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For immediate release



Couple donates collection of paintings and sculptures to Art Gallery of Hamilton

The Art Gallery of Hamilton was delighted to announce the gift of 34 works of art to the Gallery's permanent collection from Mariel O'Neill-Karch and Pierre Karch. The works – 12 paintings, 19 works on paper, and 3 sculptures -- that make up the Mariel O'Neill-Karch and Pierre Karch Donation will add significantly to the Gallery's collection.

The Karch Donation includes works by such well-known international artists as Eugène Delacroix (French 1798-1863), Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (French 1824-1898), Jef Lambeaux (Belgian 1852-1908), Hiroshige (Japanese 1797-1858) and such Canadian artists as Jean-Paul Lemieux, Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Coté, Jennifer Dickson, Anna Noeh, and Louise Scott. The donation has been certified by the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board as meeting the required criteria for outstanding significance and national importance.

"This is a jewel of a collection," said AGH President and CEO Louise Dompierre. "Each work has been lovingly selected by Mariel and Pierre. These rare works will add greatly to the reputation of our collection, and we are touched that this nationally-known couple would entrust their international collection to our care."

The Karch Donation will be featured in an exhibition at the Art Gallery of Hamilton in Winter 2009.

Mariel O'Neill-Karch is a Professor in the Department of French at the University of Toronto. Pierre Karch is a Professor Emeritus of French at York University, Toronto. Both have published extensively.

The couple first considered donating their collection when they read a newspaper article about Joey and Toby Tanenbaum's gift to the Gallery. In 2002, the Tanenbaums, Toronto-based philanthropists and collectors, gifted over 200 works to the AGH, and transformed the Gallery into a centre for the study of nineteenth-century European art.

Founded in 1914 through a gift from the family of the late Hamilton-born artist William Blair Bruce, the Art Gallery of Hamilton is Ontario's third largest public art gallery. Its permanent collection of 9,000 works is conservatively valued at over \$160 million and is considered one of the finest in the country.

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From the left: Louise Dompierre (AGH President and CEO), Patrick Shaw Cable (AGH Acting Chief Curator/Curator of European Art), Mariel O'Neill-Karch, Geraldine Copps, Pierre Karch, The Right Honourable Sheila Copps
Photo: Mike Lulich

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