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March 13, 2006

## **VANCOUVER ART GALLERY LAUNCHES PROVINCIAL TOURING PROGRAM WITH GROUP OF SEVEN EXHIBITION**

**VANCOUVER, BC** — The Vancouver Art Gallery will launch *Across the Province*, a new regional touring program, with *Dawn: Sketches by the Group of Seven* at Two Rivers Gallery in Prince George, British Columbia. Comprised of 30 Group of Seven works from the Vancouver Art Gallery's permanent collection, the exhibition opens at Two Rivers Gallery on March 30 at 7:30 p.m. and will remain on display through June 23. *Dawn* will also be featured at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria from July 7 through September 24 and at the Kelowna Art Gallery from December 2 through February 18, 2007. *Dawn: Sketches by the Group of Seven* is the first touring show in the *Across the Province* program, a series of Vancouver Art Gallery permanent collection exhibitions set to travel to five partner institutions, including the Kamloops Art Gallery and Surrey Art Gallery.

“Over an amazing 75-year history, the Gallery has acquired one of the most significant collections of art in Canada,” said Kathleen Bartels, director of the Vancouver Art Gallery. “We’re thrilled to be able to collaborate with other British Columbian arts institutions to increase accessibility to our valued collections.”

*Dawn: Sketches by the Group of Seven* explores how Canada's seminal landscape painters used the oil sketch as a fundamental tool in their artistic process. In their attempts to capture and explore the ruggedness of the Canadian wilderness and the spirit of its people, the Group utilized Canada's backcountry as their studio, taking paints, brushes and small panels into the wilds on a series of sketching trips. Painting directly from the dramatic scenery they explored, the Group not only gained material for later elaboration on larger canvases, but also captured the landscape with an extraordinary sense of immediacy.

*Dawn* includes oil sketches by all seven original members of the Group of Seven, including Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Franklin Carmichael, Francis Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J.E.H. MacDonald and Frederick Varley. The exhibition features works ranging from the period the Group was together to later individual experiments in abstraction and beyond.

The Vancouver Art Gallery's permanent collection was established in 1931 and has grown to include nearly 9,000 works of art. International in scope and representing more than two centuries of art, the collection also places a strong emphasis on British Columbian art, making it the principal repository of works produced in the province. The Gallery began acquiring Group of Seven works in 1932, beginning with A.Y. Jackson's *Road to St. Fidele*, and continues expanding this important collection of historic Canadian art.

*Dawn: Sketches by the Group of Seven*, curated by Vancouver Art Gallery's senior curator Ian Thom, is organized and circulated by the Gallery with the generous support of The Rix Family Foundation. The next exhibition to tour as part the *Across the Province* initiative will be **B.C. Binning**, which will be displayed at the Vancouver Art Gallery from February to April 2007 before travelling to partner venues.

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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 and Gaming Revenues, the Government of Canada through the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage Museums Assistance Program and Cultural Spaces Canada.