

McMICHAEL CANADIAN ART COLLECTION ANNOUNCES  
LANDMARK EXHIBITION AND PUBLICATION  
ON FEMALE ARTISTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY



Suzanne Duquet (1916-2000), *Group*, 1941, oil on canvas, 127 × 149.8 cm, Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Gift of the artist, 1996.94, Photo: MNBAQ, Jean-Guy Kerouac©, Estate of the artist

March 29, 2021, KLEINBURG, ON - The McMichael Canadian Art Collection is pleased to announce the opening of the exhibition *Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Moment* on September 10, 2021. This major exhibition gathers nearly 300 works by a generation of extraordinary female painters, photographers and sculptors of a century ago, including garments, beadwork, baskets and quillwork boxes made by Indigenous women artists during this pivotal inter-war period. Curated by McMichael Chief Curator Sarah Milroy (CM), the exhibition debuts alongside a multi-authored academic publication of the same name, and takes a long overdue look at the artistic endeavours of women in this period.

The inspiration for *Uninvited* arose from an awareness of the skewed narratives of Canadian art history as it has been traditionally told, a narrative that has long overlooked artistic production by women, and by Indigenous women particularly, during the heyday of the Group of Seven. While members of the Group of Seven were indeed mentors to many female artists, they nevertheless did not invite any of their female peers to join their ranks – a fact that has cast a long shadow over the way we have come to understand the trajectory of Canadian art. *Uninvited* is presented at the McMichael concurrently with the exhibition *A Like Vision: The Group of Seven at 100*, offering a rich and lively challenge to the Group's recent centenary celebrations.

Best known as the spiritual home of the Group of Seven, the McMichael is committed to extending the gallery's curatorial vision and collections beyond its now canonical holdings. As the only publicly funded art gallery devoted solely to Canadian art, the McMichael increasingly acquires and displays art from every region of Canada, from coast to coast to coast, historic or contemporary, male or female, settler or Indigenous, new immigrant or first-wave settler.

For the first time, the art of the famed Beaver Hall Group of painters from Montreal (among them Anne Savage, Emily Coonan, Prudence Heward and Lilius Torrance Newton) will be shown alongside the paintings of Emily Carr from British Columbia, and sculptures by Toronto artists Elizabeth Wyn Wood, Frances Loring and Florence Wyle. *Uninvited* also incorporates the contribution of women from immigrant communities during this period, such as the painters Regina Seiden and Paraskeva Clark, as well as the work of Canadian expatriates like the avant-garde photographer Margaret Watkins, who left her home in Hamilton for the US and Scotland.

While the Group of Seven and their associates primarily focussed on landscape painting, the women in *Uninvited* examined urban life, portraiture, industrial landscapes and the lives of people who were marginalized in the nation's relentless march to modernity. The exhibition will also celebrate named Indigenous female artists working in traditional media – among them Mrs. Walking Sun, Attatsiaq, Sophie Frank, Bridget Anne Sack and Elizabeth Katt Petrant -- with a number of core loans from the Royal Ontario Museum, the Nova Scotia Museum and the Manitoba Museum.

*Uninvited* represents a crucial step in the evolution of the McMichael's mission to articulate a broader shared cultural heritage. While many previous efforts to spotlight artwork by historical Canadian female artists have suffered from underfunded and sporadic institutional commitment, *Uninvited* at last provides the same sumptuous catalogue and generous presentation that male Canadian artists of this period have long enjoyed. The exhibition draws from more than 60 private and institutional lenders across the country, with special thanks to the National Gallery of Canada and the Art Gallery of Ontario.

Alongside this revolutionary exhibition, the McMichael is proud to present an accompanying exhibition catalogue featuring essays from 39 artists, thinkers, curators, art historians and writers, together providing fresh outlooks on aspects of Canadian art that have long been relegated to the shadows. Introductory essays from Chief Curator Sarah Milroy, art historian Jocelyn Anderson and Katerina Atanassova, Curator of Canadian Art at the National Gallery of Canada, anchor the publication, examining the ways in which women artists of the day negotiated their professional relationships with male colleagues, built their own careers and developed their own networks of support. As well, Kristina Huneault, Professor and Graduate Program Director at Concordia University, explores the complexities of presenting art by Indigenous women alongside settler art.

Taken as a whole, *Uninvited* is an unprecedented, cross-disciplinary initiative that will surprise and delight art lovers, casual observers and seasoned academics alike, prompting a national conversation on a more diverse and layered account of Canadian art.

“The McMichael Canadian Art Collection’s ‘*Uninvited*’ exhibit provides a new, one-of-a-kind opportunity to witness the Canadian experience through the work of female artists who have been overlooked for far too long,” said Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries. “Their artwork not only gave them a voice – it created a lasting echo that, 100 years later, reminds us of the incredible culture and heritage that we have inherited. I encourage everyone to visit McMichael safely and explore the artistic legacy of these incredible women.”

*Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Moment* is made possible with the generous support of presenting sponsor BMO, the McMichael Women’s Art Council, and a group of enlightened private donors.

Please note that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection is closed until further notice while Ontario is under [provincewide emergency and stay-at-home measures](#). The McMichael’s grounds and trails remain open, however the parking lot is closed. For more information about ticketing, shopping, programs and virtual offerings please visit [mcmichael.com](#).

Media wishing to request an interview with Chief Curator Sarah Milroy, request a review copy of the *Uninvited* publication or obtain high-resolution images of the artworks are asked to contact Sam Cheung at [scheung@mcmichael.com](mailto:scheung@mcmichael.com) or 905.893.1121 ext. 2210.

*Ces informations sont aussi disponible en français.*

## ABOUT THE McMICHAEL CANADIAN ART COLLECTION

# McMichael

CANADIAN ART COLLECTION D'ART CANADIEN

An Agency of the Government of Ontario  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

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 foremost venue in the country showcasing the Group of Seven and their contemporaries. In addition to touring exhibitions, its permanent collection consists of over 6,500 works by historic and present-day Canadian artists, including the Group of Seven and their contemporaries, as well as Indigenous artists. The Gallery is located on 100 acres of northern 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).

## Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Moment

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