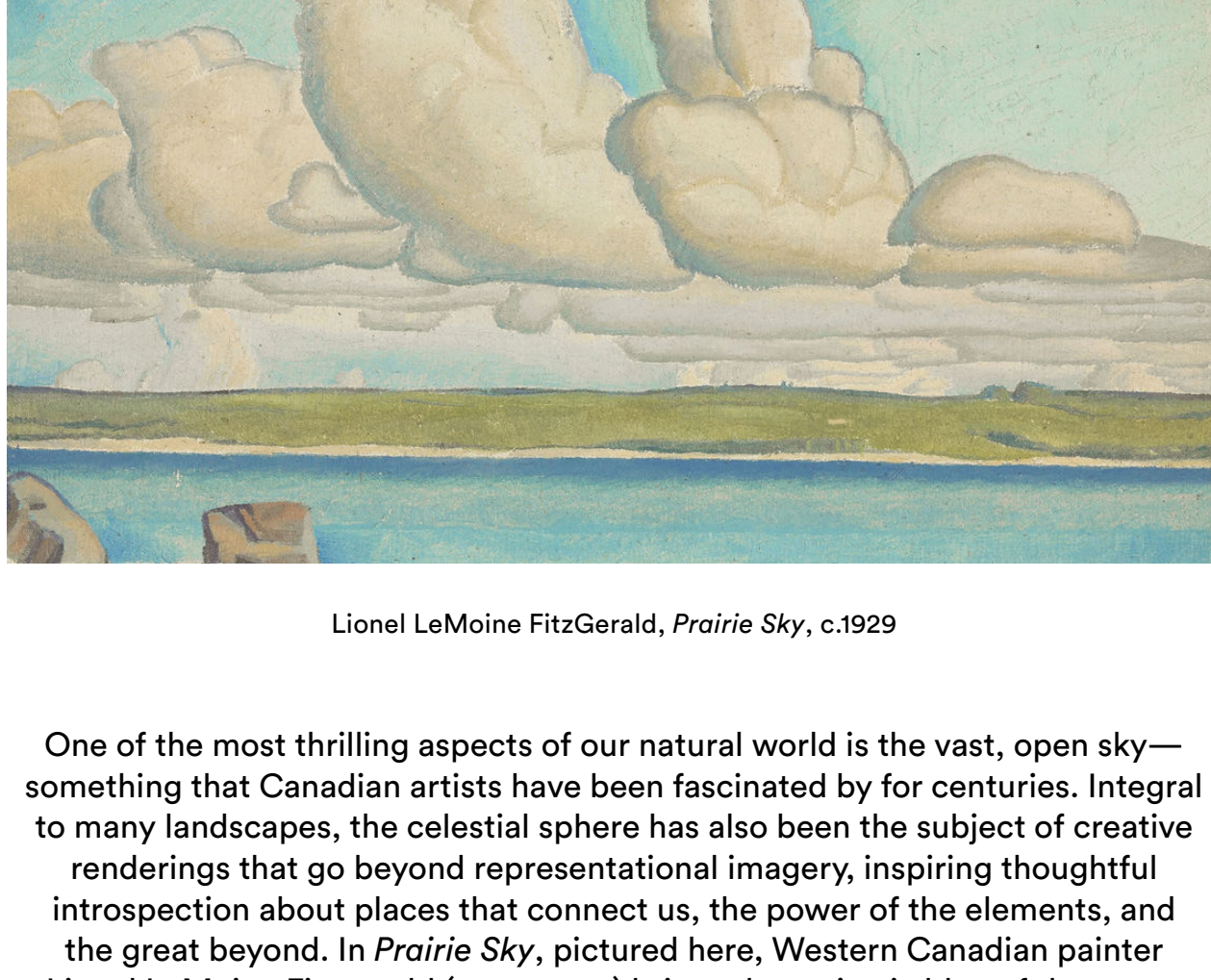


A MIRROR TO THE WORLD REFLECTIONS ON THE SKY

4 Canadian artists on the perplexing
majesty of the universe above

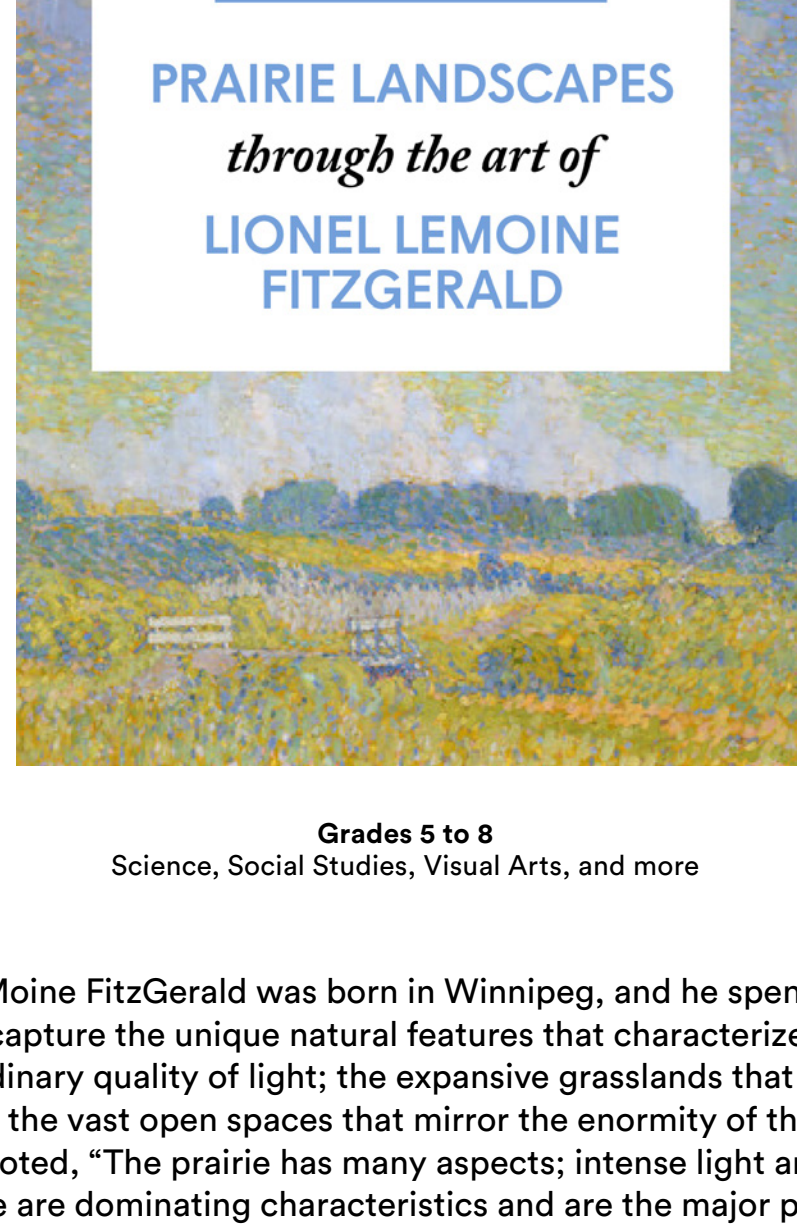


Lionel LeMoine Fitzgerald, *Prairie Sky*, c.1929

One of the most thrilling aspects of our natural world is the vast, open sky—something that Canadian artists have been fascinated by for centuries. Integral to many landscapes, the celestial sphere has also been the subject of creative renderings that go beyond representational imagery, inspiring thoughtful introspection about places that connect us, the power of the elements, and the great beyond. In *Prairie Sky*, pictured here, Western Canadian painter Lionel LeMoine Fitzgerald (1890–1956) brings the majestic blue of the upper atmosphere to life with large, voluminous clouds that are almost tactile, dedicating most of the compositional space to a representation of the sky. In celebration of our latest Teacher Resource Guide dedicated to landscapes like this one, we are sharing works by Canadian artists who have represented the world above, from the Maritimes to Nunavut and beyond.

— The Art Canada Institute Education Team

Wide Vistas



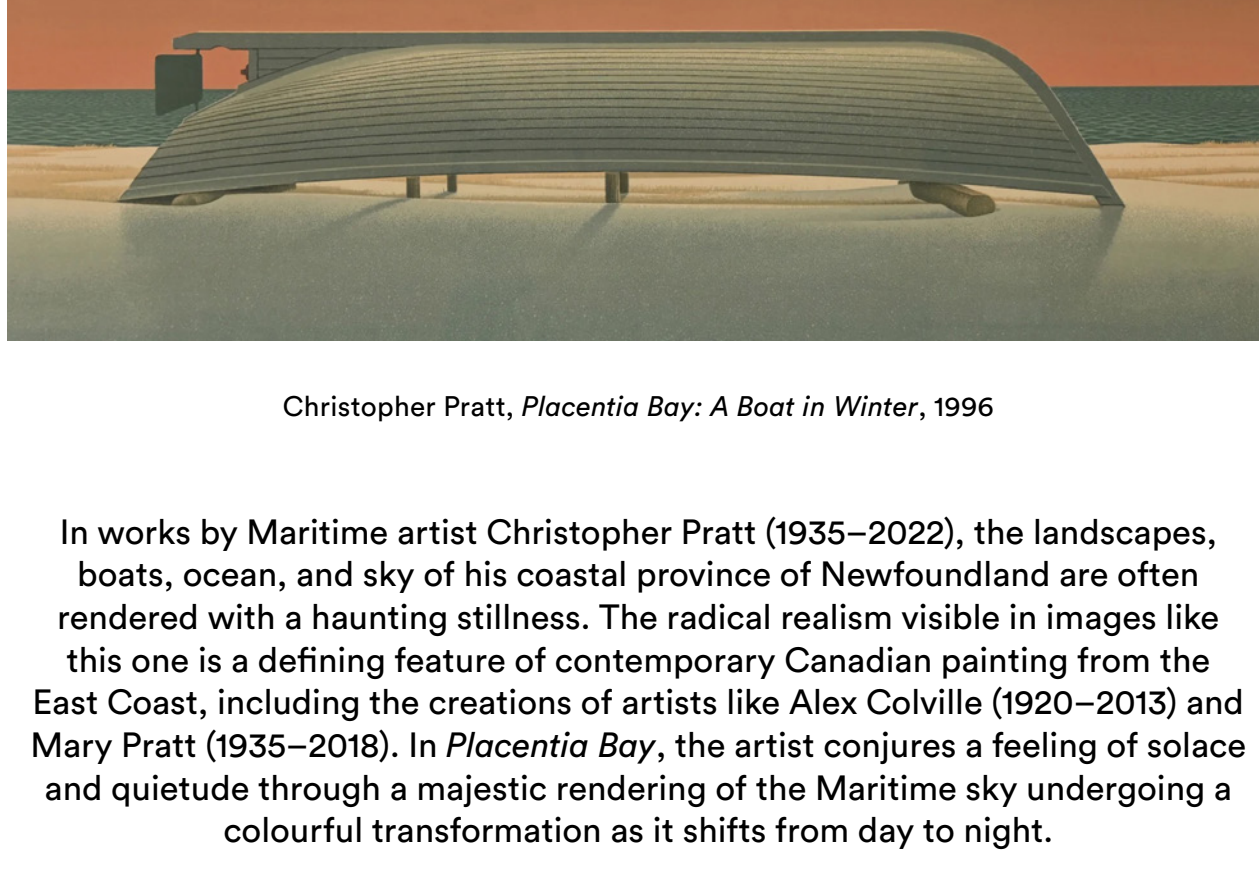
Grades 5 to 8
Science, Social Studies, Visual Arts, and more

Lionel LeMoine Fitzgerald was born in Winnipeg, and he spent his career working to capture the unique natural features that characterize the Prairies: their extraordinary quality of light; the expansive grasslands that make up their terrain; and the vast open spaces that mirror the enormity of the sky. As the artist once noted, “The prairie has many aspects; intense light and the feeling of great space are dominating characteristics and are the major problems of the prairie artist.” In our latest Teacher Resource Guide, Fitzgerald’s artworks are the starting point for investigations into Western Canadian landscapes as they relate to science, art, and history.

[Download the Teacher Resource Guide here.](#)

AVENUES TO EXPLORE

Maritime Glow



Christopher Pratt, *Placentia Bay: A Boat in Winter*, 1996

In works by Maritime artist Christopher Pratt (1935–2022), the landscapes, boats, ocean, and sky of his coastal province of Newfoundland are often rendered with a haunting stillness. The radical realism visible in images like this one is a defining feature of contemporary Canadian painting from the East Coast, including the creations of artists like Alex Colville (1920–2013) and Mary Pratt (1935–2018). In *Placentia Bay*, the artist conjures a feeling of solace and quietude through a majestic rendering of the Maritime sky undergoing a colourful transformation as it shifts from day to night.

Interested in learning more about Maritime artists?

Download our [Teacher Resource Guide on Alex Colville and literary devices here](#), and on [Mary Pratt and the properties of light here](#).

Northern Skies



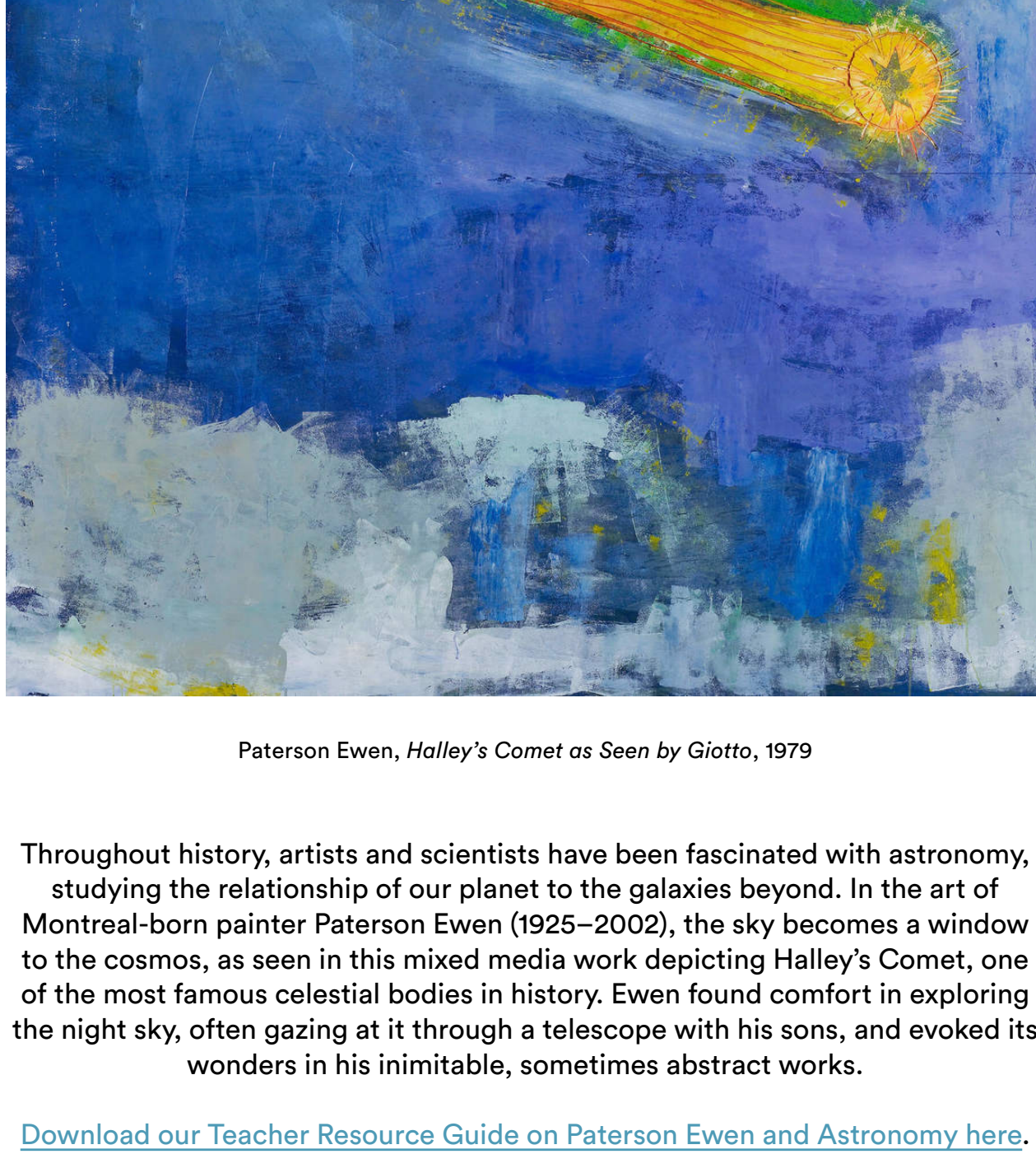
Ooloosie Saila, *Untitled (Pink Landscape)*, 2019

An exuberant burst of colour is front and centre in this remarkably creative landscape by contemporary artist Ooloosie Saila (b.1991). Here, the fiery Nunavut sky stands in stark juxtaposition with the icy waters in the lower half of the composition, and jagged clouds peak through the vibrant palette of pinks, oranges, and blues that characterize her experience of the world above. Saila was inspired by the iconic drawings of Kenojuk Ashevak (1927–2013), whom she had the opportunity to meet and visit with when she was a child.

Interested in learning more about Nunavut and its artists?

[Download our Teacher Resource Guide on the iconic Pitseolak Ashoona here.](#)

Exploring the Universe



Paterson Ewen, *Halley's Comet as Seen by Giotto*, 1979

Throughout history, artists and scientists have been fascinated with astronomy, studying the relationship of our planet to the galaxies beyond. In the art of Montreal-born painter Paterson Ewen (1925–2002), the sky becomes a window to the cosmos, as seen in this mixed media work depicting Halley’s Comet, one of the most famous celestial bodies in history. Ewen found comfort in exploring the night sky, often gazing at it through a telescope with his sons, and evoked its wonders in his inimitable, sometimes abstract works.

[Download our Teacher Resource Guide on Paterson Ewen and Astronomy here.](#)

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Launched in 2013, the Art Canada Institute is the only national institution whose mandate is to promote the study of an inclusive multi-vocal Canadian art history to as broad an audience as possible, in both English and French, within Canada and internationally. The ACI works with more than fifty of Canada’s leading art historians, curators, and visual culture experts who are dedicated to the creation of authoritative original content on the people, themes, and topics that have defined Canadian art history.

We are creating a central digital resource to tell the world about Canada’s most important works of art and where they are located. By functioning as an online art museum, a [digital library](#), and an interactive Canadian art encyclopedia, the ACI is an indispensable resource on Canada’s visual heritage.

Visit us at aci-iac.ca

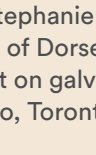
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