

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY CELEBRATES RECORD YEAR

Gallery sees milestone year for visitation, programs, and community impact

November 8, 2018, Vancouver, BC – Reaching the close of its 87th year in operation, the Vancouver Art Gallery proudly reports an outstanding year for annual visitation, programs, and positive impact on the community. The 2017/18 fiscal year puts Western Canada’s largest art museum in excellent positioning as it looks toward the construction of a transformational new building and continues its mission of ensuring art and culture’s central place in the community.

More than 600,000 visitors attended exhibitions and programs at the Gallery and its public art site, a new record exceeding 2016/2017 visitation by close to 100,000 people, and members surpassed 37,000. The programming of two major exhibitions also helped ensure the success of this fiscal year, starting with the opening of the tremendously popular summer 2017 exhibition *Claude Monet’s Secret Garden*. In February 2018, the Vancouver Art Gallery presented *Takashi Murakami: The Octopus Eats Its Own Leg*, the first survey of Murakami’s work in Canada, drawing unprecedented crowds.

“Looking back, this has been, by all accounts, a milestone year for the Gallery marked by exceptional programs, record attendance and revenue,” says Kathleen S. Bartels, Director of the Vancouver Art Gallery. “We are grateful to the dedication of staff and the support of Trustees, donors and corporate partners. This coupled with a groundswell of support for our collection, exhibitions and programs, in addition to an ever-growing interest in art and culture made this year one of the most successful in the Gallery’s history.”

The past year was an important one for the Vancouver Art Gallery in continuing to promote arts and culture as well as accessibility throughout the community and around the province. The Gallery engaged with over 72,000 children, families, and adults through its arts education activities, and reached more than 28,000 people across British Columbia’s diverse communities through its touring exhibitions and activities. In addition, the Gallery’s mission of inclusiveness and ensuring access regardless of a visitor’s socio-economic situation saw more than 137,000 people welcomed with either complimentary or donated admission.

Important accomplishments were also made in terms of the Gallery’s Collection, which is at the heart of the museum’s operations. An incredible 240 acquisitions were made, bringing the Collection’s holdings to nearly 12,000 works. These additions vary in media, from photography and painting, to design objects and large-scale installations. The Gallery’s highly-regarded photography collection grew with significant works from several contemporary photographers including those by preeminent American photographer Walker Evans, and a major donation of historical photography by Mattie Gunterman. Historical and contemporary acquisitions by BC artists were also a focus this year, including works by Charles Edenshaw, Ian Wallace, Mark Lewis, Landon Mackenzie, Roy Kiyooka, Susan Point and Beau Dick.

The Gallery’s total operational revenue of \$21.4 million surpassed budgeted expectations by \$1.4 million. This includes admissions of almost \$5 million, memberships of \$1.25 million, and retail gross sales of \$3.9 million. Together with private sector fundraising and endowment, this revenue represents 82% of the Gallery’s total revenue base, with the remaining 18% coming from government sources.

The Gallery continues the positive momentum into the upcoming season, having recently launched its fall lineup headlined by the Canadian premiere of *Guo Pei: Couture Beyond*. Organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery in collaboration with Atlanta's SCAD FASH Museum of Fashion + Film, this exhibition features more than forty breathtaking designs by China's foremost couturière. The Gallery's other major exhibition this season is the career survey *Dana Claxton: Fringing the Cube*, which looks at the prolific Hunkpapa Lakota (Sioux) artist's investigations into Indigenous identity, beauty, gender and the body. Already these presentations are stirring up buzz and excitement among audiences.

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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 xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səłilwətaʔł (Tsleil-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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