

McMICHAEL CANADIAN ART COLLECTION DEBUTS GENERATIONS: THE SOBEY FAMILY AND CANADIAN ART

Exhibition spotlights more than 170 works including Canadian trailblazers from the Group of Seven to Quebec Impressionists and Contemporary Indigenous Artists



Kent Monkman (b. 1965), Study for "mistikôsiwak (Wooden Boat People): Resurgence of the People," (Final Variation), 2019, acrylic on canvas, 107.3 x 213.4 cm, Collection of the Sobey Art Foundation, © Kent Monkman

February 1, 2022, KLEINBURG, ON - The McMichael Canadian Art Collection proudly announces the upcoming new special exhibition *Generations: The Sobey Family and Canadian Art*, opening on February 12, 2022. *Generations* offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to explore one of Canada's most legendary private collections, revealing the family's long-standing engagement with Canadian and Indigenous art. This exhibition brings together more than 170 works by early European newcomers, the Group of Seven, their contemporaries, Quebec Impressionists and the Automatiste painters along with the trailblazing Indigenous artists of today. Touring nationally, *Generations* examines the story of Canadian art from fresh perspectives and allows for new conversations between the art of yesterday and today.

Generations: The Sobey Family and Canadian Art coincides with the landmark 20th anniversary of the Sobey Art Award, which continues to have an indelible impact on the visibility and vitality of contemporary art across Canada. Formally established in 2002 and administered by the Sobey Art Foundation, the Sobey Art Award is recognized as one of the world's most significant privately funded prizes supporting contemporary visual artists and is credited

with catalyzing the early careers of revered names in Canadian art, among them Annie Pootoogook, Brian Jungen and Ursula Johnson. *Generations* celebrates this 20th anniversary milestone by showcasing works by many of these artists, demonstrating the range and depth of the Sobey family's engagement with Canadian art, and their visionary leadership in the cultural sector.

As well, the Sobey family has quietly preserved and promoted the legacies of historical Canadian artists for three generations. From a collection of Jean Paul Lemieux's rare works, to major works by Kent Monkman, to Cornelius Krieghoff's vivid winter scenes, to masterworks by the Group of Seven, the Sobey Collections reflect the wide-ranging creativity of artists from every region of the nation.

Generations is curated by McMichael Chief Curator Sarah Milroy. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, edited by Milroy, and featuring contributions from McMichael Executive Director Ian A.C. Dejardin, artist Kent Monkman, and art historians John Geoghegan, Jocelyn Anderson and Michèle Grandbois. This lavish celebration, featuring full-colour reproductions of all artworks in the show, will be available at the McMichael Gallery Shop and online eShop.

"Engaging with this extraordinary collection of Canadian art has been the privilege of a lifetime," says Milroy. "In shaping the exhibition and book, we have taken our cue from private collecting itself, in which new connections and associations between artists are freely made. Thus, we will find Kent Monkman sharing a gallery with Cornelius Kreighoff, or David Milne hanging alongside Peter Doig. Filled with surprises and revelations, this will be a survey of Canadian art like no other."

"We are all extremely humbled by the work of the McMichael and its chief curator, Sarah Milroy, on this exhibition," said Rob Sobey, Chair of the Sobey Art Foundation. "On behalf of the Sobey family, it's an honour to share three generations of our passion for Canadian art. Our collective commitment to Canada is shared by the McMichael and we're excited to circulate this exhibition across the country with each of our other host venues."

"We are fortunate in Ontario to have some of the country's best-known cultural institutions — like the McMichael Canadian Art Collection — that enrich our province and attract thousands of visitors every year to see their spectacular collections," said Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries. "I encourage everyone to safely plan a visit this winter to see the McMichael's latest exhibition, *Generations*, which is sure to delight and inspire us with its impressive display of Canadian and Indigenous art from across the country."

Following its opening at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, *Generations* will tour across the country, taking residence in St. Johns, Newfoundland; Edmonton, Alberta; Charlottetown,

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PEI; and Halifax, Nova Scotia. Alongside the McMichael's presentation of *Generations*, the Gallery will also produce a robust slate of virtual programs including tours, educational classes and curatorial talks to give visitors and students an opportunity to engage with this treasured collection. As Canadians look to the arts for inspiration and insight, the McMichael continues to serve as a creative oasis in turbulent times.

Media wishing to request an interview with Chief Curator Sarah Milroy or obtain high-resolution images of the artworks are asked to contact Sam Cheung, Media Relations and Communications Coordinator at scheung@mcmichael.com or 905.893.1121 ext. 2210. Media wishing to contact the Sobey Art Foundation are asked to contact Bernard Doucet, Executive Director at bernard.doucet@sobeys.com or 902.921.1755.

Ces informations sont aussi disponible en français.

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 Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, 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 6,500 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.

ABOUT THE SOBEY ART FOUNDATION

The Sobey Art Foundation was established in 1981 with the mandate to carry on the work of entrepreneur and business leader, the late Frank H. Sobey, who was a dedicated collector of Canadian art. The Sobey Art Foundation continues the work he began by preserving representative examples of 19th and 20th century Canadian art. The Sobey Art Award, created by the Foundation in 2002, is Canada's pre-eminent Annual contemporary art Award open to contemporary Canadian artists of all ages.

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