

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver Art Gallery presents full-size version of the Kobe Paper Log House with *Offsite: Shigeru Ban*

Offsite Installation Showcases Renowned Japanese Architect's Visionary Design for Earthquake Disaster Relief



On view: May 11 to October 8, 2018

April 24, 2018, Vancouver, BC – This spring, the Vancouver Art Gallery presents *Offsite: Shigeru Ban*. This exhibition organized by the Gallery's Institute of Asian Art features the full-scale version of renowned Japanese architect Shigeru Ban's Kobe Paper Log House at the Gallery's Offsite location (1100 West Georgia Street).

Under the direction of Shigeru Ban, the Gallery has built a version of his 15.8 square-meter Kobe Paper Log House utilizing readily sourced materials. Founder of the Voluntary Architects Network, Ban designed the Kobe Paper Log House as disaster relief shelter with his extensive knowledge of recyclable materials, particularly of paper and cardboard. This exhibition will also feature a large photomural documenting Ban's ongoing design work on global disaster relief projects – work that in 2017 earned him the Mother Theresa Award.

In 1995, the coast of Japan was hit by a 6.9 magnitude earthquake, with the major port city of Kobe as its epicentre. Over 6,000 people were killed, and 200,000 lost their homes. At the time a young Tokyo-based architect, Ban responded to the urgent need for temporary relief shelter by designing the Kobe Paper Log House, which served to house thousands of displaced Kobe residents. Since its creation, Ban has been called on by such organizations as the United Nations to develop his innovative structures, regarded for their low cost, easy accessibility and simple application.

“For more than twenty years, Shigeru Ban’s designs have served as a prototype for housing displaced peoples caught in the grips of natural disasters and war around the world,” says Kathleen S. Bartels, Director of the Vancouver Art Gallery. “Based in a city known as a hub for green design and architecture, where the threat of an earthquake remains integral to building design choices, the Gallery invites visitors to see up-close this remarkable work of sustainable design that has improved the lives of so many.”

Offsite: Shigeru Ban is organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery's Institute of Asian Art and curated by Bruce Grenville, Senior Curator.

Image: Shigeru Ban, Paper Log House – Kobe, 1995, photo: Hiroyuki Hirai

About the artist

Born in Tokyo in 1957, Shigeru Ban attended the Southern California Institute of Architecture from 1977 to 1980 and later, the Cooper Union School of Architecture where he met Dean Maltz, his New York Partner. In 1985, Shigeru Ban Architects was established in Tokyo. When Ban discovered that the two million refugees from the 1994 Rwandan Civil War were forced to live in appalling conditions, he proposed his design for paper-tube shelters to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and was hired as a consultant. After the Kobe Earthquake in 1995, he built the Kobe Paper Log House for displaced Vietnamese refugees who did not have access to temporary housing provided by the Japanese government.

Shigeru Ban was awarded the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2014 and the Mother Theresa Award in 2017.

About Offsite

Offsite is the Vancouver Art Gallery’s outdoor public art space located at 1100 West Georgia Street between Thurlow and Bute Streets, west of the Shangri-La Hotel, in downtown Vancouver. Presenting an innovative program of temporary projects, it is a site for local and international contemporary artists to exhibit works related to the surrounding urban context. Featured artists consider the site-specific potential of art within the public realm and respond to the changing social and cultural conditions of our contemporary world. New projects are installed in the spring and fall. *Offsite: Shigeru Ban* is the 17th *Offsite* installation of this series.



Offsite is organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery and funded by the City of Vancouver through the Public Art Program. The Gallery recognizes Ian Gillespie, President, Westbank; Ben Yeung, President, Peterson Investment Group; and the residents of the Shangri-La for their support of this space.

About The Institute of Asian Art

Responding to the city’s geographic location on the eastern edge of the Pacific Rim, the Vancouver Art Gallery has been committed to presenting contemporary art of the Asia Pacific region for more

than two decades. Launched in 2014, the Gallery's Institute of Asian Art (IAA) is a comprehensive initiative committed to advancing scholarship and public appreciation of Asian art.

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About the Vancouver Art Gallery

Founded in 1931, the Vancouver Art Gallery is recognized as one of North America's most respected and innovative visual arts institutions. The Gallery's ground-breaking exhibitions, extensive public programs, and emphasis on advancing scholarship all focus on historical and contemporary art from British Columbia and around the world. Special attention is paid to the accomplishments of Indigenous artists, as well as to the arts of the Asia Pacific region—through the Institute of Asian Art that the Gallery founded in 2014. The Gallery's programs also explore the impacts of images in the larger sphere of visual culture, design and architecture. www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

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.