

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **William Ronald's 'Prime Minister Series', a part of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery's Permanent Collection featured in new book.**

*Kitchener, Ontario - August 24, 2010:* Under the main floor of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery lies a 4,000 piece permanent collection overseen by the Gallery's Registrar Cindy Wayvon. Last year, author Iris Nowell approached Wayvon with an intriguing request, a viewing of Stratford born artist William Ronald's 'Prime Minister Series.' This week Wayvon received a special delivery, a signed copy of Nowell's new book 'Painter's 11: The Wild Ones of Canadian Art.'

Featuring a biography of each of the Painters 11 and selections of their work, Nowell's book is the first to chronicle the undertakings of the group, a pioneering and often controversial collection of some of Toronto's abstract painters. A founding member, William Ronald's work and life was no less scintillating.

In 1954, Ronald introduced mainstream Toronto to abstract art through a window display at the Robert Simpson Company at Queen and Young. Employed as a window dresser, Ronald used his work to complete the home furnishings department's settings, a move which garnered Painters 11 their first exhibition at the Roberts Gallery.

Three years later, Ronald presented his first commercial solo exhibition in New York in April 1957. He also kept strong ties with Painters 11, negotiating an invitation for them to exhibit at the NY Riverside Museum in 1956. He quickly garnered attention within established art circles and nabbed a contract with renowned art dealer Samuel Kootz, a highly lucrative deal at both ends.

Returning to Canada in 1965, Ronald turned to television, hosting his own often outrageous television show 'The Umbrella', which featured a young Lloyd Robertson as announcer, on CBC from 1966 to 1967 and co-hosting 'As It Happens' from 1968 to 1969. "I consider myself to be a work of pop art," said Ronald on air.

Ronald continued to paint and in 1977 began 'The Prime Minister Series,' which he created over the next seven years. The group of work embodies Ronald's own views of each of the leaders, resulting in truly unique portraits. First shown at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 1984, the series traveled to galleries across Canada and was gifted to kw|ag by Hamilton philanthropist, Irving Zucker in 1993.

*"It is quite rewarding to see our collection represented in a publication of this caliber,"* says Registrar Cindy Wayvon. *"It provides yet another avenue for kw|ag to share works from our permanent collection that are critical to the history of art in Canada."*

'Painters 11' author Iris Nowell has worked as an art consultant on major projects for the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario. She was the art researcher for 'Tom Thomson: The Silence and the Storm' (1977) by Harold Town and David Silcox and has written, 'Hot Breakfast for Sparrows: My Life with Harold Town' (1992) and 'Joyce Weiland: A Life in Art' (2001). 'Painter's 11: The Wild Ones of Canadian Art' is published by Douglas & McIntyre.

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### About the Permanent Collection

Work from the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery's permanent collection will be shown in 'A Boundless Moment', a fall 2010 corridor exhibition. This show marks the beginning of a new series of Community Curator projects at kw|ag. Tarin Hughes, a recent graduate of the University of Waterloo's Fine Arts program and one of the Gallery's docents was invited to work closely with Gallery staff in the development of her own exhibition from the permanent collection. A *Boundless Moment* opens Sept 17.

### About the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery

The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (kw|ag) connects people and ideas through art. The Gallery emphasizes contemporary art, has a 4,000 work permanent collection and offers experiences for adults, children and families. Established in 1956 and operating within Centre In The Square, kw|ag is the oldest and largest public gallery in Waterloo region: roots in the community, eyes on the world. In 2010 kw|ag launched thier blog: [Free Admission](#).

**Gallery Hours:** M-W 9:30am-5pm., T 9:30am.-9pm, Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 1pm-5pm

Admission to KWJAG is free courtesy of Sun Life Financial. All are welcome.

### For more information please contact:

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Prime Minister Series: *Pierre Elliott Trudeau*,  
1980, oil and spraypaint on canvas.  
William Ronald. Gift of Irving Zucker (1993)

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