

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Vancouver Art Gallery Receives \$50 Million from Province of British Columbia to Construct New Building

VANCOUVER, BC —The **Vancouver Art Gallery** has received the largest one-time donation to an arts institution ever given by the Province of British Columbia. The \$50 million in lead funding announced by the **Honourable Gordon Campbell, Premier of British Columbia** on **March 6, 2008** is a crucial first step in the Gallery's plans to construct a new purpose-built art museum in Vancouver's vibrant downtown core.

"The Vancouver Art Gallery stands on the brink of one of the most exciting, dynamic periods in our history and, thanks to the extraordinary support of the Province of British Columbia, we are poised for major growth," said **Vancouver Art Gallery director, Kathleen Bartels**. "Vancouver is without question an increasingly important city in the world and deserves a great art museum – one that will fuel the ambitions and aspirations of its thriving visual arts community."

Projected for completion in 2014, the Gallery plans to begin construction on a new building in 2010, shortly after the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. After an extensive master planning process which concluded in 2004, the Gallery determined the need for a building of approximately 320,000 square feet, more than double the size of the current building, to meet the institution's exhibitions, collections and programming requirements for the next 30 years and beyond.

After 25 years in its current location in downtown Vancouver's Robson Square, the former Provincial courthouse building no longer meets the organization's needs across all areas of operation. The historic building, constructed in 1906 and re-designed by Vancouver architect Arthur Erickson in 1983 to accommodate the Vancouver Art Gallery, now has a severe lack of space for exhibitions, collections and programs, and also possesses seismic vulnerabilities and aging systems.

The new Vancouver Art Gallery will be an innovative and inspiring building that will stand as a lasting cultural and architectural icon for Vancouver, British Columbia and Canada. With more than twice the exhibition space of the current building, it will ensure the Gallery's future success in creating and securing major international historical exhibitions, as well as those featuring today's most important contemporary artists.

Vancouver is recognized around the world for the extraordinary artists who live and work in the city, including Jeff Wall, Rodney Graham, Stan Douglas, Roy Arden, Robert Davidson, Brian Jungen, Ken Lum and Ian Wallace. The new Vancouver Art Gallery will match the ambitions, talent, and successes of these artists and celebrate the work of the many great artists who preceded them. The new building will allow for new dedicated galleries for its growing permanent collection of nearly 10,000 works, including one of North America's most significant international photo-based collections, and the most outstanding holding of British Columbian art, including important First Nations artworks and the most significant collection of canvases by Canadian painter Emily Carr.

“A bold, dynamic new Vancouver Art Gallery will deliver superior artistic and cultural experiences to British Columbians and to visitors from around the world,” said George Killy, chair of the Vancouver Art Gallery’s board of trustees. “This dynamic new gallery will further solidify Vancouver’s position as the Pacific gateway to Canada and North America.”

Please also see the [March 6th media release](#) issued by the Province of British Columbia about the funding announcement, or visit www.gov.bc.ca.

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