

**ART GALLERY OF HAMILTON PREMIERES
IMPORTANT HAIDA AND
CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS**

AGH Winter Season Opening on Saturday, February 11 at 3:00 p.m.

Hamilton, February 9, 2017 – The Art Gallery of Hamilton, the largest museum in southwestern Ontario, is launching its celebration of Canada’s 150th birthday with two important exhibitions: *Expanding the Circle: Robert Davidson and the Ancient Language of Haida Art* and *Sara Angelucci: Piece Work*.

“This year, the Art Gallery of Hamilton is very excited to present two compelling exhibitions that are strongly linked to sense of place – *Expanding the Circle: Robert Davidson and the Ancient Language of Haida Art* to the Haida Gwaii in British Columbia with its dramatic land and sea forms which have influenced Haida artistic expression for centuries and *Sara Angelucci: Piece Work*, an exhibition which chronicles with powerful imagery and sound the social narrative of one of Hamilton’s oldest garment manufacturers – Coppley Apparel,” said Shelley Falconer, AGH President and CEO.

“We will continue our celebrations throughout the year with an expanded Canadian collection and program mandate of Indigenous and regional artists and stories which reflect our rich local and national histories.”

Expanding the Circle: Robert Davidson and the Ancient Language of Haida Art
On view to May 28, 2017



Robert Davidson, *Xyaalang (Dancing)* 2013, acrylic on canvas, 101.5 cm x 152.5 cm. Image by Kenji Nagai



This exhibition presents historical Haida artworks drawn from the collection of the McCord Museum in Montreal in conversation with new and recent work by Robert Davidson, one of Canada’s most respected and renowned contemporary artists. Davidson’s paintings and sculptures expand and transform the ancient language of Haida art using colour, form, and abstraction. For the presentation of this exhibition in

Hamilton we are thrilled to include work by Davidson in conjunction with these historical objects and in so doing highlight the work of this magnificent painter.

Almost every item in the Northwest Coast collection in the McCord Museum is a jewel. This collection was primarily amassed by George Mercer Dawson (1849-1901), one of the most remarkable scientists and explorers of his time. Most of the carved feast bowls, bentwood boxes, masks and rattles, and other historical artifacts showcased in this exhibition were collected by Dawson in 1878 on Haida Gwaii, the Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia. In 1880 he published the first detailed study of Haida Gwaii.

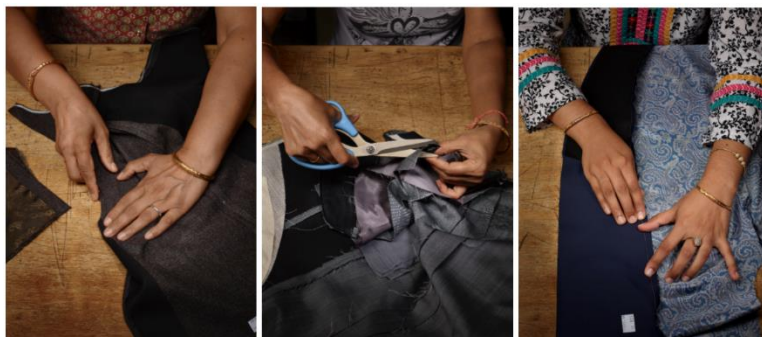
Davidson himself guided the selection of historic artworks from the McCord Museum, and his voice is interwoven throughout the exhibition to discuss their significance. The exhibition features a group of six recent paintings, four of which come directly from the artist's studio; none have been shown before in Eastern Canada. As such, this exhibition marks a rare opportunity for audiences in the Hamilton, the Greater Toronto Hamilton Region and southwestern Ontario to experience spectacular works by Davidson, in the context of the rich art historical lineage from which they emerge.

This exhibition marks important firsts: It is the first time that these Davidson paintings will be displayed in conjunction with the works from the McCord collection and it is the first time that many of these works will be presented in the Eastern Canada.

"If we look at the world in the form of a circle, let us look at what is on the inside of the circle as experience, culture and knowledge. Let us look at this as the past. What is outside of the circle is yet to be experienced. But in order to expand the circle we must know what is inside the circle. It has been the art that has brought us back to our roots. I am proud to be one of those people chosen to put the puzzle back together and move on. The challenge is ours to keep expanding the circle." Robert Davidson

SARA ANGELUCCI: PIECE WORK

On view to May 14, 2017



Sara Angelucci, *Mano D'oro Series*, 2017

Born in Hamilton to Italian immigrant parents, Sara Angelucci is well known for autobiographical work in a range of media including still photography, moving image, sonic performance and installation. With *Piece Work*, Angelucci's latest body of work, she revisited her mother's history as a garment worker, producing a new installation in collaboration with today's workers at Copley Apparel in downtown Hamilton. The

exhibition, which creates a multi-sensory environment through the composite installation of photography, video, sculpture and sound, presents their complex, layered and diverse perspectives.

Coppley has operated continuously in the same building since 1883, and has employed every wave of new immigrants to the city, including Angelucci's late mother Nina, who arrived in Hamilton in 1957. In *Piece Work*, the factory signifies more than a long-standing local business or the artist's familial history. It is a capsule of the city's social history, and the diverse communities that together contribute to the fabric of our industrial roots. While Hamilton's labour history is often associated with the dominant narrative of masculine steelworkers, the apparel industry and its majority women workforce was at one time a major player in the city's industrial economy.

Today, women continue to form the majority of the apparel industry workforce and Coppley is one of five remaining garment manufacturers in Hamilton. Although each maker is often anonymous, the women's combined piecework – the 123 pieces required in the construction of a man's suit – result in the carefully crafted image of successful masculinity. Working closely with sewers in situ at the factory, Angelucci presents a series of poignant artworks that bring attention back to the experience of the worker, in visual, auditory, and symbolic ways.

Select works from *Piece Work* will travel to the Canadian Cultural Centre, in Paris, France, later this year.

"The exhibition Piece Work...evolved out of many visits to Coppley Apparel... I became fixated on the sewers; watching the women at their machines, working with skill, strength and dignity, as I tried to imagine my mother's daily life there on the same sewing floor. I think of the hands of the sewers in Piece Work as mano d'oro [hands of gold]. Like alchemists they transform one element into another; their exacting labour turns fabric into dollars, dollars into bread." Sara Angelucci

The Official Opening of the winter season will take place at the AGH on Saturday, February 11 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission is free and all are welcome.

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

Official Opening

Saturday, February 11, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p. m. Remarks at 3:30 p.m.

Free admission.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING: AGH TALKS

Contemporary Artist's Talk with Robert Davidson and Special Film Screening

Friday, February 10

7:00 pm – TALK: ART OF THE HAIDA GWAII WITH ROBERT DAVIDSON

Robert Davidson, one of the nation's most eminent contemporary artists, is a member of the Tsahi Eagle Clan and was raised in the village of Masset on Haida Gwaii (the Queen Charlotte Islands). Fluent in painting, screen printing, wood carving, jewelry and other mediums, Davidson has been decorated with such honours as the Order of Canada and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Canadian Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, to name just a few.

9:00 pm – FILM: HAIDA GWAI: ON THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

At a stunning low altitude, aerial cinematography sweeps over the Haida Gwaii, a breathtakingly beautiful archipelago off the British Columbia Northwest Coast. It takes us into the geographic heart of the Haida Gwaiian people, who thrived for more than 10,000 years until they were decimated through disease, rampant commercial logging and industrial over-fishing. Today, the Haida Nation is recovering, exerting their sovereignty and winning battles against unsustainable logging and fishing.

Tickets: AGH Members: \$15 / Non-Members: \$20

Contemporary Artist's Talk with Sara Angelucci in conversation with Alana Traficante, Acting Curator of Contemporary Art, AGH

Thursday, March 9

Reception with the artist: 6:30 p.m.

Artist Talk: 7:00 p.m.

Guided Tour: 8:00 p.m.

Cash bar. Free admission.

The Fabric of the City: Hamilton Textile Industry and Exhibition Walking Tour

Saturday, April 1

10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

At the same time that the AGH is presenting *Sara Angelucci: Piece Work*, the Workers Arts and Heritage Centre (WAHC) presents *All or None: Garment Workers' Union Banners from the Permanent Collection* (January 20 - April 22) which draws connections between the Centre's collection of historic union banners with the work of contemporary Canadian artist Kandis Friesen. To synchronize these exhibitions, WAHC and the AGH are pleased to co-host an artist-led exhibition tour at each venue, connected by a short walking tour led by WAHC staff highlighting some of the historic and remaining textile and garment manufacturing vestiges in the city's core.

10:30 a.m. Tour of *All or None* with Kandis Friesen **starting at Workers Arts and Heritage Centre (51 Stuart Street, Hamilton)**

11:45 a.m. Walking tour from WAHC to the AGH

1:00 p.m. Tour of *Piece Work* with Sara Angelucci (AGH, 123 King Street West, Hamilton)

AGH / WAHC Members: FREE | Non-Members: \$12

TOURS

Docent guided tours of the exhibition:

Every Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday, and statutory holidays at 1:00 p.m. (including Family Day: Monday, February 20; Good Friday: April 14; and, Victoria Day: May 22).

Free with admission.

About the Art Gallery of Hamilton

Founded in 1914, 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, numbers more than 10,000 works and is recognized as one of the finest in Canada. The AGH is a vital creative hub and centre of lifelong learning that enables people of all ages to enrich their lives by gaining a deeper understanding of art. Visit www.artgalleryofhamilton.com for more information.

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 from 4:00 p.m. to 8: p.m.

Museum 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.

Open noon to 5:00 p.m. on statutory holidays as follows:

Family Day (Monday, February 20); Good Friday, (April 14); and Victoria Day (Monday, May 22).

The Art Gallery of Hamilton is located at 123 King Street West, downtown Hamilton, Ontario, L8P 4S8.

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GROUP TOURS

To arrange for a Group Tour, please contact:

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