

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Vancouver Art Gallery's Largest Emily Carr Exhibition in Over Two Decades Welcomes Visitors from Around the World

That Green Ideal: Emily Carr and the Idea of Nature offers a timely re-examination of Carr's enduring influence on how British Columbia's landscape is seen, understood and represented



February 5, 2026, VANCOUVER, B.C. // Traditional Coast Salish Lands including the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətaɫ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is proud to present *That Green Ideal: Emily Carr and the Idea of Nature*, the Gallery's most comprehensive exhibition of Emily Carr's work in more than 20 years and the first to focus exclusively on her evolving idea of nature. Drawing primarily from the Gallery's world-leading Emily Carr collection and spanning the full breadth of her career, the exhibition offers a focused reconsideration of how Carr's modernist vision continues to shape perceptions of the Pacific Northwest landscape. The exhibition opens to the public on February 6, 2026, and is paired with a tours and events program for visitors of all ages.

Widely recognized as one of Canada's most influential artists, Emily Carr (1871–1945) developed a way of seeing nature that blurred observation, spirituality and artistic invention. *That Green Ideal* explores the space between Carr's lived encounters with forests, coastlines and mountains, and the ideas—cultural, philosophical and artistic—that transformed those experiences into works of art. Through paintings, drawings, journals and archival materials,

the exhibition traces Carr's lifelong effort to capture not just the appearance of nature, but its perceived inner essence.

"Emily Carr created a way of seeing B.C.'s landscapes that people hadn't quite experienced before—one grounded in spatiality, where you're not just looking at the forest, but feel as though your nose is right up against it," says **Richard Hill**, Smith Jarislowsky Senior Curator of Canadian Art at the Vancouver Art Gallery. "Her vision was so compelling that we now tend to take it for granted, overlooking how her paintings continue to shape our visual understanding of the region. With this exhibition, my ambition is to resist that familiarity and instead open a gap between Carr's lived experience of nature and her transformation of that experience into paint."

At the end of the exhibition, visitors will discover an interactive space designed for audiences to pause and engage creatively with Carr's ideas of nature. Here, visitors can sketch their own responses to Carr's work, browse books about her life and art, and take part in word-based activities that deepen their understanding of the exhibition. A sensory-friendly felt wall offers a tactile experience for younger visitors, while a search-and-find activity guides families through the galleries, encouraging close observation and playful exploration.

Last year on World Health Day, the Vancouver Art Gallery announced a groundbreaking new collaboration with the BC Parks Foundation that recognizes the healing power of art and nature in supporting mental health and psychological wellbeing. Through this partnership, healthcare professionals can prescribe their patients a visit to the Vancouver Art Gallery via the BC Parks Foundation's PaRx program.

That Green Ideal: Emily Carr and the Idea of Nature extends this approach by placing reflection and personal connection at the centre of the visitor experience. As audiences move through the exhibition, they are encouraged to consider how Carr understood, imagined and felt the natural world and how those ways of seeing continue to shape our own relationships with landscape today. Visitors are invited to experience the exhibition as a contemplative journey, using Carr's vision as a starting point for renewed awareness. Prescribed visitors can take home *Colouring Carr*, a nature-inspired colouring book featuring works from the Gallery's collection—also available for purchase at the Gallery Store.

The Store will complement the exhibition with a range of exclusive Emily Carr merchandise. Visitors can browse stickers and magnets featuring five of Carr's iconic forest paintings, a postcard series highlighting her lesser-known charcoal drawings or a tote bag or poster featuring the exhibition's signature artwork, *Untitled*, 1931. In Spring 2026 the Vancouver Art Gallery will publish *That Green Ideal: Emily Carr and the Idea of Nature*, a lavishly illustrated catalogue, the centrepiece of which is an extensive, scholarly essay by Richard Hill that expands his investigation into Carr's life and work.

The exhibition has also prompted a special collaboration with Vancouver-based cycling brand [Samsara](#), which has created a limited-edition collection inspired by Emily Carr's forest paintings. Designed by Samsara's all-women team in Vancouver, the collection includes apparel and accessories that are custom designed, drawing inspiration from Carr's lush depictions of the landscape.

The Vancouver Art Gallery has collaborated with Fairmont Hotel Vancouver's Notch8 tea salon to present *Among the Trees with Emily Carr*, an afternoon tea inspired by Carr's celebrated paintings. Running from Friday, May 22 to Sunday, September 6, 2026, the experience invites guests to enjoy a selection of sweet and savoury treats in an immersive, forest-inspired setting.

That Green Ideal: Emily Carr and the Idea of Nature will be on view at the Vancouver Art Gallery from **February 6 to November 8, 2026**. The exhibition is organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery and curated by **Richard Hill**, Smith Jarislowsky Senior Curator of Canadian Art with **Andrea Valentine-Lewis**, Curatorial Assistant.

Presented by:



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We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia.



PROGRAM SCHEDULE

ART OF WELLBEING FOR SENIORS (formerly Art At Any Age)

Seniors are invited to join a dynamic program of interactive arts-based workshops.

Wednesday February 18–Wednesday March 4, 2026 | 1:30 – 3:30PM | 4East

Art of Wellbeing for Seniors is open to Gallery Members and the public. Advance registration is required and includes a bundle of three unique workshops responding to *That Green Ideal: Emily Carr and the Idea of Nature*.

Find out more here: <https://www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/events/art-of-wellbeing-for-seniors-emily-carr/>



Community Access Partner:



Corporate Partner:



CURATOR TALK

Saturday, March 7, 2026 | 2 – 3:30 PM | 4East

Join Richard Hill, Smith Jarislowsky Senior Curator of Canadian Art, to delve deeper into Emily Carr's profound engagement with the landscapes of British Columbia. Register here:

<https://www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/events/curator-talk-mar-7>

AMONG THE TREES WITH EMILY CARR | AFTERNOON TEA

Friday May 22–Sunday September 6, 2026 | Thursday – Saturdays with seatings at 11 AM, 1PM and 3PM

Notch8 Restaurant & Bar, Fairmont Hotel Vancouver | 900 West Georgia Street

Embark on a culinary journey inspired by celebrated B.C. artist Emily Carr with an afternoon tea at Fairmont Hotel Vancouver's Notch8 Tea Salon. Created in collaboration with the Vancouver Art Gallery, this specially themed tea invites guests to savour delectable treats and artistic creations in Notch8's tea salon, which will be transformed into an immersive experience with Carr's artwork and forest decor. Find out more here: <https://www.fairmont-hotel-vancouver.com/dine/emily-carr-afternoon-tea/>

THE MAKING PLACE

Families are invited to get creative together and make art inspired by the exhibitions on display.

Every Sunday | 11AM – 4PM | 4East

The Making Place is open to all ages. On February 8 and 15, families can expect hands-on making activities inspired by the work of Emily Carr. Tours take place every Sunday at 2PM, designed for visitors aged 5 to 12 years

old and their families, although everyone is welcome. Sign up for a same-day tour on the day of your visit. Find out more here: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/family-programs/

PUBLIC TOURS

All visitors are invited to enhance their Gallery experience with a guided exhibition tour.

Thursdays at 10:30 AM, 11:30 AM, 1 PM and 2 PM and Sundays at 11AM | Gallery Lobby

Guided Tours are a great way to learn more about the cultural and social contexts of artworks on display. Led by a trained Art Educator, each tour is unique and reflects your guide's passions and interests. Free with Gallery admission. Find out more here: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/tours/

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Media package: <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/HgZldXxVwE>

For media requests, email media@vanartgallery.bc.ca

Image: Emily Carr, *Loggers' Culls*, 1935, oil on canvas, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of Miss. I Parkyn

ABOUT EMILY CARR (1871–1945)

Emily Carr is one of Canada's most renowned artists, celebrated for her modernist depictions of the landscapes of British Columbia. Born in Victoria in 1871, Carr defied the expectations of her time with a fierce independence and a resolve to travel widely in pursuit of her artistic training. She studied at the California School of Design in San Francisco, the Westminster School of Art in London, and later in France, where she developed a distinctive post-Impressionist style and a fauvist-inspired palette that would define much of her later work.

Carr first turned her attention to the art and cultures of Indigenous peoples in 1907 and, following her transformative studies in France, undertook an ambitious sketching trip to Haida Gwaii in 1912. There she created a significant body of watercolours and canvases that fused her French training with her deep engagement with the monumental forms of totem poles and village sites. When exhibited in 1913, these works met a mixed reception and sold poorly, forcing Carr to set aside painting for nearly fifteen years while she ran a boarding house in Victoria.

Her career was revived in 1927, when her work was included in the *Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art: Native and Modern* at the National Gallery of Canada. There she met members of the Group of Seven, including Lawren Harris, whose recognition and encouragement emboldened Carr to embrace her vision fully. Over the next fifteen years, until ill health curtailed her practice in 1942, she produced the powerful, swirling landscapes and forest scenes that remain her most celebrated achievements.

In later life, Carr also turned to writing. Her first book, *Klee Wyck* (1941), a memoir of her encounters with Indigenous communities, was awarded the Governor General's Award for Literature. Today, Emily Carr is remembered as a pioneering modernist whose art gave form to both the spiritual force of the British Columbia landscape and the enduring presence of Indigenous culture.

ABOUT THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

Founded in 1931 on the ancestral and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, the Vancouver Art Gallery is recognized as one of North America's most innovative visual arts institutions. The Gallery's celebrated exhibitions, extensive public programs and emphasis on advancing scholarship all focus on historical and contemporary art from British Columbia and around the world. Special attention is given to the accomplishments of Indigenous artists, as well as to those of the Asia Pacific region—through the Centre for Global Asias (formerly the Institute of Asian Art) founded in 2014. The Gallery's exhibitions also explore the impact of images in the larger sphere of visual culture, design and architecture.

The Gallery's new Art of Wellbeing lab furthers its commitment to community by promoting the role of art in fostering health and wellbeing. Developed in collaboration with healthcare professionals, researchers and Indigenous Elders, the lab creates opportunities for individuals to engage with art in ways that support mental, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Committed to inclusivity and accessibility, the Gallery welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors each year to share perspectives, build community and shape our collective future through art.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is a charitable not-for-profit organization supported by its members, individual donors, corporate funders, foundations, the City of Vancouver, the Province of British Columbia through the B.C. Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts.

Quote sheet

That Green Ideal: Emily Carr and the Idea of Nature

February 6–November 8, 2026

“Carr is a remarkable modernist landscape painter who has been largely overlooked in the wider history of Modernism. Her intense commitment to art despite sexist assumptions about her potential as a woman artist and her geographic isolation from the mainstream art world are a story I think many people would find fascinating, if given a chance to hear it and see the work.” - **Richard Hill, Smith Jarislowsky Senior Curator of Canadian Art at the Vancouver Art Gallery**

“We are uniquely positioned to share the depth and significance of Emily Carr’s legacy with our diverse publics. This landmark exhibition opens as Vancouver welcomes a wave of visitors, inviting everyone, from school groups to international travellers, to experience Carr’s vision of the Pacific Northwest in ways that spark dialogue, discovery and joy.” - **Eva Respini, Interim Co-CEO and Curator at Large at the Vancouver Art Gallery**

“In British Columbia, nature is not something distant—it is part of the rhythm of our everyday lives through the forests and oceans that surround us. *That Green Ideal: Emily Carr and the Idea of Nature* deepens this connection by inviting visitors to explore how Carr herself turned to the natural world for renewal and transcendence. Through the Gallery’s ongoing prescription initiative, guests will be invited to experience her vision as part of their own journey of healing and thriving. It is a profound reminder that art, like nature, has the power to restore us.” - **Sirish Rao, Interim Co-CEO and Director of the Gallery’s Art of Wellbeing Lab**

"The Audain Foundation is pleased to support this exhibition, drawing on the Gallery’s exceptional Emily Carr collection. The Vancouver Art Gallery is the steward of the most important collection of works by the artist. I am convinced that no artist has better captured the stillness and majesty of British Columbia's west coast forest. We now have an opportunity to celebrate her artistic legacy. As a woman in the 19th and 20th century, Carr faced immense challenges. Yet she chose the path of art, overcoming discrimination, social constraints, confronting her times. We need to share the stories of such cultural heroes, so that we may inspire new generations of artists.” - **Michael Audain, Chair, Audain Foundation**