



IMAGE: *Storm Drift*, 1934, oil on masonite, 103.8 x 139.2 cm. Collection of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, gift of Earl Putnam, 1980.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo, the Ontario Arts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, Sun Life Financial, and our many individual and corporate donors.

Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery

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Connecting Art and Life

Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery

Gallery Hours Daily 10 - 5, Thurs 10 - 9, Sun 1-5
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ART GALLERY



IMAGE: *Cattle Fording the River in Moonlight*, 1935, oil on canvas, 122 x 168 cm. Collection of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, gift of Frank E. Page.

Homer Watson

Not Your Average Pastoral Picnic: Selections from the Permanent Collection

December 2, 2005 - March 19, 2006

You are invited to the ***opening reception at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery on Friday, December 2, at 7-9 pm.***



IMAGES: (left to right) *O'er the Western Hills, the Sun*, date unknown, graphite and ink on paper, 41.5 x 45.2 cm. Collection of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery; *Ice Break on the Grand River*, oil on canvas, 109.4 x 145.1 cm. Collection of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, gift of Earl Putnam, 1980; *A Land of Thrift*, graphite and ink on paper, 56.5 x 71.8 cm. Collection of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, gift of Paul and Stella Murray, 1983.

Epic and atmospheric...hardly terms that we would use to describe the present-day regional landscape. But when Homer Watson painted the Grand River region he saw it as a place full of potential. His paintings of darkened skies and lush countrysides provoke a sense of nostalgia, reminding us of a time when the Region in which we live was history yet to be influenced by industry.

As a complement to the *Variations on the Picturesque* exhibition, this selection of works from our permanent collection underscores the late 19th and early 20th century interests and origins of the picturesque in Watson's work. This exhibition in combination with *Variations* emphasizes the context for present-day expressions of the subject that so inspired Watson during his artistic lifetime.

Born in Doon, Ontario in 1855, Watson focused much of his practice on painting the landscape he considered to be his home. Though he spent several years in the UK, Watson would return to Canada to paint his regional landscape with unaltered dedication. His travels had influenced him, exposing him to what was

known primarily as a European style of painting. This style of painting, often referred to as "romantic", was made popular by English painters such as John Constable and J.M.W. Turner in the early 1800's. Common to most "romantic" landscapes was a sense of awe; a sense that one was always powerless to the beauty and perceived greatness of the natural world. Watson's work invites the consideration of these ideas by way of the picturesque Canadian landscape.

This dedicated investigation earned the respect of his peers, landscape painters from Canada and abroad. Though his paintings were in the collections of such luminaries as Oscar Wilde and Queen Victoria, few Canadians are familiar with his work. *Not Your Average Pastoral Picnic* features 17 of the 50 works by Watson currently in the KW|AG Permanent Collection. KW|AG is honoured to re-introduce our community to Homer Watson through this select group of works.