
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

2022TACS0047-001531

Oct. 14, 2022

Province boosts support for new Vancouver Art Gallery

VANCOUVER – The Province is fulfilling a longstanding commitment to invest an additional \$50 million toward a new home for the Vancouver Art Gallery to protect and support the expansion of a cultural and tourism icon in B.C.

“The Vancouver Art Gallery is a flagship cultural institution in B.C., and we are proud to provide this additional investment to make this new building a reality,” said Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. “The new gallery will be a social, artistic and commercial hub and will enrich tourism and cultural experiences in the region for residents and visitors alike. I’m especially pleased with the collaborative partnership with four local Indigenous artists to design the building exterior. Once built, it is sure to draw global attention as the largest building to reflect Coast Salish culture in the world.”

The building façade was designed through collaboration with Coast Salish artists Debra Sparrow, Skwetsimeltxw Willard (Buddy) Joseph, Hereditary Chief Chepximiya Siyam’ Janice George and Angela George, and Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron, with Vancouver architects Perkins & Will. The exterior of the building is informed by a Coast Salish world view through consultation with Indigenous artists from the host Nations and reflects the gallery’s commitment to celebrating Indigenous art and advancing reconciliation in the province.

The new Vancouver Art Gallery will be a multifaceted facility featuring a theatre, library and research centre, artist studios, child care, restaurants and retail space. There will be an Indigenous community space, along with five dedicated classrooms for specialized school programs and art instruction to serve more than 90,000 students annually. The project is expected to generate an estimated 3,000 construction jobs and 1,000 permanent jobs in the tourism sector.

In addition, the new Vancouver Art Gallery’s Chan Centre for the Visual Arts will optimize capacity for safe and efficient storage of works of art in the gallery’s permanent collection, including Canada’s most important collection of works by renowned Canadian artist Emily Carr. The new gallery will be located at Larwill Park on Georgia Street in downtown Vancouver.

This is the second investment by the Province toward the new gallery. In 2008, the B.C. government provided \$50 million for a total investment of \$100 million. This project has received more than \$190 million in private donations, including \$100 million from the Audain Foundation in 2021 and \$40 million from the Chan Foundation in 2019.

“The new Vancouver Art Gallery will truly be a community space for the growth of B.C.’s arts and cultural sector, the enjoyment of the public and the prosperity of the region,” said Anthony Kiendl, CEO and director of the Vancouver Art Gallery. “Combined with the support of generous

donors, members and stakeholders, we are closer to realizing our vision of a new gallery that better reflects everyone in B.C. Together, we are contributing to a rich cultural environment in Vancouver, through the voices of Indigenous communities and the people from many lands who have decided to make Vancouver and British Columbia their home. The gallery will create strong links between local culture and international art and audiences.”

Mass timber will be featured as part of the construction to reduce the building's carbon footprint. The new gallery will be the first Passive House art gallery in North America and will be the most environmentally sustainable art museum in Canada.

Learn More:

For more information about the new Vancouver Art Gallery project:

<https://www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/future-gallery>

Two backgrounders follow.

Contact:

Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport
Media Relations
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BACKGROUNDER 1

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More Vancouver Art Gallery facts

- In 2022, the federal government invested \$25 million from Infrastructure Canada through the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Program, as well as \$4.3 million from the Department of Canadian Heritage Canada Cultural Spaces Fund for a total of \$29.3 million.
- The Vancouver Art Gallery is a not-for-profit registered charity supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Province of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver, as well as by its members, volunteers and private donors.
- The new Vancouver Art Gallery will provide:
 - 7,432 square metres (80,000 square feet) of exhibition space, doubling the current space to feature ongoing exhibitions of Indigenous, Asian, Canadian and international art, as well as the permanent collection.
 - Enhanced accessibility initiatives, including enriching experiences for visitors who are visually impaired.
 - More than 5,500 square metres (60,000 square feet) of outdoors terraces, including a 2,300-square-metre (25,000 square foot) open exterior community and green meeting place to serve as a public gathering place for art, people and events, including interactive art.
 - A resource centre, art library and archive available to artists, curators, scholars, educators and the general public.

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BACKGROUNDER 2

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What people are saying about the new Vancouver Art Gallery

Dana Claxton, (Lakota) artist, department head, UBC Department of Art History, Visual Art & Theory, Vancouver Art Gallery Association board member and vice-chair of the BC Arts Council –

“The new building will become a permanent symbol in this amazing and dynamic city that reflects the commitment of the gallery and the B.C. government to advancing reconciliation. As an Indigenous artist and as a board member of the gallery, I marvel at the gallery’s vision as the new building honours and celebrates Indigenous arts and culture throughout all significant elements of its design. It gives me great hope and pride to think about how this will translate to audiences and the public in light of our province’s promise to stand with Indigenous people on the path of reconciliation.”

Qwasen Debra Sparrow, Musqueam Knowledge Keeper and Indigenous artist/weaver –

“I am excited to be contributing to a space that will serve as a marker of the impact of Indigenous art on the nation’s cultural landscape. The new gallery will enable a new appreciation of a wide variety of art forms from around the world, enhancing our nation’s understanding of art. It has been wonderful to have worked in collaboration with the gallery to incorporate traditional Indigenous artforms into the architecture of the new building to be enjoyed by global and local citizens for generations to come.”

Skwetsimeltxw Willard (Buddy) Joseph, Elder in Residence and Squamish weaver –

“It is a great joy to have a hand in the creation of this monumental building. My role with the Vancouver Art Gallery as Elder in Residence has always been to provide support and guidance while promoting understanding and respect for Indigenous perspectives and values. I feel confident that the new building will reflect these values and promote Indigenous voices in many ways. I am grateful to be a part of the realization of this exciting new beginning for the Vancouver Art Gallery.”

Chepximiya Siyam’ Janice George, Indigenous artist/weaver –

“Our work with the Vancouver Art Gallery has created a deep connection to the past and a vision for the future. It is important to understand that this new gallery will be the largest expression of Coast Salish art in the world. It is essential we share and appreciate the history of those who came before us and communicate that history through this collaborative work.”

Qʷənat Angela George, Indigenous artist/weaver –

“The new Vancouver Art Gallery will continue to emphasize and celebrate Indigenous culture

through educational initiatives, exhibition programming and the prioritization of Indigenous voices. The new gallery will be a welcoming space for all individuals who wish to expand their horizons and broaden their senses of self through the experience of rich and diverse art forms. Teaching and sharing allow us to acknowledge where we come from, our stories and where we are today.”

David Calabrigo, chair, Vancouver Art Gallery Association and senior vice-president corporate development and legal affairs, Canfor –

“We’re grateful for the Province’s ongoing support for the gallery’s vision to create North America’s first Passive House art gallery. The new Vancouver Art Gallery will strengthen our understanding and appreciation of the diverse communities in British Columbia, and this significant provincial funding brings us one step closer towards the realization of this monumental project.”

Michael Audain, businessman, philanthropist and donor –

“The long overdue new Vancouver Art Gallery building will establish British Columbia as a premier destination for the visual arts, while providing a space to honour our renowned arts community. The Audain Foundation is proud to join so many of our citizens and levels of government in support of the talented artists who have been creating significant art on this coast for thousands of years.”

Christian Chan, Chan Family Foundation trustee and Vancouver Art Gallery Association board trustee –

“The new Chan Centre for the Visual Arts will be a world-class cultural institution. From every step in its design, we’ve made sure the new gallery will be accessible for all people to broaden their cultural horizons and will serve to educate and enrich the lives of both local and global visitors. Art changes the way we understand the world, and the support from the Province will give British Columbians an inspiring place to reflect.”

Hank Bull, local artist and Vancouver Art Gallery board trustee –

“Over the years, as I have come to know Vancouver as my home, I have found a sense of belonging within the welcoming walls of the Vancouver Art Gallery. To feel the solid support of the Province at this critical moment is a huge affirmation. The new building will function as a gathering place for diverse communities, a laboratory for creative minds, and a place of wonder and learning. It will serve as a beacon for Vancouver, telling the world that this is a city where great art happens.”

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