



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Vancouver Art Gallery acquires \$3.5 million collection of contemporary photo-based art



Cindy Sherman, *Untitled Film Still #16*, 1978, Black & White photograph, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery

Vancouver, BC – The Vancouver Art Gallery announced that it has acquired a major contemporary photo-based art collection valued at \$3.5 million (CAN). The acquisition, from Toronto collector Alan Schwartz, consists of 60 works by 15 internationally acclaimed artists. The Vancouver Art Gallery now has one of the most comprehensive photo-based collections in North America.

“By acquiring this extraordinary collection, the Gallery is now a leader in the international cultural arena,” said Kathleen Bartels, Director, Vancouver Art Gallery. The acquisition includes work by Reinke Dijkstra, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Dan Graham, Andreas Gursky, Louise Lawler, Thomas Ruff, Cindy Sherman, Thomas Struth and Rachel Whiteread.

Ms. Bartels added: “The Gallery has been actively acquiring photography and photo-based works since the early eighties and our collection is exceptionally strong in photoconceptual works by internationally renowned Vancouver artists. This acquisition places the local in a global context by enhancing our existing holdings with these highly regarded European, British and American artists. It is the most significant acquisition by the Vancouver Art Gallery in over 50 years”.

The Vancouver Art Gallery collects work that is not only relevant to Canada but that also participates in an international dialogue. Senior Curator, Bruce Grenville, said: "Over the years, the focus has been on the "Vancouver School" of photoconceptualism that includes senior artists such as Ian Wallace, Jeff Wall, Rodney Graham, Ken Lum, Stan Douglas and Roy Arden – this acquisition provides a key link to similar artistic practices on a global scale".

Alan Schwartz is an internationally respected collector and is an executive at Yorkton Securities in Toronto. He is a member of the Alfred Stieglitz Society at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and was a Vice President of the Board of Trustees of the Art Gallery of Ontario. Mr Schwartz's recent decision to disperse part of his collection was underscored by the hope that it would remain in Canada. Previous donations to the Vancouver Art Gallery by this collector, and the Gallery's existing holdings of photo-based art, were influential factors in his decision to sell and donate a substantial number of works to the Vancouver Art Gallery.

The Vancouver Art Gallery will exhibit works from this acquisition during the spring of 2003.

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Full list of works available on request.

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Images:

Media images are available on the Vancouver Art Gallery's FTP site at:

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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, the Greater Vancouver Regional District, the Vancouver Arts Stabilization Program (VAST) and the Gerald and Sheahan McGavin Capital Grants to the Arts.