ART GALLERY OF HAMILTON EXHIBITION SHEDS NEW LIGHT ON ITALIAN BAROQUE PAINTING IN CANADA

Illuminations: Italian Baroque Masterworks in Canadian Collections
Opens Saturday, February 28

Luca Giordano (Italian 1634-1705) *The Massacre of the Children of Niobe* c.1685 oil on canvas
Art Gallery of Hamilton The Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Collection, 2002. Photo: Roy and Carole Timm of Wavelength

February 26, 2015 – Beginning February 28, 2015 the Art Gallery of Hamilton will present *Illuminations: Italian Baroque Masterworks in Canadian Collections*, the first comprehensive exhibition examining the breadth of Italian Baroque painting in Canadian public collections. The exhibition simultaneously explores how 19th-century painters manipulated light and shadow in a manner similar to Italian Baroque artists.

"The Art Gallery of Hamilton is especially proud to present *Illuminations: Italian Baroque Masterworks in Canadian Collections*," said Shelley Falconer, AGH President and CEO. "The works included in the AGH permanent collection are among some of Canada's most important national assets. We are delighted to be able to present some of our significant treasures and are most grateful to the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Art Gallery of Ontario, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and the National Gallery of Canada for the their generosity in loaning important works from their collections."

Unlike many exhibitions of Italian Baroque art, *Illuminations* brings together a wide range of subjects that reflects the diversity of the times, then and now. Who would have thought scenes of gamblers and pickpockets were equally popular among collectors of religious and mythological art?

"The drama and flair for theatrical display in Italian Baroque art is similar to our culture, where dynamic images are everywhere and rapidly shared via the internet," said Devin Therien, co-curator of *Illuminations*. "The 'selfie', for example, can be linked to the captivating, realistic and sometimes ridiculous characters depicted by Italian Baroque artists."

"The exhibition demonstrates the inventiveness and subtlety of Baroque painters' adaptation of light effects and how fundamentally important illumination was for all Western artists," said Benedict Leca, co-curator of the exhibition.

Illuminations also considers Canadian collectors and how we, as a country, came to appreciate the theatricality of Baroque art. The history of collecting Italian Baroque painting in Canada is largely due to the fortunes and philanthropy of collectors living in Montreal and Toronto, the early industrial and financial capitals of Canada. Like the first generation of Montreal and Toronto collectors, Joey and Toby Tanenbaum have played a significant role in establishing the European collections at the AGH and AGO, with the intention of building world class galleries.

The exhibition includes two subsections entitled *Print Culture and the International Baroque* and *Baroque Art in the Era of Impressionism.* Each explores how the highly theatrical paintings of Italian Baroque artists influenced the works of contemporary and future printmakers, painters and sculptors.

The prints provide viewers with an understanding of how Italian Baroque artists publicized their work internationally. Rembrandt was fascinated with the diversity of Italian print culture. *The Philosopher* and *Christ Healing the Sick*, two of his most renowned and complex prints on view in the exhibition, reveal how his ingenuity was directed by both his own artistic inventiveness and his reinterpretation of Italian art.

The exhibition includes internationally renowned paintings found in the permanent collections of the Art Gallery of Hamilton, the Agnes Etherington Art Centre at Queen's University, Art Gallery of Ontario, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and National Gallery of Canada; 8 prints from the AGH collection, including 4 by Rembrandt; and 8 19th-century paintings from the AGH Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Collection.

A fully illustrated catalogue, with four independently authored essays, accompanies the exhibition. *Iluminations: Italian Baroque Masterworks in Canadian Collections* will be on view at the AGH until May 31, 2015. It will travel in June to the Art Gallery of Alberta in Edmonton.

About the Art Gallery of Hamilton
Founded in 2014, the Art Gallery of Hamilton is the oldest and largest public art gallery in southwestern Ontario. Its permanent collection, which is focused on historical Canadian, 19th-century European and Contemporary art, now numbers more than 10,000 works and is recognized as one of the finest in Canada. The AGH is regarded as a vital centre of creative development and artistic engagement that brings art and people of all ages together. It is also renowned as a North American centre for the study of 19th-century European art.

EXHIBITION-RELATED PUBLIC EVENTS at the ART GALLERY OF HAMILTON:

Official Opening
Sunday March 8, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p. m. Remarks at 2:30 p.m.
Free admission noon to 5:00 p.m.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING:

AGH *TALKS*

Illuminations and the Italian Baroque
Thursday, March 26
7:00 p.m.
Exhibition co-curator Dr. Devin Therien will discuss the art and collections included in *Illuminations: Italian Baroque Masterworks in Canadian Collections*.

Light and Shadow—Caravaggio and the Baroque
Thursday, April 9
7:00 p.m.
Dr. Lloyd DeWitt explores the work of Caravaggio, one of the Baroque's most significant artists.

AGH *TOURS*

Art @ Lunch
Wednesday, March 4
2:15 p.m.
Drama and Delight—Welcome to the Baroque

TOURS
Docent guided tours of the exhibition:
Every Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. Free with admission.

GROUP TOURS
To arrange for a Group Tour, please contact:
Laurie Kilgour-Walsh, Educator
[T] 905.5276.6610, ext. 225 [E] laurie@artgalleryofhamilton.com

On view at the AGH are:

January 24 to April 19, 2015: *JUNO Photography Exhibition* FREE ADMISSION
http://www.artgalleryofhamilton.com/ex_current.php#10

January 24 to April 26, 2015: *JUNO Tour of Canadian Art* FREE ADMISSION
http://www.artgalleryofhamilton.com/ex_current.php#junotour

February 21 to May 24, 2015: *One-Eyed-Rabbit: Jonathan Plante*
http://www.artgalleryofhamilton.com/ex_upcoming.php#7

February 28 to May 31, 2015*: Illuminations: Italian Baroque Masterworks in Canadian Collections*
http://www.artgalleryofhamilton.com/ex_upcoming.php#9

February 28, 2015 to May 24, 2015: *Robert Burley: The Disappearance of Darkness*
http://www.artgalleryofhamilton.com/ex_upcoming.php#11

VISITOR INFORMATION

Admission:
AGH Members: Free; Adults, $10; Students/Seniors, $8; Children (6-17), $4; under 5 years, Free.
Friday Free Night: Free admission on the first Friday of the month.

Gallery Hours:
Tuesday & Wednesday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.; Thursday, 11 a.m.–8 p.m.; Friday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.; Saturday–Sunday, 12 noon–5 p.m.

The Art Gallery of Hamilton is located at 123 King Street West, downtown Hamilton, Ontario, L8P 4S8.
[T] 905.527.6610 [E] info@artgalleryofhamilton.com

-30-

For publicity images go to: http://www.artgalleryofhamilton/imagebank

For more information, please contact:
Steve Denyes, Manager, Communications
[T] 905.527.6610, ext. 255 [E] steve@artgalleryofhamilton.com