

The Group of Seven and Tom Thomson

DAVID SILCOX

Firefly Books, \$85.00 cloth, ISBN 1-55297-605-X

Do you ever ask yourself, “If the house were on fire and I could save just one of my books, which would I choose?” I do, and it always comes down to the very thick and not readily available *Joaquin Sorolla* or Peter Mellen’s 1973 *The Group of Seven*. Cost of replacement pushes me toward the former, sentiment toward the latter. As always, sentiment trumps cost.

The painters who comprised the group—Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, J.E.H. MacDonald, Arthur Lismer, F.H. Varley, Frank Carmichael, and Frank Johnson—were active before and after World War I. Their best-known work is of the Canadian landscape, both its lyrical splendor and harsh austerity. Tom Thomson, having joined some of the others on painting trips, would have been part of the group had he not drowned in 1917 at age 40 before it was officially organized. The painters had no formal organization, no elected leader or charter. No more than four of them ever painted together at the same time. They were more a school of painting whose names, along with those of A.J. Casson, LeMoine FitzGerald, and Edwin Holgate, became associated with one another. Together they are one of Canada’s national treasures.

David Silcox, an art historian and managing director of Sotheby’s Canada, and Firefly Books have served enthusiasts of the Seven’s movement well. The first major work on the group in 30 years has 369 color reproductions. One hundred twenty-three of the images in the book have never before appeared in print outside auction catalogs. Silcox has divided the book into sections according to subject matter and location. Along with various places in Canada—Algonquin Park and the Georgian Bay; the Arctic; the St. Lawrence River and Quebec; Algoma and Lake Superior; the Prairies, Rockies, and West Coast—we find chapters on cities and towns, still life and portraiture, and World War I.

The art is sometimes realistic, other times highly stylized. Colors can be garish or muted. Impressionistic technique is prevalent in the on-location paintings, refined design in the large studio works. Varley seems to have had the greatest interest in, and certainly flair for, portraiture. He used thick paint and strong color to maximum effect. His *Vera* depicts a woman whose almond eyes remind us of Modigliani’s women, while her subtle smile recalls the *Mona Lisa*. Of the landscape paintings, Thomson’s have the most distinctive style. His experience as a commercial artist (he designed, among other things, greeting cards) is always evident. Broken color and bold composition were his hallmark.

Reproductions are always imperfect representations of actual paintings. Even such excellent ones as those in this book raise questions about accuracy. One need only compare the reproductions of A.Y. Jackson’s *The Edge of the Maple Wood* in Mellen’s earlier book to that in Silcox’s. The painting shows a patch of uncultivated ground with some trees in the middle ground and farm buildings in the distance. In the earlier book, the mostly earth colors are warm, giving the effect of late afternoon sun, however diffused. In the Silcox book, the colors are

cooler and less saturated. Only a few shadows suggest the presence of direct sunlight. Such differences make the viewer wish all the more to see the original.

Silcox’s preference for Lawren Harris is evident in the disproportionate number of reproductions of his work—almost 100 of the 369. No one could reasonably quarrel with this decision. Harris was not only the most prolific of the painters but also the moving force behind the group, and its most articulate spokesman.

When the group disbanded in 1933, in part to make way for younger painters similarly intent on creating a pan-Canadian art, they could take pride in having committed to canvas enduring testimonies to the strength and freedom of their country. They did this by showing what was extraordinary about it and by finding the extraordinary in the ordinary. To these artists Canada owes much of its national identity. ■

REVIEWER: Gary Michael is a nationally acclaimed artist who has reviewed art books for *TBR* and other publications for more than 30 years. You can see his work at garyheartist.com.

Art Country Canada Group of Seven TOM THOMSON. Tom Thomson, the brilliant, pioneering Canadian artist for whom the City of Owen Sound's Art Gallery is named, was born near Claremont, Ontario, northeast of Toronto on August 5, 1877, the sixth of ten children born to John Thomson and Margaret Matheson. Two months later, the family moved to their new home, Rose Hill, near Leith, eleven kilometres northeast of Owen Sound. It was in this quiet rolling country side, overlooking the shores of Georgian Bay that Thomson grew up. Thomson was a landscape painter. His Winter Landscape Landscapes Art Landscapes Paintings Emily Carr The Group of Seven were inspired by the expansive views along Lake Superior and often painted its vistas. (Sponsor Content). Learn More. The Group of Seven were inspired by the expansive views along Lake Superior and often painted its vistas. (Sponsor Content). Group of Seven Continues updated their status. Often wrongly assumed to have been a member of the Group of Seven, Tom Thomson almost certainly would have been had he not died too soon, in 1917. His influence and legacy were driving forces in the Group's formation 100 years ago. The exhibition Tom Thomson, centered around the artist's dazzling oil sketches, opens on Saturday, February 8 and accompanies "A Like Vision": The Group of Seven at 100. <https://mcmichael.com/event/tom-thomson/>. See More. Tom Thomson, who died before the Group was established, was always present in the public mind. Included are works by: Frank Carmichael Frank Johnston A.J. Casson Arthur Lismer Le Moine FitzGerald J.E.H. MacDonald Lawren Harris Tom Thomson Edwin Holgate F.H. Varley A.Y. Jackson The artwork is organized by the various regions of Canada, with additional sections on the war years and still-life paintings. Not long after the death of artist Tom Thomson in 1917, a group of artists with whom he worked met and founded the Group of Seven, a group of artists who primarily painted the Canadian landscape which was then not in vogue and in their own styles instead of attempting to copy the then fashions or Europe.

Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven. The period of Canadian art from 1910 to 1933 can best be summed up by the word, "grim." In part, the problem was Canada's colonial mentality, which assumed that anything European was automatically superior to anything Canadian. An old lady once told one of the Group of Seven members, "It's bad enough to have to live in this country, without having pictures of it in your home." As a consequence, in 1924, only 2% of the paintings sold in Canada were by Canadian artists, and the patrons of Montreal bragged that more Dutch paintings The Group of Seven and Tom Thomson: An Introduction by Anne Newlands (English) P. Brand New. C \$24.68. David Wistow / Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven Selected Works 1982. C \$20.99. Top Rated Seller. Tom Thomson, Canadian landscape painter was born August 5, 1877 and died under mysterious circumstances July 8, 1917 (aged 39) while painting and canoeing at Canoe Lake, Algonquin Park, Ontario. While not an official member of the Group of Seven, his close association with the other members was cut short by his tragic, mysterious, and premature death. Group Of Seven Art Group Of Seven Paintings Paintings I Love Acrylic Paintings Art Paintings Emily Carr Canadian Painters Canadian Artists Photo Ciel. Tom Thomson, the brilliant, pioneering Canadian artist for whom the City of Owen Sound's Art Gallery is named, was born near Claremont, Ontario, northeast of Toronto on August 5, 1877, the sixth of ten children born to John Thomson and Margaret Matheson. Two months later, the family moved to their new home, Rose Hill, near Leith, eleven kilometres northeast of Owen Sound. It was in this quiet rolling country side, overlooking the shores of Georgian Bay that Thomson grew up. Thomson was raised on the farm and received his education locally, though ill health kept him out of school for a period Now in paperback, The Group of Seven and Tom Thomson is even more affordable than the celebrated original hardcover edition. This award-winning bestseller includes many never-before reproduced paintings and presents the most complete and extensive collection of these artists' works ever published. The 400 paintings and drawings reveal the remarkable genius of all 10 painters who, at some point, were part of the movement. Tom Thomson, who died before the Group was established, was always present in the public mind. Included are works by: Frank Carmichael.

If you have never seen anything by Tom Thomson or the Group of Seven it is hardly surprising, since this is the first time their works, considered national treasures over there, have been shown in this country since 1925. Which is no small oversight, given that Thomson is high on the list of Canada's greatest artists. Thomson (1877-1917) was a pioneer in both senses.Â Canoe Lake was where Thomson disembarked from the Toronto train. He would stay in the logging village there and canoe the length of the park with his paints. It is also where he disappeared on a summer night in 1917, his body only hauled from the water eight days later. Did he fall from his canoe, was he murdered, why was he so swiftly buried and then exhumed? His death remains a mystery. 4 Tom Thomson Although Thomson died before the group officially formed in 1920, he was part of the circle of painters who travelled and painted together before the First World War. His work had an enormous effect on the development of other members of the group. Thomson's love of the north country was infectious. He led the others on camping and canoeing expeditions in Algonquin Park, where he worked as a guide and park ranger. Fine art prints of the Group of Seven, "Tom Thomson, Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Franklin Carmichael, A.J. Casson, J.E.H. MacDonald, F.H. Varley, Emily Carr, Clarence Gagnon." Purchase Museum Quality Prints of World's most important historical artists, including Tom Thomson and The Group of Seven. Start Shopping! Shipping and return policy. The Group of Seven were inspired by the expansive views along Lake Superior and often painted its vistas. (Sponsor Content). Learn More. The Group of Seven were inspired by the expansive views along Lake Superior and often painted its vistas. (Sponsor Content). Group of Seven Continues updated their status.Â Often wrongly assumed to have been a member of the Group of Seven, Tom Thomson almost certainly would have been had he not died too soon, in 1917. His influence and legacy were driving forces in the Group's formation 100 years ago. The exhibition Tom Thomson, centered around the artist's dazzling oil sketches, opens on Saturday, February 8 and accompanies "A Like Vision": The Group of Seven at 100. <https://mcmichael.com/event/tom-thomson/>. See More. Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven. The period of Canadian art from 1910 to 1933 can best be summed up by the word, "grim." In part, the problem was Canada's colonial mentality, which assumed that anything European was automatically superior to anything Canadian.Â Tom Thomson and five of the original seven members of the Group of Seven all worked as commercial artists, and they used Art Nouveau every day in their work. It was only natural that it should carry over into their fine art. The elements of Art Nouveau was strongly reinforced in 1913, when some of the Group went to Buffalo, New York to see a show of Scandinavian painters. Many of the Scandinavians were painting landscapes in the flat colours, organic shapes and curving, vine-like lines of Art Nouveau.

The name "Group of Seven" was in fact something of a misnomer. During its lifespan, the Group exerted a great influence over other domestic artists and it would accommodate the work of a total of eleven Canadian artists. One might even add a twelfth name if one includes Emily Carr, one of Canada's most important modern artists. Carr attributed her artistic renaissance to her discovery of the Group of Seven. Jackson became especially close to Tom Thomson and the two shared a studio, often fishing and sketching together in Algonquin Park. Jackson's landscapes, which eschewed conventional composition by extending the image to the edges of the canvas, often featured views of water seen through trees and this became a favourite subject amongst the Group. Findable but Unlocated Tom Thomson Sketching Locations. There are several Tom Thomson sketches, believed to be from 1916, that are sufficiently distinctive to facilitate location and yet we have so far failed to do so. This is our challenge for the future. Group Of Seven Art Group Of Seven Paintings Group Art Canadian Painters Canadian Artists New Artists Emily Carr Tom Thomson Paintings Dulwich Picture Gallery. Canada's Group of Seven: kings of the wild frontier - in pictures. The Group of Seven and Canadian Nationalism. Back in June, I had the pleasure of exploring the beautiful Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal (Montréal Museum of Fine Arts). To my delight, their collection of Quebec and Canadian art had a large nâ€¦ In addition to Tom Thomson, David Milne and Emily Carr, the Group of Seven were the most important Canadian artists of the early 20th century. Their influence is seen in artists as diverse as abstract painter Jack Bush, the Painters Eleven, and Scottish painter Peter Doig. Members of the Group of Seven at the Arts & Letters Club in Toronto, clockwise from the left: A.Y. Jackson, Fred Varley, Lawren Harris, Barker Fairley, Franz Johnston, Arthur Lismer and J.E.H. Macdonald. (courtesy Art Gallery of Ontario). Members. The original members of the Group of Seven were Franklin Carmichael, Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Franz Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J.E.H. MacDonald and F.H. Varley. Tom Thomson was a peer and a leading influence but died before the group was formed. The Group of Seven, also sometimes known as the Algonquin School, was a group of Canadian landscape painters from 1920 to 1933, originally consisting of Franklin Carmichael (1890â€“1945), Lawren Harris (1885â€“1970), A. Y. Jackson (1882â€“1974), Frank Johnston (1888â€“1949), Arthur Lismer (1885â€“1969), J. E. H. MacDonald (1873â€“1932), and Frederick Varley (1881â€“1969). Later, A. J. Casson (1898â€“1992) was invited to join in 1926, Edwin Holgate (1892â€“1977) became a member in 1930, and LeMoine FitzGerald (1890â€“1956)...