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**Vancouver Art Gallery acquires major artworks by
Geoffrey Farmer, Reena Saini Kallat, Sonny Assu, Colleen Heslin and more**

December 21, 2015, Vancouver, BC – Vancouver Art Gallery is pleased to announce significant recent acquisitions for its expanding collection, including artworks by Vancouver-based artists Geoffrey Farmer, Al McWilliams, Colleen Heslin, Sonny Assu and Kim Kennedy Austin, Los Angeles-based Mark Ruwedel, New York and Munich-based Barbara Probst, and Mumbai-based Reena Saini Kallat among many others.

Vancouver artist Geoffrey Farmer, who has been recently selected to represent Canada at the Venice Biennale in 2017, donated his milestone work *Look in my face; my name is Might-have been; I am also called No-more, Too late, Farewell* (2010-ongoing) to the Gallery. This work is a computer generated montage of images and audio created from a library of thousands of sounds and scanned photographs that were collected from a vast range of sources, including field recordings and clippings from image libraries used before the advent of the internet. The title of the work references a sonnet by the pre-Raphaelite painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), and evokes a sense of loss around the past. Previously exhibited at the artist's major survey presented at the Vancouver Art Gallery during the summer of 2015, this is the fourth work by Farmer to enter the Gallery's collection, including the massive installation *The Surgeon and the Photographer* which will be touring to the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. This computer-generated montage is a significant addition to the Gallery's international collection of contemporary art.

Reena Saini Kallat donated *Woven Chronicle*, a large-scale, site-specific installation created specifically for the Gallery's Offsite location, where it was on display during the summer of 2015. Hand-woven electrical wires create an intricate web that maps the continents of the world, with an overlay of wires that represent various paths of human migration around the globe. This is the first work by this important artist to enter the Gallery's collection, and it contributes significantly to the holdings of contemporary Asian art under the Institute of Asian Art initiative.

With the Audain Emerging Artist Acquisition Fund, the Gallery continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to art from British Columbia by acquiring the following artworks by promising local artists:

Two works by Sonny Assu, titled *Leila's Desk* (2014) and *Inherent* (2014), are two sculptures that each takes the form of a school desk that has been subtly altered by the artist. They represent, together, encounters with racism experienced by both the artist and his grandmother within the Canadian education system in the early and late twentieth century, respectively. Sonny Assu is an artist of Ligwilda'xw (Kwakwaka'wakw) descent, of

the We Wei Kai (Cape Mudge) Nation. An Emily Carr University alumnus, Assu has exhibited his work widely across Canada since 2003. In 2011 Assu won the Creative Achievement Award for Excellence in First Nations Art from the British Columbia Achievement Foundation, and in 2007 he won The Emily Award. He was long-listed for Sobey Art Award in 2012, 2013 and 2015.

Colleen Heslin's *Tabby Cat* (2015) is a large-scale painting made of stitched-together dyed fabrics. It brings fresh energy to the project of abstraction, incorporating elements of analytical cubism, stain painting, abstract expressionism, quilting and collage. Based in Vancouver and Montreal, Colleen Heslin is an emerging Canadian artist whose work explores the boundaries and crossovers between painting, sculpture, quilting and photography. She was the 2013 winner of the RBC Painting Competition and the 2014-2018 City of Vancouver Artist Live/Work Studio Award. This is the first work by Heslin in the Gallery's collection.

Five photographs from Los Angeles-based artist Mark Ruwedel's ongoing series *Crossing* were gifted to the Gallery by the artist. These works depict Ruwedel's continuous survey of landscapes full of relics, fossils and the decayed remains of industrial and individual ambition. Since 2005, Ruwedel's work has been included in four group exhibitions at the Gallery, and these new acquisitions are an outstanding addition to the Gallery's holdings of photography.

Other key donations include artworks by Canadian and international artists Kim Kennedy Austin, Kate Craig and Eric Metcalfe, Barbara Ess, Gathie Falk, Isabelle Hayeur, Al McWilliams, Ayumi Minemura and Stephen Prina, Barbara Probst, Evelyn Roth, Lawrence Weiner, and Johannes Wohnseifer. The Gallery is also indebted to Toronto collectors Ann and Marshall Webb who donated 16 artworks.

With over 11,700 works of art, the Vancouver Art Gallery's collection which is held for the benefit of the citizens of Vancouver, represents the most comprehensive resource for visual culture in British Columbia. Established in 1931 with the founding of the Gallery, the collection grows by several hundred works every year. It is a principal repository of works produced in this region, as well as related works by other Canadian and international artists. The Gallery plans to dedicate half of the exhibition space (40,000 square feet) in the new building, designed by Herzog & de Meuron, to showcase the collection.

Image credit: Geoffrey Farmer, installation view of *Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been; I am also called No-more, Too-late, Farewell*, 2010-, algorithmic computer software for montage sequence, generative composition in collaboration with Brady Marks. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the Artist, VAG 2015.26.1, Photo: Rachel Topham, Vancouver Art Gallery

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High-resolution images are available upon request.

MEDIA INFORMATION:

Debra Zhou, Communications Specialist
Direct: 604-662-4722 Mobile: 604-671-2358
dzhou@vanartgallery.bc.ca

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.