

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, July 5, 2004

MEDIA PREVIEW EVENT
Thursday, September 30, 2004

**VANCOUVER ART GALLERY PRESENTS WORLD PREMIERE EXHIBITION ON
THE POWER AND POTENTIAL OF GLOBAL DESIGN**

Thought-Provoking Collaboration with Designer Bruce Mau

Massive Change: The Future of Global Design
October 2, 2004 – January 3, 2005

VANCOUVER, July 5, 2004 – This October, the Vancouver Art Gallery presents the world premiere of *Massive Change: The Future of Global Design*, a groundbreaking exhibition that investigates the capacity, power and promise of design. *Massive Change* takes a radical look at how rapidly evolving technologies have created the potential for design to affect change on a global scale and how this has placed us at the beginning of a new, unprecedented period of human possibility. Organized by the Gallery in collaboration with Bruce Mau Design and the Institute without Boundaries, this international touring exhibition will be on view in Vancouver October 2, 2004 through January 3, 2005.

“*Massive Change* invites us to consider the dramatic impact of design on the world around us and the monumental way that it is changing the way we live,” said Kathleen Bartels, Director of the Vancouver Art Gallery. “The Vancouver Art Gallery is committed to exploring the connection between artistic creativity and contemporary life and to working with leading voices in the field such as acclaimed designer Bruce Mau.”

Posing the question “Now that we can do anything what will we do?,” *Massive Change* investigates the virtually unlimited capabilities and resulting ethical dilemmas of design in the contemporary world. “Design is one of the most powerful forces at work today,” said designer Bruce Mau, who is known for his unique, interdisciplinary approach and acclaimed manifestos *Life Style* and – in collaboration with Rem Koolhaas – *S,M,L,XL*. “Design is no longer simply a mechanism for adapting to the world in which we live, but is profoundly affecting change on a global scale.”

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Gallery will host “Massive Change Visionaries” featuring innovative thinkers in conversation with Bruce Mau and award-winning journalist Charlie Rose on October 16.

Exhibition Details

Massive Change translates the ideas communicated in Bruce Mau’s compelling new design manifesto into a provocative, accessible and immersive experience. The exhibition employs objects, sound, video, still photography, computer and satellite images, interactive technology and three-dimensional constructs over two floors of the Gallery (16,000 sq. ft.) to explore the impact of global design.

Massive Change brings to light extraordinary breakthroughs and discoveries that have transformed our world, as well as those on the horizon that promise profound change. The exhibition is divided into key areas of human activity that constitute the future of global design—urbanization, information, the image, movement, manufacturing, energy, materials, markets, the military, wealth and politics, and even life itself.

“Unlike traditional design exhibitions that focus on objects and aesthetics *Massive Change* reflects the scope and dynamism of its subject matter,” said Bruce Grenville, Senior Curator at the Vancouver Art Gallery. “Design is an art form that is unique in its direct relationship to solving significant social issues. The exhibition reveals Bruce Mau’s visionary artistry; the physical experience will immerse visitors in a series of powerful, poetic encounters to reveal *Massive Change* at work in our world.”

Among the highlights:

MOVEMENT: *Massive Change* presents current and future thinking in personal transportation—including green alternatives like the electric and human-powered Gizmo and Twike—demonstrating how tremendous advancements in the design of transportation are providing us with more freedom and greater efficiency at a lower cost, both ecological and economic. The exhibition also explores design developments in speed and safety, from the crash-test dummy to the latest virtual crash testing. An installation of the studio of noted inventor Dean Kamen provides an intimate look at the design process behind such celebrated inventions as the Segway and the iBOT™ wheelchair and features original prototypes of these designs.

INFORMATION: *Massive Change* charts a brief history of the incredible range of computer interfaces including many from the personal collection of scientist Bill Buxton, a pioneer in the field of human-computer interaction. A “Global Portraits” gallery provides a look at the role of design in the field of information technology that is helping us to achieve an unprecedented understanding of the world. This includes projections that track space debris found orbiting our earth, the ozone hole, the earth’s gravity field and economic and infrastructural development in remote villages around the world.

THE MILITARY: From smart bombs to high-powered night vision goggles and nanotech military suits that heal wounds, *Massive Change* investigates the extraordinary advancements in the design of military technology that are equipping soldiers with superhuman powers. The exhibition brings to light the innumerable innovations in our daily lives that originated with the military—including the Internet, Gore-Tex, and freeze-dried foods—and shows how the direction of technology transfer is reversing itself so that consumer product design and, more specifically the world of play and entertainment, are shaping the future of military design. The reversal is reflected in the transformation of Tyco’s remote-controlled “Vertigo” toy truck into a remote-controlled military spy weapon called “Dragon Runner” and Hasbro’s Super Soaker water gun to the M4 CARBINE, the primary weapon for U.S. Special Operations Forces.

MATERIALS: The world today is in the midst of a materials revolution. *Massive Change* demonstrates how nature has become the source of inspiration for the design of artificial materials and how materials science is producing substances with unprecedented performance ability and properties.

Among the innovations on view are self-healing plastic; Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Aerogel, the lightest solid in the world; self-cleaning glass that breaks down mold and bacteria when exposed to light; and, Spectra Shield™, a man-made fiber that is ten times stronger than steel yet light enough to float on water.

HEALTH AND LIVING: When Franklin, Crick and Watson uncovered the structure of DNA, they rendered the realm of the living as a system of information that can be used to redesign virtually every aspect of life itself. *Massive Change* examines our newfound ability to redesign the human body, from growing and reconfiguring body parts to designing artificial organs, limbs and skin. Genetically modified crops and animals are also examined, such as Golden Rice, which is genetically modified with a daffodil gene that provides beta-carotene (Vitamin A) to fight blindness in malnourished children. The exhibition also explores one of the most significant health issues facing the world today, access to drinkable water, and features new design innovations that are providing the means to deliver potable water to the whole world. Throughout the Health and Living gallery, visitors are invited to vote on the issues that arise from this controversial field of design.

Related Massive Change Activities

The *Massive Change* project also includes:

- *Massive Change: Visionaries*, a daylong think tank on October 16 moderated by Bruce Mau and award-winning journalist Charlie Rose that brings together an amazing collective of today's best thinkers at the forefront of design to explore and debate the issues raised in *Massive Change*. Speakers include Dean Kamen, inventor of the Segway and the iBOT™ wheelchair; technology pioneer Bill Buxton; and Janine Benyus, the celebrated author of *Biomimicry*.
- *Massive Change*, published by Phaidon Press, to be released in early October;
- a website (www.massivechange.com) and a weekly radio program, *Massive Change Radio*; and,
- a feature-length documentary in partnership with the National Film Board of Canada.

Bruce Mau Design and the Institute without Boundaries

Massive Change is a collaborative project with Bruce Mau Design (BMD) and the Institute without Boundaries (IwB). Since its inception in Toronto in 1985, BMD has gained international recognition for innovation across a wide range of projects, from book design to visual identity and branding, environmental graphics, programming and exhibitions and product development. Bruce Mau rose to prominence in the early 1980s through his work with Zone Books, which reconceived the role of graphic designer with designs infused by the logic of the texts. The studio has collaborated with some of the world's leading architects, artists, writers, curators, academics, entrepreneurs, businesses and institutions. In 1995, Mau collaborated with Rem Koolhaas on the celebrated design manifesto *S,M,L,XL* and in 2000 he published his own acclaimed manifesto *Life Style*. Recent projects include Tree City, a project to transform Downsview Park in Toronto; STRESS, a multi-media installation about the limits of the human body; and Puente de Vida, the development of a museum of biodiversity in Panama City. The IwB is a post-graduate, interdisciplinary design program developed with George Brown – Toronto City College, in which a group of students spends a year inside the BMD studio working as a

team to research, design and realize an ambitious public project. The program was established in January 2003 and aims to create a new breed of designer. *Massive Change* is the first project for the IWB.

Vancouver Art Gallery

The Vancouver Art Gallery, founded in 1931, is one of the leading Canadian art museums. 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 architecture, design, performance, photography, film, video and the newest forms of digital expression, as well as the best of the traditional disciplines of painting, sculpture, and drawing. The Gallery has built a strong collection of photo-conceptual work by Stan Douglas, Jeff Wall and Ian Wallace as well as one of the most comprehensive photo-based art collections in North America, with the recent acquisition of more than 60 works by 16 internationally acclaimed artists including Rineke Dijkstra, Andreas Gursky, Cindy Sherman and Thomas Struth.

The Gallery presents national and international exhibitions ranging from contemporary artists to historical masters. Among its recent exhibitions are: *The Uncanny: Experiment in Cyborg Culture*; solo shows of acclaimed Vancouver artist Stan Douglas and contemporary British artists Douglas Gordon and Gillian Wearing; and *Robert Smithson in Vancouver: A Fragment of Greater Fragmentation*. Current exhibitions include *Baja to Vancouver: The West Coast and Contemporary Art* (through August 29, 2004); *Andy Warhol: Prints and Drawings from the Warhol Museum* (through September 6, 2005); and, *A Modern Life: Art and Design in British Columbia 1945 – 1960* (through October 11, 2004). For more information, visit www.vanartgallery.bc.ca.

- end -

When: October 2, 2004 – January 3, 2005

Where: Vancouver Art Gallery
750 Hornby Street, Vancouver, BC, V6T 2H7, Canada
604 662 4719
www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

Media Contact: Julie-Ann Backhouse, Vancouver Art Gallery, 604 662 4722
Natalie Hoch, Resnicow Schroeder Associates, 212 671 5170 nhoch@resnicowschroeder.com

Images: Digital images for professional media use are available at the Vancouver Art Gallery's FTP site. Contact Julie-Ann Backhouse or Natalie Hoch for password access or to request CD

Vancouver
Presentation
Sponsor



Media Sponsors



THE VANCOUVER SUN



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.