



For Immediate Release:

**FIFTY-THREE DESIGNERS REVAMP MCLEAN HOUSE FOR
THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF TORONTO SHOWHOUSE, MAY 8TH TO 31ST, 2009**

Toronto – The Junior League of Toronto told fifty-three designers to “go to their room” and show what they did, when the Junior League Showhouse, opens to the public on May 8th 2009. This time the League returns to the “spectacular” Georgian-style estate, McLean House on the grounds of Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.

This event is a highlight of Toronto’s spring calendar and visitors to this year’s Showhouse will be awed by the beautiful rooms fifty-three of Canada’s top designers have so brilliantly executed.

This was the League’s first design house and was a joint venture of the Interior Designers of Ontario (now ARIDO) and the Junior League of Toronto who partnered to transform McLean House. Then, the House was being used as a clinical hospital facility when ARIDO and the League were asked to turn it back into the party house it once was. Proceeds from that first venture were directed to the League’s programs in the community.

“This will be the Junior League’s eighth house and we are thrilled to be returning to the House where it all started,” said co-chairs for this year’s event, Dawn Drayton and Valerie Mines.

So popular is this event that some of the designers from the first Showhouse at the McLean House in 1983 have returned. For Del Weale and Dee Chenier, it is their seventh house. For Joseph Cheng, who has participated from the beginning, he will design his signature room, the dining room for his eighth Showhouse involvement.

The McLean Estate was once known for the fabulous parties and social events held there in the 1930’s, a time of great Art Deco design. Several of the designers are going to recall that era, with a modern twist, when they reinvent that time in their rooms. They include Katherine Newman, Brian Gluckstein, Kimberley Seldon and Timothy Mather.

Bespoke craftsmen are also coming to the fore to showcase their master millwork designs. Since the McLean Estate is a public venue for weddings and fundraising events, many of the mechanicals associated with running a modern venue must be enclosed to keep the essence of a 1930’s mansion intact. Moise Bensimon is just one of the master millwork crafters whose work will be highlighted in this endeavour.

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When the Junior League of Toronto first showcased McLean House in 1983, some areas were left untouched. They include exterior terraces, the basement and the third floor. The League is delighted that designers, Jeanette Hlinka, Ann Hepfer, Camal Pirbhai, Giani Tariello, Gillian Gillies, Martin Ciccone, Michael Renaud, Jim Charron and Hauser have chosen to take on some of these spaces.

Glen Peloso has chosen the Coach House as his venue.

An instant draw for many visitors is the kitchen and for his fourth Showhouse, Alex Chapman will create a fabulous 21st century version.

No space will be left undone. Every nook and cranny will be restored and designers Anne Hepfer and Anita Wicklem are taking on the challenge of small spaces.

The Junior League of Toronto has a proud history of improving the quality of life for thousands of residents in the Greater Toronto Area by assessing and responding to their needs through new initiatives, community partnerships and by providing trained volunteers and funds to new and existing community programs. Since 1926, they have stepped forward to meet the changing needs of the community by contributing more than \$4 million and over 40 million volunteer hours to hundreds of community agencies.

The League's focus is to provide support for women, children and families and this year proceeds from the Showhouse will go to St. Alban's Boys' & Girls' Club, the Women and Babies Program at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, and the Junior League of Toronto projects.

The Junior League of Toronto Showhouse will be open from May 8th – 31st, 2009 Tuesday to Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and until 9:00 Wednesday and Thursday evening. Tickets are \$25.00 and can be purchased on-line at www.jltshowhouse.org or at the door. To book a group tour for ten or more people, contact jltshowhousetours@gmail.com or 416-485 4218. ext. 301

Canadian House & Home will publish a comprehensive story with colour photographs documenting the Junior League of Toronto Showhouse™ in a Fall 2009 issue.

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