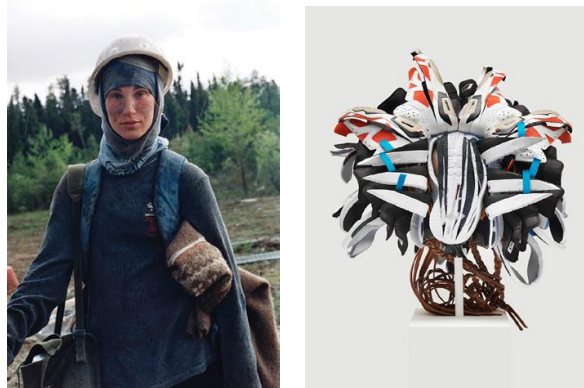


The Vancouver Art Gallery Announces the Acquisition of 334 Artworks in 2018

Significant Works by Brian Jungen, Elad Lassry, Fred Herzog, Sarah Anne Johnson, Sonny Assu, Stephen Waddell, Wayne Alfred and More Added to the Gallery's Collection



December 18, 2018, Vancouver, BC – The Vancouver Art Gallery announces the recent acquisition of an impressive 334 works to its expanding collection in 2018, the majority of which were gifted through the generosity of private donors. Some of these notable pieces include a photo series by Sarah Anne Johnson, recently presented works by Elad Lassry, a portfolio of works by Fred Herzog, as well as contemporary works by Indigenous artists Brian Jungen, Sonny Assu, and Wayne Alfred.

“The Gallery is proud to add remarkable works of art to its collection due to an outpouring of support by donors from Canada and abroad in 2018,” says Kathleen S. Bartels, Director of the Vancouver Art Gallery. “These gifts further strengthen the collection, especially our holdings of contemporary artworks by BC-based artists and prominent Indigenous artists, as well as photography and photo-conceptual works. Thanks to the generosity of a number of individuals, including artists themselves, these works will be available to the people of Vancouver and its visitors to enjoy.”

“The Gallery’s curators have been working for years to build the collection, and we are honoured by the increased support by collectors and artists this year to help us in our pursuits,” says Rochelle Steiner, Associate Director and Chief Curator of the Vancouver Art Gallery. “We look forward to initiating a series of exhibitions on the Gallery’s fourth floor in 2019 that will highlight selections from the collection, including recent acquisitions.”

Bolstering the Gallery’s contemporary photography collection, which is today considered among the most substantial in North America, Vancouver-based, renowned photography collectors Claudia Beck and Andrew Gruft generously donated forty-one works in 2018. This builds on Beck and Gruft’s 2005 donation of works by many of the world’s most celebrated photographers, a gift that transformed the Gallery’s photography collection, and has continued annually. With this latest gift, their most extensive contribution to the Gallery in the past decade, Beck and Gruft’s donation now totals 752 works of art. A highlight of Beck and Gruft’s donations this year is the large-scale colour photograph *The Asphalt Layer* (2001) by locally-based, internationally-known artist Stephen Waddell. This work draws reference to Gustave Caillebotte’s painting *Les Raboteurs de Parquet* (1875).

Additionally, collector and former Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisition Committee member Tim Kerr donated twenty-four pieces, his largest gift to the Gallery to date. This includes a portfolio of fifteen historic black-and-white photographs by the influential Fred Herzog dating from the 1950s to 1980s. Kerr's generous gift expands the Gallery's holdings of Herzog photographs, a number of which will be on view as part of an upcoming collection installation in 2019. Kerr also donated four works by BC artist Graham Gilmore, whose language-based works on paper and canvas utilize found text.

Several key acquisitions support the Gallery's commitment to showcasing BC's own contemporary Indigenous artists: Wayne Alfred's red cedar bark sculpture *Salmon Transformation Mask* (1992); Brian Jungen's *Warrior 4* (2018), made from Nike Air Jordans, copper and leather; and Sonny Assu's acrylic on panel work *Ghost* (2015). Alfred's mask is also a gift of esteemed collectors Claudia Beck and Andrew Gruft, while Assu's work is a gift of the artist and Jungen's work was purchased by the Gallery. All of these works are currently on view until March 17, 2019 as part of *The Metamorphosis*, an exhibition exploring transformation.

Three works by Tel Aviv-born, Los Angeles-based artist Elad Lassry were added to the collection as gifts: *Egg Centerpiece* (2012), *Two Crystals Green (Red)* (2012), and *Untitled (Light Blue Cabinet)* (2012). Two of these works were included in Lassry's 2017 survey exhibition at the Gallery, and offer compelling examples of this international artist's practice concerned with visual perception and the meaning of images in the twenty-first century.

The major installation *Tree Planting* (2003-4), from Winnipeg-born artist Sarah Anne Johnson was gifted to the Gallery by the artist. Comprised of sixty-five photographs, this series chronicles various adventures in tree planting, a rite of passage for many Canadians. Johnson's work is included in the collection of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and is currently on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

A legendary founder of the West Coast school of post-conceptual photography, Ian Wallace donated his 2011 large-scale, four-part work *Construction Site (Olympic Village I-IV)* to the Gallery's collection. It will be on view as part of a new collection installation in 2019. Two other works by Wallace were also donated this year: *The Summer Script* (1974), a work in oil on silver gelatin print, and *My Heroes in the Street - Studies for Pictures on Canvas* (1986), a group of ten chromogenic prints, both gifts of Beck and Gruft.

Since 1931, the Gallery's collection has become the most comprehensive resource for visual culture in British Columbia with strengths in conceptual and photo-based work, art by contemporary Indigenous artists, and prominent art from Asia among other priorities. The Gallery's collection boasts more than 12,000 artworks, but with its current space, only a small portion of collection works can be viewed by the public on a temporary basis. The new building by Herzog & de Meuron will address this issue with half of all exhibition space (40,000 square feet) dedicated to showcasing the collection, thus allowing visitors to enjoy many more of the Gallery's acquisitions throughout the year.

[Image #1: Sarah Anne Johnson, *Nadine (from Tree Planting)*, 2003, chromogenic print, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the Artist, Photo: Courtesy Julie Saul Gallery, New York, and Stephen Bulger Gallery, Toronto]

[Image #2: Brian Jungen, *Warrior 4*, 2018, Nike Air Jordans, copper, leather, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Purchased with funds from the Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisition Fund and the Jean MacMillan Southam Art]

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About the Vancouver Art Gallery (vanartgallery.bc.ca)

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.

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.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is situated on traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səfilwətaʔt (Tseil-waututh) peoples, and is respectful of the Indigenous stewards of the land it occupies, whose rich cultures are fundamental to artistic life in Vancouver and to the work of the Gallery.

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