

VARLEY

THE FREDERICK HORSMAN VARLEY  
ART GALLERY OF MARKHAM  
31 MAY, 1997

## The Gallery

Harmony with nature is the inspiration for the new art gallery.

Stand in the Introductory Gallery of The Frederick Horsman Varley Art Gallery of Markham and look out one of the floor-to-wall windows, past the trees to Toogood Pond and the Rouge River, and you will be reminded of a Group of Seven landscape. This direct link to one of Canada's most important artistic influences is exactly what Jerome Markson, of Markson Borooh Hodgson Architects Inc. envisioned when he was commissioned to design a new home for the Kathleen Gormley McKay art collection.

Inspired by how Frederick Varley and the Group of Seven interpreted nature in their artwork, the award-winning architectural firm set out to harmo-



The view from inside the gallery is reminiscent of a Group of Seven painting.

nize the new building into the beauty of its natural surroundings. Influenced by the historic setting of the neighborhood, the gallery is integrated into the picturesque streetscape of Unionville and the parkland environs of Toogood Pond. The intimate scale, size and colour of the adjacent church, is complemented by architectural details echoed in the design of the gallery. The 15,000 square-foot building incorporates natural materials found in the Canadian land-



The Frederick Horsman Varley Art Gallery of Markham.

scape and a colour palette inspired by Varley. The warm terra-cotta brick of the building's facade, accented by the rich plum slate roof, illustrates Markson's "feeling and respect for Varley, by using natural materials where possible, brick and slate inside and out, maple cabinet work and flooring, and natural light in the public spaces."

When entering the foyer, visitors will be impressed by the calm and inviting intimacy of the space, due in large part to the appropriate choice of natural building materials. A simple sequence of spaces is encountered off the entry point. The first of two gallery spaces is designed to introduce Varley's art

within the context of the Group of Seven, while establishing his ties to Unionville and the art collection of Kathleen Gormley McKay. Flowing off the introductory space is the main gallery, which features changing exhibitions drawn from local, national and international sources. The cathedral ceiling in the Community Room, designated for studio activities and lectures, mirrors that of the church ceiling next door. The two-dimensional graphics and three-dimensional and display features reflect the minimalist approach adopted by the designers and curatorial staff. "Our intention was to maintain the integrity of the architectural design and highlight the artwork by incorporating installation elements into the design as invisibly as possible," says Sharon Gaum-Kuchar, director/curator.

To properly care for artwork, the facility integrates specialized heat, humidity and light controls, as well as the required security and storage systems.

The gallery is now an integral part of the Unionville landscape, a perfect addition to the classic heritage district.



Groundbreaking for the facility, October, 1994.

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~ Extends ~

Congratulations To The Varley Art Gallery

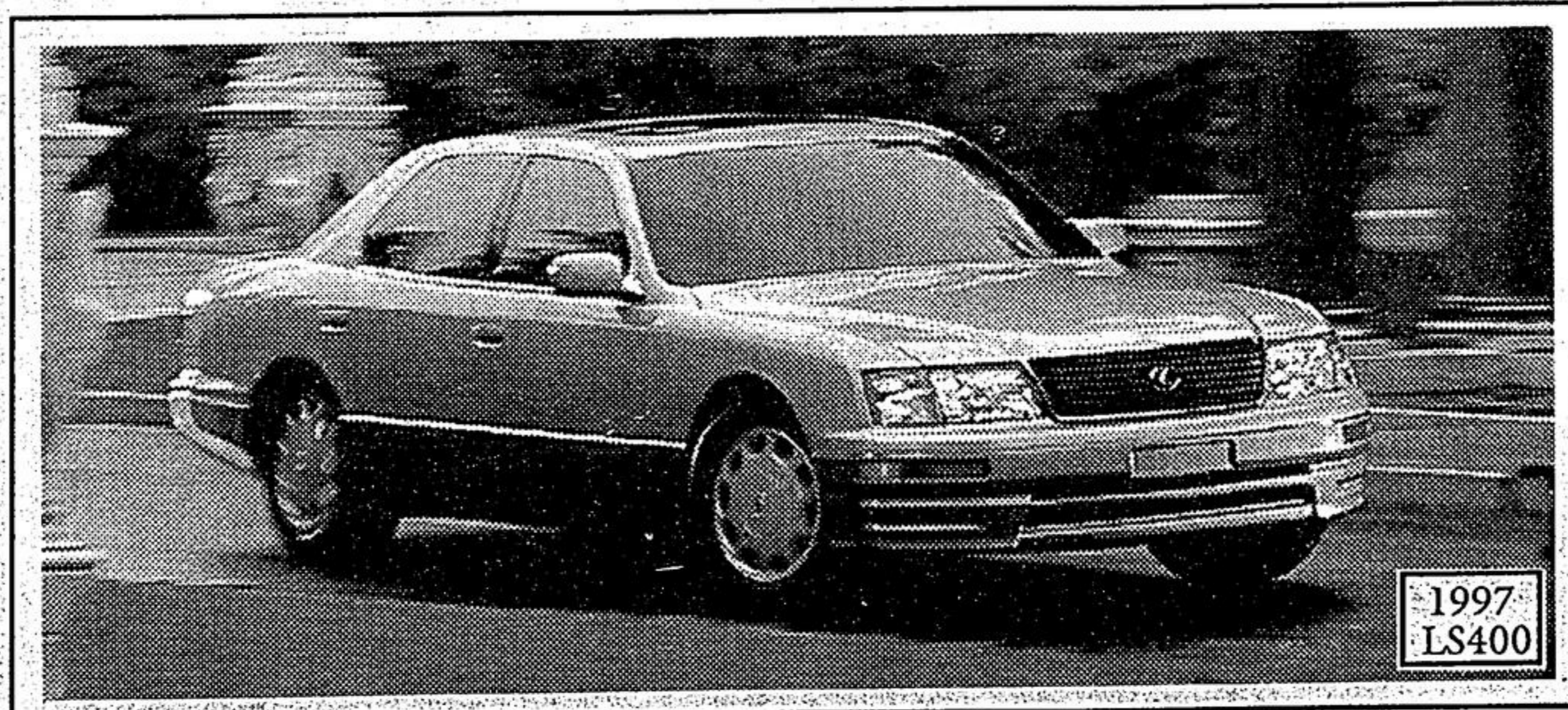
~ And ~

Urges You to Visit The Gallery To Experience Art At Its Best

~ And ~

Also Urges You To Visit Their Showroom To Experience Automotive

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