



LA RONGE DRAWINGS

Gregory Hardy RCA

curated by Grant McConnell

November 12 — January 15, 2022

About *La Ronge Drawings*

Gregory Hardy is much admired across the country and beyond for his vigorous and direct landscapes of the prairies and boreal lakes and forests of northern Saskatchewan. This exhibition features work produced around his island cabin on Lac La Ronge – his “Mont Saint-Victoire,” as curator Grant McConnell writes in his catalogue essay for the show. The reference is to Paul Cézanne’s obsession with the mountain in southern France, overlooking Aix-en-Provence.

Hardy draws quickly and aggressively, *en plein air* (open air) from his kayak, with subsequent refinements completed in the studio. However, never do the paintings lose the sense of immediacy achieved in the original sketches. The great vitality of his mark making is a hallmark of his style. Another remarkable feature of his landscapes is the weighty prominence given to the sky and its

clouds. This may be considered as a kind of abstraction – a compensation that makes up for the experiential power of an element that doesn’t fully register as a purely visual sign. McConnell writes, “The clouds in a Hardy painting are as physical, as tangible as a mountain in a work by the Group of Seven painter Lawren Harris.”

Hardy has exhibited extensively since 1975 and his work can be found in collections around the world including: the Canada Council Art Bank, Art Gallery of Alberta, Hines International (Boston), Household International (Chicago), and Canadian embassies and consulates in San Jose, Beijing, Warsaw, Sydney, London and Los Angeles.

Image: installation view of *La Ronge Drawings* in the Main Gallery