Royal Ontario Museum | Musée royal de l'Ontario

100 Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 2C6

416.586.8000
www.rom.on.ca

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
For more information, interviews and visuals, please contact:
Marilynne Friedman, Senior Publicist, 416.586.5826; marilynf@rom.on.ca

Canada Collects: Treasures from Across the Nation

Original ROM exhibition celebrates the passion of Canada's collectors



Flying Sphere, 1920
Robert Tait-MacKenzie
Bronze
56 high x 50 wide x 16 cm deep
Power Corporation of Canada Collection



Lubicon, 1988, Alex Janvier Acrylic on canvas, 165.2 x 267 cm. The Edmonton Art Gallery Collection, purchased with funds from the Estate of Jean Victoria Sinclair.



The Kiss. 1908-1919
Constantin Brancusi
Plaster with oil staining patina
26 wide x 28 high x 20 cm deep
On loan from The Latner Art Collection © Estate of Constantin Brancusi / SODRAC (2007)

(Toronto, Ontario – September 17, 2007) The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) is pleased to present ***Canada Collects: Treasures from Across the Nation***, an integral component of the Museum's Fall 2007 *A Season of Canada*. This original ROM exhibition is on display in the ROM's Garfield Weston Exhibition Hall on Level B2 in the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal from **Saturday, October 6, 2007** until **Sunday, January 6, 2008**.

Canada Collects celebrates the art of collecting in Canada as well as the inaugural year of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal. Approximately 70 significant objects on loan from nearly 50 different Canadian institutional and private collections are featured in this eclectic exhibition, from contemporary paintings to original historical manuscripts, illustrating the depth and strength of collections across Canada.

William Thorsell, the ROM's Director and CEO, said, "The ROM is honoured to bring together these highlights from the leading collections in the country--everything from vital Canadian historic artifacts

to internationally recognized works of fine art. *Canada Collects* is an unprecedented, unique collection of extraordinary works and artifacts never before gathered in one place."

Kenneth Lister, Assistant Curator in the ROM's World Cultures Department and the lead curator of *Canada Collects*, stated, "It may seem that a gold brooch created by Northwest Coast artist Bill Reid has little relation to the landing gear of the Avro Arrow. It may appear that *The Kiss* by Constantin Brancusi and a Métis wedding dress make curious companions. However, these juxtapositions form one of the compelling features of this exhibition, where objects chosen by individual collectors blend together in a composition that maps Canadian passions."

The exhibition's unique structure underlines the fraternity among great museums and individual collectors as well as Canadians' sophisticated interest in the cultures of other places. For the Museum's many international and national visitors, it also highlights the diversity of Canadian collections, assembled at the ROM for the first and only time in this remarkable exhibition.

Assembling some of the most iconic historical Canadian artifacts in the country, *Canada Collects* is certain to strike a patriotic chord among many visitors. From an early 1709 Hudson's Bay Company map of the Hudson's Bay and Straits, to the 1982 Proclamation of the Canadian Constitution Act, the exhibit touches on many aspects of the country's political and social history. Other notable Canadian items include Lucy Maud Montgomery's original manuscript for Anne of Green Gables (1905), Walter S. Allward's powerful maquette, *Justice* (c. 1925-1930) for the Vimy Ridge Memorial, the first Canadian maple leaf flag (1965) and Pierre Elliott Trudeau's birchbark canoe (c. 1968). *Canada Collects* also illustrates how important works of fine and decorative arts from around the world have enriched private and public collections in this country. Notable artists represented in the exhibition include Francis Bacon, Constantin Brancusi, René Magritte, George Segal and James Tissot; with Canadian contributions from Lawren Harris, Joe Fafard and Jeff Wall, among others described below. With regard to decorative arts, *Canada Collects* includes textiles, ceramics, religious items, decorative sculptures, and furniture.



Pierre Trudeau's Canoe
Circa 1968**,** Birchbark
76 cm wide x 5 m long.
On loan from the Canadian Canoe Museum, courtesy of the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Estate.

Introducing the exhibition to the visitor is the sculpture *Chateau d'eau: lumière mythique*, on loan from the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal. Comprised of cedar wood, metal, lights and a motor, this large-scale 1997 work by Irene F. Whittome, a Vancouver-born, internationally renowned and awarded multi-media artist, establishes the exhibition's objective and position: connecting the art, artist and collector. For Whittome, this tower for collecting water evokes her childhood and the sources of energy of her youth: B.C.'s Fraser River, the St. Lawrence River and all the seas that affect her and her world to this day.

Objects in the exhibition are positioned in a largely chronological manner. Among the oldest pieces are a collection of carved caribou bone and antler pendants, made by the Beothuk, the now extinct aboriginal residents of the Island of Newfoundland. Dated to the 18th and 19th centuries, these small, thin pendants, some resembling human or bear digits, were created to be both decorative as well as spiritually or magically significant.

The pendants are on loan to the ROM from The Rooms Provincial Museum of St. John's, Newfoundland, a landmark facility whose collection of approximately 200 Beothuk pendants is the largest in the world.



Photograph, *Satellite Towers – Luis Barragan*.
2000-01,
183 x 152 cm
Hiroshi Sugimoto
Black and white
On loan from Mr.
Alan Schwartz

The exhibition's final objects originate in the 21st century. These include a Hiroshi Sugimoto black and white photograph of Mexican architect Luis Barragan's buildings, *Satellite Towers*, considered to be among the world's greatest sculptural monuments. On loan from a private collection, the photograph dating to 2000-2001 is part of Sugimoto's architectural series and is the last object encountered by visitors in the exhibition.

Between the exhibition's first and final objects are numerous highlights. Among them is a Cree dress, circa early 1800s, worn by *Cun-ne-wa-bum*, a woman of Plains Cree and British ancestry. On loan from The Manitoba Museum, this dress was collected by pioneering Canadian artist Paul Kane and is one of a few of its kind in existence today. Kane's painting (circa 1848-56) of the woman wearing the dress is owned by the ROM and will be on display near the dress.

Another notable object is the Metallic Flush-Batten Wideboard canoe. On loan from the Canadian Canoe Museum, this craft was manufactured in 1900 by the Brown Boat Company and represents the superb craftsmanship of canoe builders in Ontario's Lakefield and Peterborough areas. It also displays unique innovations in construction as the wood canoe developed.

Other information:

The newly expanded **ROM Museum Store** will feature merchandise complementing the exhibition, including Canadian made and inspired jewellery, home décor, books and a selection of unique gift ideas. Also available will be the exhibition catalogue, ***Canada Collects***. Edited by exhibition curator Kenneth Lister, the 176-page catalogue features full colour images of all exhibition objects included in the display. The hardcover volume, retailing at $44.99 plus applicable taxes, is published by the ROM.

In celebration of *Canada Collects*, the ROM's two new dining areas will offer a diverse range of inspired menu items. Diners will also enjoy numerous promotions and opportunities related to the exhibition and the other components of *A Season of Canada.* **C5 (Crystal Five) Restaurant Lounge,** located at the pinnacle of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal, provides superlative gastronomic experiences in a sophisticated environment. Its menu highlights the textures and flavours of Toronto's diverse cultural fabric. Lunch is served Monday through Sunday and dinner Thursday through Saturday. For a more casual experience, **Food Studio** provides healthy menu options and sources organic, seasonal ingredients from local Ontario food producers when possible. Located on Level B1, Food Studio welcomes diners for lunch from Monday to Sunday, and for dinner on Friday nights. For more information on dining at the ROM, go to http://www.rom.on.ca/services/dining/index.php

ROM Members already know that the best way to experience the ROM is through membership. A ROM Individual or Family membership delivers numerous benefits, including free general admission, newsletters, events, previews, discounts and much more. For additional information or to purchase a membership, call call 416.586.5700 or visit www.rom.on.ca/members

Canadian-themed programs, highlighting the country's art, culture and history, complement the exhibition's engagement through a wide array of ROMLife programming, and the re-launched ROM Friday Nights and the new Family Sundays. ROMLife's *Canadian Icons* takes place on Wednesday, November 28 at 6:30 pm, during which a roster of eminent speakers addresses the question, "What Says Canada?" National icons, including beavers, Mounties, Canada geese, donuts, maple leaves, the CN Tower (and perhaps, now, the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal), and their evolution over time, are explored. In *Find Tomorrow's Retro Treasures*, taking place on Saturday, October 27 at 1:30 pm, a panel of experienced collectors shares its insights. Participants learn how to discover new areas of collecting and search for collectibles before they become too popular. For more information or to register online for ROMLife programs, go to www.rom.on.ca/programs or call 416.586.5797. *Canada Collects* will enjoy an enhanced presence on the ROM's website and will be featured in a podcast.

Admission to *Canada Collects* is included with paid general admission: Adults: $20; Students with ID and Seniors: $17; Children: $10; Children 4 & under are free. Reduced admission prices apply on Friday nights from 4:30 pm to 9:30 pm: Adults, Seniors and Students with ID: $10; Children: $5. For information on special rates and private guided tours, groups of ten or more adults may call Mirvish Productions Group Sales at 416.593.4142 or toll free at 1.800.724.6420 or e-mail grouptours@rom.on.ca . Schools and student groups should contact the ROM's Education Department at 416.586.5801.

Also opening on October 6 in the ROM's *A Season of Canada* are the new *Sigmund Samuel Gallery of Canada*, located on the Museum's Level 1, as well as *Shapeshifters, Time Travellers and Storytellers*, presented by BMO Financial Group, an exhibition of the ROM's Institute for Contemporary Culture (ICC), showcasing evocative objects from the Museum's collections and new works by leading contemporary Aboriginal artists from across Canada, and *Charles Pachter's Canada (II)* in which many of the multimedia artist's paintings of Canadian icons are projected onto the wall of Hyacinth Gloria Chen Court in a vivid digital presentation.

-30-

The **Royal Ontario Museum** (ROM) is an agency of the Government of Ontario. Opened in 1914, Canada's largest museum of natural history and world cultures has six million objects in its collections and galleries showcasing art, archaeology and natural science.

Renaissance ROM is an ambitious expansion and heritage renovation project that reasserts the Royal Ontario Museum as one of North America's great museums and a leading cultural attraction for the city, province and country. Renaissance ROM continues until 2009 with several new and renovated galleries to be created at the Museum.

For 24-hour information in English and French, please call **416.586.8000** or visit the ROM's web site at **www.rom.on.ca**

A Season of Canada

Sponsored by: Nienkämper Furniture

THE GLOBE AND MAIL
Media Partner

Inaugural Season Sponsor CIBC