

## Clarence Gagnon's *Maria Chapdelaine* Paintings Return to the McMichael this Holiday Season



Left: Clarence Alphonse Gagnon (1881–1942), *The Chapdelaine Farm*, 1928/1933, watercolour and gouache with pastel and/or coloured pencil on paper, sheet: 20.4 x 26 cm; image: 16.4 x 22.2 cm, Gift of Colonel R.S. McLaughlin, McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 1969.4.7 Right: Clarence Alphonse Gagnon (1881–1942), *Christmas Mass*, 1928/1933, pastel and/or coloured pencil on paper, sheet: 21.7 x 23.8 cm; image: 18.2 x 21.8 cm, Gift of Colonel R.S. McLaughlin, McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 1969.4.34

**Kleinburg, ON** – On November 23, Clarence Gagnon's beloved suite of paintings for [Maria Chapdelaine](#) returned to the walls of McMichael Canadian Art Collection just in time for the holiday season. The series of 54 exquisite miniature paintings offers visitors a rare opportunity to immerse themselves in Gagnon's enchanting vision of Quebec's rural past.

Created in the early 1930s, Gagnon's jewel-like compositions were commissioned to illustrate *Maria Chapdelaine*, the acclaimed novel by French author Louis Hémon. Celebrated as a pinnacle of Canadian book illustration, Gagnon's works vividly capture the beauty and spirit of the Quebec countryside and have been enchanting art lovers and readers alike for generations.

For reasons of conservation, these delicate paintings from the McMichael's permanent collection can only be displayed once every three years, making their holiday-season return a truly special occasion. The winter scenes, in particular, add a festive ambiance, perfectly complementing the season's spirit.

This exhibition offers visitors an expanded look at the work of Clarence Gagnon, more of which can be seen in *River of Dreams: Impressionism on the St. Lawrence*, which celebrates the Impressionist tradition in Quebec. Together, the two exhibitions offer a complementary romantic vision of Quebec at the turn of the 20th century.

Guests visiting the McMichael Canadian Art Collection can enhance their experience of *Maria Chapdelaine* with a series of English and French-language programs and family-friendly activities.

Highlights include the **Matinée francophone: Clarence Gagnon et Maria Chapdelaine on Saturday, December 14, from 10 am to 12 pm**, as well as **virtual tours** available in both English and French, with



the English Livestream Virtual Tour on December 18 and the French Livestream Virtual Tour on January 29.

Over the holidays, families can enjoy special programming, including a Gagnon-inspired drop-in art workshop and storytelling circle during **Family Sunday on December 15**, as well as **English and French Family Storytelling Circles** offered throughout the holiday break. Learn more about McMichael events here.

For more information on these exhibitions and related programming, please visit [www.mcmichael.com](http://www.mcmichael.com).

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*Ces informations sont aussi disponibles en français.*

Media wishing to request interviews, media tours, obtain high-resolution images or review copies of publications are asked to contact Sadie Evans at [sevans@mcmichael.com](mailto:sevans@mcmichael.com) or 905.893.1121 ext. 2290.

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## **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 Gaming, 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](http://mcmichael.com).

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