

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Theodore Wan

Vancouver, BC – The Vancouver Art Gallery will be the final venue to present *Theodore Wan*, a comprehensive retrospective of the late photo-conceptual artist's work and research. Curated by art historian Dr. Christine Conley, this nationally touring exhibition brings together Wan's seminal work and never-before-seen photographs, videos, research and interviews with the artist's contemporaries.

Known primarily in the art world, Theodore Wan made a significant contribution to conceptual art in Canada throughout the 1970s and 1980s, specifically in Halifax and Vancouver. Wan's reputation was secured through a remarkable series of medical photographs that played on the ambivalent status of the photograph as art object and illustration. In these works that bridge scientific illustration, performance and self-portraiture, the artist submitted his body to various procedures, instruments and technologies of medical examination and treatment. He also created a number of engaging conceptual pieces with a humorous twist, including officially changing his name to Theodore Saskatche Wan. In the late 1970s Theodore Wan opened an artist-run gallery in Vancouver called Main Exit and went on to develop a commercial photography practice that fed his fascination with performance, narcissistic spectacle, and exotic dancing – riding a fine line between art and everyday life.

Theodore Wan was born in Hong Kong, moved to Vancouver at the age of thirteen and studied at the University of British Columbia and the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Theodore Wan died prematurely in 1987.

The exhibition opened in Halifax at the Dalhousie Art Gallery in January 2004 prior to touring to Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. An illustrated catalogue produced by the Dalhousie Art Gallery accompanies the show. This nationally touring exhibition has been organized by the Dalhousie Art Gallery with works borrowed from the Vancouver Art Gallery and generous funding from the Department of the Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts.

The exhibition is one of four exhibitions on display this summer in the *Body Slam* suite, an international convergence of recent contemporary work focusing on the human form. Comprising works by artists from Austria, France, the UK and Vancouver, *Body Slam* explores the human condition through the mediums of sculpture, photography and video. *Body Slam* is being presented in juxtaposition with an exhibition of historical works by the legendary sculptor Rodin, providing visitors with a unique opportunity to explore the human body in all its many dimensions.

All media are welcome to attend the opening celebration at 7pm on Friday, June 24, 2005.

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