

MEDIA RELEASE



Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery • 25 Caroline Street North • Waterloo ON N2L 2Y5 • 519.746.1882

Exhibition inspired by the Holocaust to open this week at the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery

WATERLOO (ONTARIO) CANADA • September 16, 2013: The Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery proudly presents *WAR: Light Within/After the Darkness*, an exhibition of contemporary art projects that directly respond to the Holocaust and to other atrocities committed during the Second World War.

An opening reception with artists in attendance will be held at the Gallery on Sunday, September 22, 2013 from 2 to 5 pm with remarks at 2:30 pm. All are welcome. The exhibition continues to January 5, 2014.

“This exhibition is distinct in its approach to the theme of the Holocaust,” notes Christian Bernard Singer, Curator of the Gallery. “These powerful and inspiring works explore the spirit of resistance, survival, hope and beauty that endured through the darkness.”

Curated by Singer, *WAR: Light Within/After the Darkness* features H el ene Brunet-Neumann, Chari Cohen, Laura Donefer, Mary McKenzie, Tina Poplawski, Oded and Pamela Ravek and Claire Weissman-Wilks. Many of these artists were inspired by family stories of those who survived the Holocaust.

Seven major projects poignantly evoke the realities faced by Jews and other innocent populations during the war.

- **Mary McKenzie** has created an installation of a portion of a house that was abandoned in haste. In this work, it is unclear whether the residents ran to hide or were forcibly removed.
- **Chari Cohen** evokes the forests in which Jewish partisans and other resistance fighters hid and operated against German occupation. This major installation of suspended porcelain trees hovers over cracked earth containing seedlings that will grow toward these trees over the course of the exhibition.
- **Laura Donefer**’s installation of cast glass footprints, some taken from actual Holocaust survivors, tells the story of the forced death marches of concentration camp prisoners.
- **Oded and Pamela Ravek** have created a sculptural glass memorial to the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust. The sculpture is also a tribute to Oded’s mother and her two sisters who miraculously survived the horrors of Auschwitz-Birkenau.
- **Tina Poplawski**’s installation references the emotional reverberations caused by the enforced displacement of people from their homes by violent military assaults. Her grandfather was executed by the NKVD (the precursor to the KGB) and all of his known relatives were sent to the Gulags.
- **Claire Weissman-Wilks**’ sculptures and drawings, depicting love, kindness, compassion, caring and protection, were inspired by the personal journal of Etty Hillesum.
- **H el ene Brunet-Neumann**’s *Caucus:  mergence*, an installation of figurative sculptures created out of unfired clay and straw, represents an international council of peace. Installed in the Gallery’s courtyard, the sculptures will slowly disintegrate as they are exposed to the elements, reminding us that we do indeed forget.

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Complementing this exhibition will be: *What If? from the Permanent Collection*. The Gallery's permanent collection is comprised of nearly 1,000 contemporary artworks. This exhibition will feature key pieces from the collection that would have been deemed degenerate by the Nazis because the artists who created them are either Jewish, gay or politically outspoken. By exhibiting these works, the Gallery asks the question, "What if these artists had been silenced by a regime like the Nazis and their works never created?"

A lecture and panel discussion related to the exhibition is being planned for October 10. Visit the Gallery's website to find out more: www.theclayandglass.ca

For more information or to schedule a media interview, please contact Christian Bernard Singer, Curator at 519.746.1882, Ext. 230 or email christian@canadianclayandglass.ca or visit www.theclayandglass.ca

With an emphasis on supporting the work of Canadian ceramic and glass artists, the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery presents exhibitions that challenge ideas and perceptions of the definitions of art, craft and design today. The Gallery's public programs offer multiple pathways for engagement with contemporary artworks and art-making practices. The Gallery Shop is recognized on its own merits as a fine craft gallery, showing the best of Canadian ceramic and glass work. Housing a collection of historical and contemporary Canadian ceramic, glass and enamel art, the Gallery is proud to conserve and promote an active component of Canada's rich cultural heritage.

The Gallery is located at 25 Caroline Street North in Waterloo, Ontario. It is open Monday to Friday, from 11 am to 6 pm, Saturdays from 10 am to 5 pm, and Sundays 1 to 5 pm. **Admission is always free.**