

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Vancouver Art Gallery Welcomes Students, Teachers and Families for Another Season of Art, Learning and Creativity

School Programs, Teacher Workshops, Family Activities and Youth Programs Encourage Learners of All Ages to Discover New Ways of Understanding the World Through Art



September 3, 2026, VANCOUVER, BC // Traditional Coast Salish lands including the xʷməθkʷəy̍əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is one of British Columbia's leading destinations for art education, welcoming thousands of students and young people each year. From interactive tours and hands-on artmaking workshops to programs designed specifically for teachers, families and young adults, the Gallery connects learners of all ages with its exhibitions and collection. This season, school and family programs take inspiration from four major exhibitions: *That Green Ideal: Emily Carr and the Idea of Nature*, *Future Geographies: Art in the Century of Climate Change*, *Highlights from the*

Collection and the forthcoming *Modern Iran and the Avant-Gardes, 1948–78*, opening December 11.

“Every child begins life curious, imaginative and creative. Art helps us nurture and sustain those qualities,” says **Sirish Rao**, Interim Co-CEO. “Providing access to art is at the core of our work and an essential investment in our collective future. As we plan for our future home at Larwill Park, we are creating the conditions to reach more young people than ever before, with dedicated spaces for learning and new opportunities to engage with art, artists and ideas. When young people encounter art, they are doing more than building an appreciation for culture. They are learning to think critically, see the world from different perspectives, and imagine new possibilities for themselves, their communities and their future.”

In the 2025–26 school year, the Gallery welcomed more than 23,000 free visits from children and youth aged 18 and under, and almost 10,000 visitors in School Programs—7,843 students and 1,293 chaperones representing 141 schools across B.C.

Beginning September 22, school groups are invited to explore *Future Geographies: Art in the Century of Climate Change*, the Gallery’s major international exhibition examining the intersection of contemporary art and the climate crisis. The Gallery’s school tours and workshops use interactive looking, discussion and creative activities to encourage students to develop visual literacy, engage directly with art and ideas, and to think critically about climate change, sustainability and the future.

School programs are offered four times a day, four days a week, with programs at capacity each year—a reflection of the strong demand from teachers and schools across the region. Bookings for the 2026–27 school year open **Wednesday, September 9 at 3:30 PM**. Find out more and register here: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/schools

“Our hope is that every young person who walks through our doors experiences a sense of awe, and a grasp of their own creative potential,” says **Susan Rome**, Head of Learning at the Vancouver Art Gallery. “We want the Gallery to feel like a place that belongs to them—a space where they feel welcomed, curious and free to ask questions, explore ideas and respond personally to works of art. By encouraging young people to look slowly and deeply, think critically and express themselves without judgement, we hope to nurture not only lifelong learners, but a lifelong connection to the Gallery and the arts.”

The Gallery’s commitment to art education extends beyond the classroom. Teachers receive complimentary study guides to help prepare their students for their experience. The Gallery also offers teacher orientations that provide opportunities to explore exhibitions and learn more about approaches to teaching with art. More than 200 teachers from across British Columbia participated in teacher orientations and professional development workshops last year.

Orientations begin on September 17, followed by a special provincial professional development day workshop on Friday, October 23. The day will include a guided exhibition tour and strategies for learning workshop, featuring guest speaker **Elin Kelsey**, author of *Finding Hope in a Climate Change Crisis*.

Art for the whole family

Every Sunday from 11 AM to 4 PM, visitors of all ages can drop into The Making Place, a creative space where they can experiment with materials and make art together. Upcoming activities include making paper weavings inspired by **Clarissa Tossin's** work in *Future Geographies* and stripe drawings inspired by *Jim Lambie: Zobop (Colour-Chrome)*.

Special editions of the Making Place include a Design Vancouver Festival workshop on September 20, exploring **B.C. Binning's** design practice through mobile-making, and Truth and Reconciliation-focused activities on September 27, including light boxes inspired by **Marianne Nicolson's** *Baxwana'tsi: The Container for Souls* (2006) in *Highlights from the Collection* and paper sculptures inspired by **Brian Jungen's** *Cetology* (2002) in *Future Geographies*.

On September 30, the Gallery will mark National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with *Where Plants Speak: A Guided Walk with Cease Wyss*. Indigenous artist, ethnobotanist and knowledge keeper **Dr. T'uy't'tanat Cease Wyss** will lead a guided plant walk through *X̱wá'yx̱way* (Stanley Park).

Growing the next generation of artists

Teen Art Group, presented in partnership with **Emily Carr University of Art + Design**, has been running for almost 20 years. This immersive program for youth aged 15 to 18 alternates between the Gallery and Emily Carr University, giving participants opportunities to explore exhibitions, meet artists and cultural practitioners, experiment with materials and develop their own artistic voices. This fall, artist **Emily Hermant**, whose *Vancouver Now!* exhibition is currently on display at the Gallery, will lead workshops with the Teen Art Group participants.

The Gallery also partners with **Arts Umbrella** on **Art Exchange**, a visual arts program that encourages young students to respond creatively to exhibitions. The months-long program culminates with participants producing exhibitions of their work at Arts Umbrella's space on Granville Island. Together, these programs give young people opportunities not only to experience art, but to become artists, makers and contributors to Vancouver's creative community.

There's always something to discover

Families visiting the Gallery can explore exhibitions together at their own pace. Search-and-find family activity guides are available across three floors, encouraging children and adults to look closely and discover artworks together. Interactive family spaces within *That Green Ideal: Emily Carr and the Idea of Nature* and—from December—*Modern Iran and the Avant-Gardes, 1948–78* offer more opportunities to draw, read, make and explore, with activities designed to accommodate different ages and engagement levels.

The Gallery also offers public tours throughout the week, including an interactive family tour every Sunday at 2 PM. Children and youth aged 18 and under always receive free admission, while the Gallery offers free self-serve storage lockers for coats, backpacks and foldable strollers.

For more information, please visit: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/family-programs/

SCHOOL TOURS AND WORKSHOPS

September 22, 2026–February 18, 2027 | Monday–Thursday, 9:30 AM and 12:15 PM

Grades 2–12

Registration opens **September 9 at 3:30 PM**. Space is limited and sessions fill quickly. Find out more here: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/schools/

TEACHER ORIENTATIONS

Teacher Orientations are a great opportunity for teachers to preview an exhibition and learn more about the accompanying workshop before bringing students to the Gallery. For more information, or to register, visit: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/schools/teacher-resources/

September 17, 2026 | 4–5:15 PM

Future Geographies: Art in the Century of Climate Change

January 7, 2027 | 4–5:15 PM

Modern Iran and the Avant-Gardes, 1948–78

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY WORKSHOP

October 23, 2026 | 4–5:15 PM

THE MAKING PLACE

Every Sunday | 11 AM–4PM

The Making Place is open to all ages and free with Gallery admission. Family tours are designed for visitors aged 5 to 12 years old and their families, although everyone is welcome. Find out more here: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/family-programs

TEEN ART GROUP

October 15, 2026–February 11, 2027 | Every Thursday, 4–7 PM

Ages 15–18

Teen Art Group (TAG) is an immersive arts learning experience presented in partnership with Emily Carr University of Art + Design. Find out more and register here: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/teens/teen-art-group/

ART EXCHANGE

October 2026–June 2027

Ages 13–15

Art Exchange is a full-scholarship visual arts program for teens to explore, critique and observe exhibitions at the Gallery, and then respond by making their own work at Arts Umbrella. Find out more and apply here: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/teens/art-exchange/

WHERE PLANTS SPEAK: A GUIDED WALK WITH CEASE WYSS

September 30, 2026 | 10:30 AM–12 PM

Learn about local plants with Dr. T'uy't'tanat Cease Wyss on a guided walk through Xwáýxway (Stanley Park). Find out more here: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/events/where-plants-speak-sep-30/

Generous Support from:

Jessica Yan Macintosh and George Macintosh

Foundation Partners:



Indigenous Knowledge Partner:



Media package: <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/CDizPP30o8>

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

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 B.C. Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts.