

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver Art Gallery acquires acclaimed artworks by Rodney Graham, Susan Point, Skeena Reece, Stephen Waddell and more



Image credit: Rodney Graham, *Paddler, Mouth of the Seymour*, 2012-13, chromogenic transparencies, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Purchased with funds from the Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisition Fund and a financial gift from Phil Lind, © Rodney Graham, Courtesy 303 Gallery, New York

April 10, 2016, Vancouver, BC – The Vancouver Art Gallery is pleased to announce the recent acquisition of significant contemporary works for its expanding collection, including artworks by Vancouver-based artists Rodney Graham, Susan Point and Stephen Waddell; Beijing-based artist Wang Dongling; Montreal-based artist Sorel Cohen; and many others.

Rodney Graham's recent triptych *Paddler, Mouth of the Seymour* (2012-13), which presents a single image across three monumental lightboxes, was acquired through funds from Rogers' Vice Chairman and Gallery Trustee Phil Lind, as well as the Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisition Fund. The work is inspired by a painting by American artist Thomas Eakins and comes from a body of work that Graham has been making since 2005, which often depicts the artist as the subject of humorous self-portraits. Graham is an internationally-recognized artist and was the recipient of the Order of Canada in 2016 and this major acquisition will bring a more complete representation of his significant practice into the Gallery's collection.

Two contemporary cedar carvings—*Up Stream Quest* (2016) and *Birth of a Star* (2016)—by distinguished Coast Salish artist Susan Point, both currently on view in her major retrospective *Susan Point: Spindle Whorl* at the Vancouver Art Gallery, have been acquired, one through funds donated by Michael and Inna O'Brian. These outstanding works speak to Point's mastery of traditional Salish forms and techniques and propel the Gallery's commitment to growing its holdings of work by contemporary Indigenous artists. Additionally, three works by prolific artist Jerry Pethick, all of which were included in the 2015 exhibition *Jerry Pethick: Shooting the*

Sun/Splitting the Pie, a comprehensive overview of the Canadian artist's career, have been purchased with funds donated by Jim and Rojeanne Allworth.

Another acquisition is *Raven: On the Colonial Fleet* (2010), a bold installation and performance work by Canadian artist Skeena Reece, first presented at the 17th Sydney Biennale in 2010 and later included in *Beat Nation: Art, Hip Hop and Aboriginal Culture* at the Vancouver Art Gallery in 2012. The acquisition of this formative piece is aligned with the Gallery's interests in collecting work by artists from this region. In addition, two large-scale photographic works by Vancouver artist Stephen Waddell have been acquired—*Big Room Caveman Autoportrait* (2016) and *Stain* (2012). Both are part of a series of black and white images taken inside underground caverns in the United States, Canada and Lebanon, and were shown in Waddell's solo exhibition *Dark Matter Atlas* at the Gallery in 2016.

With the Audain Emerging Artist Acquisition Fund, the Vancouver Art Gallery continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to art from British Columbia and is pleased to acquire artworks from numerous artists currently represented in *Vancouver Special: Ambivalent Pleasures* (2016-17). These works include Allison Hrabluik's carefully crafted video *The Splits* (2015), which employs a cast of speed skippers, hula hoopers, weight lifters, opera singers and dog trainers among others to perform a strange and at times absurd talent show; Tamara Henderson's large upholstered sculpture *Scarecrow's Holiday* (2016); Ryan Peter's three photograms that uniquely explore analogue photographic techniques; and Eli Bornowsky's *Game Designer* (2016), a diptych comprised of two round, abstract paintings that investigate experimental processes of duplication.

Renowned artist Wang Dongling has also generously gifted a large calligraphic work *Heart Sutra* (2016), which he created during a live performance at the Gallery in October. The artist's innovative calligraphic form results in characters and even entire columns of text that collide to generate an energetic script. This donation will enable the Gallery to better represent its history of events and exhibitions.

Other significant donations include several works by Julia Feyrer and Tamara Henderson, which were recently exhibited at the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery in 2016 and will be shown at the Vancouver Art Gallery in the summer of 2017. Comprised of a number of themed tables laid with found and fabricated objects, this generous donation is in keeping with the Gallery's commitment to collect works by emerging artists. Additionally, two silver gelatin prints by Montreal-based artist Sorel Cohen—*After Bacon/Muybridge: coupled figures/head and arm* (1980)—have also been graciously donated by the artist.

With over 11,800 works of art, the Vancouver Art Gallery's collection 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. The Gallery is a principal repository for works produced in this region, and is committed to the collection of conceptual and photo-based work, work by contemporary Indigenous artists, and prominent art from Asia among other priorities. 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 its extensive collection.

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High-resolution images of works are available upon request.

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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

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.