

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Art Gallery of Hamilton's Winter 2009 Exhibition Season  
brings together major works from one of Canada's foremost art collectors**

The Art Gallery of Hamilton's Winter 2009 exhibition season reassembles, for the first time since the 1940s, the works from one of Canada's most noted collectors. Other highlights include the exhibition of a newly-donated private art collection now part of the Gallery's Permanent Collection, a visual and aural exploration of storied Hamilton neighbourhoods, the kinetic installations of one of Canada's most noted contemporary artists and the inaugural exhibition of the AGH's *Vista Italia* celebration.

Newspaper publisher Harry Stevenson Southam (1875-1954) was recognized as one of Canada's foremost collectors of art in the 1930s and 1940s. Southam's generosity extended across the country during this critical collection-building period, but he gave more works to Hamilton, where he grew up, than to any other city. For the first time in decades, ***Inspirational: The Collection of H. S. Southam***, on view from **January 17 to May 3**, reassembles major works from Southam's collection, at the core of which were the Canadian paintings, his true passion. The exhibition moves from impressive canvases of the Group of Seven, to the highly charged period of the 1930s, including works by many women artists, such as Emily Carr, Prudence Heward, Pegi Nicol MacLeod, Sarah Robertson, Anne Savage, and Liliás Torrance Newton. It ends with Southam's later taste for such rising Quebec artists as Louis Muhlstock, Jacques de Tonnancour, and Paul-Émile Borduas. A sample of Southam's European collection reveals not only how his early aesthetic interests shaped his later Canadian choices, but also how international movements inspired Canadian art.

On view from **January 24 to May 3**, ***Visual Poetry: The Collection of Pierre Karch and Mariel O'Neill Karch*** represents a very special instalment of the AGH's Collectors Series, featuring thirty-two stellar works acquired through the years by Toronto collectors Pierre Karch and Mariel O'Neill-Karch, and then generously donated by the couple to the AGH at the end of 2007—the most significant gift to the Gallery since the donation of The Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Collection in 2002.

The works range from historical European and Canadian art to contemporary pieces, the three key collecting strengths of the AGH. ***Visual Poetry*** presents additional works by the same artists from the Gallery's pre-existing Permanent Collection. Among the artists included are Eugène Delacroix and Puvis de Chavannes, two major French masters from the beginning and end of the nineteenth century; leading French Surrealist André Masson; Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Coté and Jean-Paul Lemieux, central figures respectively in the history of Quebec sculpture and painting; and Louis de Niverville and Jennifer Dickson, two foremost contemporary Canadian artists.

Hamilton artists and collaborators Christina Sealey and Richard Oddie have spent much of the last couple of years rediscovering our city through extensive visits to neighbourhoods, iconic landscapes and landmarks, and by talking candidly with residents and friends about their diverse experiences of Hamilton. On view from **January 24 to May 17**, ***Atelier: Christina Sealey and Richard Oddie / Living Spaces Imagining Hamilton*** is an audio-visual expression of their findings. In this re-imagined city, paintings depicting people and urban landscapes are surrounded by a layered soundscape that mixes ambient noises from different locations along with clips from some of the interviews conducted in that area. As viewers move through the space, they will be immersed in different visions of the city and in the different possibilities of urban life it offers. It is the artists' hope that the exhibition will invite reflection on the different ways in which Hamilton and its various regions are experienced, interpreted and valued.

The inventive creations of Montreal artist Jean-Pierre Gauthier will be on view from **January 31 to May 17** in the exhibition ***Jean-Pierre Gauthier: Machines at Play***. Gauthier's kinetic installations combine humour and poetry and have emerged from his exploration of the acoustic and metaphorical potential of the found object. With an ingenuity seldom seen, they bring together the notions of order and chaos, permanence and fragility, performance and randomness. This exhibition is organized and circulated by the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, with financial support from the Museums Assistance Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

The above exhibitions are located on Gallery Level One. Admission to these exhibitions is \$12 for adults, \$10 for students and seniors, \$5 for children ages 6 to 17 years. Children under the age of 5 years receive free admission. Family admission (consisting of two adults and up to four children) is \$30. AGH Members receive free admission.

*Also on view on Gallery Level Two, with free admission courtesy of Orlick Industries:*

Ushering in the AGH's 2009 **Vista Italia** celebration of Italian art and culture presented by TD Bank Financial Group, ***Il Bellissimo Panorama: Views of Italy*** features a fresh and poetic assortment of approximately forty Italian views from the AGH holdings—created by diverse European, Canadian, and American artists, and ranging in time from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. On view until **October 12**, subjects include scenic sketches of named and unnamed Italian hill and mountain towns. The exhibition also offers several views of figures outdoors, ranging from ancient Roman gods and goddesses to Italian peasants. Among the Canadian works on view are two lively graphite sketches by A. Y. Jackson, three evocative oil paintings by James Wilson Morrice, and three crisp black-and-white photographs of Venetian canals by contemporary artist Jeff Nolte. Exhibition Partner: The Frisina Family, in honour of Alfonso E. Frisina.

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.

The Art Gallery of Hamilton has organized an engaging lineup of film, performance, children's, family and adult programming to complement its varied roster of exhibitions. For complete exhibition and programming information, please visit [www.artgalleryofhamilton.com](http://www.artgalleryofhamilton.com).

Art Gallery of Hamilton is located at 123 King Street West in downtown Hamilton, 905-527-6610. Gallery hours: Tuesday and Wednesday Noon to 7 pm, Thursday and Friday Noon to 9 pm, Saturday and Sunday Noon to 5 pm. Closed Mondays. The AGH is open from Noon to 5 pm on statutory holidays, including Family Day (Monday, February 16), Good Friday (Friday, April 10) and Easter Sunday (Sunday, April 13).

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To **access high-resolution images of AGH exhibitions**, please e-mail: [steve@artgalleryofhamilton.com](mailto:steve@artgalleryofhamilton.com)

**For further information on the Art Gallery of Hamilton, its exhibitions and programming**, please contact:

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