

## Quotation #1: The Importance of the Arts

*Canada is recognized around the world as a country with the greatest quality of life, and the vitality of our culture and heritage is one of the strongest signs of our collective success. Today, Canada has everything it needs to become one of the major creative centres of the world. Our artists are powerful instruments of change and innovation. In their diversity lies our strength and originality on the international stage...*

*We salute the richness of Canadian culture and... help our artists pave the way to the future... Arts and culture are not just for today. We have a responsibility to preserve our heritage and to promote the creative arts for future generations. An important measure of a great civilization, of a great society, is its contribution to humanity through the sciences and the arts, through its discoveries, its innovations, its cathedrals and canvasses, its stories and its music.*



- The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada May 2001, as cited on the Canada Council website: <<http://www.canadacouncil.ca/prizes/prbr01-e.asp>>

## Quotation #2: A National Identity?

*To create a national idiom, a national mythology to interpret Canada to Canadians... We have to sing our own songs and we have to create our own heroes, dream our own dreams or we won't have a country at all.*



- Pierre Berton, Special Senate Committee on Mass Media, March 25, 1970.

## Quotation #3

*One disadvantage of living in Canada is that one is continually called upon to make statements about the Canadian identity, and Canadian identity is an eminently exhaustible subject.*

- Northrop Frye, as cited in the *Toronto Star*, October 15, 1977.

## Quotation #4: Regional Identities

*The question of Canadian identity, so far as it affects the creative imagination, is not a "Canadian" question at all, but a regional question. An environment turned outward to the sea, like so much of Newfoundland, and one turned towards inland seas, like so much of the Maritimes, are an imaginative contrast: anyone who has been conditioned by one in his earliest years can hardly become conditioned by the other in the same way. Anyone brought up on the urban plain of southern Ontario or the gentle farmland along the south shore of the St. Lawrence may become fascinated by the great sprawling wilderness of Northern Ontario or Ungava, may move there and live with its people and accepted as one of them, but*



*if he paints or writes about it he will paint or write as an imaginative foreigner. And what can there be in common between an imagination nurtured in the prairies, where it is a centre of consciousness diffusing itself over a flat expanse stretching to the remote horizon, and one nurtured in British Columbia, where it is in the midst of gigantic trees and mountains leaping into the sky all around it, and obliterating the horizon everywhere?*

- Northrop Frye, 1971.

## Quotation #5: Painting an Experience of the Land

*There is something bigger than fact: the underlying spirit, all it stands for, the mood, the vastness, the wilderness, the Western breath of go-to-the-devil-if-you-don't-like-it, the eternal big spaceness of it. Oh the West! I'm of it and I love it. Woods and skies out west are big! You can't squeeze them down.*



- Canadian artist Emily Carr, as cited in *Canada's Digital Collections: Emily Carr, At Home and at Work*.  
<<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/EmilyCarrHomeWork/main.htm>>

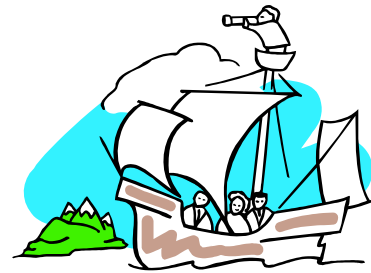
## Quotation #6

*[When we view a great mountain, for example] ... there is an interplay of something we see outside of us with our inner response. The artist takes that response and... shapes it on canvas with paint so that when it is finished it contains that experience.*

- Canadian artist and member of the Group of Seven, Lawren Harris, as cited in *Lauren Harris: An Introduction to His Life and Art* by Joan Murray (p.31).

## Quotation # 7: The Main Theme in Canadian Literature

*The central symbol for Canada - and this is based on numerous instances of its occurrence in both English and French Canadian literature - is undoubtedly Survival, la Survivance. ... For early explorers and settlers, it meant bare survival in the face of "hostile" elements and/or natives; carving out a place and a way of keeping alive. But the word can also mean the survival of a crisis or a disaster, like a hurricane or a wreck, and many Canadian poems have this kind of survival as a theme. ...For French Canada after the English took over it became cultural survival, hanging on as a people, retaining a religion and a language under an alien government. And in English Canada now while the Americans are taking over it is acquiring a similar meaning...*



*... the main idea is the first one: hanging on, staying alive. Canadians are forever taking the national pulse like doctors at a sickbed: the aim is not to see whether the patient will live well but simply whether he will live at all.*

- Margaret Atwood, 1972.