

National Gallery of Canada Comes to Oakville Galleries

For release November 8, 2007

(Toronto) – Oakville Galleries invites you to experience the National Gallery of Canada's *On Tour* prize-winning exhibit entitled, *Is there a there there?* The winning proposal was created by Oakville Galleries' curator, Marnie Fleming and involved a competition with entries from across the country. This exhibit will be open to the public from **17 November 2007 to 27 January 2008** at Oakville Galleries in Gairloch Gardens and at Centennial Square.

Is there a there there? examines the suburban phenomenon - not unlike what's currently being experienced in suburbs just like Oakville. Gertrude Stein once wrote of her hometown of Oakland, California, "There is no there there." She was lamenting the rapid development and "cookie-cutter" housing that had obliterated her memory of place. Marnie Fleming frames Stein's observation as a question: "is there a there there?" This selection of images of suburbia from the collections of the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography posits a place-specific answer to this question.

This exhibit explores how post-war Canadian contemporary artists have investigated an undeniably paradoxical experience. Works depicting utopian ideals of community contrast with those revealing the menacing aspect of suburban life – tepid conformism. The artists ask challenging questions about suburbia – questions that are currently being asked by many in the suburbs of Ontario. Much of their art is invested with a political and social edge and is interwoven with motifs of surveillance, mobility, and the pursuit of capital.

In each medium, the suburban landscape reflects both the desires and fears of Canadian culture at large. And, as developers continue to raise subdivisions in farmers fields, more Canadians – nearly one in two – move to the suburbs, making it necessary to reflect on a new suburban reality and the changing face of our landscape and who we are.

Artists: Roy Arden, Philip Bergerson, Molly Lamb Bobak, Roland Brener, Tony Brown, Robin Collyer, Susan Dobson*, Isabelle Hayeur*, Geoffrey James, Ken Lum, Euan Macdonald, David McMillan, N.E. Thing Co., Stephen Shore and Jeff Wall.

*complementary works from Oakville Galleries' collection.

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