

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**British Columbia's most prestigious visual art awards to be presented at the
Vancouver Art Gallery**

Jeff Wall to receive Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts
Tim Lee and Kevin Schmidt to receive VIVAs

VANCOUVER, BC — British Columbia's most prestigious annual awards for the visual arts, the **Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts** and the **VIVA Awards**, will be presented at the **Vancouver Art Gallery** on **May 22, 2008 at 7pm**. The fifth annual Audain Prize, awarded by the **Audain Foundation for the Visual Arts**, will go to internationally renowned photo-based Vancouver artist **Jeff Wall**. Wall will be joined at the Vancouver Art Gallery ceremony by Vancouver artists **Tim Lee** and **Kevin Schmidt**, recipients of the **21st annual VIVA Awards**, a prize granted by the **Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation**.

Jeff Wall is widely acknowledged as one of the world's most influential contemporary artists. Over the past two decades he has developed a body of work that has played an important role in establishing photography as the most significant art form of the late 20th century. His work has been exhibited in galleries and art museums throughout the world, including solo exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Art Institute of Chicago, Art Tower Mito, Japan, Museo Nacional and Tate Modern, London. With a recent acquisition purchased in part with funding provided by the Audain Foundation, the Vancouver Art Gallery became the largest public holder of Wall's work in North America.

Korean-born Vancouver artist **Tim Lee's** sculpture, photography, video and painting integrate important moments of popular culture with significant moments in art history. His work plays with the conventions of high modernism using humor and irony, and his own image as the central subject. In 2002, he completed an MFA at the University of British Columbia. He received national recognition in 2001 with the exhibition of his video-performance, *The Move* at Vancouver's Western Front, and recently completed a residency at the prestigious CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts in San Francisco where his work is currently on display. He has participated in numerous exhibitions nationally and internationally, and his work is held in the collections of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Museum of Modern Art, New York and Tate Modern, London.

Since graduating from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design in 1997, **Kevin Schmidt** has received considerable recognition as an important emerging artist. A multi-disciplinary artist, working primarily in photography and video, his work references the pictorial traditions of landscape art through representations of nature as sublime spectacle. Currently showing the installation *Fog, 2004* in the Vancouver Art Gallery exhibition *The Tree: From the Sublime to the Social*, Schmidt has had exhibitions at Presentation House Gallery, Vancouver, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Zierhershsmith, New York, Edmonton Art Gallery, and Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh.

The Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts is funded by the Audain Foundation for the Visual Arts and granted annually to a senior British Columbia artist. The award has been increased in 2008 to \$30,000. Over the last 20 years, Michael Audain, chairman of Polygon Homes Ltd., has been a leading supporter and philanthropist of the visual arts in British Columbia. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the Vancouver Art Gallery, and is the Chair of the Vancouver Art Gallery Foundation and the Audain Foundation for the Visual Arts. He is also as a member of the British Columbia Arts Council and a trustee of the National Gallery of Canada. Founded 1997, the Audain Foundation has

supported many initiatives in the visual arts, including the establishment of the Audain Curator of British Columbia Art at the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Audain Endowment for Contemporary Canadian Art and the Audain Curator of Indigenous Art at the National Gallery of Canada, the Audain Visual Arts Teaching Gallery at Simon Fraser University and the Audain Great Hall at the Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art.

Provided by the **Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation**, the VIVA Awards are given annually to celebrate exemplary achievement by British Columbian artists in mid-career. The Awards were founded by renowned British Columbia painter Jack Shadbolt and his wife Doris Shadbolt, whose significant work as a curator and writer elevated the place of British Columbia art on a national and international level. Created to nurture the advancement of the visual arts in British Columbia and their appreciation by the public, the award grants \$12,000 annually to practicing artists in mid-career. Since its creation in 1988, 38 VIVAs have been granted in an ongoing program that continues in memory of the founders.

The May 22 event is open to the public. Those planning to attend should call 604-662-4747.

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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 Gaming Revenues; the Government of Canada through the Canada Council for the Arts and the Department of Canadian Heritage.