

## The Permanent Collection

---

The founding members of the Vancouver Art Gallery began raising funds for a civic art collection in 1925 with a starting gift of \$50,000 from the group's chairman, Henry A. Stone. The first painting acquired for the collection was a 19th century British landscape titled *Canterbury Meadows*, 1877 by T.S. Cooper (1803-1902). In 1931, Henry Stone and Charles Hepburn Scott, art director of the Vancouver School of Art, were commissioned by the Founders to travel to Britain and Europe to purchase works for the collection.



Thomas Sidney Cooper, *Canterbury Meadows*, 1871, oil on canvas, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery

The Vancouver Art Gallery's inaugural exhibition consisted of 55 paintings, 33 watercolours, 25 prints and drawings and four sculptures, including late eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century British works by artists Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956), Alfred James Munnings (1878-1959), David Cox (1783-1859), William Powell Frith (1819-1909), George Morland (1763-1804), David Wilkie (1785-1841), Harold John Wilde Gilman (1876-1919) and Frederic Leighton (1830-1896).



A.Y. Jackson, *The Road to St. Fidele*, 1929-1930, oil on canvas, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Founders' Fund

In 1933, the former Director of the British National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery, Sir Charles Holmes, was commissioned by the Association to purchase works on the Gallery's behalf. Holmes acquired a number of significant works, including *Fides*, 1871 by Edward Coley Burne-Jones (1833-1898), *The Dream of Belinda*, 1780-1790 by Henry Fuseli (1741-1825), *Portrait of George Montgomerie*, 1750-1760 by Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), *Portrait of Miss Elizabeth Hervey*, by Joseph Highmore (1692-1780) and *Portrait of Mr. Bridgeman*, by William Hogarth (1697-1764).



James Wilson Morrice, *On the Beach, Dinard*, nd., oil on canvas, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Founders' Fund

The collection originated with a strong emphasis on British historical painting with few Canadian works. The founding collection included only seven works by Canadian artists, six of which were gifts. The first major purchases of Canadian art were made in 1932 with *On the Beach, Dinard*, c. 1900-1905 by J.W. Morrice (1865-1924), *The Road to St. Fidele*, c. 1929-1930 by A.Y. Jackson (1882-1974) and three additional works purchased from an exhibition of Canadian art held at the Vancouver Art Gallery. The following year, three significant Canadian works were acquired: *The Load of Grass*, c. 1898 by Homer Ransford Watson (1855-1936); *Indian Encampment*, n.d. by Cornelius Krieghoff (1815-1872); and *Reading the Future*, 1883 by Paul Peel (1860-1892).



Paul Peel, *Reading the Future*, 1883, oil on canvas, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of Mr. F. N. Southam

It was not until 1937 that the Vancouver Art Gallery purchased a work by Emily Carr (1871-1945); *Totem Poles, Kitseukla*, 1912 was acquired at a cost of \$400. A second Carr artwork, *Loggers Culls*, c. 1933-35, entered the collection in 1939 as a gift from Miss I.

Parkyn. When Carr passed away on March 2, 1945, a selection of her works was willed to the Province of British Columbia. In 1966, the Trustees officially transferred the Emily Carr Trust Collection, totalling 157 works, to the Vancouver Art Gallery. Today, the Emily Carr Trust Collection is the most significant holding of Carr's work in the world. The Collection is comprised of 252 artworks, including 146 paintings, 51 drawings and 45 ceramic works, as well as letters, books, photographs and untitled sketches.



Emily Carr, *Totem Poles, Kitsseukla*, 1912, oil on canvas, Vancouver Art Gallery Collection, Founders Fund

The Vancouver Art Gallery's collection also houses a number of major works by Lawren Harris, including *Abstract #7*, n.d., *Composition #1*, c.1940, *First Snow, North Shore of Lake Superior*, 1923, *Island, MacCallum Lake*, 1921, *Mount Thule, Bylot Island*, 1930, *Tamarack Swamp*, 1920 and *Red House, Yellow Sleigh*. Many of Harris' distinguished contemporaries are also well represented, with works by A.Y. Jackson, Arthur Lismer (1855-1969), Jock Macdonald (1897-1960), J.W. Morrice (1865-1924), E.J. Hughes (b. 1913), David Milne (1882-1953), Harold Town (1924-1990), Gershon Iskowitz (1921-1988) and Jack Bush.



Lawren Harris, *Mount Thule, Bylot Island*, 1930, oil on canvas, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the Vancouver Art Gallery Women's Auxiliary

The collection includes a number of works by some of Quebec's best known artists, including Theophile Hamel (1817-1870), Antoine Plamondon (1804-1895), Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Coté (1869-1937), Paul-Emile Borduas (1905-1960), Guido Molinari (1933-2004), Jacques de Tonnancour (b. 1917), Claude Tousignant (b. 1932), Charles Gagnon (1934-2003), Yves Gaucher (1934-2000), Alfred Pellan (1906-1988) and Jean-Paul Lemieux (1904-1990). The Gallery has also acquired major works by Quebecois contemporaries such as Genviève Cadieux (b. 1955), Jana Sterbak (b. 1955), Jocelyne Allouche (b. 1947) and Betty Goodwin (b. 1923).



Betty Goodwin, *Carbon*, 1987, pastel, graphite, oilstick and wash on geofilm, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of Martin Goodwin

One of the collection's principal strengths is the abundance of works by artists of this region, a strength that reflects the Gallery's commitment to preserve and present works by British Columbia's finest artists. E.J. Hughes, John Vanderpant (1884-1939), Maxwell Bates (1906-1980), Toni Onley (1928-2004), Jack Shadbolt (1909-1998), Bertram Charles Binning (1909-1976), Gordon Smith (b. 1919), Alistair Bell (1913-1997), Mowry Baden (b. 1936), Takao Tanabe (b. 1926), Robert Davidson (b. 1946), Michael Morris (b. 1942), N.E. Thing Co., Jeff Wall (b. 1946), Ken Lum (b. 1956), Rodney Graham (b. 1949), Stan Douglas (b. 1960), Ann Kipling (b. 1934), Gathie Falk (b. 1928), Brian Jungen (b. 1970), and Allyson Clay (b. 1953), among many others, are well represented.

The Vancouver Art Gallery's European historical collection includes Dutch paintings from the seventeenth century by Jan Anthoniszoon van Ravenstyn (1570-1657), Jan Wynants (1630/35-1684), Isaac van Ostade (1621-1649), Pieter Neeffs the Elder (1578-1656), Jacob Marrel (1614-1681), Jan van Huysum (1682-1749), Balthasar van der Ast (1590-1656), Ambrosius Bosschaert the Younger (1609-1645), Jan Josefsz van Goyen (1596-1665), Abraham Storck (1635-1710), Roelof de Vries (1631-c.1681), Willem van de Velde the Younger (1633-1707), Adriaen van der Kabel (1631-1705), Salomon van Ruysdael (1600-1670), Flemish-

Cornelius de Heem (1631-1695), Roelandt Savery (1576-1639) and a fine first edition of Francisco Jose de Goya y Lucientes' *Disasters of War*.

Until 2002, the Gallery had collected a relatively small number of photographs, including holdings of work by John Vanderpant (1884-1939), Eikoh Hosoe's (b. 1933) and significant work by Vancouver photographers Jeff Wall (b. 1946), Rodney Graham (b. 1949), Roy Arden (b. 1957), Kelly Wood (b. 1962), Stan Douglas (b. 1960), Ian Wallace (b. 1943) and Arni Haraldsson (b. 1958), as well as portfolios by Manuel Alvarez Bravo (1902-2000), Minor White (1908-1976) and Donigan Cumming (b. 1947). Through a combination of gift and purchase, the Gallery realized a major addition of international photography in 2002. The collection from Alison and Alan Schwartz includes major works by Cindy Sherman (b. 1954), Andreas Gursky (b. 1955), Thomas Struth (b. 1954), Dan Graham (b. 1942) and others.

2003 and 2004 saw the photographic collections substantially enlarged by further gifts from the Schwartz family, Sandra Simpson, Bill Jeffries, Jeremy Caddy and, most notably the addition of the Claudia Beck and Andrew Gruft collection. The Beck/Gruft Collection of more than 450 works includes important photographs by Samuel Bourne (1834-1912), Robert Frank (b. 1924), David Octavius Hill (1802-1870) and Robert Adamson (1821-1848), Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), Manuel Alvarez Bravo (1902-2002), Ansel Adams (1902-1984), Edward Weston (1886-1958), Lewis Hine (1874-1940), Tina Modotti (1896-1942), William Henry Fox-Talbot (1800-1877), Margaret Bourke-White (1904-1971), Weegee (1899-1968), Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908-2004), André Kertész (1894-1985) and many others. This body of work complements and augments the places the Gallery's photography collection as one of the most important in North America.



Brian Jungen, *Prototype for New Understanding #2*, 1998, Nike Air Jordans, hair, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Acquisition Fund and purchased with the financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts Acquisition Assistance Program



Jeff Wall, *Bad Goods*, 1985, azo dye transparency, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisition Fund



Julia Margaret Cameron, *The Seven Stars*, 1870, albumen print, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of Claudia Beck and Andrew Gruft,