

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## The Vancouver Art Gallery Presents *Denyse Thomasos: just beyond*



**November 9, 2023, VANCOUVER, BC // Traditional Coast Salish Lands including the *xʷməθkʷəy̓əm* (Musqueam), *Skwxwú7mesh* (Squamish) and *səlilwətał* (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.**

The Vancouver Art Gallery is pleased to present *Denyse Thomasos: just beyond*, a career retrospective honouring the late Trinidadian-Canadian artist, Denyse Thomasos (1964–2012). The exhibition, organized by the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, and Remai Modern, Saskatoon, will present a selection of Thomasos' remarkable paintings, works on paper (many of which have been rarely seen), alongside sketches, photographs and newly uncovered documentary footage of Thomasos working in her studio. *Denyse Thomasos: just beyond* delves into the artist's innovative use of formalist techniques to push the boundaries of abstraction, infusing personal and political narratives onto her canvases.

Thomasos was one of the most talented painters to emerge in the 1990s, yet her remarkable contributions to contemporary art have often been overlooked. Through the skillful manipulation of pattern, scale and repetition, Thomasos effectively communicates the vast and enduring impact of historical events, such as the transatlantic slave trade, without exploiting the imagery of those most affected by these events.

"*Denyse Thomasos: just beyond* is a testament to the power of art in preserving the stories of our past and shaping our future," said **Anthony Kiendl, CEO & Executive Director** of the Vancouver Art Gallery. "We are pleased to share with audiences the profound and lasting impact of Thomasos' work."

The exhibition will feature over 60 of Thomasos' exceptional works, offering a unique opportunity for audiences to explore her remarkable career and artistic evolution. These works will illuminate the depth of her innovative techniques and the intricacies of her thematic exploration. The exhibition will include videos shedding light on the legacy and artistry of Thomasos through in-depth glimpses of her professional life.

*Denyse Thomasos: just beyond* is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, co-published by the AGO, Remai Modern, and DelMonico Books • D.A.P. and co-edited by exhibition curators Michelle Jacques, Head of Exhibitions and Collections/Chief Curator, Remai Modern; Sally Frater, Curator of Contemporary Art, Art Gallery of Guelph; and Renée van der Avoird, Associate Curator, Canadian Art, Art Gallery of Ontario. The catalogue will be available for purchase at the Gallery Store.

*Denyse Thomasos: just beyond* opens on November 10, 2023 and is on view through March 24, 2024.

Organized by the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto and Remai Modern, Saskatoon, and curated by Michelle Jacques, Head of Exhibitions and Collections/Chief Curator, Remai Modern; Sally Frater, Curator of Contemporary Art, Art Gallery of Guelph; and Renée van der Avoird, Associate Curator, Canadian Art, Art Gallery of Ontario. Circulated with the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.

For more information, please visit <https://www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/exhibitions/denysethomasos>

**IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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Image: Denyse Thomasos, Arc, 2009, acrylic on canvas, Art Gallery of Ontario, Purchase, with funds from the Women's Art Initiative, 2022, © The Estate of Denyse Thomasos and Olga Korper Gallery, Photo: Michael Cullen

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## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in Port of Spain, Trinidad, the acclaimed painter Denyse Thomasos was raised in Toronto and spent most of her professional career in Philadelphia and New York City. Thomasos earned a BA in Painting and Art History from the University of Toronto in 1987. She attended the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture in 1988 and the following year completed her MFA in Painting and Sculpture, Yale School of Art, Yale University. Throughout her career she attended various residencies, such as the Ucross Foundation Artist Residency, in Ucross, Wyoming in 2000 and the Bogliasco Foundation Artist Residency in Genoa, Italy in 2003. She won numerous prestigious awards, including the Guggenheim Fellowship Prize in 1997; the Joan Mitchell Foundation award in 1998; and the New York Foundation for the Arts award in 2008; as well as grants from both the Canada Council and the National Endowment for the Arts. Her work has been collected by private collectors, as well as major corporate and public institutions, including Rutgers University, New Jersey; Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa; Bank of Montreal, Toronto; Banque Nationale du Canada, Montreal; Art Gallery of Guelph; Oakville Galleries; the Hart House Collection at the University of Toronto; and private collections throughout Canada and the United States. When Thomasos died tragically in 2012, she was at the height of her career, with major museum shows, a full professorship, New York and Toronto gallery representation, and many prestigious awards and residencies.

## MEDIA CONTACT:

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**ABOUT VANCOUVER ART GALLERY** ([www.vanartgallery.bc.ca](http://www.vanartgallery.bc.ca)) Founded in 1931, the Vancouver Art Gallery is recognized as one of North America's most innovative visual arts institutions. The Gallery's innovative exhibitions, extensive public programs and scholarship focus on historical and contemporary art from British Columbia and around the world. Special attention is given to the accomplishments of Indigenous artists, as well as to artists from the Asia Pacific region—through the Institute of Asian Art founded in 2014. The Gallery's exhibitions also explore the impact of images in the larger sphere of visual culture, design and architecture. The Vancouver Art Gallery is a charitable 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 the ancestral and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and is respectful of the Indigenous stewards of the land it occupies, whose rich cultures are fundamental to artistic life in Vancouver and the work of the Gallery.*

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