

Contact: Maria Terrone
Director of Communications
718-997-5591

Maria Matteo
News Assistant
718-997-5590

“MEMORY & HISTORY” ART EXHIBITION AT QUEENS COLLEGE

EXPLORES THEMES OF IMMIGRATION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

-- Work of Italian American Artist B. Amore and Jewish American Artist Pauline Jakobsberg Will Be Shown at Godwin-Ternbach Museum, February 18-June 4, 2004 --

NEW YORK, February 2004—From 1892 to its official close in 1954, over 12 million immigrants passed through the gates of New York’s Ellis Island, yearning for freedom and a new life on American shores. Most of them, in one or two generations, fulfilled their dream, but not without a struggle. The residue of their experiences, as well as the lives they left behind, lives on in the work of Italian American artist B. Amore and Jewish American artist Pauline Jakobsberg.

Memory & History, an exhibition at Queens College’s Godwin-Ternbach Museum, will feature the compelling and evocative work of these artists. Running from February 18 through June 4, 2004, the exhibition is sponsored by the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute (a City University of New York institute under the aegis of Queens College); the Italian American Museum, in temporary residence at the Calandra Institute; and Queens College’s Center for Jewish Studies and Godwin-Ternbach Museum.

Through their uniquely individual yet universal artwork, Amore and Jakobsberg explore the themes of immigration, family, and history, and in the process confront the highly charged subjects of personal and group cultural memory. Both artists utilize collage and assemblage as vehicles to evoke the layered, elusive, and often disorderly processes of memory to construct poignant visual narratives. In these artworks, family photographs, letters, keepsakes, and personal items mingle with family stories, nostalgia, and history to examine, preserve, and trigger the sometimes joyful, sometimes painful or bittersweet remains of the past.

“B. Amore’s work is colorful and sculptural, while Jakobsberg’s is quiet, with the specter of the Holocaust present in its dark, graphic tones,” says Amy Winter,” curator of the exhibition and director of the Godwin-Ternbach Museum. “And so their works, so closely related in subject, beautifully complement and contrast each another. In addition, *Memory & History* is an interdisciplinary show, an approach that is an important part of the museum’s mission.

“The exhibition touches on sociology, history, and cultural identity,” Winter continues, “issues relevant to community, especially the community of Queens, the locus of immigration for New York City today. One topic this exhibition will begin to explore is the nature of the early wave of immigration at the turn of the 20th century, and that of the ‘new immigration’ currently occurring in Queens and all over the United States.”

On Wednesday, February 25 at 12 noon, Dr. Winter will lead a tour of the exhibition. This free event is open to the public. No reservations are needed.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

B. AMORE was born in 1942 in Washington, DC, and raised in Boston. She received her BA in social work from Boston University, but later turned to art as a calling. This led to her study at the School of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the University of Rome, and the Accademia di Belle Arti in Carrara, Italy, the famed site of marble quarries and studios from which Michelangelo himself culled his stone.

Currently, she teaches sculpture in the MFA program of Vermont College. She previously taught at the Boston Museum School for a decade. Amore was the founder and director of the Carving Studio and cofounder of the Kokoro Studio Retreat Center, both in West Rutland, Vermont.

The recipient of numerous awards, including Fulbright and Mellon Fellowships, Amore has won public and private art commissions in the United States and Japan, and has had her work shown in many national and international exhibitions. In 2000, she mounted *Lifeline*, a one-person show at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum, filling six of the museum's galleries with multimedia installations and sculpture that traced the thread of her family's immigration and lineage.

The *Lifeline* show built upon *Opening Windows of Time*, a 1998 exhibition at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City, which, in turn, was developed from prior exhibitions that explored her roots and unearthed the spiritual foundations of her past. Amore's work was also included in *Italian American Women Artists*, a fall 2001 exhibition at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum.

"The *Memory & History* exhibit continues the theme of immigration as the quintessential odyssey," says Amore. "The consequences of this journey affect generations. In my work, the immigrant journey becomes the metaphor for the entire human journey.

"The presence of two languages and two cultures in my home of origin awakened early an appreciation of duality – the unique aspect of standing in two worlds at the same time. I am interested in the relationship between human perception and the influences of one's heritage, both in the near and distant past."

PAULINE JAKOBSBERG was born in New York City to a working-class family that lived in an ethnically mixed neighborhood. She grew up fascinated with family stories of the past told around dinner tables or on cement stoops on hot summer nights. These early experiences resonate to this day in her art, which frequently begins with a story, journal sketch, family photo, or memory drawing whose historical evocation she translates into visual reality.

Jakobsberg received her degrees in art from the University of Maryland. She ran a private art school for children and adults, and maintains a studio called the Graphic Workshop. A founding member of the Washington Printmakers Gallery in DC, she has won distinguished awards and prizes for graphics and printmaking.

Jakobsberg has had numerous solo exhibitions in Europe, most recently in the Franz Kafka Gallery in Prague and the Terezin Museum, in the Czech Republic. Her work can be found in many private collections in the United States, South America, and Europe. Her most recent showing was at the Peck Humanities Institute, Montgomery College, Maryland. A video of her work was produced by Pandora's Box of Montgomery for cable TV and is available to the public.

Says Jakobsberg: "The driving force behind my work is inspired by my husband's family who were Holocaust survivors, as well as my own memory drawings, found objects, family journals, countless stories told by my parents and grandmother and, last but not least, the garment center. Most of the 19th- and 20th-century photos and letters that I have been fortunate to inherit convey a familiar story, whether from childhood or my research and travels or from surviving relations. Incorporating these images into my etched prints allows me to speak for those I remember and those whose lives were cut short. Time and again what I uncover reminds me of my inability to fully grasp the past, as I turn history into a visual reality."

FREE PUBLIC PROGRAMS

In addition to the February 25 curator's tour of the exhibition, the museum will host these public programs, all at 12 noon:

Wednesday, March 3, Artist's talk by Pauline Jakobsberg (in the museum)

Monday, March 8, "Not to Be Strangers and Alone: The American Jewish Immigrant Experience," talk by Dr. Harriet David Kram, History Department, Queens College (Klapper Hall 401)

Wednesday, March 24, Artist's talk by B. Amore (in the museum)

Monday, April 19, "The Italian Immigrant Experience," Dr. Gerald Myer, Behavioral and Social Sciences Department, Hostos Community College, CUNY (Klapper Hall 401)

Other programs still being planned include poetry readings and a lecture on "The New Immigration." For information about events related to this exhibition, please call the museum office at 718-997-4736.

Generous funding for the *Memory & History* exhibition and its programs has been provided by The David Berg Foundation. The exhibition is also made possible, in part, by the Queens Council on the Arts with public funding from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

The Godwin-Ternbach Museum, the only museum in Queens with art from ancient to modern times, as well as the only museum within the City University of New York, houses more than 3,500 works of art. These include Egyptian, Greek, and Asian antiquities, and pre-Columbian, African, and Pacific culture artifacts. Roman and Islamic glass, Renaissance and Baroque sculpture and decorative arts, and paintings and drawings by masters of all periods highlight the collection. Drawing on its own artworks and loan exhibitions, the Godwin-

Ternbach Museum seeks to reflect the diverse nature of Queens College and the borough of Queens and to fill the borough's need for a comprehensive art museum.

Located in Klapper Hall on the Flushing campus (65-30 Kissena Blvd., Flushing, Queens, Exit 24, LIE), the museum is open Monday to Thursday, 11 am-7 pm, and for this exhibition, on Saturdays, 10 am-6 pm. For more information, call 718-997-4724 or 718-997-4736.