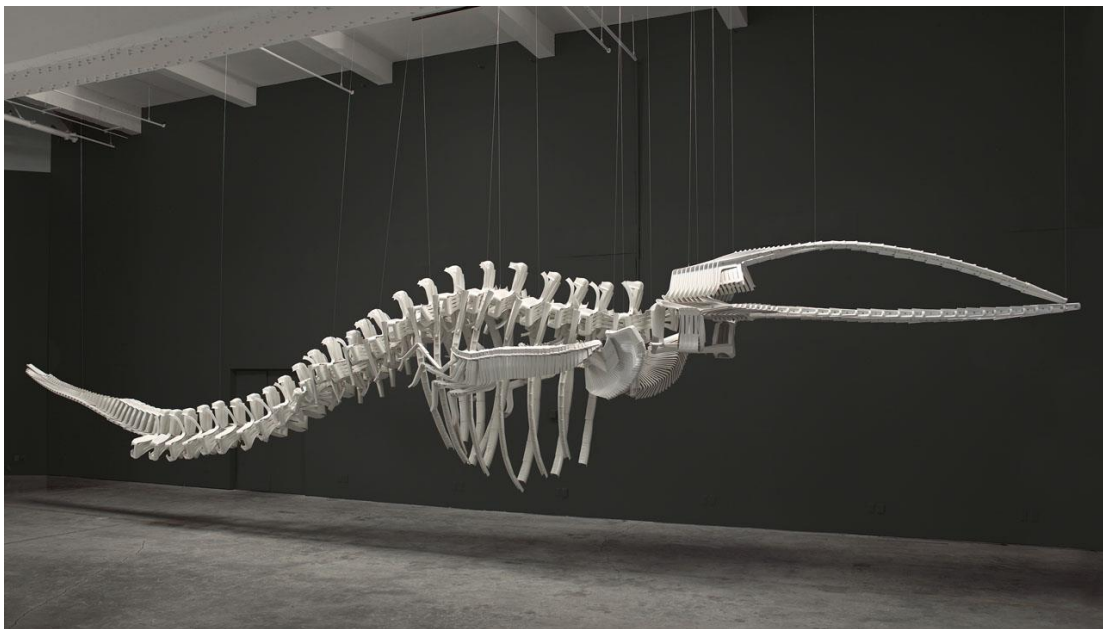


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Vancouver Art Gallery Launches Major Exhibition Addressing Climate Change Through Contemporary Art

A landmark international exhibition examines how contemporary artists are reimagining our relationship to a changing planet



April 22, 2026, VANCOUVER, BC // Traditional Coast Salish Lands including the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliiwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is pleased to present *Future Geographies: Art in the Century of Climate Change*, the first major exhibition in Canada to examine the intersection of contemporary art and future climates on a global scale. Bringing together more than 30 artists and over 35 works—from immersive video installations to living sculptures—the exhibition underscores the urgency and relevance of sustainability and the environment as defining issues of our time. The exhibition opens on May 14, 2026 and runs until January 10, 2027.

“Future Geographies asks: How do we face ecological change with anything other than despair? Artists are not scientists, nor are they journalists, but they have a role to play in asking questions about our future on this planet. In this century shaped by climate change, that act of imagining is both a necessity and a form of resistance.” - **Eva Respini**, Interim Co-CEO & Curator at Large at the Vancouver Art Gallery

Organized into four thematic sections, *Future Geographies* brings into dialogue artists from around the world whose work engages with sustainability, activism and care. The exhibition opens with the thematic chapter titled Living Knowledge, where visitors are welcomed by **Teresita Fernández**'s *Island Universe 2* (2023)—a monumental charcoal installation evoking the Earth's geological past, when the continents formed a single supercontinent—presented in Canada for the first time. In this section, works by **Andrea Bowers** draw on the long history of environmental activism in Northern California, while **Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill** presents a delicate flag composed entirely of tobacco leaves. Visitors also encounter **Firelei Báez**'s *Unbound* (one way

ashore, a thousand channels)—from her ongoing series of Map paintings—and **Carolina Caycedo's** delicate hanging sculptures, fashioned from fishing nets gathered from communities whose waterways have disappeared due to damming projects in Central America.

Consumed Earth examines artistic responses to histories of extraction and the threat of extinction. **John Akomfrah's** widely acclaimed *Vertigo Sea* (2015)—an epic three-channel video installation that montages archival and new footage into a meditation on humanity's interdependence with the ocean—makes its Vancouver debut. **Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun Lets'lo:tseltun's** vivid depiction of British Columbia wildfires stands as a history painting for our time, while Act III of **LaToya Ruby Frazier's** *Flint Is Family In Three Acts* (2022) documents the crisis of contaminated drinking water in Flint, Michigan with portraits and stories of those activists who advocated for clean water. Visitors also see **Edward Burtynsky's** aerial photographs of ocean oil spills, confronting the impact of human activity on the planet, and **Judy Chicago's** series *The End: A Meditation on Death and Extinction*, which tackles human mortality.

Speculative Worlds introduces artists who have made fantastical works about imagined futures that incorporate notions of science fiction, including **Josh Kline**, whose video installations project a not-too-distant future changed by rising tides. Figurative sculptures by **Huma Bhabha**, **Cannupa Hanska Luger** and **Rose B. Simpson** imagine a post-human future, while **Abbas Akhavan's** sculpture of natural elements presented against a green screen suggests a future in which nature is encountered primarily through mediated experience.

The exhibition concludes with Material Memory, centred on artworks fashioned from recycled and found materials, and those that focus on ideas of healing and recuperation. **Brian Jungen's** *Cetology* (2002)—an 8.5-metre-long whale skeleton constructed from white plastic patio chairs—critiques environmental destruction, consumer waste and the institutional conventions of natural history museums. Visitors are invited to contemplate **Jean Shin's** *Huddled Masses* (2020), composed entirely of obsolete cell phones and electronics, which exposes tensions between nature and technology. Also featured is *YOU LIBERATE MY ANGER MY DESIRE MY LOVE* (2026), a sculpture by **Jeffrey Gibson** created for the exhibition, marking the artist's first presentation in Vancouver. The exhibition takes its title from *Future Geography: Cosmic Cliffs* (2023) by Brazilian artist **Clarissa Tossin**. In the work, NASA images of distant star clusters and planets are woven together with discarded Amazon delivery boxes—an everyday emblem of global consumption and environmental impact.

Future Geographies extends to the Gallery's fourth floor with *SANCTUARY: The Ancient Forest Experience* (2021), an immersive installation by artist, ethnobotanist, educator and activist **Dr. T'uy't'tanat Cease Wyss**, in collaboration with filmmakers **Damien Gillis** and **Olivier Leroux**. Presented within a geodesic dome, the 360° projection transports visitors into two ancient forest ecosystems in British Columbia: the Inland Temperate Rainforest in the Kootenay region and Stal'Kaya (Dakota Bear Ancient Forest) on the Sunshine Coast, in the unceded territory of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation). Guided by Wyss's narration and a rich soundscape of birdsong, streams and waterfalls, the work foregrounds the ecological and cultural significance of these environments, including the presence of culturally modified trees that reflect long-standing Indigenous stewardship. By juxtaposing these intact forests—some of which have existed since the last Ice Age—with nearby clear-cuts and managed tree plantations, *SANCTUARY* highlights both the beauty and vulnerability of old-growth environments, underscoring what is at stake in their protection. The presentation of *Sanctuary* is accompanied by a presentation of Cedar baskets and garments by Indigenous weavers and selected by Cease Wyss. This display highlights Cedar's sacred role at the heart of Indigenous communities, underscoring its enduring cultural, spiritual and practical significance.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Vancouver Art Gallery is partnering with the University of British Columbia Climate Action Lab to develop new platforms for dialogue and public engagement. The collaboration brings together more than 40 undergraduate students from across disciplines, led by **Eva Respini** and **Dr. Sara Harris**, Department of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences. Student-produced videos, presented throughout the

exhibition, respond to individual artworks and themes, providing scientific context and expanding on the environmental issues explored in each section.

Future Geographies: Art in the Century of Climate Change adopts a sustainable approach to exhibition-making, aligning its production methods with the urgency of its subject matter. Environmentally conscious practices include reusing existing gallery walls and plinths, replacing traditional vinyl wall texts with recycled alternatives and donating materials at the end of the exhibition to city organizations. The Gallery has also focused on including works by local artists and artists in the collection, implemented paperless ticketing, minimized exhibition-related travel and avoided air transport of artworks as part of its commitment to reducing environmental impact.

The Gallery has partnered with Canada's National Observer to present *Future Geographies* online, extending the exhibition to audiences worldwide—visit today at: www.futuregeographies.nationalobserver.com

This morning at 10AM PDT, audiences are invited to join a live online conversation with **Eva Respini**, Interim Co-CEO and Curator at Large at the Vancouver Art Gallery, artist and curator **Josh Kline**, and **Linda Solomon Wood**, founder, publisher and editor-in-chief of Canada's National Observer, hosted by the Vancouver Art Gallery and Canada's National Observer. To join the stream, visit: www.us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register

An exclusive media preview, tour and Q&A will take place on Wednesday, May 13 at 4 PM. Email media@vanartgallery.bc.ca to RSVP.

Future Geographies: Art in the Century of Climate Change is organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery and curated by **Eva Respini**, Interim Co-CEO and Curator at Large, with **Andrea Valentine-Lewis**, Curatorial Assistant. The exhibition opens on Thursday, May 14, 2026 and runs until January 10, 2027. The exhibition will be on view at the Art Gallery of Ontario from March to September 2027. The presentation at the AGO is led by **Debbie Johnsen**, Assistant Curator, Contemporary Art.

Major Partner:



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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Certificate in Climate Studies and Action

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The Gallery will present a robust series of public programs through the run of the exhibition featuring artists and experts from across disciplines, offering multiple entry points into the exhibition's themes. Program details will be announced on a rolling basis—please visit the Gallery's website for the latest updates:

www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/events/

CURATOR TALK

Thursday, June 18, 2026 | 6:30 – 8 PM | 4East

Join Eva Respini, Curator of *Future Geographies: Art in the Century of Climate Change* and Interim Co-CEO and Curator at Large at the Vancouver Art Gallery, to delve deeper into the artists and themes explored in the exhibition. She will trace the evolution of the project and research, speak to the selection of artworks and artists, how she worked with community partners to make this a more sustainable exhibition project and what it means to work on an exhibition on this topic today.

Where Plants Speak: A Guided Walk with Cease Wyss

Saturday, June 27, 2026 | 2 – 4:30 PM | Stanley Park and the Vancouver Art Gallery

Join Dr. T'uy't'ananat Cease Wyss for a guided plant walk that interweaves ecology, storytelling and Indigenous knowledge. Starting at the Stanley Park Field House, participants will move through the landscapes of Stanley Park, as Cease shares teachings about the plants that sustain and shape these ecosystems. Following the walk, the group will return together to the Vancouver Art Gallery for a making and sharing workshop.

Fall 2026 | ARTIST TALK: Jean Shin

Jean Shin's practice explores the intersections of technology, consumption, and environmental impact, transforming discarded materials—such as cell phones and e-waste—into evocative installations.

Presented in conjunction with *Future Geographies: Art in the Century of Climate Change*, this artist talk will feature Shin reflecting on the environmental and social implications of technological production and waste, offering insight into how artistic practice can critically engage with the ecological consequences of global technological systems.

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Image: Brian Jungen, *Cetology*, 2002, plastic chairs, Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Purchased with the Financial Program, the Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisition Fund and Support of the Canada Council for the Arts Acquisition Assistance, VAG 2003.8 a-z, Photo: Vancouver Art Gallery

For media requests, email media@vanartgallery.bc.ca

Media package: <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/XCFut5lcOf>

ABOUT EVA RESPINI

Eva Respini is an internationally renowned curator and arts leader and is Interim Co-CEO and Curator at Large at the Vancouver Art Gallery. Respini served as the curator and co-commissioner for the 2022 U.S. Pavilion's presentation of Simone Leigh at La Biennale di Venezia. She organized the highly successful mid-career survey of Simone Leigh's work, which opened at the ICA/Boston in April 2023, and toured across the United States through 2025.

Prior to her arrival in Vancouver, Respini was Deputy Director and Barbara Lee Chief Curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art Boston (ICA/Boston). There she curated over a dozen exhibitions, including ambitious thematic exhibitions *Art in the Age of the Internet* and *When Home Won't Let You Stay: Migration through Contemporary Art*. Prior to her tenure at the ICA/Boston, she served as Curator at the Museum of Modern Art for more than a decade, where she curated numerous acclaimed exhibitions.

Respini has been a visiting lecturer, critic and speaker at a number of universities and taught a seminar on curatorial practice at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design for five years. She has published numerous books and catalogues, and her writing appears in museum publications and periodicals.

ABOUT THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

Founded in 1931 on the ancestral and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (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.