

Sale Name: Fine Art Auction Featuring Canadian & Inuit Artworks

LOT 28 - Gordon Webber - Untitled Landscape



Artist Description Gordon McKinley Webber (1909 – 1965 CAD) O.C.A. Born in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, the eldest of five children. He was introduced to fine art by his mother. In 1924, he enrolled at the Ontario College of Art, where he studied with teachers who included Arthur Lismer, J.E.H. MacDonald and Emanuel Hahn. In protest against the resignation of Lismer as vice-principal in 1927, Webber and a group of other artists including Isabel McLaughlin founded the Art Students' League (1927–1930) at which prominent Toronto artists such as Lawren S. Harris were invited to give critiques. Webber was recognized as a talented student since 1930 when he was invited to show with the Group of Seven. In the early 1930s, Webber began teaching with Lismer at the Art Gallery of Toronto. During these years, he was a figurative artist. In 1934, he travelled to Mexico to attend a Progressive Education Association Conference, met Mexican artists and studied the local murals. Back at home, Webber continued to teach at the Children's Art Centre of Toronto, helped found the Picture Loan Society in Toronto in 1936, and exhibited his work to critical approval. In 1937, Webber enrolled at the New Bauhaus School of Design in Chicago where he studied with László Moholy-Nagy. His contact with Moholy-Nagy was critical for him: he became much more experimental. His work changed: he became an abstract painter, interested in art photography and design, whether applied to graphics, stage or costume. In 1939, Webber accompanied Moholy-Nagy to California to teach a course at Mills College in Oakland, California. In 1940, Lismer invited Webber to join the School of Art and Design at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA). In 1942, Webber graduated from the School of Design in Chicago with a Bachelor of Design degree. During his studies in Chicago, Webber exhibited his abstract work in Canada to mixed reviews. In 1942, he took the Teachers Course at the Art Gallery of Toronto (1942). From 1942 to 1953, Webber taught architectural drawing at the School of Architecture, McGill University in Montreal part-time, then in 1953 was appointed assistant professor. He also continued to teach at the MMFA where he had students such as Guido Molinari and Claude Tousignant. (Tousignant recalls Webber introducing

him to abstract expressionism in 1950, an experience which deeply moved him.) In the summer of 1950, he taught design, drawing, and painting at the summer school of the University of British Columbia as well. During these years, Webber experimented with photography and film, drawing directly on 35 mm film stock having learned the technique through Norman McLaren at the National Film Board of Canada studios in Montreal. In the late 1940s and the early 1950s, Webber choreographed two ballets. He was involved with the design of costumes and sets for theatrical presentations at McGill and many commissions integrating art and architecture, executing works such as an exterior mural and interior mobile for the Town of Mount Royal Post Office, and a relief sculpture for the McConnell Engineering Building at McGill. Webber also sought to preserve historic Canadian architecture.

Description

Ink Drawing

Signed Lower Right

Sight - 7.5 ins x 11 ins (19.05 cm x 27.94 cm)

Provenance:

Private Collection

Unframed

Quantity: 1



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