

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Vancouver Art Gallery Looks to the Future, Launches Exploratory Phase of Facility Plan

Vancouver, BC –The Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Vancouver Art Gallery, George Killy, announced today that the Gallery has appointed Michael Maltzan Architecture, Inc. (MMA) of Los Angeles to address long-term challenges and opportunities associated with its aging courthouse buildings and its site in downtown Vancouver. MMA was selected from a “short list” of four firms due to their extensive experience in master planning and design projects for major cultural institutions - including the Museum of Modern Art’s temporary exhibition facility in Queens, New York; the Fresno Metropolitan Museum in Fresno, California; and the UCLA Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, California.

“The committee was impressed by the high caliber of the four short listed firms and their understanding of the Gallery’s strengths and challenges,” said Mr.Killy. “Michael Maltzan Architecture has proven success working on museum and institutional projects in urban environments and a reputation for collaboration and strong integrated partnerships.”

MMA will facilitate Phase One of the project, an exploratory phase, working with Vancouver architectural firm Henriquez Partners Architects. Together, they will conduct an evaluation of programming needs; current and projected visitor attendance; maintenance considerations; safety, traffic patterns and other operational considerations. The team will also assess the realistic development options on the current site (Block 51) and the adjacent site (Block 61). Finally, the architects will suggest a number of functional design options that would allow the Gallery to remain on its existing site and still achieve its goals. The facility master planning project will involve a broad cross-section of Gallery stakeholders, including government, Gallery donors and members, community leaders, arts and cultural organizations, educational organizations, downtown businesses and others.

The Gallery Director, Kathleen Bartels, added that “this project, while centering on architectural solutions, is really first and foremost about people, the hundreds of thousands of people throughout Vancouver and BC who have grown up with the Gallery, whose lives have been enriched by it, and who want to continue to share it with their families and friends in the future. We expect to identify innovative solutions that will benefit Vancouver for the next 25 years.”

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The Gallery in September 2003 solicited expressions of interest from twenty-three national and international architectural firms. MMA will commence work on the Vancouver Art Gallery's master plan this month and a final plan will be presented to the Gallery's Board of Trustees by the end of 2004.

Mr. Maltzan remarked, "Vancouver is one of the most important cities internationally for contemporary art, and we are excited to be working in that context with the Vancouver Art Gallery, which is moving boldly forward with fresh vision. We are equally looking forward to working with Vancouver-based firm Henriquez Partners".

Michael Maltzan Architecture, Inc.

Michael Maltzan leads a staff of 20 professional architects and administrators based in Los Angeles, California. Prior to establishing his own firm in 1995, Mr. Maltzan was a Senior Associate and Project Designer with Frank O.Gehry Associates where he worked on a number of award-winning projects including the Disney Concert Hall, the University of Toledo Art School and the Molecular Biology Centre at the University of Cincinnati. He received a Master of Architecture degree with a Letter of Distinction from Harvard University in 1987 and holds both a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Bachelor of Architecture from Rhode Island School of Design, where he received the Henry Adams/AIA Scholastic Gold Medal.

The firm has a demonstrated understanding of exhibition design and an award-winning record of architectural excellence. MMA have been commissioned to design and manage a wide range of projects and have won a number of awards including the 2003 American Architecture Award for the Museum of Modern Art, Queens, and The Chicago Athenaeum: Museum of Architecture and Design.

Recent arts-related projects include:

- Museum of Modern Art, Queens, temporary exhibition facility, Long Island, New York; Art Museum, \$35M project. MMA were appointed in 2000 as architects responsible for designing all public spaces at this new facility of the world-famous MoMA, including the building exterior, roofscape, lobby and exhibition spaces.
- Sonoma County Museum, Santa Rosa, California; expansion and renovation, \$30M project. In 2002, MMA were commissioned to program, master plan and design the museum, and to guide the project through construction of a 52,000 s.f. facility.
- UCLA Hammer Museum, Westwood, California; renovation and addition, \$15M project. Work on programming, master plan and design of an 83,200 sq. ft. renovation and expansion.

- Fresno Metropolitan Museum, Fresno, California; \$65M project. Master plan and concept direction for new facility.
- Latin American Art Museum Long Beach, California; Master plan.
- KIDSPACE Museum, Pasadena, California; expansion and renovation, \$17M project

Master Planning Process Background

In summer 2003, the Board of Trustees and Director established a Master Planning Committee to review the Gallery's facility needs. The master planning committee, which reports to the Gallery's Board of Trustees, consists of board chair George Killy; board member Kevin Leslie; board member Michael Geller; home builder and art patron Michael Audain; acclaimed Vancouver artist Ken Lum; director of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Nicholas Oldsberg; chief curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Elizabeth Smith; Gallery director Kathleen Bartels and senior curator Bruce Grenville.

The Gallery sought the advice of the Architecture Institute of British Columbia to ensure all procedures relating to the master planning process were consistent with best practice. In September 2003, the Gallery advertised nationally for architectural firms to provide expressions of interest in assessing the Gallery's present and future facility needs. Four firms were short-listed:

- Alsop Architects/Robbie Young + Wright Architects (Toronto & London);
- Peter Cardew Architects (Vancouver);
- Machado and Silvetti Associates (Boston); and,
- Michael Maltzan Architecture, Inc. (Los Angeles)

Building History

The Vancouver Art Gallery was founded in 1931. The Gallery's home for 52 years was in a 1911 art deco building on West Georgia Street. The Gallery moved to its present site, at 750 Hornby Street, from its original home in 1983. Formerly the provincial courthouse, the Gallery is situated in the centre of downtown Vancouver in an historic neo-classical building designed by Francis Rattenbury in 1907. The courthouse was converted to a gallery by architect Arthur Erickson and Associates at a cost of \$20.5million (CDN). The Gallery site takes up an entire city block (Block 51). The site is owned by the Province of British Columbia, managed by the British Columbia Building Corporation (BCBC) and the Gallery sub-leases the building from the City of Vancouver. The total building space is 165,000 sq ft, with a total exhibition space of 40,000 sq ft.

Vancouver Art Gallery

The Vancouver Art Gallery, founded in 1931, is the largest Gallery in western Canada. The Gallery is governed by a 24-member board of trustees, employs 75 staff, engages 350 volunteers and has over 10,000 members. The permanent collection numbers more than 8,000 works of art and is valued at over \$100 million (CDN).

Reflecting Vancouver's prominence over the past decade on the international stage as a major centre for contemporary visual art, the Gallery is committed to presenting groundbreaking work by contemporary artists from such disciplines as photography, film, video, architecture, design, performance and the newest forms of digital expression, as well as the best of the traditional disciplines of painting, sculpture and drawing.

Current exhibitions: *Canvas of War* (closes May 16, 2004); and *Determined Pursuit: Highlights from the Longstaffe Collection* (closes May 16, 2004). Upcoming exhibitions include: *A Modern Life: Art and Design in British Columbia, 1945-1960* (May 15 – Oct 11, 2004); *Baja to Vancouver: The West Coast and Contemporary Art* (June 5 – Sept. 6, 2004); *Andy Warhol: Prints and Drawings* (June 5 – Sept. 6, 2004); and, *Massive Change: The Future of Global Design* (Oct 2, 2004 – Jan 3, 2005).

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Media Contact:
Julie-Ann Backhouse
Communications Specialist
604 662 4722