



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Turner Prize winner Gillian Wearing opens at Vancouver Art Gallery



Gillian Wearing

Drunk (detail), 1999

3 DVD projected installation, black and white, sound, 23 minutes

Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Acquisition Fund

Vancouver, BC – Opening at the Vancouver Art Gallery on July 13, *Gillian Wearing: a trilogy* provides compelling documentation of urban life. The exhibition brings together a trilogy of Gillian Wearing's recent video installations that reveal the complex nature of human relations especially in the realm of alcohol consumption.

In just over a decade Wearing has risen to great prominence in the international art world. Since finishing her studies at Goldsmiths College, University of London in 1990, Wearing has built a solid practice of candid, distinctive work. Wearing received the prestigious Turner Prize in 1997 and her work has appeared in numerous international solo and group exhibitions - from the Tate and Serpentine galleries in London to the Sydney and Sao Paulo biennials. The Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago is launching an international tour of her work in the fall of 2002.

"Wearing uses photography and video to explore the intimacies of human relationships," said Daina Augaitis, Chief Curator, Vancouver Art Gallery. "Her work is frank and touches issues at the core of society. The work in this exhibition, at times painfully intense and real, forces us to look at the connections between individual experience and shared social values."

The impetus for this exhibition came from the Vancouver Art Gallery's recent acquisition of Wearing's *Drunk* which was made in 1999. *Drunk* is considered to be one of the artist's signature works and, together with *Prelude* (2000) and *I Love You* (1999), forms this particular trilogy of works around drinking. Wearing has talked about being "interested in capturing the elements of psychological behaviour of the uninhibited. Alcohol is an obvious tool in freeing inhibition."

Drunk is a three-projector installation that is the culmination of two years of collaboration with a group of South London street drinkers. Throughout this period the artist got to know her subjects, their lifestyles and characters. Wearing recorded their activities in her studio and created a beautiful and poignant work.

Prelude is a single channel video installation about a female street drinker who died during the making of *Drunk*. Wearing brings together fragments of the woman's story as a tribute to her life. This four-minute piece is narrated by her twin sister and is an intense portrait that elicits questions about predominant social values.

I Love You is the third work in the trilogy and deals with the psychology of human behaviour. Unlike *Drunk* and *Prelude* the work was staged with actors and blurs the lines between reality and fiction. The random sequences portray scenes of crisis, hysteria, passion and violence.

Theresa is a set of photographs that bind the three projected works. In these candid photos a street drinker is depicted with her numerous lovers. More than uninhibited alcoholic behaviour is revealed in these photographs. In fact, they lay bare the essence of Wearing's artistic project which is to force a re-evaluation of what we see in people.

Gillian Wearing was born in Birmingham, England in 1963. She currently lives and works in London and is represented by Maureen Paley Interim Arts (London); Gorney, Bravin + Lee (New York); and Regen Projects (Los Angeles). A catalogue, *Gillian Wearing: a trilogy*, has been produced to accompany this exhibition. The curator's tour will take place on Thursday October 17, 2002 at 7pm. This exhibition has received support from the British Council.

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Gillian Wearing will attend the opening at the Vancouver Art Gallery on the evening of July 12, 2002.

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