

THE LILLIAN MAYLAND MCKIMM COLLECTION



A LIFELONG PASSION FOR CANADIAN ART

LILLIAN MAYLAND MCKIMM (b. 1925) took great joy in supporting Canadian artists. For Lillian, who celebrated her 100th birthday this year, art collecting was a personal pursuit, done for her own enjoyment. Always an inquisitive collector, she found the process of acquiring the work was as important as the work itself. She diligently researched the backgrounds, subjects and styles of the artists she pursued—always with a mind to celebrate the wealth and breadth of talent that Canadian art had to offer—and collected the artworks that touched her heart. The walls of her homes were filled with some of the finest examples from across Canadian art history, bringing enjoyment to her family over many years. The Lillian Mayland McKimm Collection is the result of a lifetime of curiosity and passion for the very best of Canadian art.

Lillian would rarely pass the opportunity to go into a gallery, and frequently she brought her children along to visits near at home or farther afield. Not being able to visit in person was not an impediment, and she spent many hours perusing the catalogues sent by Heffel Fine Art Auction House and galleries from across the country, including Madrona Gallery in Victoria. Heffel's relationship with Lillian goes back more than forty years: Lillian's first acquisition from Vancouver's Heffel Gallery, then under the auspices of Kenneth G. Heffel, was a charming Joachim Gauthier oil purchased in July 1982. Lillian began to pursue her interest in Canadian art at an early age. An amateur painting practice during her teenage years led her to study fine art at the University of Toronto. There, Lillian took every art course she was able to, from drawing and painting—including, briefly, lessons under A.Y. Jackson—to sculpture and mosaics. Through her studies, she was introduced to the best of Canadian painting at the time. Admiring, researching and eventually acquiring art became part of the regular cadence of her life, a rhythm that would continue for decades.

Lillian's university years were also when she met George F. McKimm, a young commerce student. They would marry in 1948 and soon after move to Calgary, where they would spend their leisure time hiking and skiing in the rugged Canadian Rockies. Lillian was originally from Calgary, and her family had a deep connection to the development of the city at the beginning of the century.

TOP LEFT:
Lillian Mayland McKimm, 1965

BOTTOM LEFT:
NICHOLAS DE GRANDMAISON
Portrait of Lillian Mayland
pastel on sandpaper

Not for sale



Lillian and George McKimm at a dance contest aboard the *SS Michelangelo* in 1949, when they were declared the ship's twist champions



Lillian Mayland McKimm with her children George Jr. and Anita at the Mayland residence on Durham Avenue, Calgary, during the wedding of Betty Mayland and William V. Ellis of Boston, Massachusetts, 1955

Lillian's father, Albert H. Mayland, often seen with Lillian and her sister Betty winning at the Calgary Horse Show, built his fortune through ranching, meat processing and oil. In 1926, he acquired the Belkin Brothers' Calgary packing plant, renaming it the Union Packing Company, and soon turned to oil ventures, selling Mayland Oils to Imperial before founding Mercury Oils in 1930 to develop the Turner Valley oil fields. By acquiring Beaver Lumber's Patron Oil stations and Arctic Oil, his "99" gasoline was distributed through more than 700 Prairie outlets. Lillian followed her father's entrepreneurial drive for business with her quest and passion towards building her art collection.

Her father was at one time among the city's largest employers and owned substantial pastureland east of his packing plant. In 1962, fifteen years after Mayland's passing, the east Calgary neighbourhood of Mayland Heights was named in his honour. (Mayland Heights is also the location of Heffel Calgary). Lillian's abiding connection to Calgary and rural Alberta proved to be lifelong, and her affinity for the Rockies is evidenced in many of

the works she acquired. The Group of the Seven held particular importance to her, its members having painted across the country: as part of this sale, exceptional works by Lawren Harris, J.E.H. MacDonald, and A.Y. Jackson showcase the Rocky Mountains at their most dramatic.

From Calgary, Lillian and George moved to Vancouver Island, settling in Sidney, just north of Victoria, in 1971. There, the couple would add sailing to their recreational pursuits, exploring the landscapes and coastlines of British Columbia. Some of the finest masterworks from the McKimm Collection speak to the couple's love of this area. Emily Carr's *Dancing Forest* (lot 112) is a beautiful celebration of BC forests and an exemplar of Carr's skill at rendering movement and energy. *Entrance to Howe Sound* (lot 110), a major rare, early canvas from E.J. Hughes, is a jewel of the collection. This work occupied a special place in the McKimm family home and can be ranked as one of the greatest works from the artist's oeuvre.



Lillian and George McKimm at their favourite restaurant, the Deep Cove Chalet in North Saanich, 1974

Some of the more interesting pieces on offer bridge the distance between Lillian's dual loves of the coast and the mountains: several of W.J. Phillips's best images of Canada (lots 101 - 104) are included here, as well as an extraordinarily rare Jock Macdonald sketch of Black Tusk in Garibaldi Park (lot 111). While images of the West comprise an affectionate core of her collecting, Lillian's love of Canadian art was never limited to one area, and works reaching across the nation to Ontario, Quebec and the East Coast take pride of place within the present selection.

As the Canadian painting scene developed, Lillian continued to collect the best artists that were available. The post-Group generation are well represented with exceptional works by Sarah Robertson, Kathleen Daly Pepper and Paraskeva Clark. While landscapes and modernist subjects formed the core of her

interest, Lillian was never one to dwell on the past, and over the years her collection expanded to include emerging contemporary masters such as Jean Paul Riopelle, Mary Pratt, Jack Shadbolt and Bill Reid. (Watch for these works in upcoming online auctions.)

The Lillian Mayland McKimm Collection represents decades of passionate collecting driven by careful consideration and a love of Canadian art, featuring works of outstanding calibre from across the country. Heffel is incredibly proud to be continuing a relationship with the McKimm Collection started four decades ago by bringing these exceptional works to auction.

RIGHT:
The McKimm family at their home, Coste House, Christmas 1963

