been conveyed in Canadian landscape painting up to that point. Through brilliant colours and brushstrokes they showed an isolation that was spiritual rather than destitute, a ruggedness that was powerful rather than inhospitable, an expanse that was intoxicating rather than barren, and a natural world to be proud of rather than found boring, and in so doing, changed the zeitgeist of the Canadian national identity from that time forward.

The Group of Seven was founded in 1920.

The original group included seven painters: Franklin Carmichael, Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Franz Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J.E.H. MacDonald, and F.H. Varley who met one another in Toronto between 1911 and 1913. As members left the group or died, new members joined: From 1920-1931: A.J. Casson, L.L. FitzGerald, and Edwin Holgate. And although neither Tom Thomson nor Emily Carr ever joined formally as members, their work as and close involvement with the group as contemporaries and friends is undeniable and they are both recognized and included here in '*Group of Seven Flash Fiction*'.

Collectively, the Group of Seven defined a Canadian art movement and carved a place in our national psyche. With the current and all-important resurgence, concern, and respect for our land, our environment, and our very future, we believe that a reawakening of appreciation for the Group of Seven Canadian Modernist Landscape Painters may help illuminate what is dear to us all.

In '*Group of Seven Flash Fiction*' we celebrate and honour the 100 years Anniversary of the founding of the Group of Seven 1920-2020.