

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY PRESENTS GROUNDBREAKING EXHIBITION ON THE POWER AND POTENTIAL OF GLOBAL DESIGN

Massive Change: The Future of Global Design

Thought-Provoking Collaboration with Designer Bruce Mau Redefines Museum Experience

On View October 2, 2004 to January 3, 2005

VANCOUVER, October 17, 2003 – The Vancouver Art Gallery has commissioned renowned designer Bruce Mau to create a groundbreaking exhibition that will investigate the capacity, power, and promise of design. *Massive Change: The Future of Global Design* takes a radical look at how rapidly evolving technologies have created the potential for design to affect change on a global scale, and how this has placed us at the beginning of a new, unprecedented period of human possibility. Organized by the Gallery in collaboration with Bruce Mau and the Institute without Boundaries, the exhibition will be on view October 2, 2004 through January 3, 2005 with additional tour venues and dates to be announced.

“*Massive Change* is a landmark project that will change the way we think, feel, and approach the realm of design, and create a stronger understanding of its increasingly dramatic impact on the world,” said Kathleen Bartels, director of the Vancouver Art Gallery. “The Vancouver Art Gallery is dedicated to pushing the boundaries of the museum experience and to undertaking exhibitions and programs that explore the relationship between contemporary life and artistic creativity, so it was natural for us to collaborate with such an extraordinary thinker and artist as Bruce Mau.”

Posing the question “Now that we can do anything what will we do?,” *Massive Change* investigates the virtually unlimited capabilities and resulting ethical dilemmas of design in the contemporary world. “In the past century – especially the past 50 years – design has emerged as one of the world’s most powerful forces,” said designer Bruce Mau, one of the leading voices in contemporary design, who is known for his unique, interdisciplinary approach and acclaimed manifestos *Life Style* and – in collaboration with Rem Koolhaas – *S, M, L, XL*. “Where once design was a way of responding to the world around us, it is now a catalyst that is changing the natural world in profound and significant ways.”

Exhibition Details

Massive Change represents a bold, new curatorial initiative at the Vancouver Art Gallery. The exhibition will translate the ideas communicated in Bruce Mau’s compelling new design manifesto into a provocative, accessible, and fully immersive experience. Innovative design installations will employ objects, sound, video, still photography, computer and satellite images, sophisticated interactive technology, and three-dimensional constructs to explore the impact of global design.

“*Massive Change* will create a new paradigm for exhibition design, reflecting the scope and dynamism of its subject matter,” said Bruce Grenville, Senior Curator at the Vancouver Art Gallery. “Design is an art form that is unique in its direct relationship to solving significant social issues. The exhibition reveals Bruce Mau’s visionary artistry; the physical experience will be unparalleled, immersing visitors in a series of powerful, poetic encounters to reveal *Massive Change* at work in our world.”

Massive Change will bring to light extraordinary breakthroughs and discoveries that have transformed our world, as well as those on the horizon that promise profound change. The exhibition is divided into key areas of human activity that constitute the future of global design culture – housing and urbanization, information, the image, movement, manufacturing, energy, materials, markets, the military, wealth and politics, and even life itself.

Among the highlights:

MOVEMENT: *Massive Change* will chart the rapid evolution of personal and mass transportation – spanning early innovations such as the Wright Brothers’ aircraft and the motorized tricycle of Carl Benz to futuristic air-filtering concept cars and the transatlantic Maglev train – to demonstrate how tremendous advancements in transportation are providing us with more freedom and greater efficiency at a lower cost, both ecological and economic. The exhibition will also explore new advances in vehicle technology that maximize speed and safety, including the “seeing” car and next-generation crash test dummies. An installation of the design studio of noted inventor Dean Kamen will provide an intimate look at the thinking process behind such celebrated inventions as the Segway and the IBOT.

INFORMATION: *Massive Change* will track the incredible range of computer interfaces in development since the era of punch cards, including the earliest computer “mouse” and the latest in virtual interfaces. A “Global Portraits” gallery will provide a look at powerful forms of information technology that are helping us to achieve an unprecedented understanding of the world, such as projections of internet traffic and censorship, global air traffic and flight paths, the ozone hole, and a three-dimensional rendering of the earth’s surface. The extraordinary capacity to archive global culture will be demonstrated by the Rosetta Project, a Rosetta Stone for future generations that will preserve an expected 4,000 languages on a 3-inch nickel disk.

THE MILITARY: From smart bombs to high-powered night vision goggles and nanotech military suits that heal wounds and disappear, *Massive Change* will investigate the extraordinary advancements in military technology that are equipping soldiers with superhuman powers. In addition, the exhibition will bring to light the innumerable innovations in our daily lives that originated with the military and how the direction of technology transfer is reversing itself – from M-16 Double Assault guns to super soaker guns, to Play Station II to remote-controlled trucks. The exhibition will also highlight the significant influence of the entertainment industry – such as Wonder Woman’s invisible plane and Boeing’s Invisible Defender.

MATERIALS: The world today is in the midst of a materials revolution. *Massive Change* will demonstrate how nature has become the source of inspiration for the design of artificial materials, and how materials science is producing substances with unprecedented performance ability and properties. Among the innovations on view are self-healing plastic, Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Aerogel – the lightest solid in the world, and Bio-Rubber – a biodegradable material that can serve as scaffolding to build heart tissue, blood vessels, cartilage, bone, and even whole organs for transplantation.

HEALTH AND LIVING: A garden of bio-engineered plants and animals will demonstrate how we now have the ability to design life itself, and the promise and uncertainties behind this new frontier. The exhibition will feature new life forms designed to improve food supplies under increasingly harsh environmental and social conditions, such as the featherless chicken; and products that allow for the delivery of first world medications to developing populations, such as Golden Rice, which is genetically modified with a daffodil gene that provides beta-carotene (Vitamin A) to fight blindness in malnourished children.

In addition to the international touring exhibition, which will include venues in the United States, Europe, and Asia, *Massive Change* will also include a book to be published by Phaidon Press; a series of public events and an online forum, which will serve as vehicles for leading thinkers – artists, architects, engineers, designers, philosophers, scientists, and writers – to discuss and debate critical themes and implications of *Massive Change*; an evolving website (www.massivechange.com); and a feature-length documentary.

Bruce Mau Design and the Institute without Boundaries

Massive Change is a project of Bruce Mau Design (BMD) and the Institute without Boundaries (IwB), a post-graduate, interdisciplinary design program developed with George Brown – Toronto City College, in which a group of students spends a year inside Mau's studio working as a team to research, design, and realize an ambitious public project. The goal of the program is to create a new breed of designer who, in the words of Buckminster Fuller, is a "synthesis of artist, inventor, mechanic, objective economist, and evolutionary strategist." *Massive Change* is the first project of the IwB, which was established in January 2003, and is an outgrowth of BMD. Since its inception in Toronto in 1985, BMD has gained international recognition for innovation across a wide range of projects, from book design to signage, exhibition design, identity and branding, products, parks, and more. Bruce Mau rose to prominence in the early 1980s through his work with Zone Books, which reconceived the role of graphic designer with designs infused by the logic of the texts. The studio has gone on to collaborate with some of the world's leading architects, artists, writers, curators, academics, entrepreneurs, businesses, and institutions. In 1995, Mau collaborated with Rem Koolhaas on the celebrated design manifesto *S, M, L, XL*, and in 2000 he published his own acclaimed manifesto, *Life Style*. Recent projects include Tree City, a project to transform Downsview Park in Toronto; STRESS, a multi-media installation about the limits of the human body; and Puente de Vida, the development of a museum of biodiversity in Panama City.

Vancouver Art Gallery

The Vancouver Art Gallery, founded in 1931, is one of the leading Canadian art museums. Reflecting Vancouver's prominence over the past decade on the international stage as a major center for contemporary visual art, the Gallery is committed to presenting groundbreaking work by contemporary artists from such disciplines as architecture, design, performance, photography, film, video and the newest forms of digital expression, as well as the best of the traditional disciplines of painting, sculpture, and drawing. The Gallery has built a strong collection of photo-conceptual work by Stan Douglas, Jeff Wall, and Ian Wallace; as well as one of the most comprehensive photo-based art collections in North America, with the recent acquisition of more than 60 works by 16 internationally acclaimed artists including Rineke Dijkstra, Andreas Gursky, Cindy Sherman, and Thomas Struth. The Gallery presents national and international exhibitions ranging from contemporary artists to historical masters. Among its recent exhibitions are: *Down from the Shimmering Sky* and *The Uncanny: Experiment in Cyborg Culture*; solo shows of acclaimed Vancouver artist Stan Douglas and contemporary British artists Douglas Gordon and Gillian Wearing; and a mid-career survey of Vancouver sculptor Liz Magor. Current and upcoming exhibitions include *Robert Smithson in Vancouver: A Fragment of Greater Fragmentation* (Sept. 20, 2003 – Jan. 4, 2004); *Chagall: Storyteller* (Oct. 16, 2003 – Feb. 8, 2004); *Home and Away: Crossing Cultures on the Pacific Rim* (Oct. 23, 2003 – Jan. 25, 2004); *The Divine Comedy: Francisco Goya, Buster Keaton, William Kentridge* (Jan. 24 – May 16, 2004); *Baja to Vancouver: The West Coast and Contemporary Art* (June 5 – Sept. 6, 2004); and *Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller* (Oct. 28, 2004 – Jan. 30, 2005).

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When: October 2, 2004 to January 3, 2005

Where: Vancouver Art Gallery
750 Hornby Street, Vancouver, BC, V6T 2H7
604.662.4719
www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

Hours: Monday to Sunday & Holidays, 10 am - 5:30 pm
Thursday 10 am - 9 pm

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