

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## The Vancouver Art Gallery Selects Formline + KPMB to Design its New Home



**SEPTEMBER 29, 2025, VANCOUVER, BC // Traditional Coast Salish Lands including the xʷməθkʷəy̍əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətaɫ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.**

Following a rigorous, months-long search, the Vancouver Art Gallery has named **Formline Architecture + Urbanism** and **KPMB Architects** as the architectural team to lead the next phase of design for its new purpose-built home at Larwill Park, located at 181 West Georgia Street. Selected from proposals submitted by 14 leading Canadian firms, this decision marks an important milestone in the Gallery's renewed vision to create a destination for art and culture that reflects the diversity of its audiences. This is the beginning of a collaborative process toward a new conceptual design in 2026, one shaped by listening, dialogue and the perspectives of the communities the Gallery serves.

The selection was approved by the Gallery's Board of Trustees based on the recommendation of the Architect Selection Committee, following an in-depth review and interview process. The Committee was comprised of Board and Gallery leadership, artists, major benefactors and construction experts, bringing together broad expertise and perspectives to ensure the process reflected the Gallery's

capabilities, values and ambitions. Furthermore, a panel comprised of architects and building and real estate professionals advised the Committee on the technical aspects of the submissions.

“The selection of Formline + KPMB to envision the new Gallery is a bold and topical statement supporting Canadian innovation and excellence,” says **Jon Stovell**, Chair of the Gallery Association Board. “KPMB Architects brings a proven track record for creating elegant, world-class museums that centre art and community, while B.C.-based Formline Architecture + Urbanism leads with an Indigenous design vision that is both contemporary and deeply rooted in tradition.”

**Sirish Rao** and **Eva Respini**, Interim Co-CEOs of the Gallery, share their thoughts on the opportunities ahead with this new partnership: “The Vancouver Art Gallery is the cultural memory keeper of British Columbia and holds a unique position in the Pacific Northwest. This is the largest cultural infrastructure project in Vancouver in over 30 years and we are thrilled to partner with Formline + KPMB to work towards a Gallery that supports storytelling, convening, innovation and access to art and ideas.”

This Formline + KPMB partnership, forged through years of mutual respect and collaboration, combines Formline’s authentic, place-based Indigenous design thinking with KPMB’s proven gallery expertise and pragmatic execution. KPMB Architects founding partner **Bruce Kuwabara** brings a commitment to engaging diverse perspectives, which Formline, under the leadership of founder **Alfred Waugh**, amplifies with its unique perspective and skill set. Together, Formline + KPMB promise a new Vancouver Art Gallery that is both a local cultural beacon and an international architectural landmark, blending Indigenous and global knowledge to reflect Vancouver’s vibrant, inclusive spirit.

“Our team is deeply honoured to receive the commission to design the new Vancouver Art Gallery, as it brings my personal journey full circle in a profound way,” says **Alfred Waugh**, founder and principal of Formline Architecture + Urbanism. “My mother left this world too early, and during my formative years, she asked me to do something meaningful for our people—a request that has sparked my journey into architecture. Now we have been privileged with this opportunity to celebrate Vancouver’s vibrant culture while honouring the Indigenous peoples who have stewarded this land for generations and paying tribute to the beautiful mountains and lush rainforests that define our region.”

“It’s an honour to collaborate with Alfred Waugh and Formline to help shape the future of an institution that holds such profound cultural and civic significance for Vancouver and British Columbia—places that express a diversity of world views all at once,” says **Bruce Kuwabara**, a founding partner at KPMB Architects. “Following their release from an internment camp in British Columbia, my family relocated to Hamilton where I was born. Returning to the province to design the Vancouver Art Gallery is deeply meaningful for me.”

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Pictured left to right: Alfred Waugh and Bruce Kuwabara

## **ABOUT THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY**

Founded in 1931 on the ancestral and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, the Vancouver Art Gallery is recognized as one of North America's most innovative visual arts institutions. The Gallery's celebrated exhibitions, extensive public programs and emphasis on advancing scholarship all 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 those of the Asia Pacific region—through the Centre for Global Asias (formerly 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 Gallery's new Art of Wellbeing lab furthers its commitment to community by promoting the role of art in fostering health and wellbeing. Developed in collaboration with healthcare professionals, researchers and Indigenous Elders, the lab creates opportunities for individuals to engage with art in ways that support mental, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Committed to inclusivity and accessibility, the Gallery welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors each year to share perspectives, build community and shape our collective future through art.

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.

## **ABOUT FORMLINE ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM**

Based in West Vancouver, **Formline's** remarkable portfolio of work integrates Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Western Knowledge to create buildings that are culturally sensitive and environmentally responsible. Projects like the Indigenous House, Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre, and the Governor General's award-winning Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre at UBC highlight their talent for creating spaces that are contemporary yet deeply rooted in Native traditions. Their emphasis on the poetic use of wood and tactile, inviting environments reflects a design philosophy that honors place and community.

## **ABOUT KPMB ARCHITECTS**

**KPMB Architects** is an award-winning architecture firm with more than 35 years of cultural experience. The firm is responsible for six projects that defined Toronto's Cultural Renaissance, including the Gardiner Museum, the Roy Thomson Hall Enhancement, the TELUS Centre for Performance and Learning for the Royal Conservatory and the TIFF Lightbox, home of the Toronto International Film Festival. KPMB's belief in civic humanism and democratic pluralism is expressed in its design of several Category 'A' cultural institutions that combine world-class exhibition spaces for contemporary art and artists and generous community space. These include the Art Gallery of Hamilton, the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa, the Gardiner Museum in Toronto, Rемаi Modern in Saskatoon, the Ottawa Art Gallery and Contemporary Calgary.