



Edward Burtynsky, *Markaflljot River #1, Erosion Control, Iceland, 2012*, chromogenic print
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the Artist
© Edward Burtynsky, Courtesy Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto/Paul Kuhn Gallery, Calgary

Three decades of powerful photographs by acclaimed Canadian artist Edward Burtynsky presented at the Vancouver Art Gallery

February 20, 2014, Vancouver, BC – The highly anticipated exhibition *A Terrible Beauty: Edward Burtynsky* will be presented at the Vancouver Art Gallery from **March 1 – May 26, 2014**. Featuring 44 photographs from the Gallery's permanent collection, including 34 new acquisitions donated by the artist, this exhibition highlights Burtynsky's most captivating images of natural and man-made landscape that reflect the impressive reach of human enterprise. Burtynsky's early series of homestead photographs shot in British Columbia in the 1980s, documentation of the extraordinary growth and transformation of China in the past decade, and his new groundbreaking project on the subject of water are among the many well-known subjects on display.

"We are excited to showcase so many recently acquired photographs by Burtynsky in this remarkable exhibition," said Kathleen S. Bartels, the Vancouver Art Gallery's Director. "Burtynsky is an extraordinary artist whose thought-provoking work compels us to observe and reflect on our relationship with the world that we live in today."

A Terrible Beauty: Edward Burtynsky focuses on all major photographs the artist produced between 1983 and 2013. The exhibition is organized into four sections: **Inhabited**, **Extracted**, **Manufactured** and **Abandoned** – four types of forceful actions through which human beings have profoundly inscribed their presence on the world's land and water, highlighting many of the key subjects the artist has photographed in British Columbia (mines, railways and homesteads) along with well-known photographs of industrial landscapes in China, Bangladesh and North America. Many of the pictures in this exhibition are drawn from Burtynsky's new body of work, begun in 2008, called *Water*. Looking back on this project, Burtynsky recently described the impetus that shaped its research and production: "I wanted to understand water: what it is, and what it leaves behind when we're gone. I wanted to understand our use and misuse of it. I wanted to trace the evidence of global thirst and threatened sources. Water is part of a pattern I've watched unfold throughout my career. I document landscapes that, whether you think of them as beautiful or monstrous, or as some strange combination of the two, are clearly not vistas of an inexhaustible, sustainable world." (*Walrus*, October 2013).

During the exhibition, Burtynsky's photographs will be placed in dialogue with the exhibition **Scorned: Emily Carr**, paintings and drawings by Emily Carr from the Gallery's permanent collection. "Like Burtynsky, Carr also observed the impact of human industry on the natural world with both horror and fascination," said Bruce Grenville, Senior Curator at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Vancouver Art Gallery will present Edward Burtynsky as the 2014 **Heller Lecture's** guest speaker on **March 14, 2014**. The artist will talk about his photographic practice with a focus on his *Water* series photographs, and his award-winning documentary *Watermark*. Following his lecture, Burtynsky will be

joined by the renowned human ecologist William Rees for a discussion on the role of water in global ecological sustainability.

About Edward Burtynsky

Toronto-based photographer Edward Burtynsky is an acclaimed Canadian artist, internationally renowned for his remarkable photographic depictions of global industrial landscapes. Burtynsky was born in St. Catharines, Ontario in 1955 and received a B.A. in Photographic Arts from Ryerson Polytechnical University in Toronto and a Diploma in Graphic Arts from Niagara College in Welland, Ontario. Burtynsky has exhibited his work extensively in solo exhibitions since 1982. Burtynsky's work is in numerous public collections including Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; Brooklyn Museum of Art; Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal; George Eastman House, Rochester; Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; National Gallery of Art, Washington; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Winnipeg Art Gallery; and Vancouver Art Gallery. Burtynsky was one of the inaugural recipients of the TED Prize in 2005, and was awarded the Order of Canada in 2006.

A Terrible Beauty: Edward Burtynsky and ***Scorned: Emily Carr*** are organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery and curated by Bruce Grenville, Senior Curator.

A media event will take place on Thursday, March 13, 2014 from 9:00am to 10:30am with Edward Burtynsky and Bruce Grenville at the Vancouver Art Gallery. Media attending must RSVP to Debra Zhou (dzhou@vanartgallery.bc.ca)

Related events:

The Heller Lecture: Edward Burtynsky and William Rees

Friday, March 14, 7pm

UBC Robson Square, 800 Robson Street, Room C300 – Theatre

Admission: \$20 for Members and \$30 for Non-members

<http://www.eventbrite.ca/e/heller-lecture-2014-edward-burtynsky-tickets-8540943191>

***A Terrible Beauty* Curator's Tour with Bruce Grenville**

Tuesday, March 18, 7pm, in the Gallery

Senior Curator Bruce Grenville tours *A Terrible Beauty: Edward Burtynsky* and *Scorned: Emily Carr*, and discusses diverse works in the exhibitions. Free for Members or with Gallery admission.

Transformed Utterly: Poetic Interjections into *A Terrible Beauty*

Tuesday, April 22, 7pm, in the Gallery

The Vancouver Art Gallery and Poetry is Dead magazine present commissioned poetry created in response to the landscape in *A Terrible Beauty*. Free for Members or with Gallery admission.

Presenting Sponsor:



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Images are available upon request.

MEDIA INFORMATION:

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About the Vancouver Art Gallery: The Vancouver Art Gallery is a not-for-profit organization supported by its members, individual donors, corporate funders, foundations, the City of Vancouver, the Province of British Columbia through the BC Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts. We thank everyone for their continuing generosity