

Nature Framing

Nature

A
PHOTOGRAPHY
ACTIVITY



National
Gallery
of Canada

Musée
des beaux-arts
du Canada

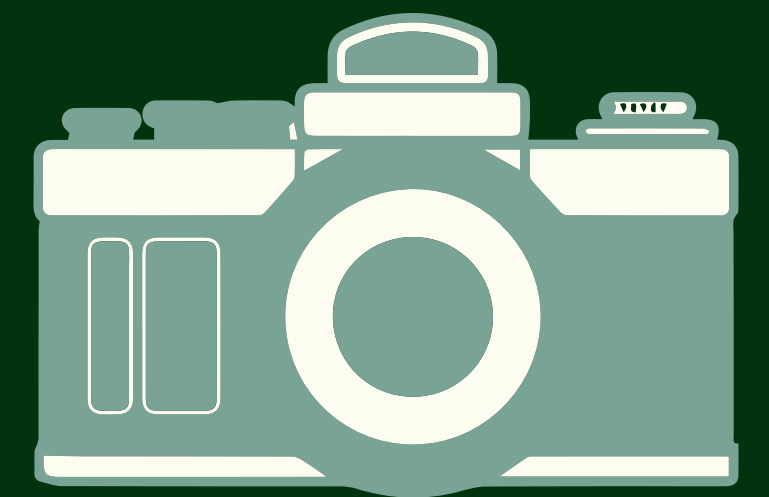
100 YEARS

OF THE GROUP
OF SEVEN

Materials

Mark the 100th anniversary of the Group of Seven's first exhibition by going outside and getting creative. Nervous about paint and paper? Grab your phone and join us as we adapt lessons learned from the Group of Seven paintings to help you see your world through a new lens.

Franklin Carmichael, Lawren S. Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Frank Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J.E.H. MacDonald and Frederick Varley formed the Group of Seven in 1920. Romantic, spiritual and visibly modern, these artists dared to paint Canada like no one had done before.



Colour Up Close

In *The Tangled Garden* J.E.H. MacDonald concentrated on bold colours, elegant lines and effective use of framing. Here the garden is a tumble of colour, pushed tightly together and framed by drooping sunflower stalks. By focusing on the garden and excluding the surrounding area MacDonald created a secret world for us to enjoy.

Often when snapping photos of nature, the casual photographer will take wide-angle shots – images that include both the subject and surrounding area. Getting up close allows for an amazing play of colours, shapes and textures.



J. E. H. MacDonald, *The Tangled Garden*, 1916. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Gift of W.M. Southam, F.N. Southam, and H.S. Southam, 1937, in memory of their brother Richard Southam Ottawa. Photo: NGC

Wide-angle shots are great for providing context and setting the scene.



Up close the shape, weight and rich colour of the flower petals pop!



Natural Light

In *North Shore, Lake Superior* (1926) Lawren S. Harris balanced bright, crisp light with deep, rich shadow. The painting is simultaneously peaceful and dramatic, earthly and celestial.



Lawren S. Harris, *North Shore, Lake Superior*, 1926. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.
© Family of Lawren S. Harris. Photo: NGC

Avoid taking photographs mid-day when the light can be harsh and clinical.



Plan to take your outdoor photographs early in the morning or in the late afternoon when the sun is lower.

Consider how late afternoon shadows add mood and dimension to your photos.



Point of View

In *Sweetsburg, Quebec* (1910) A.Y. Jackson captured the beauty of a non-traditional landscape. Here we contemplate the tired grace of a wilting farmstead. Clumps of snow and muddy paths foreshadow the arrival of spring and the new planting season.

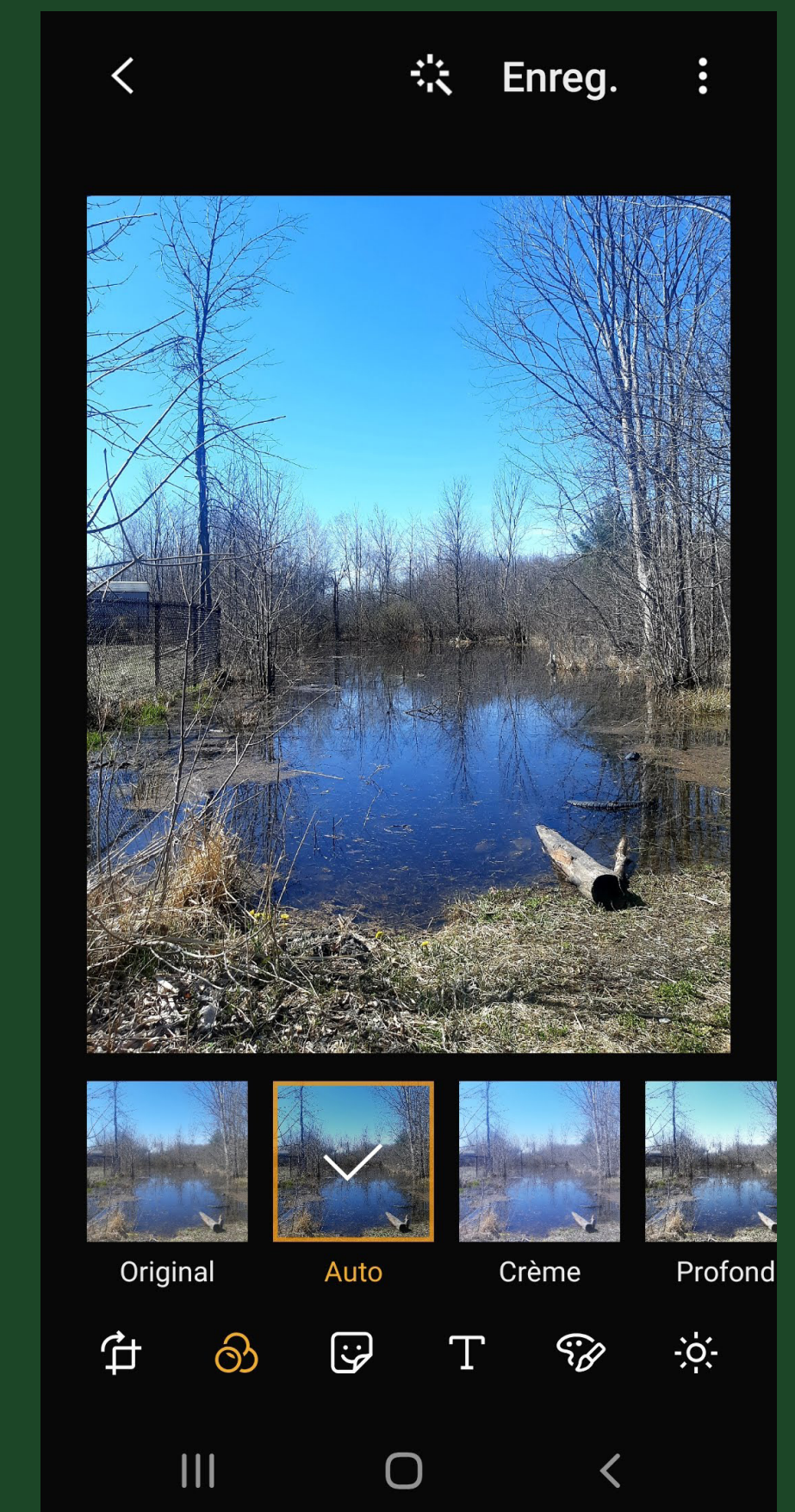
Consider the small patches of nature that exist between houses, streets and boulevards. Small neglected spaces that deserve a second look or perhaps just need the right framing to transform into something extraordinary.



A.Y. Jackson, *Sweetsburg, Quebec*, 1910. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Bequest of Dr. J.M. MacCallum, Toronto, 1944. © Estate of A. Y. Jackson / SOCAN (2020). Photo: NGC

Before you take your picture, experiment with framing by considering the following:

- What element(s) do you want to include in your photograph?
- Are you looking to build context and tell a story? A wide-angle shot might be best. Not sure? Perhaps the added detail and texture of a zoomed shot might be more interesting.
- Lines are your friends! Are you looking to create a sense of solidity? Look to include horizontal lines such as fences or the horizon in the distance. Diagonal lines can help create a feeling of movement, pulling the eye towards a certain zone.
- Play with the placement of the horizon line. Tip your camera up and down – consider what your photograph would look like with more or less sky included.



In spite of the car tires in the water and the fence that surrounds it, this small pond is proof that nature thrives – even in urban areas.

Don't forget you can edit your photos when you get home. Explore how colour filters and cropping tools can help you fine-tune your photographs.

Of course we want to see your fabulous new photographs! Share them with us at [#GroupofSevenAt100](https://www.instagram.com/GroupofSevenAt100)