



McCord Museum

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JEWISH PAINTERS OF MONTREAL - WITNESSES OF THEIR TIME, 1930-1948

Montreal, December 14, 2009 – On January 29, 2010, the McCord Museum will open the travelling exhibition ***Jewish Painters of Montreal – Witnesses of their Time, 1930-1948***, comprised of works from the collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, to which works from the McCord's own collection have been added for the Montreal exhibition. The exhibition, which was an enormous success at the MNBAQ in 2008, will allow visitors to discover influential figures from Montreal's art scene during the 1930s and 1940s and the history of our city during the Great Depression and World War II.

"This joint collaboration between the MNBAQ and the McCord not only offers Montrealers their own chance to explore the surprising work of these artists from the Jewish community and learn more about an important time in the city's history, it also addresses the social issues of this highly significant historical era," states Esther Trépanier, Executive Director of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.

Jewish Painters of Montreal presents the ways in which a community of artists viewed a city, Montreal, an era, the Great Depression, and the world, with fascism on the rise and World War II looming. It evokes both the history of the working class and the socio-political issues of the time and examines the aesthetic issues faced by artists who chose to dissociate themselves from the artistic nationalism that prevailed. The exhibition brings together more than **80 works**: paintings, drawings, prints and even caricatures. Among the artists represented are Sylvia Ary, Jack Beder, Alexander Bercovitch, Sam Borenstein, Rita Briansky, Guitta Caiserman-Roth, Eric Goldberg, Herman Heimlich, Harry Mayerovitch, Louis Muhlstock, Ernst Neumann and Moe Reinblatt.

Exhibition themes

The exhibition focuses on a number of themes: **The City**, its streets, its colours and its lights; **People in the City**, the life of the working class during the Depression, their misery and their pastimes; **The War**, with its fundamental issues galvanizing a world fighting against fascism; and **The Human Figure**, where portraits combine with self-portraits and scenes from the studio to take the visitor on an intimate tour of the artists' environment.

"The painters from the Jewish community who were involved in the Montreal art milieu during the 1930s and 40s were unique witnesses to their time," adds Ms. Trépanier. "Running counter to the traditional, often nostalgic landscape scenes and themes of national identity, they turned their sights instead to the contemporary world, portraying it through original, innovative art, whose richness is abundantly apparent in the works brought together for this exhibition."

Jewish Painters of Montreal – Witnesses of their Time, 1930-1948 is produced and its touring exhibition organized by the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. It is presented in Montreal by the McCord Museum with the financial support of the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine du Québec.

- 30 -

Images available on request.

For more information on the exhibition or to schedule an interview with a member of our staff, please contact:

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PEINTRES JUIFS
DE MONTRÉAL
TÉMOINS DE
LEUR ÉPOQUE
1930-1948

JANUARY 29
TO MAY 2,
2010