

For Immediate Release

Daina Augaitis to step down as Chief Curator/Associate Director at the Vancouver Art Gallery

January 26, 2017, Vancouver, BC - At the end of December 2017, after more than 20 years as the Vancouver Art Gallery's Chief Curator / Associate Director, Daina Augaitis will be stepping down to pursue other professional and personal interests.

As Chief Curator, Daina has been instrumental to many of the Gallery's successes over the past two decades. Under her leadership, the Gallery's exhibitions, publications and public programs have been significantly enhanced. She has also contributed enormously to the growth of the Gallery's permanent collection through the acquisition of works by established and emerging artists from around the world.

In addition to leading the Curatorial department, Daina has curated numerous solo exhibitions of local artists such as Douglas Coupland, Stan Douglas, Geoffrey Farmer, Brian Jungen, Marianne Nicolson, Ian Wallace and Paul Wong, and international artists such as Kimsooja, Ann Hamilton, Gillian Wearing, Yang Fudong, Zhu Jinshi and others. Her thematic exhibitions such as *Visceral Bodies* and *Drawing Contemporary Life*, have often explored socially-based ideas. She also collaborated on curatorial projects such as *Charles Edenshaw, Baja to Vancouver, Raven Travelling: Two Centuries of Haida Art, The Tree: From the Sublime to the Social, Rebecca Belmore, Bharti Kher* and *The Forbidden City: Inside the Court of China's Emperors*. More recent collaborations include *Mashup: The Birth of Modern Culture* and *Vancouver Special: Ambivalent Pleasures*. She was commissioned by the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid to curate Muntadas' career survey that toured internationally. Her important work has strengthened the Vancouver Art Gallery's curatorial vision and, together with her Gallery colleagues, has helped to solidify its role in the visual art landscape of Vancouver, Canada and beyond.

Daina has also played a leadership role in expanding the Gallery's publishing program to include a large roster of co-published books that capture much of the scholarship the Gallery produces.

In 2014, she received the Canadian Museum Association award for outstanding achievement in research for *Charles Edenshaw*. Her work was recognized nationally with The Hnatyshyn Foundation Award for Curatorial Excellence in Contemporary Art (2014) and she received an Emily Award from the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (2000). Internationally, she curated the Vancouver Pavilion at the Shanghai Biennale (2012) and was the Canadian commissioner for the Bienal de Sao Paulo (2002), Sydney Biennial (2000) and Johannesburg Biennale (1995).

“With her vision, intellect and determination, Daina has been instrumental to many of the Gallery’s successes over the past two decades. We are so grateful for her significant contributions to the Gallery’s curatorial program, for her commitment to artists and her curatorial rigour which is internationally recognized. She has forged an important foundation as we work towards the establishment of the new Vancouver Art Gallery.” says Kathleen Bartels, Director. “Daina will continue to work on curatorial plans for the new Gallery and I am very pleased that she will maintain a relationship with the Gallery after the end of the year.”

“I am very proud to have worked with a talented and dedicated team to elevate the Gallery’s curatorial work as a leading visual art institution, with an international reach and a strong local impact,” says Daina Augaitis. “Our accomplishments under Kathleen’s visionary leadership, as well as our very exciting future ahead make this move bittersweet. I will continue to follow very closely the Gallery’s successes and support its ambitious endeavours.”

An international search for her successor will commence shortly.

About the Vancouver Art Gallery

Founded in 1931, the Vancouver Art Gallery is recognized as one of North America’s most respected and innovative visual arts institutions. The Gallery’s innovative ground-breaking exhibitions, extensive public programs and emphasis on advancing scholarship all focus on the historical and contemporary art of British Columbia and international centres, with special attention to the accomplishments of First Nations artists and the art of the Asia Pacific region—through the Institute of Asian Art founded in 2014. The Gallery’s programs also explore the impacts of images in the larger sphere of visual culture, design and architecture. www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

The Vancouver Art Gallery is a 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.

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