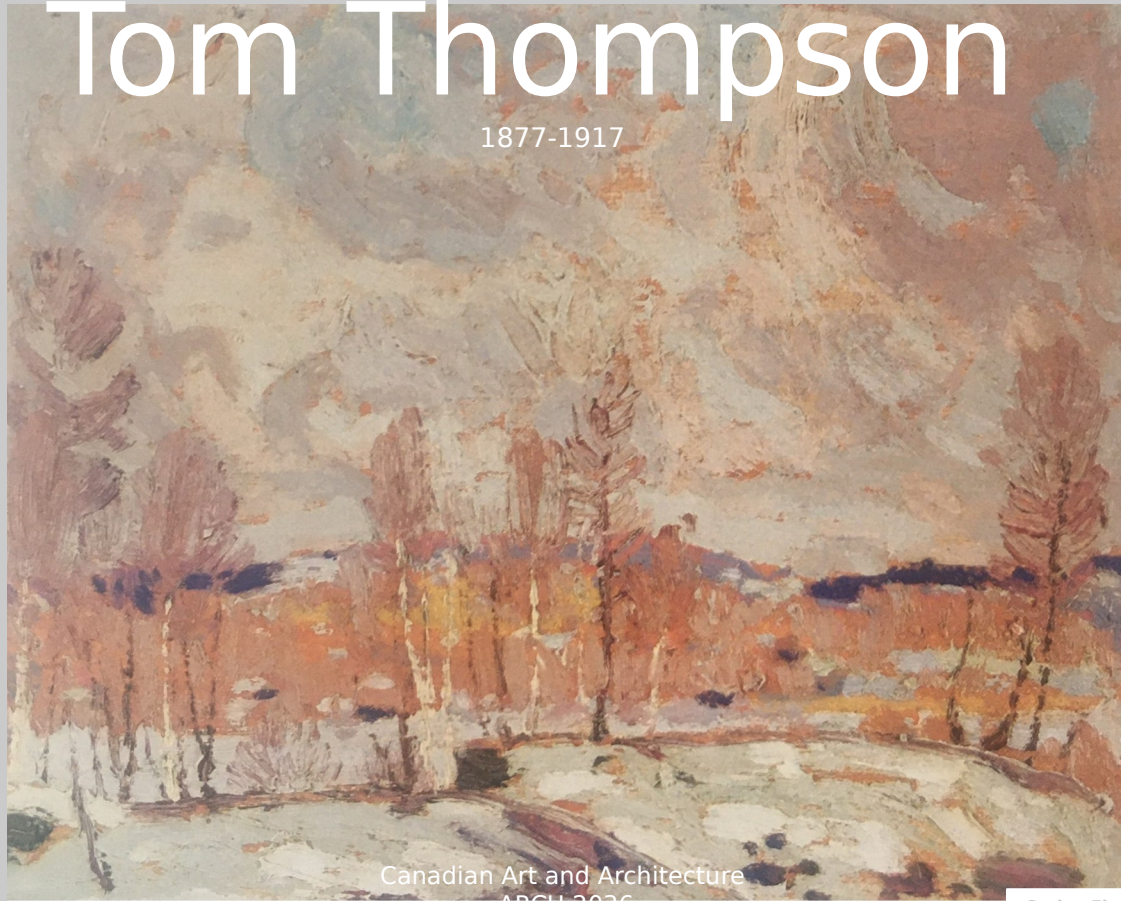


Tom Thompson

1877-1917

“Force compressed in a small framework - snow, trees and water are central elements in his vocabulary.”¹



Canadian Art and Architecture

ARCH 2036

Winter 2020

Rebecca Jacob and Grace Wilson

Professor: Terrance Galvin

Spring Flood

1917

Oil on panel

21.0 x 26.8 cm

Fig. 1, Thompson, Tom, "Spring Flood," Oil on Panel, 1917. In *The McMichael Canadian Art Collection*, by J. Blodgett, pg 32, Scarborough McGraw Hill Ryerson LTD., 1989..

¹ Joan Murray, *Tom Thompson: The Last Spring*, (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1994). 8.

Presentation Outline

- Tom Thompson; a brief biography
- Canada's artistic landscape in the early 1900's
- Algonquin Park: the unexplored north country wilderness
- Interpretation of collected works: early and late
- Devotion to the landscape: A long lasting impact in Canadian Art



Snow in the Woods 1916
Oil on Panel
21.9 x 27.0 cm

Tom Thomson: a brief biography

The Facts:

- Born near Claremont, Ontario, on August 5, 1877. Raised in Leith, near Owen Sound
- Exposure to the outdoors
- Later in life lived between Algonquin park and Toronto
- No formal art training
- Died July 8, 1917 at Canoe Lake

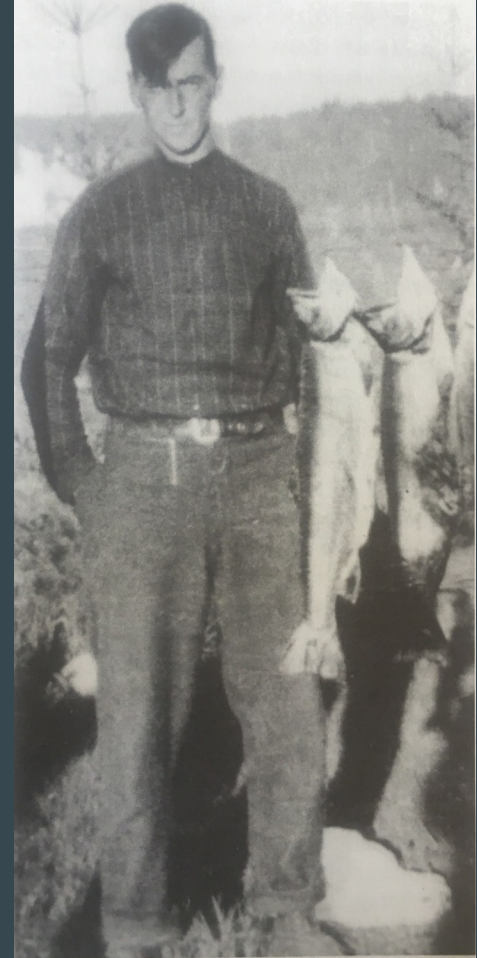
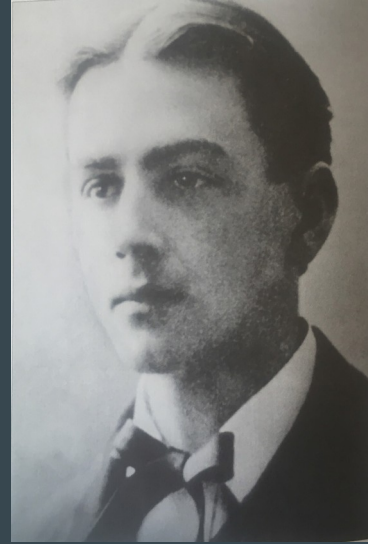


Fig. 3, (top left) Tom Thompson, in *Canoe Lake: Algonquin Park*, by S. Bernard Shaw, pg 92, Burnstown: General Store Publishing House., 1996.

Fig. 4, (right) Tom Thompson, in *Canoe Lake: Algonquin Park*, by S. Bernard Shaw, pg 99, Burnstown: General Store Publishing House., 1996.

Fig. 5, (bottom left) Tom Thompson, in *Canoe Lake: Algonquin Park*, by S. Bernard Shaw, pg 133, Burnstown: General Store Publishing House., 1996.

Canada's artistic landscape in the early 1900's

Art and the Birth of Canada

- Confederation and the Canadian art scene
 - Establishing cultural independence
- European models influence
- Royal Canadian Academy of Art (1880)



Robert Harris, *Fathers of Confederation*,
1883

Influential Art Movements: Setting the Scene

Impressionism (1865 -



Claude Monet, *Impression, Sunrise*, 1899

Fig. 7, Monet, Claude, *Impression Sunrise*, 1899,
<https://www.invaluable.com/blog/art-history-timeline/>

Art-Nouveau (1890-



Alphonse Mucha, *Princess Hyacinth*, 1911

Fig. 8, Mucha, Alphonse, *Princess Hyacinth*, 1911,
<https://www.invaluable.com/blog/art-history-timeline/>

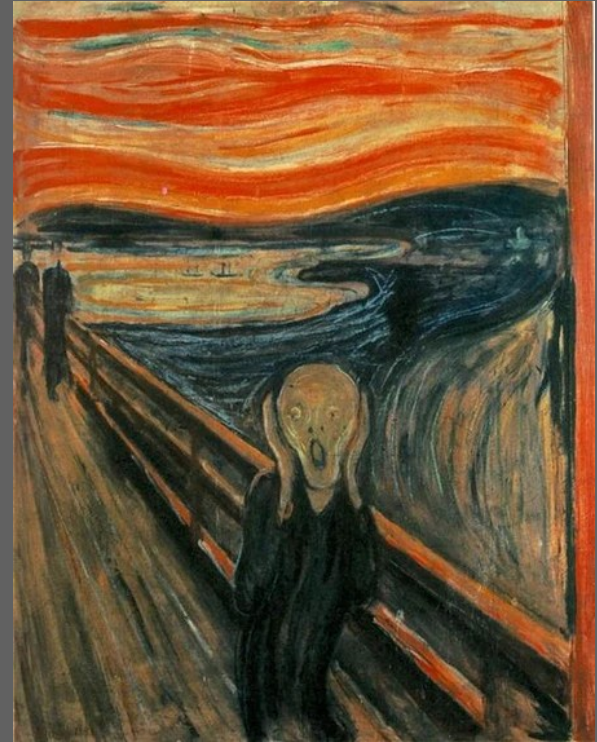
Post-Impressionism (1885-



Vincent Van Gogh, *Wheat Field with Cypresses*, 1889

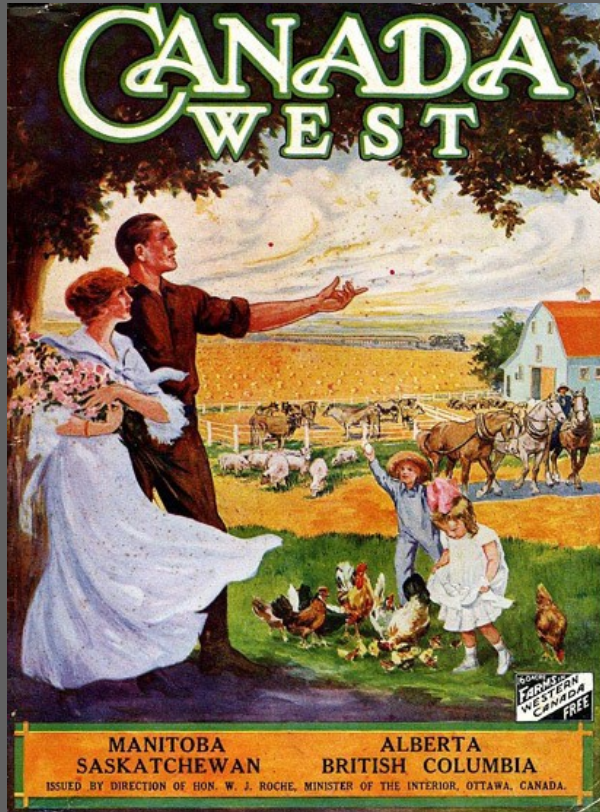
Fig. 9, Vincent Van Gogh, *Wheat Field with Cypresses*, 1889
<https://www.invaluable.com/blog/art-history-timeline/>

Expressionism (1910-



Edvard Munch, *The Scream*, 1893

Fig. 10, Edvard, Munch, *The Scream*, 1893,
<https://www.invaluable.com/blog/art-history-timeline/>



- Promoting Immigration to the West
 - Cultivation and Farming
 - Pristine lakes
- Depicting the harsh realities of Canadian landscape



Carl Ahrens
Midsummer
1917



Tom Thompson
Autumn's Garland
1915-1916

“Samples of the rough, splashy, blatant, plastering and massing of unpleasant colours” - “an absolute lack of knowledge of drawing, colour and design” Carl Ahrens - 1916

Algonquin Park: the unexplored wilderness

Algonquin Park

- Thompson's most frequented and favoured landscape;

- Forest transition zone (Northern Boreal Forest-Southern Great Lakes Deciduous Forest)
- Family ties to the North
- Fishing grounds

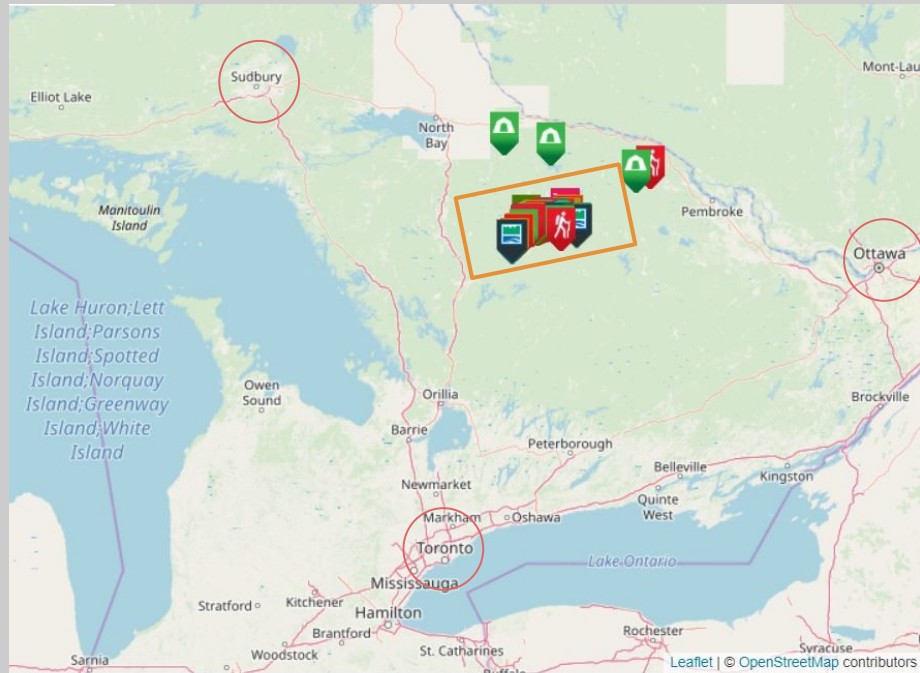
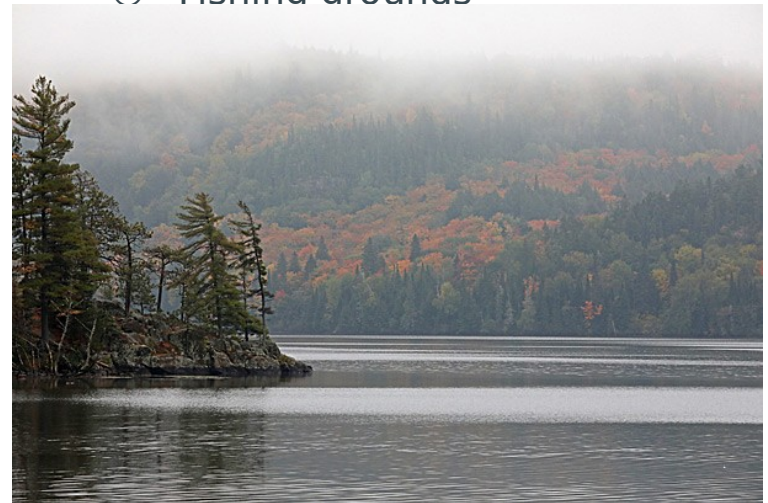


Figure 14 Map of Algonquin Park
<https://www.ontarioparks.com/park/algonquin/maps>



Other Explorations - Georgian Bay



Giants Tomb - Georgian Bay, 2011
Photograph



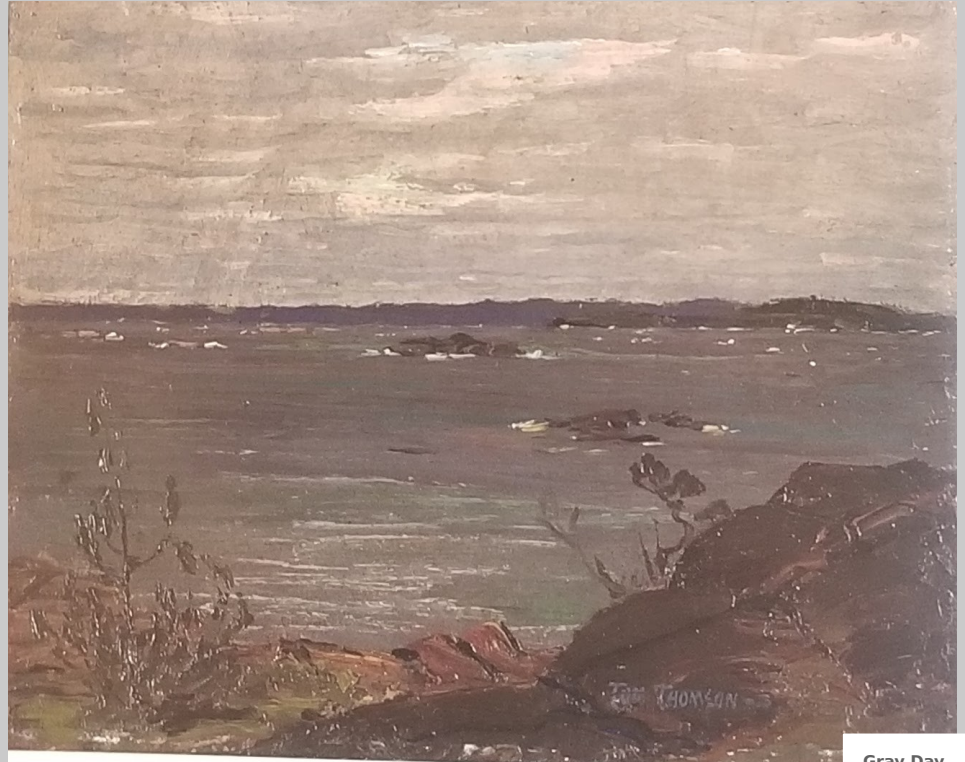
Giant's tomb - Georgian Bay, 1914
Oil on panel

Fig. 15, Giant Tomb, Georgian Bay, 2011., In *The Footsteps of the Group of Seven*, by J.. Waddington, and S. Waddington, pg 132, Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions, 2013.

Fig. 16 Thompson, Tom, "Giant Tomb, Georgian Bay," Oil on Panel, 1915-1916, In *The Footsteps of the Group of Seven*, by J.. Waddington, and S. Waddington, pg 132, Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions, 2013.



**Gray Day
Giant's Tomb-**
2011
Photograph



Gray Day,
1914
Oil on panel

Fig. 17, Gray Day Giant's Tomb, 2011, In *The Footsteps of the Group of Seven*, by J.. Waddington, and S. Waddington, pg 131, Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions, 2013.

Fig. 18 Thompson, Tom, "Gray Day," Oil on Panel, 1914, In *The Footsteps of the Group of Seven*, by J.. Waddington, and S. Waddington, pg 130, Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions, 2013.

Interpretation of Collected Works: early and late

Early Work

- Multiple professions including engraver
- He worked with ink, pen, and watercolour
- The creativity sparked his passion for art
- In 1907 he took an art class
- Started his painting career when he was 35
- Majority of his works from 1912-1917
- Mostly oil on panel or larger works were oil on canvas



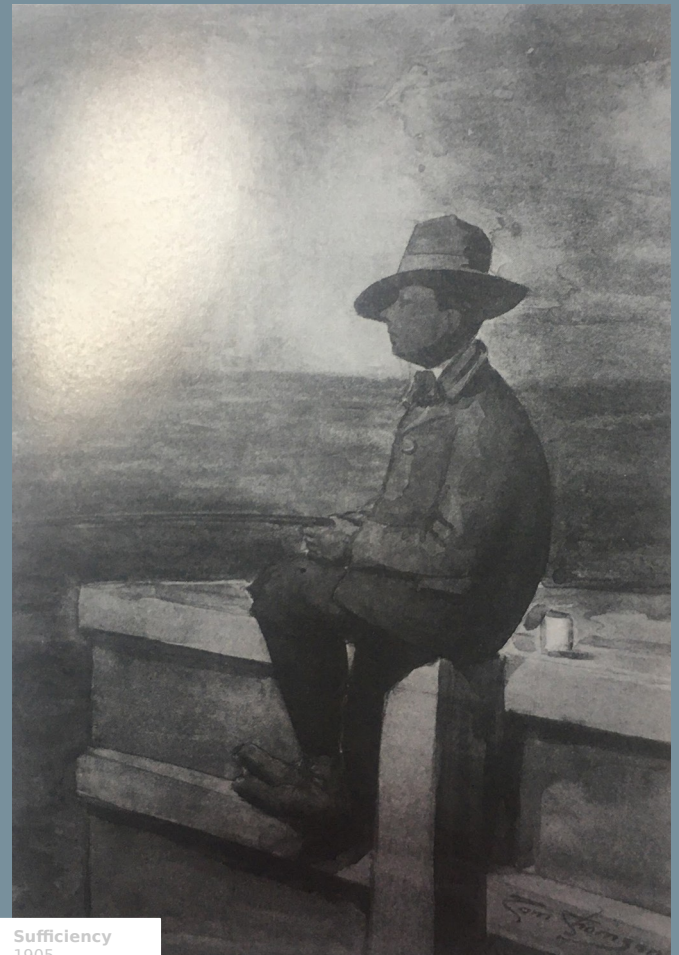
Untitled,
1908
Ink on paper

Exploration of mediums



Young Fisherman,
1905
Ink on Paper
33.3 x 50.8 cm

Fig. 20 Thompson, Tom, "Young Fisherman," Ink on Paper, 1905, In *Tom Thompson: The Last Spring*, by J. Murray, pg 23, Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1994.



Sufficiency
1905
Oil on Board
35 x 25 cm

Fig. 21 Thompson, Tom, "Sufficiency," Oil on Board, 1905, In *Tom Thompson: The Last Spring*, by J. Murray, pg 23, Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1994.



- Members from the Group of Seven influenced Thompson's painting including;

- Simplification
- Reorganization of a scene
- Paint application
- Colour combination

First Exhibition



Tom
Thomson,
*Northern
Lake*, 1913

Late Work: The Last S

- Winters in Toronto and remainder of the year in Algonquin Park
- Distant Panoramas Abandoned
 - Close-up, enclosed compositions
- Evolving techniques and refined colour palette



Tom Thomson,
Spring Flood, 1917

Tom
Thomson,
*The West
Wind*, 1917



Fig. 25, Thompson, Tom, "The West Wind," Oil on Canvas, 1917, In *Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven: Selected Works from the Collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario*, by D. Wistow, pg 13, Canada: Herzig Somerville, 1982.

Tom
Thomson,
*Northern
River*, 1915



Fig. 26, Thomson, Tom, *Northern River*, Oil on Canvas, 1915,

<https://www.gallery.ca/collection/artwork/northern-river>

Tom Thomson,
*The Jack
Pine,*
1916-1917



Fig. 26, Thompson, Tom, *The Jack Pine*, Oil on Canvas, 1916-1917,
<https://www.gallery.ca/collection/artwork/the-jack-pine>

Devotion to the landscape: a
long lasting impact on Canadian
Art



“The light is at peace with the tree and the lake. Calmly it amplifies the beryline silence brooding on the waters where Tom's spirit rests forever alongside the sky stretched out in the shadow of the jackpine that holds heaven and earth together in an embrace encompassing the hills the lake, the seasons, and the void that fills the dark spaces between them and infinity.”

- **Henry Beissel, from “Tom Thomson’s Jackpine”**



Tom Thomson,
*Winter in the
Woods*, 1917

- Devotion to the Northern Subject
 - Development of self through nature
- Manifestation of Canadian Character
 - Bold and courageous landscapes

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