

Lawren Harris painting fetches \$4.6-million, auction record for the Group of Seven artist

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"Mountain and Glacier" canvas by Lawren Harris, is shown in a handout photo. Three paintings by Group of Seven artist Lawren Harris shattered pre-sale estimates and sold for \$9.5 million Thursday, Nov. 26, 2015 at the Heffel Fine Art Auction House fall sale in Toronto.

Three paintings by Group of Seven artist Lawren Harris shattered pre-sale estimates and sold for \$9.5-million Thursday night at the Heffel Fine Art Auction House fall sale in Toronto.

His top-selling canvas, entitled "Mountain and Glacier," set an auction record for the artist and sold for \$4.6-million, far above the expected \$1.5-million.

The auction house said the 157 works offered at its semi-annual sale sold for a combined \$23.4-million to set a Canadian record for a fine art auction. Experts had anticipated a total closer to between \$10-million and \$15-million.

"Our 20th year of live auctions has been particularly gratifying, thanks to Lawren Harris's remarkable momentum," said auction house president David Heffel.

"It's rewarding to participate in the growth of the international art market and share sought-after masterpieces with the public as they pass through one set of hands to the next."

Another canvas by the Brantford, Ont., native, "Winter Landscape," had a pre-sale estimate as high as \$1.6-million, but sold for \$3.6-million. The third Harris painting, "Winter in the Ward," fetched just over \$1.1-million – well over the pre-auction estimate of up to \$700,000.

Including these sales, Heffel has now sold works by Harris totalling \$63.8-million.

Harris, who died in 1970, has been in the news lately after entertainer Steve Martin, a noted art collector, curated a collection of his paintings at Los Angeles' Hammer Museum.

Martin spent three years putting together the 32 pieces in "The Idea of North: The Paintings of Lawren Harris."

Meanwhile, paintings by Jean Paul Riopelle also sold for far above their estimates Thursday night.

The Montreal native's 1950s canvas entitled "Sans titre" was expected to sell for as much as \$700,000, but sold for more than \$1.2-million. Riopelle's "Jour de fetes" more than doubled its estimate and sold for \$531,000.

An Alex Colville painting entitled "Harbour" set an auction record for the artist by collecting almost \$1.9-million.

Tom Thomson's "After the Storm," which is believed to be the last work he produced before his death in 1917, fetched almost double its expected price at just under \$1.3-million.

Other highlights included "Libellules egarees" by Paul-Emile Borduas, which sold for \$507,400, and Roy Lichtenstein's "Modern Room," which sold for \$141,600 to set a record for the print at auction.

Barbara Hepworth's sculpture "Three Forms" sold for \$342,000, with proceeds from the sale going to the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation. A work from Guido Molinari estate, "Mutation rythmique rouge-orange," sold for \$247,800.