



Marion Wagschal, *Artists and Children*, 1988,  
oil on linen, metal leaf, metallic paint, 254 x 211 cm, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

Marion Wagschal was born in Port of Spain, Trinidad, in 1943 to parents who fled the turmoil of the Second World War. In 1951 they immigrated to Montreal, where Wagschal later received her undergraduate and graduate degrees from Concordia University. Throughout her practice she has explored the human figure and intimate moments in personal and family relationships through a decidedly unidealized lens, often portraying her subjects as aging, tired and wrinkly. *Artists and Children* (1988) demonstrates the artist's exploration of sexuality, identity and family in her

portrait and figurative practice. Wagschal often paints close friends and family members. This image is of David Elliot and Elise Bernatchez—both professors and artists—and their four children. The aerial treatment of space is based on Wagschal's observational drawings of the parents and children in the comfort of their home. The family is lounging on supple quilts, with the mother at the head of the painting, the children below her and the father holding the youngest child near the bottom of the composition. The inclusion of domestic objects—such as children's toys in the bottom left corner, a tea set behind the father, a tapestry in the top left corner and the presence of quilts throughout the painting—is emblematic of the family's connection. The imagined intimacy of a family within a domestic space is put on display in this large painting.

Dina Georganos