

MEDIA ADVISORY

**Vancouver Art Gallery Director Kathleen Bartels awarded the 2017  
YWCA Women of Distinction Award for Arts, Culture & Design**



**May 31, 2017, Vancouver, BC** – The Vancouver Art Gallery is excited to announce that the Vancouver Art Gallery’s Director **Kathleen S. Bartels** has been awarded this year’s **YWCA Women of Distinction Award** in the category of **Arts, Culture & Design**, which honours extraordinary woman leaders who are driving positive change.

This prestigious distinction recognizes Kathleen’s role in enriching the community through her talents and her commitment to the visual arts, and is bestowed to an individual who has made a significant and sustained difference in Metro Vancouver, excels at facilitating the artistic efforts of others and who has broadened community engagement in the arts.

“This is an extraordinary honour, I am very touched and grateful to be recognized among such a distinguished group of colleagues,” says Kathleen S. Bartels. “For the past sixteen years, I have had the privilege to work with an outstanding group of people at the Vancouver Art Gallery including our talented staff, committed Board of Trustees and extraordinary artists from British Columbia and around the world. They are my inspiration.”

The awards ceremony for this year’s 34th annual YWCA Women of Distinction Awards was held at the Vancouver Convention Centre on Monday, May 29, 2017.

**About Kathleen S. Bartels**

Kathleen has been the Director of the Vancouver Art Gallery, the largest public art museum in Western Canada, for over fifteen years. Under her energetic, incisive leadership the iconic institution has experienced a period of unprecedented growth and a significant transformation of its programs, and has tripled its attendance and increased its membership eight-fold over the last fifteen years. Among her many important initiatives are the establishment of the Gallery’s Institute of Asian Art, unique in Canada for its scope and breadth; and the planning for a much needed new Gallery

building that will support the work of artists from Vancouver, throughout British Columbia and across the world, provide permanent space for the presentation of the Gallery's expanding collection, and engage growing and diversified audiences while advancing Vancouver's reputation as an international centre for art.

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#### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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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 innovative ground-breaking exhibitions, extensive public programs and emphasis on advancing scholarship all focus on the historical and contemporary art of British Columbia and international centres, with special attention to the accomplishments of Indigenous artists and the art of the Asia Pacific region—through the Institute of Asian Art 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](http://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.