

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



The Vancouver Art Gallery Launches 'Free First Free Friday Nights' in Partnership with BMO

This Spring, the Gallery will be increasing public access, offering free admission for everyone on the first Friday of every month.

April 18th, 2023, VANCOUVER, BC // Traditional Coast Salish Lands including the Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm), Squamish (Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw) and Tseil-Waututh (sělɪwətaʔ) Nations.

Through the generous support of a new partnership with BMO, the Vancouver Art Gallery is thrilled to announce that they will be offering free admission to the public on the first Friday of every month, from 4pm to 8pm. These **Free First Friday Nights**, presented by BMO will provide visitors with increased access to the Gallery, opening and expanding the world of art to a broader audience, including those who may otherwise not be able to afford the cost of admission.

“Thanks to the support of BMO, we will be able to amplify our programs and experiences, building a more creative, innovative and healthy Canada.” - **Anthony Kiendl, CEO and Director of the Vancouver Art Gallery.**

In addition to this annual sponsorship, BMO is supporting the new Vancouver Art Gallery building project for \$1.5 million. This support exemplifies BMO’s commitment to the creation of a thriving arts and culture environment for all British Columbians to enjoy for generations to come.

“Expanding access to valuable cultural institutions like the Vancouver Art Gallery is important for BMO and an initiative strongly anchored in our Purpose, to Boldly Grow the Good in business and life,” said **Gary Whitfield, Regional President, BC Region, BMO Private Wealth.** “Arts and culture enrich our lives, and are an essential source of inspiration, connection and understanding. Partnerships like these drive our community’s progress and contribute to a more inclusive society.”

Through this initiative, the Gallery will join several other global cultural institutions that also offer free admission on Friday nights. Friday was a natural choice for the Gallery as it typically yields the most traffic, making it the most convenient day for the public to access for free. The Free First Friday Nights program will enable the Gallery to continue to play an active role in improving accessibility and fostering creative thinking and problem-solving for all ages and backgrounds. This intention is guided by one of the Gallery’s four pathways, to foster community and learning by expanding public access to art.

“We are beyond excited to be able to offer the Free First Friday Nights program in partnership with BMO” said **Broek Bosma, Chief Advancement Officer of the Vancouver Art Gallery.** “In recognition of the important role of

art and culture in all our lives, the Gallery is proud to embrace opportunities that increase access to art in partnership with community-focused organizations like BMO.”

In addition to the Free First Friday Night offerings, the Gallery will also be creating additional public programming and educational tours for visitors to enjoy free of charge. Among these initiatives is the Gallery’s newly established Public Partnership Program, which enables members of more than 15 participating organizations to visit the Gallery for free as often as they wish. Daily complimentary Gallery admission is already offered for free to youth ages 18 and younger, and the Free First Friday Nights program further extends the Gallery’s mission to enhance access to exhibitions, public programming and events for everyone.

The Free First Friday Nights Presented by BMO will launch on May 5th, 2023. Visitors can access the Gallery for free between the hours of 4 pm and 8 pm at no charge. For more information, please visit vanartgallery.bc.ca/free.

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ABOUT VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

Founded in 1931, the Vancouver Art Gallery is recognized as one of North America’s most innovative visual arts institutions. The Gallery’s ground-breaking exhibitions, extensive public programs and emphasis on advancing scholarship all focus on historical and contemporary art from British Columbia and around the world. Special attention is given to the accomplishments of Indigenous artists, as well as to those of the Asia Pacific region. The Gallery’s exhibitions also explore the impact of images in the larger sphere of visual culture, design and architecture.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is a charitable 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 the Canada Council for the Arts.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is situated on the ancestral and unceded territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), S^kwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and is respectful of the Indigenous stewards of the land it occupies, whose rich cultures are fundamental to artistic life in Vancouver and the work of the Gallery.

vanartgallery.bc.ca

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