

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Art Gallery of Hamilton's Winter 2010 exhibition season  
kicks off Vital Africa celebration with ground-breaking photographic exhibition**

The Art Gallery of Hamilton's Winter 2010 exhibition season signals the beginning of the Gallery's **Vital Africa** year, the AGH's celebration of African art and culture, presented by TD.

On view from January 16 to May 9 and ushering in the AGH's Vital Africa theme, **Posing Beauty in African American Culture** explores the contested ways in which African American beauty has been represented in the media in both historical and contemporary contexts. This exhibition of photography challenges the relationship between beauty and art by examining the representation of beauty as a racialized act fraught with meanings and attitudes about class, gender, and aesthetics. With works drawn from public and private collections, *Posing Beauty* includes photography by such artists as Carrie Mae Weems, Hank Willis Thomas, Bruce Davidson, Lee Friedlander, Garry Winogrand, Eve Arnold and Edward Curtis. Exhibition Partner: TD. Media Partner: The Globe and Mail.

*Posing Beauty in African American Culture* is curated by Deborah Willis and organized by Curatorial Assistance, Pasadena, California. Dr. Willis will be in Hamilton to speak about her decades-long involvement in bringing the exhibition (and accompanying publication) into being on Thursday, February 11 at 6:30 pm.

On view January 16 to May 9, the AGH's ongoing Collectors Series continues with **Arctic Passion: The Inuit Art Collection of Christopher Bredt and Jamie Cameron** and features selected works from one of the best private collections of Inuit art that exists today in Canada. Assembled over many years, this notable collection includes comprehensive holdings from different areas like Baffin Island and Baker Lake, revealing the rich variety of Inuit visual expression — extending to materials and subjects, as well as intentions, meanings and moods. Curated by Dr. Patrick Shaw Cable.

Also on view from January 16 to May 9, **Ritual Evidence: Tim Whiten** continues the artist's exploration of transcendental themes related to rituals and relics. Using authentic human skulls, his sculptural pieces cause an arresting encounter — both spiritually and visually - for each viewer. Whiten is a highly prolific senior-career Canadian artist who has influenced generations of artists through his position as Professor of Fine Art at York University since 1968. His works have appeared in solo and group exhibitions both nationally and internationally. He is represented by Olga Korper Gallery in Toronto. Curated by Melissa Bennett.

On view January 30 to May 24, and premiering in Canada, **End of the American Road: Terence Brynes** yields surprising views of small town America. Brynes has been photographing the people and places of Springfield, Ohio annually for over forty years. Brynes' images are moving in their depiction of the town's citizens and are at times flecked with humour, or tenderness, or the plain, if not shocking, realities of American life. On display are black and white and colour photographs taken from 1966 up to the present, showing the evolution of people and place while Brynes' unassuming presence remains a constant. Brynes is a Montreal-based artist and author. His photographs have been exhibited in Canada and the USA. Curated by Melissa Bennett.

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Also on view from January 30 to May 24, **david merritt: sham** highlights the artist's playful, serious, humorous and conceptually weighted examination of the relationship between the way words are used, and the way they appear when written. Taking the words of popular songs, he charts them in intricately drawn diagrams, making connections between the many songs that use the same phrases. Merritt's signature sculptural works of delicate forms made from unraveled lengths of sisal rope will also be on display. Battling the tensions between heavy and light, some of the sisal sculptures also incorporate language, working with the themes of music, and the connections between words, meanings, and their visual presence in popular culture. Merritt's work has been exhibited in nationally and internationally. He is based in London, Ontario and is represented by Jessica Bradley Art + Projects, Toronto. Curated by Melissa Bennett.

The above exhibitions are located on the AGH's Gallery Level One. Admission to these exhibitions is \$10 for adults, \$8 for students and seniors, \$4 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 \$25. AGH Members receive free admission.

Full-time students of Mohawk College, McMaster University, Redeemer College, Columbia College and the Canadian Institute for Dental Hygiene are student e-Members at the AGH and receive free exhibition admission courtesy of the Gallery's Audience Development partner, RBC.

*The following exhibitions are located on the AGH's Gallery Level Two, with free admission courtesy of Orlick Industries:*

On view until April 11, **Liquid of Rain and Rivers** features works by Canadian artists Robert Burley, Paterson Ewen and Ron Martin in which the subject of water is interpreted through diverse approaches

Robert Burley's photographs are from his *Great Lakes* series. The Great Lakes, an area in which the artist has lived in various locations, appear as immense bodies of water. Visually comparable to seas, the surfaces of the water appear smooth due to Burley's use of slow shutter speeds. Paterson Ewen's featured work is created by gouging a large plywood surface and applying paint and metal. On view are compelling examples of Ewen's practice, and popular works from the AGH collection. Ron Martin worked with water in the early 1970s to extend its creative possibilities. By dripping water over paper to create wet areas, Martin altered the chemical composition of the surface. Once dried, the results are minimalist abstractions.

Together, these works show innovations in media as well as diverse perceptions of the meanings and myths we associate with water. Curated by Melissa Bennett.

On view until April 11, **Simon Glass: The Thirteen Attributes of God** is a suite of thirteen gelatin silver photographs that were recently acquired by the AGH. The images are fragile in character, showing intimate views of lips, hands, and feathers in tandem with poignant imagery of dead birds and overlaid with biblical and liturgical Hebrew related to the holy names of God. Glass presents an inviting glimpse into his own questions about language, faith, history and meaning. His work has been exhibited widely across Canada and Internationally. He is based in Toronto, and is represented by IndexG Gallery. Curated by Melissa Bennett.

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On view March 7, 2010 to February 21, 2011, **Max Streicher: Architecture of Clouds** showcases the artist's immense inflatable sculptures. Created specifically for the AGH's David Braley and Nancy Gordon Sculpture Atrium, Streicher's new work draws from the cathedral-like setting of the atrium. While overwhelming in scale, the work also invites the viewer to engage with it, walk around it, look upward and inside the form. Filled with air that is blown into the structure using an electric fan, the form is intensely captivating, its organic shape inviting a multitude of associations. Streicher has exhibited across Canada in numerous public galleries and artist-run centres. He has completed several site-related projects, most recently in Venice, Siena, Stockholm and Erfurt, Germany. The AGH is pleased to premier this work. Curated by Melissa Bennett.

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 **Vital Africa** celebration. Please visit [www.artgalleryofhamilton.com](http://www.artgalleryofhamilton.com) for complete exhibition and programming information,

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 15), Good Friday (Friday, April 2) and Easter Monday (Monday, April 5).

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**To access high-resolution images of AGH exhibitions and programming**, 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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