

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



Artist uses maps to understand others in *Paths We Have Taken*

For Immediate Release

**February 23, 2006
15-06**

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WATERLOO – The Robert Langen Art Gallery will host an opening reception for an exhibition of paintings, entitled *Paths We Have Taken*, from 4 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 1. Elora artist Phil Irish will be on hand to discuss his work, which is on display from March 1 to 25.

The exhibition is inspired by maps Irish has asked people to draw, leading to places that have special significance to the cartographer. The maps lead Irish to places with strong associations, where decisions were made or solace sought – places the cartographer returns to again and again. Irish follows each map, gathering photographs, drawings and notes.

From the records of his own experience in the place, he then produces an oil painting based on his subjective response to the cartographer's experiences. The oil painting and the original map are exhibited as a single piece of art.

"This project partakes in the community-building act of really trying to understand another person," said Irish. "This series of work reflects a marvelous diversity of locations and voices within a community."

Irish has been selected as the City of Kitchener's next artist-in-residence and will continue to collect maps throughout 2006. To learn more about Irish's work and awards, please visit www.philirish.com.

As Wilfrid Laurier University's visual arts centre since 1989, the Robert Langen Art Gallery provides knowledge, stewardship, appreciation and enjoyment of Canadian art and culture to the local community. The gallery is located in the John Aird Centre and is open noon to 5 p.m. from Wednesdays to Saturdays. Admission is free.