

# Tom thomson the jack pine essay

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The painting, *The Jack Pine*, by Tom Thomson is an oil on canvas was created in 1916-1917. Its measurements are 127.9 x 139.

8 cm. *The Jack Pine* is displayed in the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa. Tom Thomson's work shows the influence of Impressionism, Art Nouveau, and the achievements of the Group of Seven. *The Jack Pine* creates a calm, distilled outlook on the Canadian landscapes. I like how Thomson uses almost every colour in the rainbow.

The sky and the lake are the same colour generate a still, tranquil, and placid. There is a strong contrast between the background and the tree. The scene looks like there was a big wind storm that had just passed through and now everything is relaxed and clearing up. There is a red undertone that compliments the complimentary colours.

Thomson applies the paint on thick and in a similar way. The brushstrokes are all horizontal making it easy for the eye to look at. The tree not centered in the middle of the page, establishes a unique view and a non-perfect look at a landscape.

The twiggy branches that dangle down, as well as the tree trunk produce a perpendicularity to the horizontal mountains, sky, and water. The shapes are pretty simple in this painting, making it have a comfortable sense. While you look at *The Jack Pine* your eye wanders up the tree and then down the longest thickest branch, letting your eye level out on the horizon.

The tree is placed to the right side of the painting rather than in the center, even though it is the main focus. It is as though you are standing and taking

this picture with a camera, making it believable to look at and imagine yourself there. There is a very perpendicular feel to this painting. The horizon and the tree make a 't' right through the middle of the painting. When I drew the lines on the painting, they didn't really represent anything because he was influenced by impressionism. There were some measurements that made sense, though. The tree stands in the second quarter from the right. There is a line that is on a diagonal that lays right on the top of the thickest and longest branch.

There is a sense of depth and distance. The composition is rectilinear, which makes the painting sturdy and solid. Obviously, the main center of attention is on the Jack Pine. Once you get passed the tree, though, one sees a simple mountain range landscape that shows that there is an extensive wide-range of space and distance. Thomson uses overlapping to evoke the sense of depth. He also makes some of the mountains a lighter blue behind the others to make some of the mountains look farther away. There is a bit of colour temperature used by placing red on the ground and blue in the distance. Having the tree so big, makes it seem like it is closer to the viewer and having the mountains smaller, makes them look further away.

I would even say that there is a bit of texture gradient with the brush strokes he makes for the sky and the lake. They seem to be bigger closer to the top of the painting rather than the brush strokes closer to the mountains. That is the same for the lake, the brush strokes seem to be bigger closer to the shore that is closer to the viewer, rather than the brush strokes closer to the mountains. The eye level and vanishing point to the painting is the horizon of

the mountains. Tom Thomson uses light and colour to express his purpose of the Canadian landscapes as a calming and restful place.

He uses a dark blue for distance in the mountains and for shadowing in the lake. There are pale colours of green, yellow and blue, mainly in the sky, that give it a quiet and tranquil feel. The painting has strong colours and light contrasts, that make the tree dominating over the mountainous landscape. There are warm, red colours near the front of the painting that help the viewer see that it is closer, while there are cooler, blue colours in the mountains that are farther away. In *The Jack Pine*, the source of light is the sunset that is setting behind the mountains.

Dark shadows are starting to appear and everything is becoming dark for the night. The sky and the water in the lake get darker as they come toward the front of the painting. The tree and the closer shore, are in forming shadows because we are facing the sun and are behind the landscape to show the silhouette of the vivid pine tree. One can also see the shading in and among the rocky shore. That expresses the contours and ridges of the uneven surface of the ground.

The tree is very bold and striking because of the lighting in the background, making it lighter than the tree that is closest to the viewer. There is a very pronounced object, being the tree, as the main focus for attention and observation. Tom Thomson spent number of summers from 1913 to 1917 as a ranger in Algonquin Park, where he made quite a few sketches of the rough northern, Canadian landscapes.

He knew the Group of Seven as close friends, but was not a member because he died in a canoeing accident three years before the group was started. He used the sketches that he made as a replica or an ideal for the paintings that he painted during the winter time. Thomson's paintings were not the conventional landscape style that one might think of, but as clearly realistic and abstract in the brightly coloured forms. He also worked in a different sort of texture. Although Thomson did not sell many of his paintings during his lifetime, his exhibitions after his death brought many sales and international acknowledgment towards the Canadian terrain and Tom Thomson himself. Tom Thomson found a lot of his inspiration in the wilderness of the Ontario topography.

Most of Thomson's painting were of the outback of Canada, which is where he found his happiness and his vision. He spent a lot of time at one of the National Parks in Ontario, while he studied the forestry and territory of the country. He interpreted the outdoors and transformed it into what he saw as an artist. One can see his emotion and the symbolic significance through his style of painting. Thomson influenced many, mainly Canadian, artists such as Emily Carr. Tom Thomson did not paint for anyone in particular except himself. He was a professional painter and wanted his paintings to be sold, but there was no specific intention for anyone in particular. He just loved to capture the beauty of the natural world.

He didn't have to move anything or create something. It was already there for him, waiting to be interpreted. Thomson's paintings are like a photograph. They are just a captured image of a second in time.

I think that Tom Thomson wanted everyone to appreciate the landscapes as much as he did and he did this by painting a scene that represented, what he thought to be as a special place that had to be represented. There are many things about this painting, The Jack Pine, that I really enjoy. Tom Thomson is my favorite Canadian artist because he can take something so simple and change it into something so astounding.

He took such a simple lone tree and made it striking. I also love the colours that he uses in every little detail. Thomson would layer about three or four colours to get a specific look and capture what he was embracing at the moment. I love the way he paints. There are uncomplicated shapes and forms that make up a more impressive figure. He applies the paint as if it was a puzzle to put together.

There is a real sense of the expressed spirit of the land and the experience of nature. I like how this painting is basic and classic. It shows that even the simplest of things can be beautiful and that there is a natural awareness in everything.

This piece pleases me because it can give people a chance to see what some people are not as fortunate to see and who don't take the time to look twice at what most people take for granted. This painting doesn't leave me with any questions because it is so straight forward and there is a main focus.

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