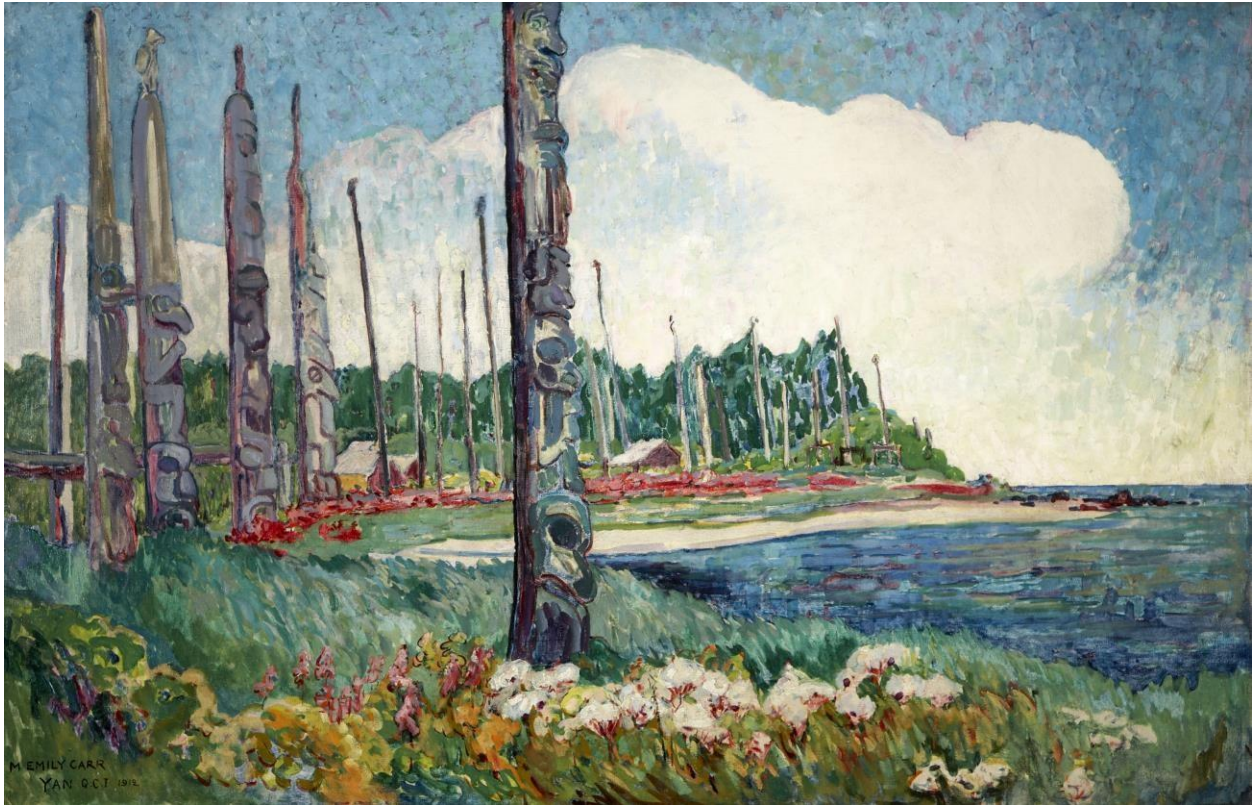


ART GALLERY OF HAMILTON

Strategic Plan 2016 – 2018

Draft



Strategic Plan 2016-2018 Executive Summary

Planning Assumptions

The primary goal of this Strategic Plan is to support the sustainability of the Art Gallery of Hamilton (AGH), southwestern Ontario's oldest and largest museum.

The following priorities provided the focus to board, management and staff collective to present a plan that advances the AGH in all areas of its program and operations:

1. Renewed Focus on the Collection and Program

All decisions emerge from a clear consideration of the care, preservation, and interpretation of one of Canada's most important permanent collections of Canadian historical, European and Contemporary art with a view to expand our Canadian mandate to include Indigenous collections.

2. Community Engagement

As the City of Hamilton and the Region's largest cultural anchor institution, the AGH will drive community sustainability – economic impact, urban regeneration, social well-being, and civic identity - with new outreach and broadened public programs. The focus of our audience development activities will centre primarily upon the local and radiate outward to the region and its communities to reach the broader population of 4 million.

3. Learning Through Art

Our programming is educational in focus and will support both art and general education for all age groups through robust curriculum-based programs. With over 650,000 elementary and secondary students within field trip distance, the AGH will expand its offering and increase its reach to school children and adults committed to lifelong learning.

4. Long Term Sustainability

This past year's rigorous review and assessment of the AGH's financial, legal and structural position has revealed several important findings when compared to industry standards in Ontario and Canada. A new financial model for sustainability will require increasing the AGH's current government base funding of 17% (\$1M) and applied funding of 83% to meet industry average of 42.5% (\$2.5M) base funding with applied funding at 57.5%.



Strategic Plan 2016 – 2018

Overview



Strategic Plan 2016-2018 Overview

AGH Mission Statement and Vision

The Art Gallery of Hamilton (AGH) is a provincially chartered non-profit organization and a Registered Canadian Charitable Organization, with the mandate to collect (in trust), preserve, exhibit, and interpret works of art for the community of Hamilton and beyond. Dedicated to engaging, stimulating, and enriching its audiences through art, the AGH is a public resource that conserves and communicates Canada's artistic and cultural heritage, and explores contemporary and historical art within a local, national, and international context in a fiscally responsible way.

Environmental Insights

The AGH is navigating a rapidly changing and dynamic external environment.

The city of Hamilton is now Ontario's fastest growing city and the ninth largest census metropolitan area (CMA) in Canada placing it just behind Winnipeg, Manitoba and ahead of London, Ontario. Southwestern Ontario is home to 4 million people, representing 31 percent of Ontario's population. More than half (54%) of residents live within major urban centres including Hamilton, London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Guelph, Milton, Oakville and Burlington. Projected population growth for Southwestern Ontario is 10 percent by 2020.

While the growth in Hamilton will result in a more diverse and skilled population, the environment poses both challenges and opportunities for the AGH. The Hamilton CMA is predicted to lead the region due to its declining vacancy rates, proximity to the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), McMaster University and the large hospital network attractive to international immigrants and Ontario residents. Even as the region's low population growth rates of the past few years are gradually rising due to more in-migration, Hamilton CMA's growth rate is predicted to reach its fastest pace in many years at 1.4 percent in 2017. As the region's largest and oldest museum, the AGH has throughout this planning process reconsidered how it has evolved and how we might continue to develop in the future. As there has been a profound shift in the expectations and behaviour of our audiences in the past 20 years, so must the Gallery reflect these changes. With the concept of museum and gallery in constant evolution today, the AGH is well poised to respond to these challenges with curatorial vision, artistic innovation, respect for our audiences and an understanding of the public's desire for a more active engagement with art and their public institutions. The AGH's renewed commitment to the public reflects the needs of many, and not the few, as we seek to balance the concept of museum as "temple" and site for contemplation with the contemporary "agora" – an open and engaging social nexus, a thought-provoking context for the exchange of ideas through art.

Methodology and Goals/Objectives

In 2015, the AGH embarked on a rigorous review and analysis of its current structural, financial and legal context to consider how the Gallery will increase relevance and sustainability for the next 10 years and beyond. The methodology included the formation of a new committee of the Board of Directors, *Planning and Priorities*, along with the President & CEO and Senior Staff, to consider and analyze the Gallery's current status, competitive environment, opportunities and constraints. In December 2015, the Board of Directors approved the following four priorities to guide the Gallery's business, exhibition and program planning process:

1. **Renewed Focus on the Collection and Program**
2. **Community Engagement**
3. **Learning Through Art**
4. **Long-Term Sustainability**

The AGH is first and foremost a cultural/educational organization with a mandate to preserve and interpret one of Canada's most important collections of local, national and international works of art. To fulfill that mandate the Gallery has outstanding collection, curatorial, educational and programming expertise that supports our obligations to the people of Hamilton and the broader region. However, we are also a business organization actively involved in sponsorship, fundraising, marketing and tourism, catering and retail services. We must be increasingly entrepreneurial in these business activities. As both a cultural/educational and an entrepreneurial organization, we must build a strong and stable infrastructure that supports and enables the AGH to thrive into its next century for the city of Hamilton, the broader region and the country.

The following summary identifies the four priorities as centrepieces of our strategy including current and new initiatives as well as challenges. As the Gallery builds its new Strategic Plan for 2016-18 we remain committed to a broadly transparent and consultative process. Throughout 2016, the Gallery will embark on broad community consultations to ensure that we build a sustainable organization that can continue to deliver **cultural, educational** and **social value** vital to the pursuit of our mission and mandate.

1. Renewed Focus on the Collection and Program



At 102 years old this year (1914-2016), the AGH is southwestern Ontario's oldest and largest art gallery/museum with a repository of many significant works by local, regional, national and international artists – William Blair Bruce, Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven, Emily Carr, George Reid, Maurice Cullen, The Beaver Hall Group, Frank Panabaker, Tom MacDonald, Alex Colville, Guido Molinari, Yves Gaucher, Luca Giordano, James Tissot,

Théodule Ribot, Jean-Léon Gérôme, Gustave Doré, Charles Cordier, Puvis de Chavannes, Michael Snow, Joyce Wieland, Carl Beam, Norval Morrisseau, Ed Burtynsky, Joseph Hartman, Keith Haring, Kim Adams, Tyler Tekatch, to name a few. Indeed the AGH is unique in Canada as one of the only public art gallery/museums to reside outside Canada's major urban cities and yet maintain a collection of important national and international repute. The size of the collection (over 10,000 objects) and its significance to our local and national heritage necessitates rigorous museological standards and practices which, in turn, require highly-skilled professionals, specialized physical environments and stable resources.

As with most public museums and art galleries, public access is limited to only eight percent of the collection at any one time due to limited physical and human resources. Through an enhanced program mix, rigorous scholarship, educational initiatives, digital technologies and commercial activities, the AGH will broaden public awareness and access to the permanent collection. An increased commitment to representing and interpreting Hamilton's important history through art, is reflected through an expansion of meaningful regional representation from 2016 to 2018 with the development of several new exhibitions and programs including a new collection area to broaden the Canadian mandate - **Indigenous**. For example, the AGH has recently committed acquisition funds to the accessioning, preservation, interpretation and support of local Six Nations of the Grand River artists, and the over 50 Inuit artists represented by the Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) Chedoke Collection. (The Mountain Sanatorium, later known as Chedoke, has an important ethno-history as Canada's largest and principal Inuit hospital in Canada treating Inuit people with tuberculosis in the 1950s and 60s.)



This renewed focus on the collection will ensure that the acquiring, caring for, publishing, interpreting and displaying of the AGH permanent collection is given priority and balanced with special exhibitions interlaced with crossovers from historical and contemporary, from high- and low-brow, and virtual and real. While temporary “blockbuster” exhibitions can be a quick fix, they increasingly distract from our core educational and collections-focused mission and can result in increased costs that create unplanned deficits. The accompanying exhibition plan reflects a commitment to long-term planning and a balanced program mix with the following criteria articulated to ensure **core mission/collection compatibility, artistic excellence, regional relevance and financial viability.**

2. Community Engagement

While the collection, preservation, and presentation of art objects are key pillars of the Gallery’s mandate, the institution must also assert itself as a hub of cultural and educational activity, and as a venue that facilitates a wide array of social exchanges both within and outside the Hamilton area. As the city and region’s largest cultural anchor institution, the AGH will support community sustainability as an accessible public resource, one that offers a multitude of means to explore, challenge and assert notions of civic, provincial, national and global identity and life ensuring relevance in its community.

Current strategies include expanding educational, programming and outreach activities to include themes of community engagement, urban regeneration, inward investment, health and well-being. These activities need to be carried out in an increasingly collaborative manner with the community at large, cultivating as wide and diverse an array of project partners and outside input as possible.



With the visitor and key segments of the Hamilton community identified and prioritized, the AGH is also committed to **increasing access to all, not only to the privileged few**, and as the Hamilton community becomes increasingly diverse the AGH is also committed to ensuring access and equity for all. The following audiences have emerged as key priorities:

- Youth
(including reaching them via the education system)
- Adult/Senior Lifelong Learners (including those living with various health challenges)
- Family
- Local Cultural Community (artists, writers, performers)
- Tourists

The immediate goal is to establish a venue that is welcoming and vibrant with activity. The current programs that can help achieve this include the annual AGH World Film Festival and ilovefilm series, lifestyle programs such as Painting Uncorked, AGH Reads, AGH Health and Art Therapy, and upcoming multidisciplinary programs from music to performative arts. Increasingly the content of these programs will highlight local culture and topics relevant to the city. The attached program plan outlines the myriad of programs currently being developed to accommodate the widest range of learning styles in order to engage more visitors and underserved audiences.

3. Learning Through Art

Elementary/Secondary



The AGH has been profoundly committed to early education and learning since its Volunteers began leading tours of the collection for school children and adults decades ago. Today the Gallery provides tours accompanied by hands-on art making for over 9,600 elementary and secondary students throughout the school year. While our educational programs have met with enormous success, our physical facilities – studios and galleries –

are nearing capacity. Furthermore, as the city of Hamilton and region continues to develop, expand and grow, so does the need for accessible, relevant and diverse educational programming. With over 650,000 elementary and secondary students within field trip distance from the AGH, the Gallery must expand its offering and increase its reach.

The AGH permanent collection is an important multidisciplinary gateway to the curriculum and understanding of socio-historical themes. The Gallery's new commitment to a broader role in education with cross-curricular education through art will also ensure that all school-aged children grades K-12 within a 40 km field trip distance have relevant programming provided across the curriculum to support learning in Indigenous Studies, Local History and Urban Geography, and World History. With broader curricular programs and resources, the Gallery's current two percent penetration of the formal education market within this field trip distance will see increases over the next three years.

Post-Secondary/Continuing Education

The AGH’s educational initiatives are being designed to foster a continuous cycle of learning beyond the elementary and secondary school stages. Southwest Ontario is home to 14 universities and colleges, which equates to a student population of 277,000. The increased focus on local audience development complements our efforts to develop programs that are integrated across disciplines and departments involving community, artists, students, curators, academics and performers. By taking a multifaceted approach, the AGH hopes to increase accessibility and to widen the boundaries of programming and education in and through the arts. Our commitment to post- secondary education will include important teaching and program partnerships with McMaster University, Mohawk College, and Six Nations of the Grand River. Current program offerings will also be refined and expanded to meet community and demographic needs with Lifestyle and Intergenerational programs.

4. Long-Term Sustainability

This past year’s rigorous review and assessment of the AGH’s financial, legal and structural position has revealed several important findings when compared to industry standards in Ontario and Canada:

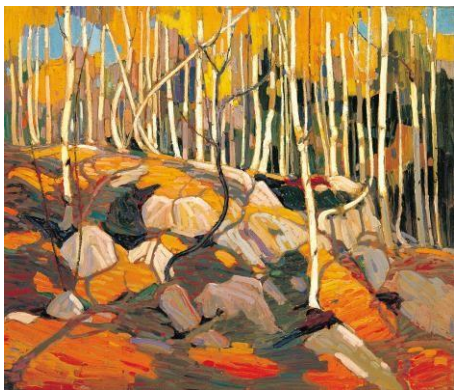
	Art Gallery of Hamilton	Provincial and national averages (for similarly-sized institutions)
Percentage of base government funding	17 percent	33 – 52 percent
Earned revenues as percentage of overall budget	50 percent	33 percent
Salaries as percentage of overall operating budget	38 percent	47 percent

If the AGH is to continue to thrive into its next century, the Gallery must increase and stabilize its government funding, expand its audience (including the donor and membership base), and aggressively maximize all commercial lines of business while continuously monitoring and controlling expenses. With the low Canadian dollar, Ontario will become even more appealing to visitors from the U.S. According to Ontario Arts Council data, 89% of North American tourists who travel to Ontario will seek arts or culture activities on their trips. While the AGH’s economic impact studies reveal a total revenue contribution to the Ontario economy of \$28.95 million (following the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport *Tourism Regional Impact Model*, 2014), the AGH must continue to capitalize on this opportunity and position itself as a regional culture-tourist destination by developing collaborative partnerships with fellow tourism leaders in the region, including those involved in sport and eco-tourism.

With an expanding audience and enhanced program mix the AGH will pursue stable government funding to support short and long-term business planning. The Gallery's resource development and commercial areas are also being restructured to maximize revenues and opportunities. In addition, investments in core business opportunities are strategically being pursued to stimulate revenues. Strategies include exploiting digital technology opportunities, monetizing physical assets, initiating a planned giving strategy and continuing to market consulting services aggressively.

Organizational Strengths and Opportunities

1. Permanent Collection



The AGH is unique in Canada as one of the only public art gallery/museums to reside outside Canada's major urban cities and yet maintain a collection of important national and international repute. The collection's scope, depth and history rank it as one of this country's most important Canadian and International collections. Indeed, at 102 years old, it is southwestern Ontario's oldest and largest art gallery/museum with a repository of many significant works by local, regional, national and international artists – William Blair Bruce, Tom Thomson and the

Group of Seven, George Reid, Maurice Cullen, The Beaver Hall Group, Frank Panabaker, Tom MacDonald, Alex Colville, Guido Molinari, Yves Gaucher, Luca Giordano, James Tissot, Théodule Ribot, Michael Snow, Joyce Wieland, Carl Beam, Norval Morrisseau, Ed Burtynsky, Joseph Hartman, Kim Adams, Tyler Tekatch, to name a few.

2. Public Trust

As a significant institution within the region, the AGH is perceived as successfully preserving, protecting, enhancing and interpreting important cultural property with integrity and diligence on behalf of the public. The AGH is now universally acknowledged as one of the region's preeminent institutions supported by an intense civic pride, by the economic benefits that derive from cultural tourism, and by unprecedented levels of philanthropy (ArcelorMittal Dofasco, Joey Tanenbaum, David Braley, RBC, TD, BMO, Effort Trust, Incite Foundation etc.).

3. Curatorial/Educational Expertise

The AGH is first and foremost a curatorial/educational organization with a mandate to preserve and interpret one of Canada's most important collections of local, national and international works of art. To fulfill that mandate the Gallery has outstanding collection, curatorial, educational and programming expertise (staff and volunteers) that supports our obligations to the people of Hamilton, the broader region, and the nation.

4. Business/Entrepreneurial Expertise

We are also a business organization actively involved in sponsorship, fundraising, marketing and tourism, catering and retail services. These are business activities for which we have become increasingly entrepreneurial with outstanding staff, volunteers and expertise. The AGH also recognizes the powerful economic impact arts and cultural tourism brings to the region and is taking initiatives to enhance our role and become more engaged as a leading tourism destination in the heart of southwestern Ontario.

Organizational Constraints and Limitations

1. Financial Resources

Since 2012 the AGH has endured structural deficits ranging from \$194,000 to \$578,000 with an operating budget increase from \$3.5m to today's \$5.8m over the last 10 years. This past year's rigorous review and assessment of the AGH's financial, legal and structural position has revealed several important findings when compared to industry standards in Ontario and Canada:

- AGH receives the least amount of base government funding at 17% versus the provincial and national averages of 33-52% for similarly-sized institutions;
- Earned revenues as percentage of overall budget are considerably higher at 50% versus the average of 33%;
- Salaries as percentage of overall budget remain lower at 38% of the AGH operating budget, while similar museums and galleries salaries are typically 47% of the operating budget.

Although the Gallery has successfully received numerous project and operating grants from the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government, it remains marginalized in the search for consistent base funding and too reliant on project grants. While project grants are a necessary method of annual support, they provide an inconsistent foundation of support and are labour intensive for an institution with minimal staffing. If the AGH is to continue to thrive into its next century, the Gallery must increase and stabilize its government funding, expand its audience (including the donor and membership base), and aggressively maximize all commercial lines of business while continuously monitoring and controlling expenses.



2. Human Resources



Along with the collection and our facilities, human resources are the AGH's greatest asset. Unfortunately, due to the increasing cost of salaries and the lack of operating funds to keep up with the inflation of salaries, we have reduced the number of staff while increasing programming, thus leaving the institution with the dilemma of having few hands to do much work. Currently the Art Gallery of Hamilton is comprised of a 17- member Board of Directors and is led by a

President & CEO supported by 6 Directors and 23 Managers, Curatorial, Collections, Educational and Administrative staff. A Volunteer Committee of 125 members is further committed to the four priorities by working in five areas of Gallery activities: Education (through the Docent program); Library; Visitor and Membership Services; Special Events; Retail (Shop at AGH, Annex, and Art Rental and Service; and the ilovefilm series and the World Film Festival.

3. Physical Resources /IT Infrastructure and Systems

Life cycle studies and faltering or inconsistent performance have indicated the need for various building and IT improvements and replacement of equipment and mission- critical systems. A number of projects have been identified – the AGH requires ongoing funds annually to address these issues, as well as unexpected repairs that arise.

4. Access and Awareness

As our community becomes increasingly diverse the AGH must assert its social and educational role to increase access and reach specific regional communities that feel alienated and shut out due to numerous factors including the invisible (but felt) cultural boundaries often present in perceived elite art institutions such as the AGH.

Awareness also continues to be a limiting factor with meagre marketing funds and a weak digital presence. Additionally, due to lack of space and human resources, public access is limited to only eight percent of the permanent collection at any one time.



Moving Forward

Operational Strategies

The following corporate strategies in support of our four key priorities (a renewed focus on the Collection; community engagement; learning through art; long-term sustainability) will be integrated throughout all areas of the organization:

1. Reorganization and Alignment of Resources

To support the identified priorities, the AGH will re-allocate internal resources and restructure to ensure efficient development and delivery of programming and services. Positions, job descriptions and salaries will be reviewed and benchmarked to ensure competitiveness, staff retention and maximum productivity. Key changes include the creation of a Programs and Education Department and the consolidation of the Commercial and Retail area with Development and Partnerships. Curatorial and Collections remains one department with modified positions plus one additional full-time position to support increased activities. And finally, the former Building and Security area is now titled Operations with IT and Systems moved to Operations from Finance. Attached detailed organizational and departmental charts identify consolidated and new positions.

2. Develop and Maintain Strategic Partnerships

Meaningful audience engagement and a commitment to access and equity can only occur in a context of mutual respect, collaboration and understanding. Partnerships with our local community organizations and representatives will be the foundation of the Gallery's renewed commitment to the Community. To that end we have initiated and enhanced multiple partnerships to support our strategic priorities, programs and outreach activities. Examples include:

- with McMaster University, cross appointed all curatorial staff to teaching positions; initiated collaborative exhibitions and encourage use of the collection as learning resource;
- with Six Nations of the Grand River, building exhibition and program collaboration;
- for Supercrawl, increasing commitment to this provincial-recognized festival, with commissioned works by Hamilton artists, enhanced programming and additional overall support;
- with the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation, participating on the Minister's strategic review of cultural policy for the province of Ontario and continuing to support the Ministry's key priorities;
- with museums and galleries across North America, AGH curators participate as members of the American Association of Curators along with Canadian organizations to reach out to a wider community and collaborate on exhibition and program development;

- in health care, with St. Peter's Hospital, Hamilton Health Sciences, and St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, develop programs for individuals with health challenges and dementia; serve as committee members of health care acquisition committees;
- with Hamilton Public Library and Hamilton school boards, develop programs;.
- with the YWCA, provide programming to women and children residents in transition.

We continue to reach out into the community to broaden our partnership base.

3. Broaden Access

We will broaden access to the collection through temporary exhibitions, permanent collection re-installations and touring exhibitions. Our renewed commitment to education/public programming and broader offerings will ensure greater community engagement and participation. In particular, the AGH will revitalize its digital presence with a new commitment to on-line access and research with educational resources to broaden access beyond our walls.

4. Increase Revenues

With a priority to finance our programming/educational activities and achieve long-term sustainability the AGH must continue to build on fundraising efforts, seek new and diverse government and foundation funding, and increase paid attendance in programming, events and commercial activities. The attached operational plan identifies key opportunities, programs and targets for 2016.



Image Credits

p. 1 Emily Carr, *Yan, Q.C.I.*, 1912, oil on canvas, Art Gallery of Hamilton, Gift of Roy G. Cole, 1992 ♦ **p. 2** Summer Market CLiC Event, photo: Mike Lalich / Hands on at Family Fun Day, photo: Mike Lalich / Visitors enjoying *1920s Modernism in Montreal: The Beaver Hall Group*, photo: Mike Lalich ♦ **p. 3** Sophie Anderson, *Toklihili: The Young Indian Princess*, oil on canvas, Art Gallery of Hamilton, The Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Collection, 2002, Photo: Roy and Carole Timm of Wavelength / Charles Cordier, *Chinese Man*, 1853, bronze with multiple patinas, gilding and enamelling, Art Gallery of Hamilton, The Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Collection, 2002, Photo: Roy and Carole Timm of Wavelength ♦ **p. 6** Alex Colville, *Horse and Train*, 1954, glazed oil on hardboard, Gift of Dominion Foundries and Steel Limited (Dofasco), 1955 / Norval Morrisseau, *Evolution*, acrylic on plywood, 3 panels, The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Gift of Mr. Nicholas John Pustina, Mr. Robert Edward Zelinski, and Mr. Kenny Alwyn Whent, 1985 ♦ **p. 7** Under the tent at the Summer Family Picnic, photo: Mike Lalich ♦ **p.8** Schoolchildren focussed intently on creating their works, photo: Mike Lalich ♦ **p. 10** Tom Thomson, *The Birch Grove, Autumn*, 1915-1916, oil on canvas, Art Gallery of Hamilton, Gift of Roy C. Cole, in memory of his parents, Matthew and Annie Bell Gilmore Cole, 1967 ♦ **p. 11** John Hartman, *Hamilton*, 2003, oil on linen, Art Gallery of Hamilton ♦ **p. 12** Artist instructors and volunteers lead a Family Fun Day activity, photo: Mike Lalich / Inspired by Canadian masterpieces, children present their own masterful creations, photo: Mike Lalich ♦ **p. 14** William Brymner, *The Vaughan Sisters*, 1910, oil on canvas, Art Gallery of Hamilton, Gift of Mrs. Harold H. Leather, 1962 / Edwin Lord Weeks, *The Last Voyage*, c. 1885, oil on canvas, Art Gallery of Hamilton, The Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Collection, 2002, Photo: Roy and Carole Timm of Wavelength