

K. M. GRAHAM

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VERY EARLY ABSTRACTION  
1967, Acrylic on Canvas  
49 x 59 in. (124.5 x 149.8 cm)

FRONT COVER: LITTLE SPORT 1976, Acrylic on Canvas 59 x 56 in. (149.8 x 142.2 cm)

K.M.  
GRAHAM

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November 7 to  
December 19, 2009

HALLELUJAH  
c. early 1960's  
Acrylic on Canvas  
40 x 11 3/4 in. (101.6 x 29.8 cm)

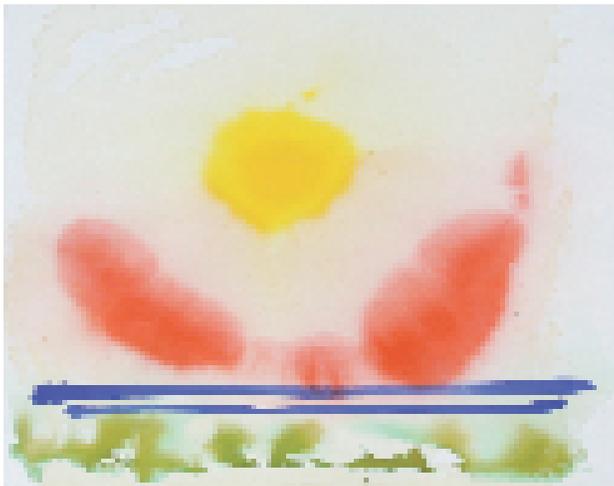


## Foreward

*"I want my art to be an affirmation of life and to edify the spirit of the viewer."*

K.M. Graham made this statement to me in 1968 when I first met her. Kate consistently accomplished this goal throughout her career, completing series after series of beautiful, evocative works full of her own deeply personal visual poetry. Her art related strongly to poetry of Emily Dickinson, whose writing inspired Kate to the depths of her soul.

The first works I saw of Kate's were from the **Hallelujah Series**. She painted them using a kitchen baster, applying fluid acrylic paint in long, irregular strands of varied colours from the centre outward, like exploding stars. As a younger artist in my twenties I was very excited about those works even though at the time I was painting landscapes that Kate considered "too brown!". She recommended that I paint the sky green in one of them just to see what would happen!



FIRST PAINTING ON CANVAS  
1969, Acrylic on Canvas  
22 3/4 x 20 1/2 in. (57.7 x 52 cm)

By 1970 I was exhibiting large abstract paintings inspired by a trip to coral reefs alongside Kate's big stained works in a two artist show at Scarborough College. Kate herself did venture into pure abstraction but it was her description of nature in personal, modernist terminology that became the main feature of her work.

Kate travelled extensively throughout her life. In the early seventies she was inspired by the Aurora Borealis and other aspects of the Arctic landscape - her canvases from this period show broad prismatic colours radiating and shimmering. She spent part of each summer and fall at her cabin in **Algonquin Park**. There, she painted watercolours and pastel studies of water lilies from the frog pond, summer green or

autumn coloured islands on the misty morning lake or against a starry night sky. While visiting the Channel Islands between England and France, she was transfixed by a large, yellow, rectangular field of daffodils next to a gorse filled moor. Kate showed me some small pastel sketches of this when she arrived home. Her excitement over the idea spawned the **Field & Moor Series**. These works perfectly exemplify Kate's remarkable ability to transpose natural subject matter into abstract language.

The majestic **Laurentian Series** from 1974 was executed by draping raw canvas over large plywood supports. They slanted downward into long metal troughs especially built to catch the runoff of paint and water. Acrylic colours were poured down the canvas in free flowing striped stains. She dramatically contrasted bright and deep hues which vibrated throughout these large paintings. The **Laurentian Series** raised qualities that were explored in some of the arctic paintings to new heights.

Kate's desire for asymmetry as evidenced in the **Field & Moor Series** carried into her paintings of the late 1970s. These works usually have a single colour in the shape of a vertical band at one end of the format. The rest of the canvas would be filled with clusters of analogous coloured shapes floating on a glowing tinted ground.



FIELD AND MOOR SERIES  
1975-76, Acrylic on Canvas  
21 x 24 in. (53.3 x 60.9 cm)

and even up to seven or more, against large stained grounds of colour from deep charcoal and navy to whispered tints of dusty rose or azure blue. These works possess a refined sparseness and are beautifully quiet, meditative works.

Through the 1980s and 1990s Kate's work became less abstract but was still full of inventive, poetic interpretations of landscapes. Her subjects were taken from trips to Bermuda, Costa Rica, British Columbia, Newfoundland, Ontario and the Arctic. In particular, Newfoundland was a major source of inspiration in the 1990s. By 1998, she found painting large works physically different and so painted on smaller sized support. She most often worked her ideas - from pencil sketches to pastels and large watercolours - out on paper. After that she would usually paint a small group of paintings all of the same idea but after their proportion; she would then paint a few middle sized canvases and then some big ones. As such, these works are variations on a theme, much like Cezanne's Mt. St. Victoire paintings.

I recall her sticking small pieces of prismatic coloured tape on stained canvases like mosaic patterned landscapes. She would remove each piece of tape and paint the exact colour in its place parroting the shape of the piece of tape. She also had a collection of canvas pieces painted with each of the colours that she used. These canvas pieces were organized in plastic boxes or drawers according to hue. Kate would tape these small swatches of colour to certain areas of her paintings, which she preferred. Hans Hoffman had taken a similar approach, tacking painted matt board to his paintings before making decisions regarding the shape, size and colour of certain areas in the works.

Her works on paper always impress me and strike me as being absolutely exquisite - even in her old age they still flowed from her hand like little gems. Arthritis eventually prevented her from raising her arm up to paint effectively but she didn't complain about her problems. She simply took a practical view of life and adapted to the circumstances that confronted her.

In 1977, Kate's work was part of a major exhibition called "14 Canadians: A Critic's Choice" organized by the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C. The show included a strong group of painters headed by Jack Bush. Jack, who died just prior to the opening, was Kate's mentor and he was extremely proud of her achievements.

In 1980 we exhibited together again in a two-artist show at the Watson/Willour Gallery in Houston, Texas. Her paintings in this show were abstractions of plant formations, derived from her pond paintings. Multicoloured leaf formations floated in mystical ovals of raw canvas. These radiant oval shapes were arranged in twos, threes



WAN LI  
1980, Acrylic on Canvas  
50 x 60 in. (127 x 152.5 cm)

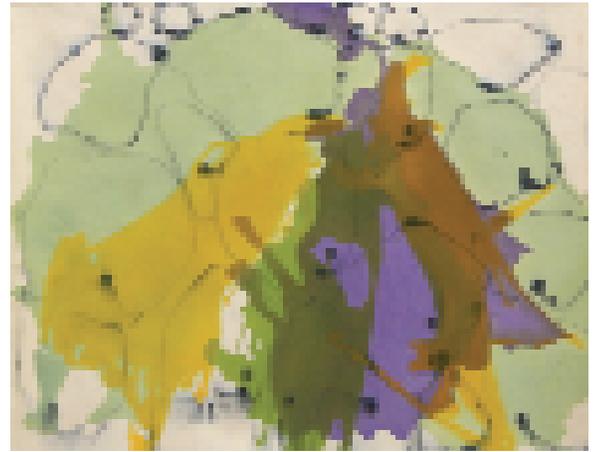
Her last years before she was completely bedridden were spent putting her estate together; she devoted her time to writing her memoirs, as well as an article about her late husband, Dr. Wallace Graham, for the Arthritis Society. I remember helping Kate weed through her works in her studio. She was very disciplined and discriminating about her life and work and destroyed any painting that failed to meet the standard of quality she demanded of her art.

Kate was frugal and picky over details; indeed, she often corrected my pronunciation, especially of artist's names - mainly Degas! That Kate was indebted to the artists she admired, like Milne, Bush, Avery, Matisse and Louis, is certainly true. Like all great artists do, Kate absorbed these influences into her own vision and visual languages, wherein producing some of Canada's most unique, striking and diverse works of art.

More than anyone, she carried the tradition of the landscape in Canadian Art, as embodied in the Group of Seven and Milne, into mainstream modernist painting of the mid to late twentieth century.

Kate started her painting when she was almost 50 years of age, after her husband died. I often wonder what she would have accomplished had she painted all her life. She was a very special friend to me, and I, along with her many other friends, who deeply miss her say, 'well done K.M. Graham, well done!' Kudos to you, always.

-Paul Fournier  
2009



NATURE'S COPE  
1972, Acrylic on Canvas  
42 x 52 in. (106.7 x 132.1 cm)





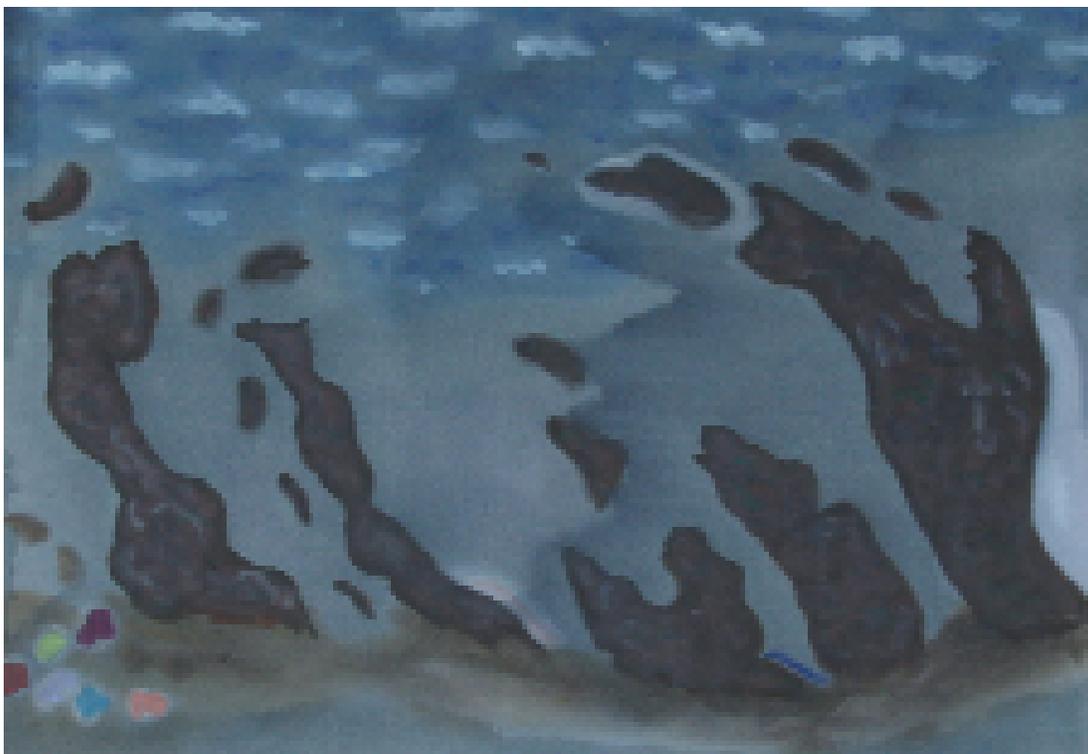
ORANGE BREEZE  
1976, Acrylic on Canvas  
47 1/8 x 41 3/8 in. (119.1 x 104.1 cm)



FIELD & MOOR SERIES  
(PURPLE BAND ORANGE FIELD WITH BOCOUR ROSE)  
1976, Acrylic on Canvas  
50 x 50 in. (127 x 127 cm)



THE LAST HOSANNA  
1970, Acrylic on Canvas  
77 x 41 in. (195.6 x 104.1 cm)



NIGHT INLET  
Acrylic on Canvas  
44 x 60 in. (111.8 x 152.5 cm)



HOSANNA IV  
1970, Acrylic on Canvas  
87 1/2 x 46 1/2 in. (222.2 x 118.1 cm)



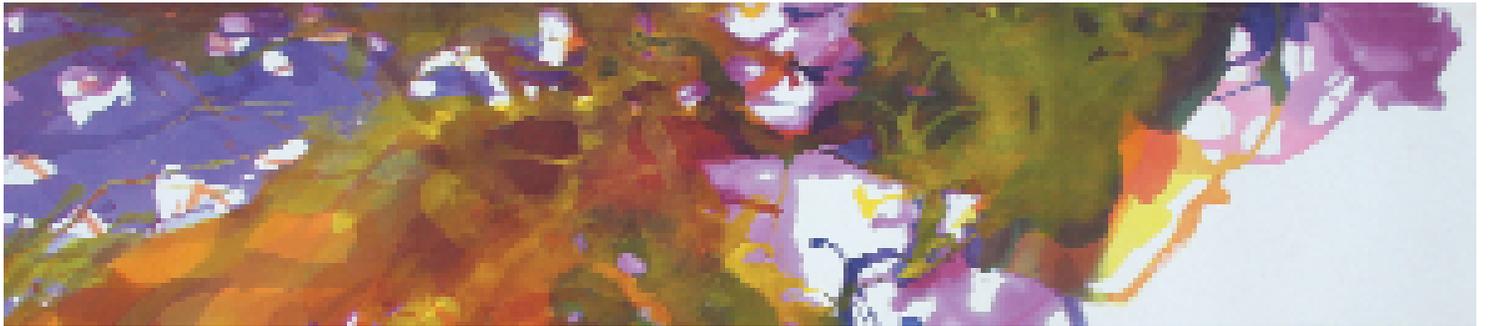
AKIRA  
1978/80/81, Acrylic on Canvas  
44 x 60 in. (111.8 x 152.5 cm)



LAURENTIAN SERIES (BAFFIN BLUE)  
1974, Acrylic on Canvas  
72 x 77 1/2 in. (82.9 x 72.7 cm)



GROWTH #1  
1973, Acrylic on Canvas  
34 1/2 x 35 in. (87.6 x 88.8 cm)



UNTITLED (HALLELUJAH SERIES #1)  
1970, Acrylic Canvas  
18 x 64 1/4 in. (45.7 x 163.2 cm)



TOKUGAWA "ON BLUE" (FOR JACK)  
1980, Acrylic on Canvas  
32 x 72 in. (81.3 x 182.9 cm)



LAURENTIAN SERIES NO. 24 (THREE CHEERS)  
1974, Acrylic on Canvas  
65 1/4 x 78 1/4 in. (165.5 x 198.8 cm)



GREEN FOUR

1973, Acrylic and Chalk on Canvas  
27 3/4 x 30 1/4 in. (70.5 x 76.8 cm)



ROSY FIVE TREES  
1973/75, Acrylic on Canvas  
56 x 80 in. (142.2 x 203.2 cm)

# K.M. GRAHAM

## EDUCATION

B.A., University of Toronto  
Royal Canadian Academy, 1973  
Honourary Fellow, Trinity College,  
University of Toronto, 1988



## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1967 Carmen Lamanna Gallery, Toronto, ON  
1970 Scarborough College, Toronto, ON  
1971, '73, '75 The Pollock Gallery, Toronto, ON  
1974 Toronto City Hall, Toronto, ON  
1976 The David Mirvish Gallery, Toronto, ON  
1979 Frans Wynans Gallery, Vancouver, B.C.  
1980 Watson Willour, Houston Texas, USA  
1980, '82 The Downstairs Gallery, Edmonton, AB  
1981 Art Gallery of Ontario Contact: circulating exhibition  
1981, '86 Lillian Heidenburg Gallery, NY, NY, USA  
1984, '78 Galerie Elca London, Montreal, PQ  
1984/5 Macdonald Stewart Art Centre, K.M. Graham Paintings and Drawings 1971 - 1984 Guelph, ON (catalogue)  
1989 Feheley Fine Arts, Arctic Lithographs & Drypoints, Toronto, ON  
1993 Douglas Udell Gallery, Vancouver, BC  
1994 Memorial University Art Gallery, K.M. Graham Eternities of Space - Paintings of the Arctic and Newfoundland St. Johns, NFLD., (catalogue) (circulating to: Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, NB)  
1994, '95/6 Costin & Klintworth, Toronto, ON  
1997 Art Gallery of Ontario, K.M. Graham - Early Arctic Works On Paper And Canvas, Toronto, ON  
2000, '01, '03 Moore Gallery, Toronto, ON

## SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

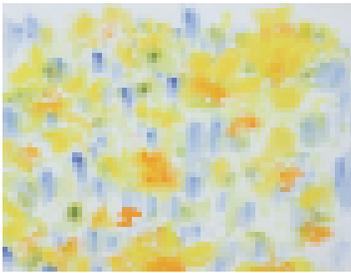
The British Museum, London, England  
Art Gallery of Edmonton, Edmonton, AB  
Art Gallery of Newfoundland & Labrador, St. John's, NFLD.  
Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, ON  
Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, NB  
Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa, ON  
McMichael Art Gallery of Canadian Art, Kleinburg, ON  
Musée d'Art Contemporain, Montreal, PQ  
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, ON  
Northumberland Gallery, Cobourg, ON  
The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, ON  
Toronto Dominion Bank, Toronto, ON  
Trinity College, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON  
Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver BC

## SELECTED CORPORATE COLLECTIONS

Bank of Montreal, Toronto, ON  
Canada Trust, Toronto, ON  
Canadian Development Corporation, Toronto, ON  
The Granite Club, Toronto, ON  
The Halifax Life Insurance Co., Toronto, ON  
J.C. Penny Co., New York, NY, USA  
London Life Insurance Co., London, ON  
McCarthy Tetrault, Toronto, ON  
McLeod, Young, Weir (Scotia McLeod) New York, NY, USA  
Nestle's Canada, Toronto, ON  
Norcen Energy Resources Ltd., Toronto, ON  
Nova (C.D.C. col), Sarnia, ON  
Onex Corporation, Toronto, ON  
Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt, Toronto, ON  
Petro Canada Ltd., Toronto, ON  
Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada, Toronto, ON  
Toronto Dominion Bank, Toronto, ON

## ADDITIONAL ARTWORKS

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UNTITLED (FLOWERS)  
1965, Acrylic on Canvas  
18 x 20 in. (45.7 x 50.8 cm)



UNTITLED  
1967, Acrylic on Canvas laid on board  
18 x 19 in. (45.7 x 48.3 cm)



NICOTIANA  
1967, Acrylic on Raw Canvas  
19 3/4 x 29 in. (50.2 x 73.6 cm)



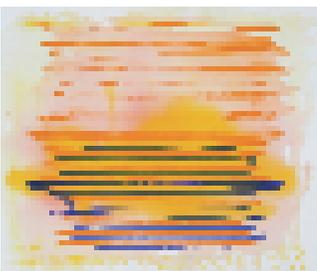
UNTITLED  
1968, Acrylic on Canvas  
15 1/4 x 18 in.  
(38.7 x 45.7 cm)



UNTITLED  
1969, Acrylic on Canvas  
15 1/4 x 18 in.  
(38.7 x 45.7 cm)



UNTITLED  
1969, Acrylic on Canvas  
26 1/2 x 26 3/4 in.  
(67.3 x 67.9 cm)



UNTITLED  
1969, Acrylic on Canvas  
25 x 26.5 in. (63.5 x 67.3 cm)



STICK DRAWING  
1970, Acrylic on Canvas  
27 1/2 x 27 in. (69.8 x 68.6 cm)



UNTITLED (HALLELUJAH SERIES #2)  
1970, Acrylic on Canvas  
23 1/4 x 31 3/4 in. (59 x 80.6 cm)



TRIAD OR IN DUE SEASON  
1970  
Acrylic on Canvas  
78 x 14 1/2 in.  
(200.8 x 36.8 cm)



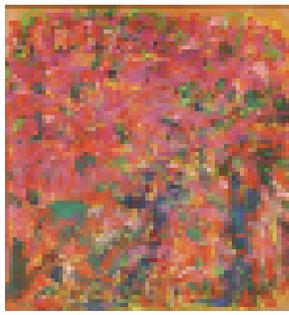
MAGIC GARDEN  
1970  
Acrylic on Canvas  
45 x 16 in.  
(114.3 x 40.6 cm)



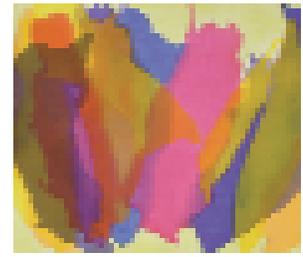
MYSTERIOUS GORGE  
1970, Acrylic on Canvas  
27 1/2 x 35 1/4 in.  
(69.7 x 90.8 cm)



INTIMATIONS  
1971, Acrylic and Pastel on Canvas  
46 x 38.5 in. (116.8 x 97.8cm)



EPIPHANY OF LIGHT  
1971, Acrylic and Chalk on Canvas  
41 x 38.5 in. (104.1 x 97.8 cm)



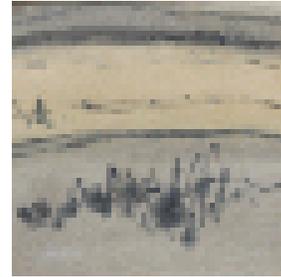
COLOUR ABSTRACTION  
1971/72, Acrylic on Canvas  
37 x 40 in. (94 x 101.6 cm)



EARLY STAINING  
1970, Acrylic on Canvas,  
32 x 74 in. (81.3 x 187.9 cm)



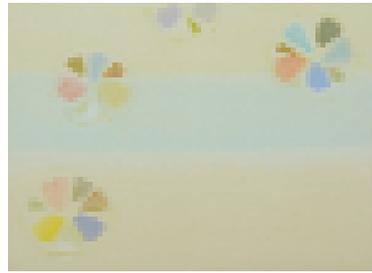
HOSANNA #12  
1971  
Acrylic on Canvas  
91 x 35 in.  
(231.1 x 88.8 cm)



NORTH OF  
COBURG HILLS  
1972  
Acrylic on Canvas  
13 1/2 x 13 1/2 in.  
(34.3 x 34.3 cm)



LITTLE GEM  
1972, Acrylic on Canvas laid on board  
16 x 18 in. (40.6 x 45.8 cm)



YANGTZE  
1979/1980, Acrylic on Canvas  
44 x 60 in. (111.8 x 152.5 cm)



JUST WISHED ON  
1980, Acrylic on Canvas  
43 x 80 in. (109.2 x 203.2 cm)



UNTITLED  
c. 1980, Acrylic on Canvas  
13 1/2 x 23 1/2 in. (34.3 x 59.7 cm)



HARRY'S WORLD  
1988/89, Acrylic and Conte  
36 3/4 x 29 in. (93.4 x 73.7cm)



CLEAR CUTTING, B.C. COAST  
2000, Acrylic and Conte  
21 x 37 1/4 in. (53.4 x 94.6 cm)

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please visit our website at  
[www.miriamshiell.com](http://www.miriamshiell.com)

BACK COVER: FIVE CEDARS 1972, Acrylic on Canvas 19 x 22.5 in. (48.3 x 57.1 cm)



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