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Vancouver Art Gallery Presents BC's Most Prestigious Visual Arts Prizes

Audain Prize goes to Paul Wong; VIVA Awards to Raymond Boisjoly and Kelly Lycan



April 19, 2016, Vancouver, BC – At a special ceremony this evening, the Vancouver Art Gallery announced this year's recipients of the most prestigious awards in this province: the Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts and the VIVA Awards. Three distinguished individuals working in the field of visual arts were honoured: **Paul Wong** has been awarded the fourteenth Audain Prize, an annual reward of \$30,000 funded by the Audain Foundation. **Kelly Lycan** and **Raymond Boisjoly** are the winners of the VIVA Award, each receiving \$12,000 from the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation for the Visual Arts.

“The Vancouver Art Gallery is very proud to be the presenting organization for these distinguished awards, and we are honoured to partner once again with the Audain Foundation and the Shadbolt Foundation to continue this important British Columbia tradition. These awards speak loudly to the outstanding artistic talent and achievement in this province,” said Kathleen S. Bartels, Director of the Vancouver Art Gallery. “On behalf of this year’s Audain Prize jury, we are so proud to present this prize to Paul Wong, a pioneering artist in visual and media art. Wong is recognized for his distinguished, multifaceted and influential art career spanning four decades. In addition, he has been instrumental in founding and cultivating some of the most interesting and

innovative artist-run spaces in the city, such as On Main, VIVO Media Arts Centre, as well as Vancouver Art and Leisure Society.”

“The jury was unanimous in their support for Raymond Boisjoly and Kelly Lycan as this year’s VIVA Awards recipients. We acknowledge these two artists’ outstanding contributions as committed and increasingly visible members in the local, regional and national art communities. The jury additionally noted that Boisjoly’s discursive and teaching practice has made a mark in BC, and that Lycan’s artistic endeavors as a community member is significant to our cultural ecology,” said Melanie O’Brian, Director of Simon Fraser University Galleries and Trustee of the Shadbolt Foundation.

About the recipients

Born in Prince Rupert, British Columbia, in 1954, **Paul Wong** is an award-winning artist and curator known for pioneering early visual and media art in Canada, founding several artist-run groups, leading public arts policy and organizing events, festivals, conferences and public interventions since the 1970s. He has shown and produced projects throughout North America, Europe and Asia. His works have been presented in solo exhibitions at Presentation House Gallery, Grunt Gallery, Satellite Gallery, Vancouver (2015); Winsor Gallery, Vancouver (2014); Surrey Art Gallery (2013); Richmond International Film and Media Arts Festival (2011); Glenbow Museum, Calgary (2009); Vtape Video Salon, Toronto (2008); and Vancouver Art Gallery (2002). He has participated in an extensive list of group exhibitions locally, nationally and internationally.

Wong is the winner of the Bell Canada Award in Video Art for outstanding contribution to the field of video art in 1992. He was the first recipient of the Transforming Art Award from the Asian Heritage Foundation in 2002 and the inaugural winner of the Trailblazer Expressions Award in 2003, created by Heritage Canada, the National Film Board, and CHUM Limited (one of Canada’s leading media companies and content providers). In 2005, Paul Wong received Canada’s Governor General’s Award in Visual and Media Art for outstanding contributions to the field. In 2008 he was awarded Best Canadian Film or Video at the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

Wong’s works are in many public collections including those of the National Gallery of Canada, the Museum of Modern Art (New York), the Canada Council Art Bank (Ottawa), and the Vancouver Art Gallery. He is in numerous private collections and is the recipient of several major commissions and grants.

Kelly Lycan is an installation and photo based artist in Vancouver, British Columbia. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (1992), and her Master of Fine Arts from the University of California, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles (1998). Lycan’s primary interests are the way objects are placed and displayed in the world and the cycle of value and exchange they go through. Re-purposing and re-contextualizing ordinary things is a consistent part of her practice. Lycan investigates the distinctions between experience and reproduction translating this through sculpture and photography while referencing collections and methods of display found in museums, institutional gift shops, cheap retail stores, or high-end department stores. Lycan reinterprets and reassembles various high and low objects through strategies of exhibition, blurring the distinction between content and style, production and mass-consumption, and originals verses copies. Her work has been exhibited in exhibitions across Canada, the United States and Europe, including Susan Hobbs Gallery, Toronto (2015); Kamloops Art Gallery (2015); Presentation House Gallery, Vancouver (2014); SFU Gallery, Burnaby (2014); Gallery 295, Vancouver (2014); Or Gallery, Vancouver (2011) Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2010); and Gallery TPW, Toronto (2009). She is a member of Instant Coffee, a service-oriented artist collective who have exhibited in Canada, the United States, Europe, South America and Asia. Recent exhibitions include Kamloops Art Gallery, Kamloops (2014); New Forms Festival, Vancouver (2014); Incheon Art Platform, Incheon, South Korea (2013); and MKG 127, Toronto (2013).

Born in Langley, British Columbia, in 1981, **Raymond Boisjoly** is an Indigenous artist of Haida and Québécois descent who lives and works in Vancouver. In 2008 he received his Master of Fine Arts at the University of British Columbia, having completed his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Emily Carr University of Art and Design in 2006. His work investigates technology, Aboriginal identity, the relationship between text and image as well as the limits of the visible. Boisjoly has presented solo exhibitions at Koffler Centre, Toronto (2016); VOX, Montreal (2015); Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa (2014); Platform Centre for Photographic + Digital Arts, Winnipeg (2014); Urban Shaman Contemporary Aboriginal Art, Winnipeg (2014); Catriona Jeffries, Vancouver (2013); Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2013); and Simon Fraser University Gallery, Vancouver (2013).

Boisjoly's work has also been included in numerous group exhibitions internationally, including Mary Elizabeth Dee Shaw Gallery, Odgen, Utah (2016); Triangle, Marseille (2015); Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal; Dalhousie Art Gallery and St. Mary's University Art Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia; Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan (2014); Santa Fe (2014); Montreal Biennial (2014); Camera Austria, Vienna (2014); Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver (2013); Walter Philips Gallery, Banff Centre (2013); Esker Foundation, Calgary (2013); The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto (2012); Vancouver Art Gallery; Power Plant, Toronto; Kamloops Art Gallery, Kamloops, British Columbia (2012); Western Bridge, Seattle (2012); and Presentation House Gallery, North Vancouver (2012).

Established in 2004, **The Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts** has become one of Canada's most prestigious honours. Supported by the Audain Foundation, the Audain Prize grants \$30,000 annually to a senior British Columbia artist selected by an independent jury. Previous winners of the Audain Prize include Michael Morris (2015), Fred Herzog (2014), Takao Tanabe and Gathie Falk (2013), Marian Penner Bancroft (2012), Rodney Graham (2011), Robert Davidson (2010), Liz Magor (2009), Jeff Wall (2008), Gordon Smith (2007), Eric Metcalfe (2006), E.J. Hughes (2005) and Ann Kipling (2004). The 2016 Audain Prize jury members are Dana Claxton, Myfanwy MacLeod, Patrik Andersson, Lorna Brown and Kathleen S. Bartels.

Funded by the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation for the Visual Arts, the **VIVA Awards** are created to nurture the advancement of the visual arts in British Columbia and their appreciation by the public. Providing \$12,000 annually since 1988, these awards celebrate exemplary achievement by British Columbia artists in mid-career, chosen for outstanding accomplishment and commitment by an independent jury. Since its inception, 45 VIVA Awards have been realized. Recent recipients include Elizabeth Zvonar (2015), Skeena Reece and Mina Totino (2014), Elizabeth McIntosh (2013), Beau Dick and Ron Tran (2012), Reece Terris and Althea Thauberger (2011). This year's jury is consisted of Brian McBay, Shaun Dacey, Tarah Hogue, Diana Freundl and Elspeth Pratt.

Image credits:

Top: Paul Wong, *Solstice*, 2014, video installation, Courtesy of the Artist, Photo: SD Holman

Bottom left: Kelly Lycan, *Underglow*, 291, *From the Faraway Nearby*, 2014, mixed media, Courtesy of the Artist

Bottom right: Raymond Boisjoly, *Station to Station*, 2014, screen resolution LightJet print mounted on dibond, Courtesy of the Artist and Catriona Jeffries Gallery, Vancouver

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