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Stunning collections and a French Connection with Masters of French Realism highlight Art Gallery of Hamilton's Fall 2011 exhibition season

The Art Gallery of Hamilton's Fall 2011 exhibition season offers a closing salute to its French Connection year with a stunning display of nineteenth-century French Realist paintings alongside three intriguing exhibitions drawn from private collections.

On view from September 24, 2011 to January 15, 2012, **Masters of French Realism** showcases works by various French painters associated with the central nineteenth-century artistic movement Realism, which achieved its most coherent expression in French painting. At the centre of French Realism was Gustave Courbet (1819–1877), represented in the exhibition by two landscape paintings. While Courbet's Realist representations of peasants and labourers were motivated by strong political views, other French Realists, such as Philippe Rousseau (1816-1887), found both popular and critical success with their naturalistically painted humble subjects. Another type of Realism is represented in the work of James Tissot (1836–1902), whose *Croquet* has long been one of the favourite European paintings in the AGH's Permanent Collection. The Gallery owns more than twenty works by Théodule Ribot, also featured in the exhibition, and is the single best represented artist in the AGH Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Collection. Together, the works shown here reveal Realism to be a primary strength of this collection. Curated by Dr. Patrick Shaw Cable. The Art Gallery of Hamilton's *French Connection* themed year is presented with the generous support of TD.

On view from October 1, 2011 to January 15, 2012, **Quilts! A Gift from Carole and Howard Tanenbaum to the Textile Museum of Canada** celebrates the donation of Carole and Howard Tanenbaum's impressive collection of quilts to the Textile Museum of Canada in 2011. Dating primarily to the latter part of the nineteenth century, these quilts were made in the United States, Canada and England. Originally used as bedding, furnishings, as well as markers of family and community celebration, most of the quilts' makers are unknown and their ancestry obscure. While their meaning and social messages have evolved, they continue to offer exquisite articulations of history, tradition and craftsmanship. Organized and circulated by the Textile Museum of Canada.

On view October 1, 2011 to January 15, 2012, **Becoming: Photographs from the Collection of John and Ginny Soule** offers works that span the late 19th century to the present day, illustrating the hallmark styles of photography as it progressed through the 20th century. In its beginnings, photography was not considered a fine art form, but was in the process of *becoming*. Likewise, the collection of John and Ginny Soule is evolving, growing along with their passion for photography. On view are photographs by Jerry Uelsmann (American, b. 1934), Edward Steichen (American, 1879-1973), Édouard Boubat (French, 1923-1999), André Kertész (Hungarian-American, 1894-1985), Heinrich Kühn (German-Austrian, 1866-1944), Frank Sutcliffe (British, 1853-1941), Horst P. Horst (German-American, 1906-1999), and contemporary Canadian pieces by Barbara Astman and Jesse Boles. Curated by Melissa Bennett.

Salah J. Bachir's collection of Attila Richard Lukacs' work is unparalleled in its scope, representing the various series for which Lukacs has become well-known. On view from October 8 to December 31, the exhibition **Attila Richard Lukacs from the Collection of Salah J. Bachir** features more than thirty works of grand portraits of decadent male nudes, poetic and mythological scenes, works from the artist's military series, Polaroid photographs used as studies for paintings, as well as a new abstract painting that has drawn attention for its departure from the figurative. Consistent throughout

the works is a highly engaging, mystical, allegorical component — images of fabled lovers and animalistic characters. Over the years, Bachir's astute selections have come to form a comprehensive collection of works by one of Canada's greatest contemporary painters. Curated by Melissa Bennett.

The following exhibition is on view on Gallery Level Two, with free admission courtesy of Orlick Industries...

From October 19 to November 3, the Art Gallery of Hamilton is pleased to host **the RBC Canadian Painting Competition**. Established in 1999, the goal of the RBC Canadian Painting Competition is to support and nurture Canadian visual artists early in their career by providing them with a forum to display their artistic talent to the country and hopefully open doors to future opportunity. Adjudicated by the Canadian Art Foundation, a jury consisting of distinguished members of the arts community selected five paintings from the following regions: Eastern (Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI, Newfoundland and Labrador), Central (Ontario), Western Canada (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut). Vancouver-based artist Rebecca Brewer was chosen as the national winner and was the recipient of \$25,000. One painting by each of the fifteen semi-finalists will be on display in this exhibition.

In the Jean and Ross Fischer Gallery, with free admission courtesy of Orlick Industries...

Artist and devoted letter writer, Ruby Baker McQuesten (1879-1911) of Whitehern Museum in Hamilton passed away from tuberculosis at the young age of thirty-one. The pairings of paintings, drawings and letters featured in **Ruby B. McQuesten: The Jewel of Whitehern**, on view until November 13, 2011, demonstrate that despite its brevity, her life was resplendent with love for her family, humour, dynamism, and an appreciation of art. Comprising studies of the surrounding landscape, floral arrangements and still-lives, the paintings and drawings on view document a life inspired by the simplicity and beauty of the natural world. This exhibition is presented by the City of Hamilton, Whitehern Historic House and Garden, Hamilton Historical Board and Hamilton Heritage Arts, Inc.

The Art Gallery of Hamilton's programming activities are assisted by the City of Hamilton, Ontario Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, and the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Art Gallery of Hamilton is located at 123 King Street West in downtown Hamilton, 905-527-6610. Gallery hours: Tuesday and Wednesday 12 noon to 7 pm, Thursday and Friday 12 noon to 9 pm, Saturday and Sunday 12 noon to 5 pm. Closed Mondays. The AGH is open from 12 noon to 5 pm on Thanksgiving Day (Monday, October 10), Christmas Eve (Saturday, December 24) and New Year's Eve (Saturday, December 31). The AGH will be closed Christmas Day (Sunday, December 25), Boxing Day (Monday, December 26) and New Year's Day (Sunday, January 1).

Please visit www.artgalleryofhamilton.com for complete exhibition and programming information.

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To access high-resolution images of AGH exhibitions and programming, please e-mail: steve@artgalleryofhamilton.com

For further information on the Art Gallery of Hamilton, its exhibitions and programming, please contact: Steve Denyes, Manager, Communications
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