

?Love letter? to Tom Thomson and Canada

The McMichael Canadian Art Collection presents a major exhibition featuring the works of one of Ontario's greatest painters, Tom Thomson, and feminist art pioneer Joyce Wieland.

Passion Over Reason: Tom Thomson and Joyce Wieland, will open to the public this Canada Day, followed by a special weekend festival starting July 8, which will mark the centennial of Tom Thomson's death. This commemorative exhibition, debuting for the nation's 150th birthday, runs until Nov. 19, and spans four galleries at the McMichael.

Thomson, a contemporary of the Group of Seven whose love for nature is demonstrated through his landscape paintings, died mysteriously on Canoe Lake at the early age of 39.

Passion Over Reason takes a critical approach to Canada's fascination with Thomson, his status as a cult figure of masculine mystique, and the mystery and mythology of his life story that has cast a virile, woodsy painter as the embodiment of quiet, Canadian resilience. Taking cues from the eye of Wieland, who imbued her vision of Thomson and Canada with overt femininity, love and sex, Passion Over Reason confirms what Wieland pointed to in the 1970s: Thomson is Canada.

?Consider this exhibition to be a love letter to Tom Thomson and Canada ? two subjects at the core of this sesquicentennial year ? and a conversation between masterworks by Thomson and Wieland,? McMichael's Chief Curator Dr. Sarah Stanners said.

The McMichael will display nearly all its rich holdings of Thomson works alongside those of Wieland, who expressed her fascination with Thomson and love for Canada through her masterwork quilts, drawings, paintings, photographs, and her films The Far Shore, which will screen in the McMichael's Theatre, and Reason Over Passion, which will show on continuous loop within the exhibition space.

The title of the exhibition is a deliberate reversal of former Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau's oft-quoted personal motto, ?Reason over passion.?

The exhibition also includes a series of commissioned artworks by established Canadian artist Zachari Logan, who will be at work in the Tom Thomson Shack from June 26 to July 8.

The McMichael is also offering an exciting lineup of special programming and festivals inspired by Ontario 150 and the centenary death of Thomson. Visit mcmichael.com for more information.

The McMichael Canadian Art Collection is at 10365 Islington Ave. in Kleinburg.