

**Sale Name:** Fine Canadian Art Auction - September 8th - October 18th 2022

**LOT 18 - J.E.H. MacDonald - Beaver Pond Lino Block**



**Artist Description** James Edward Hervey MacDonald (1873 - 1992) R.C.A., A member of the Group of Seven who asserted a distinct national identity combined with a common heritage stemming from early modernism in Europe in the early twentieth century. He was the father of the illustrator, graphic artist and designer Thoreau MacDonald. In 1887 at the age of 14, he immigrated with his family to Hamilton, Ontario. That year he began his first training as an artist at the Hamilton Art School where he studied under John Ireland and Arthur Heming. In 1889 they moved again to

Toronto where he studied commercial art and became active in the Toronto Art Students' League, a society which believed in sketching out-of-doors. He continued his training at the Central Ontario School of Art and Design, where he studied with George Agnew Reid and William Cruikshank. In 1894 or 1895, MacDonald took a position as a commercial designer at Grip Ltd., an important commercial art firm, where he further developed his design skills. In the coming years, he encouraged his colleagues—including future artist Tom Thomson—to develop their skills as painters. In 1899, MacDonald married Joan Lavis, and two years later they had a son, Thoreau. MacDonald worked as a designer at Grip Ltd. until 1903, then at Carlton Studio in London from 1903 to 1907, and returned to Grip Ltd. in 1907. Whilst at Carlton, he worked with Norman Mills Price, William Tracy Wallace, and Albert Angus Turbayne. In 1920, MacDonald co-founded the Group of Seven, which dedicated itself to promoting a distinct Canadian art developed through direct contact with the Canadian landscape. The other founding members were Frederick Varley, A. Y. Jackson, Lawren Harris, Frank Johnston, Arthur Lismer, and Franklin Carmichael. MacDonald had worked with Lismer, Varley, Johnston, and Carmichael at the design firm Grip Ltd. in Toronto. Together they initiated what they asserted was the first major Canadian national art movement, producing paintings directly inspired by the Canadian landscape. Every summer beginning in 1924, MacDonald travelled to the Canadian Rockies to paint the mountain landscapes that dominated his later work. By this time he had become somewhat distant from the rest of the Group of Seven, as he and the other members were involved in their own activities. From 1928 until his death MacDonald served as the Principal of the Ontario College of Art, and he painted with less frequency and less consistent success. Today, MacDonald is viewed with general admiration for his art, with one writer commenting, "no Canadian landscape painter possessed a richer command of colour and pigment than J. E. H. MacDonald[...]. His brushwork is at once disciplined and vigorous. His best on-the-spot sketches possess an intensity and freshness of execution not dissimilar from Van Gogh." His former home and 4-acre garden in Vaughan, Ontario have been restored. Owned by the City of Vaughan, the grounds are open to the public. MacDonald suffered a stroke in 1931, and spent the following summer recovering in Barbados. He died in Toronto on November 26th, 1932 at the age of 59.

### Description

*Lino Block Print "Beaver Pond" Algoma 1920*

Signed Lower Left

Sight - 7" x 5" (17.78 cm x 12.7 cm)

### Provenance:

Levis

Private Collection

Initialed TM (Thoreau MacDonald)

**Quantity: 1**



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