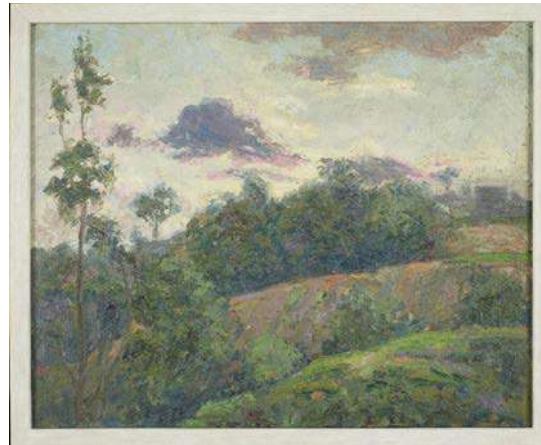


For immediate release

Newly restored Tom Thomson painting comes home to Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery

Kitchener, 7 September 2017 - The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KWAG) is proud to announce the return of an early landscape by celebrated Canadian painter Tom Thomson to our Permanent Collection. This untitled oil on canvas work dating back to circa 1910 has been expertly restored by the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), a process that has kept the painting in Ottawa for the past two years.

The sole Tom Thomson painting in KWAG's collection was selected for specialized treatment by Canada's leading conservation authority through a highly competitive application process, and will enable the Gallery to exhibit the painting for the first time following years in storage due to its highly fragile condition.



Tom Thomson (Canadian, 1877-1917), *Untitled*, c.1910. Oil on canvas, 32.8 x 40.5 cm. Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery Collection. Anonymous gift, 1995. From Left: Unframed BT (Before Treatment) Image CCI 126289-0022. © Government of Canada, Canadian Conservation Institute. AT (After Treatment) Inner Frame Image CCI 126289-0034. © Government of Canada, Canadian Conservation Institute.

For much of its life, the landscape was held by the artist's extended family and stored as a rolled canvas in an attic before being gifted to a great-niece of the artist in the early 1970s. All excess canvas had been cut from the painting at an unknown date, meaning that the work could not be stretched, but efforts were made to unroll the painting and apply a layer of dammar varnish. The painting that was donated to KWAG in 1995 showed the inevitable impact of its long journey, with the oil paint visibly cracking beneath aging, darkening varnish. Far too fragile for exhibition, the painting has been closely guarded in the Permanent Collection until arrangements could be made for its conservation.

"The Gallery officially opened its doors in 1956 with an exhibition of the work of Tom Thomson that spearheaded our legacy of exhibiting and collecting the work of leading Canadian artists," says Shirley Madill, Executive Director at KWAG. "As an art museum, we have a responsibility to our community to care for the works of art held in public trust and as Canadian cultural property for posterity. The condition of this exquisite and significant early work in Tom Thomson's career was so precarious that exhibiting the work would be a great risk. Thanks to the Canadian Conservation Institute and their willingness to undertake a significant challenge, the work has been properly conserved and can now be exhibited and enjoyed by our public for many years to come."

Through the efforts of the CCI and the sponsorship of the Government of Canada, the Tom Thomson has been cleaned of its dammar varnish, allowing its original colours to be fully appreciated for the first time in decades. The cracked surface has been painstakingly restored and stabilized on a custom-built wooden stretcher that will enable KWAG to safely present the painting to public view for the first time since its donation.

Preparations are underway to professionally frame the untitled landscape in anticipation of its first public presentation at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery in winter 2018.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support provided by the Canadian Conservation Institute through the conservation work performed on the untitled painting attributed to Tom Thomson.

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ABOUT THE KITCHENER-WATERLOO ART GALLERY

Established in 1956, the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KWAG) is Waterloo Region's oldest and largest public art gallery with an emphasis on contemporary art, offering creative and accessible experiences for all ages and segments of society. KWAG connects people and ideas through art, drawing the community into a shared experience of art that moves from sight to insight. The Gallery and its Permanent Collection of more than 4000 works is located within Centre In The Square.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery acknowledges that we are located on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. We are on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral Confederacy), Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples.

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HOURS AND ADMISSION

T-W 9:30 am-5 pm, Thu 9:30 am-9 pm, Fri 9:30 am-5 pm, Sat 10 am-5 pm, Sun 1-5 pm

Open before most Centre In The Square performances

Admission to KWAG's exhibitions is free, courtesy of



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