



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday June 27, 2002

Vancouver Art Gallery receives national award



Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun
Space, Place and Reason, 2001
oil and acrylic on canvas
Photo: Trevor Mills

Vancouver, BC – The Canada Council announced today that the Vancouver Art Gallery, for the first time in its history, is the recipient of the York Wilson Endowment Award. This annual award, valued at up to \$30,000, is granted to a single Canadian art museum or public gallery to purchase an original artwork by a Canadian artist. The Vancouver Art Gallery has been awarded \$20,000 towards the purchase of Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun's *Space, Place and Reason, 2001* for its permanent collection.

The award was established in 1997 in honour of Canadian painter York Wilson and aims to contribute to Canadian cultural heritage by facilitating the acquisition of new works by living, contemporary Canadian painters and sculptors. The award is given annually by the Canada Council.

“While this award is a significant achievement for the Vancouver Art Gallery, it acknowledges more importantly the strength of contemporary art in western Canada,” said Kathleen Bartels, Director, Vancouver Art Gallery. “The artistic influence of our local contemporary artists, and their due recognition in a national context, is to be applauded”.

Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun is a leading figure in contemporary Canadian art. Yuxweluptun is of Coast Salish and Okanagan background and studied painting at the Emily Carr College of Art and Design from 1978 to 1983. His paintings incorporate traditional Northwest Coast iconography with modernist painting traditions and use postmodern practices of appropriating images from popular culture.

“*Space, Place and Reason* is a recent work from Yuxweluptun’s ‘ovoid’ project – a central image in traditional Northwest Coast art,” said Grant Arnold, Curator, Vancouver Art Gallery. “He uses intensely coloured ovoids of various scales that overlap in complex, almost hallucinogenic space. It speaks as much of the urban experience as it does of traditions in First Nations art.”

As of June 29, *Space, Place and Reason* will be on view to the public as part of the Gallery’s new exhibition *This Place: works from the collection*. Over 75 significant works from the Vancouver Art Gallery’s permanent collection have been organized into three thematic groupings: the land, indigenous culture and the self. The exhibition, featuring artists of the Pacific Northwest, includes art works from the early 1900’s to the present in a variety of media and provides an insight into the quality, range and depth of the permanent collection.

Founded in 1931, the Vancouver Art Gallery is the fourth largest art gallery in Canada and a focal point of downtown Vancouver. It boasts a permanent collection of 7,600 works which provides in-depth representation of 20th century British Columbia art in an international context and is valued at over \$100 million. The Vancouver Art Gallery is widely recognized for its high quality exhibitions and education programs ranging from groundbreaking contemporary artists to historical figures.

– end –

Media Contacts:

For information about the Vancouver Art Gallery

Julie-Ann Backhouse, Communications Specialist, Vancouver Art Gallery

604 662 4722 media@vanartgallery.bc.ca

For information about the York Wilson Endowment Award

Donna Balkan, Public Affairs, Research and Communication, Canada Council

613 566 4305 or 1800 263 5588 ext 4134

donna.balkan@canadacouncil.ca

The Vancouver Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support of the City of Vancouver, the Province of British Columbia through the BC Arts Council, the Government of Canada through the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage Museum Assistance Program, Young Canada Works and Western Economic Diversification, the Greater Vancouver Regional District, the Vancouver Arts Stabilization Program (VAST) and the Gerald and Sheahan McGavin Capital Grants to the Arts.