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Jeff Wall Exhibition at Vancouver Art Gallery to Feature the Premiere of Several Major New Acquisitions

Gallery's position as most important public collector of artist's work bolstered by recent additions

VANCOUVER, BC — The **Vancouver Art Gallery** will present the institution's first solo exhibition of work by internationally renowned Vancouver artist **Jeff Wall** in nearly two decades. The exhibition, **Jeff Wall: Vancouver Art Gallery Collection**, will be on view from **October 25 to January 29, 2009** and will feature the Gallery's entire holdings of the artist's large-scale photographic work. Now the largest public collection of Wall's photo-based art in the world, the Gallery's collection has grown quickly over the last year with two major acquisitions in February, two additional acquisitions in June and a further acquisition in September. The Gallery's collection now stands at 11 with the addition of the most recently acquired works, *Basin in Rome 2*, 2003, *Children*, 1988, and *River Road*, 1997, all of which are gifts from British Columbia philanthropists and key Gallery supporters **Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa**.



Jeff Wall, *Basin in Rome 2*, 2003,
Transparency in lightbox, 31 x 31 cm

"With support from Michael Audain, the Vancouver Art Gallery has established itself as the world's preeminent public Gallery to experience the work of Jeff Wall, one of the most imaginative, intelligent and accomplished artists working today," said **Vancouver Art Gallery director, Kathleen Bartels**. "Exhibited throughout North America, Europe and Asia, Wall's photo-based art has played a key role in establishing Vancouver's reputation as a thriving centre for the production of contemporary visual art. It is our profound pleasure to collect and present his art, which will remain in the Gallery's collection in perpetuity as a legacy for the people of British Columbia and Canada."



Jeff Wall, *The Pine on the Corner*, 1990
Transparency in lightbox, 119 x 149 cm

Associated with the recognition of photography as one of the most important contemporary art forms of the 20th century, Wall's significant work has recently appeared in major solo exhibitions around the world, including Tate Modern, London (2005), Museum of Modern Art, New York (2007), Art Institute of Chicago (2007), San Francisco Museum of Art (2007), Guggenheim, Berlin (2007) and Tamayo Museum, Mexico City (2008).

The Gallery's relationship with Wall began in 1970, when he was included in the landmark exhibition *955,000*, guest curated by Lucy Lippard. The Gallery began acquiring his work in the mid-1980s with the purchases of *Bad Goods*, 1984 and *Backpack*, 1981-1982. In 1990, the Gallery organized *Jeff Wall 1990*, the first large-scale solo exhibition of Wall's back-lit transparencies, which accelerated the process of situating his work in an international context. *Jeff Wall: Vancouver Art Gallery Collection* will allow the Gallery to share its newest works by the artist for the first time, including the recent acquisitions *Concrete ball*, 2002, *War game*, 2007, *Basin in Rome 2*, 2003, *Children*, 1988 and *River Road*, 1997, none of which have been exhibited in British Columbia before.

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During a career that spans 40 years, Wall has established an international reputation for his photographic work. In the mid-1970s, he began making colour transparencies displayed in lightboxes, a format with which he is widely associated. These luminous backlit pictures revolutionized the way photographic art could be presented.

Wall's images are often large—some more than 12-feet wide. He sees them as 'tableaux', a term traditionally attached to painting. He has called his work 'cinematography' because of the way methods normally associated with filmmaking are combined with qualities more akin to painting, to produce a new kind of photograph.

In the early 1990s, Wall began to work with digital technology that allowed him to blend a number of negatives into a single image. These photomontages have become a central aspect of his work for the past two decades. In the mid-1990s, he began making traditional black and white photographs and, more recently, inkjet colour prints. His exploration of new and old approaches demonstrates his ongoing interest in the intersections between past and present.

The exhibition is accompanied by the hardcover catalogue, **Jeff Wall Vancouver Art Gallery Collection**, which includes full page reproductions of all Jeff Wall works in the Vancouver Art Gallery collection, exhibition histories of each work, and an illustrated text by Vancouver artist Ian Wallace.

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Presenting Sponsor:



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. We thank everyone for their continuing generosity.