

VICTORIA
COLLEGE
CATALOGUE
OF

ORIGINAL PAINTINGS

It is the policy of the Fine Arts Committee
to acquire original paintings by British
Columbia artists, which will form the nucleus
of a permanent collection of Canadian Art.

Emily Carr is the first Western painter of her generation to attain both national recognition and international fame. Although her work was for many years ignored, misunderstood, and even attacked here in Victoria, it finally reached critics who understood its qualities and its significance in the development of Canadian art. Examples of Miss Carr's paintings may be found now in the National Gallery in Ottawa, in the Toronto Art Gallery, and in many private collections. On the Pacific Coast, it may be studied in the extensive collection belonging to the Vancouver Art Gallery, in the Parliament Buildings in Victoria, and in the Victoria Public Library.

This oil-painting, although undated, is an interesting example of the artist's later style. Its tones reproduce the variety of colour existing within the green forest; movement is suggested by the wavy horizontal brush-strokes in the background. By a synthesis of the external world and her own vision, Emily Carr not only creates for us her forest, but enables us to see our own forests more clearly.

Books by Emily Carr available in the College Library:

Klee Wyck
The House of Small
Growing Pains
The Heart of a Peacock
The House of All Sorts
Pause

ESKIMO CARVINGS

One of the most interesting developments in indigenous art in Canada, besides that of the totem poles on the West Coast, is the stone-carving done in modern times by the Eskimo peoples of the North and North-east. It is at its best when untouched by European influences. The rapid spread of western civilization, however, seems to spell the eventual doom of this art in its original purity.

Victoria College owns two small examples of Eskimo stone-carving. One is a beautifully modelled animal form, a walrus of polished stone which conforms to the best sculptural traditions of any period. It is equally interesting from every angle. The other shows an Eskimo on the point of spearing a walrus through the ice. The tension of the moment is conveyed by the balanced stance of the man and the angle of the spear, while the face of the animal is outlined on the stone pedestal.

BRUNO BOBAK

"Interior Landscape"

Bruno Bobak is a young Canadian artist who, after serving in the Army during the 1939-1945 war, left Toronto to live in the West. He is married to the well-known woman painter, Molly Bobak (née Lamb); they both teach in the Vancouver School of Art.

Much of Bobak's work is a carefully conducted examination of structure and texture in natural objects such as rocks, seeds, leaves, and grasses. In this large water-colour, however, he has allowed himself a much broader scope. The eye moves up the picture from the tiny huts in the foreground to the massive hills, and from there reaches the depths of the stormy sky beyond. One wishes that Bobak would turn more often to the problems of landscape painting; few painters would have attempted this subject, and even fewer would have succeeded in mastering it.

GORDON SMITH

"Markers, Spanish Banks"

Gordon Smith, born in England and educated in Canada, now lives and teaches in Vancouver. Examples of his work have been bought recently by the National Gallery of Canada.

Like many B.C. artists, Smith is interested in the ocean and the marginal life of the beaches. He has done several studies of sea-birds which are of unusual interest, suggesting as they do the formality of certain Chinese paintings. But Smith depends on colour rather than line to convey his perceptions; his rich tones are peculiarly his own.

In "Markers, Spanish Banks", the basic elements in the design have been combined to form a decorative pattern in depth. Modern artists are so frequently obsessed with the flat pattern that the three-dimensional effect in this painting is all the more effective for being unusual.

Donald Jarvis has been recognized for some time as one of British Columbia's most original young artists. Speaking of his paintings in a recent exhibition in Victoria at the Art Gallery Colin Graham, curator of the Gallery, says,

"Perhaps better than anyone else Jarvis has fused the urban scene, the forest background, and the human figure into a unity of relationship that creates a triangular set-up of interlocking identifications, and at the same time embodies the atmosphere of the Vancouver coastal scene, humid, a little sombre, and mist-laden."

Although there are no human figures in this early example of Jarvis' work, its subject-matter is typical.

The tangled masses of logs and driftwood lying on the beach, among which the artist has chosen to emphasize certain forms, are seen even in his most recent paintings. The subtle tones will be found to change with the light that falls on them, and the atmosphere is that described by Colin Graham, misty and a little sombre.

J. L. SHADBOLT

"The Red House"

J. L. Shadbolt is someone who has never ceased experimenting in his search for a satisfactory personal idiom to convey his experience of form, colour, and movement in the world around him. His most recent work is highly symbolic, and has been received with enthusiasm in many galleries both in Canada and the United States.

This painting, however, represents a much earlier approach to the problems of art. It illustrates also two of Shadbolt's characteristics which remain constant through his changing styles - a fine draughtsmanship and an ability to use dark tones in water-colour to convey mood. Although superficially this painting is a realistic representation of an old Victoria house, the artist has infused into it emotional overtones and the mysterious atmosphere of a wet evening.

J. L. Shadbolt, who was born in England, attended the Provincial Normal School in Victoria and Victoria College. He is now instructing in the Vancouver School of Art.

J. F. PLASKETT

"Church at Duncan"

J. F. Plaskett has been less affected by the British Columbia scene than either Donald Jarvis or J. L. Shadbolt. His work has always shown traces of the romantic lyricism one finds in the work of certain modern French painters, particularly Raoul Dufy and Henri Matisse. He has held both the Emily Carr award and a Canadian Government fellowship for study abroad.

The pastel owned by Victoria College is an unusually strong example of work in this medium. The tones are vivid, the composition firm. All the elements of the picture - the bicycle, the tall stumps charred by fire, the church - combine to form a vital and interesting work.

JUDITH MORGAN

"Winter in Kitwanga"

Presented to Victoria College by the Honourable G. Straith, former Minister of Education in the Provincial Government, this picture is of genuine historical interest. It represents the home of the artist, the Indian village of Kitwanga, seen under a light powdering of snow. The treatment is simple and realistic, the tones cold.

The artist attended the Provincial Normal School, as did J.L. Shadbolt; it is particularly fitting that her work should hang in the Library which will be the focus for so many prospective teachers from all over the province when the amalgamation of the College and the Normal School takes place.

W. P. WESTON

"Battle-scarred"

This painting, which hangs in the upper corridor of the Ewing Building, was presented to Victoria College by the artist in memory of his great friend, Dr. J.M. Ewing. A portrait of Dr. Ewing by Myfanwy Pavelic will be found in the Library.

W. P. Weston, who has made many studies of the B.C. landscape, is a regular contributor to Vancouver exhibitions. In this painting he has tried to express the gnarled strength of an old Douglas fir standing among a group of lesser trees which are merely suggested in the background.

LAWREN HARRIS

1. "House, Barrie, Ontario"
1919
2. "From the Arctic to the
Temperate Zone", 1940.

Through the courtesy of the artist, Victoria College has on loan two paintings representing different stages in his development. Lawren Harris is well-known as one of the "Group of Seven", artists who have exercised through their example such an influence on the direction of Canadian painting from 1920 to the present day.

The first picture represents an old house in an Eastern Canadian town. Its lively realism stamps it as an early work. The second is more characteristic of Lawren Harris' later style. The landscape has become, by a process of abstraction and synthesis, a kind of coloured geometry whose carefully defined forms seem to him the best way of expressing the strength and stark beauty of the Canadian landscape.