



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Vancouver Art Gallery Marks 75 Years
with Major Public Event
All invited to Founder's Day celebration Saturday, October 7, 2006**

VANCOUVER, BC — The **Vancouver Art Gallery** will commemorate its **75th Anniversary** with **Founder's Day**, a major public celebration at the Gallery on **Saturday, October 7, 2006**. Taking place the opening day of the blockbuster exhibition ***Emily Carr: New Perspectives on a Canadian Icon***, jointly organized with the National Gallery of Canada, the event will feature live performances, collaborative art projects and a free hotdog barbecue provided by RBC Financial Group, the 75th Anniversary Celebration Partner, all for the 1931-era admission price of 10 cents.

“Founder's Day is an opportunity to thank the community for their support and to join us in celebrating this milestone,” said Vancouver Art Gallery director, Kathleen Bartels. “2006 has truly been a ‘homecoming’ year for the Gallery. From *Brian Jungen* and *Raven Travelling: Two Centuries of Haida Art*, to the powerful legacy presented in *Emily Carr: New Perspectives on a Canadian Icon* and the promise of a new generation in *PAINT*, this year's exhibitions showcase the best of British Columbia. The Gallery vows to remain a visual arts leader as we look forward to the next 75 years.”

The Vancouver Art Gallery first opened its doors on October 5, 1931, six months after breaking ground. Through the Founders' Fund, the generous gift of 11 donors led by businessman Henry Athelstan Stone, the Art Deco-style building was constructed on a 132-by-66-foot site on Georgia Street donated by the City of Vancouver, several blocks west of where the Gallery now stands. Within six months, more than 112,000 visitors passed through the Gallery's front entrance to see the first exhibition. Comprised of works acquired for the Gallery's permanent collection in England and France by H.A. Stone and Charles Hepburn Scott, director of the Vancouver School of Art, the exhibition included 55 paintings, 33 watercolours, four sculptures, and 23 prints and drawings – all generously purchased by the Founders.

Beginning at 12pm, the Gallery will honour the generosity of this esteemed group and the countless patrons who followed them in the Founder's Day opening ceremony on Robson Square Plaza, featuring a keynote address by **Sam Sullivan, Mayor of Vancouver** and **decedents of H.A. Stone**. Following the ceremony, a massive anniversary cake will be shared with those in attendance as the afternoon's performances and activities begin. Vancouver-based dance troupe **Aeriosa** will highlight the historic architecture of the building with breathtaking midair performances using rope rigging systems to take graceful leaps from the Gallery's exterior. Inside the rotunda, award-winning Vancouver men's choir **Chor Leoni** will entertain visitors with rousing renditions of traditional Canadian songs, and in the lobby a special presentation of exhibition posters from the past seven decades will be on display.

"RBC is proud to partner with the Vancouver Art Gallery for its 75th Anniversary and to support the celebration of the Gallery's extensive role in fostering B.C.'s vibrant arts and culture community," said Graham MacLachlan, B.C. regional president for RBC Financial Group.

Hotdogs courtesy of RBC will be available on Robson Square Plaza, where families will be able to help create a 20-foot collaborative reproduction of Emily Carr's classic self-portrait. Visitors will also have the chance to envision and construct their ideas of what the Gallery will look like in another 75 years using 250 pounds of clay, contribute their memories of the Gallery to a time capsule for future generations, and play "anniversary bingo" by searching the Gallery for fun facts and the chance to win free Gallery memberships.

As a tribute to *Emily Carr: New Perspectives on a Canadian Icon*, RBC Financial Group will lend an Emily Carr work from its corporate collection for the Founder's Day celebration. The painting **Old and New Forest**, c.1932-1940, will travel from Toronto for the event, where it will be **displayed publicly for the first time in more than 20 years**. As year-long Celebration Partner of the Vancouver Art Gallery's 75th Anniversary, RBC is carrying on a proud tradition of support for the Gallery and the visual arts. Harold Malkin, one of the Gallery's founders, was a Royal Bank of Canada board member, and over the last 20 years, RBC has provided more than \$250,000 in support of the Gallery.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is celebrating its history throughout 2006 with a four-part exhibition series highlighting the history and diversity of the Gallery's permanent collection. Titled *75 Years of Collecting*, the exhibitions draw on the nearly 9,000 works in the collection. *75 Years of Collecting: First Nations Myths and Realities*, an examination of the representation of Canada's First Nations peoples in art, and *75 Years of Collecting: Portrait of a Citizen*, an exploration of portraiture over the

past two centuries, will be on display at Founder's Day. A web-based publication accompanies the exhibitions and is available online and through electronic kiosks in the exhibition spaces. The first of its kind at the Gallery, the online publication allows users to delve deeply into the history of selected works and learn how they came into the Vancouver Art Gallery's permanent collection.

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Vancouver Art Gallery 75th Anniversary Celebration Partner



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