

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Board Trustees appointed as Construction Starts on the Future Vancouver Art Gallery

*Notable Real-Estate Developer Jon Stovell is elected Chair;
Arts and Culture Leader Esther Rausenberg is elected Vice Chair*



May 16, 2024, VANCOUVER, BC // Traditional Coast Salish Lands including the Musqueam (*xʷməθkʷəy̓əm*), Squamish (*Sḵwxwú7mesh*) and Tsleil-Waututh (*səlil'wətaʔ*) Nations.

As construction continues on the new Vancouver Art Gallery, located at the intersection of downtown's West Georgia and Cambie Streets, the Gallery has appointed **Jon Stovell** as the new Chair and **Esther Rausenberg** as the new Vice Chair of its Association Board. The duo has been elected for their expertise to help shape the future vision for one of North America's most innovative visual arts institutions, with the completion of the new Vancouver Art Gallery expected in the fall of 2028.

"We are extremely fortunate to welcome two highly experienced and influential individuals, with distinct backgrounds and perspectives," says **Anthony Kiendl, Vancouver Art Gallery CEO & Executive Director**. "Jon and Esther's unique experiences and deep knowledge will provide strategic counsel to the evolution of our future Gallery."

As Chief Executive at **Reliance Properties**, **Jon Stovell** brings more than 30 years of real-estate expertise to the Board, everything from acquisitions, finance, civic approvals, construction, policy development, industry advocacy, marketing and development. Stovell helmed the design and development of unique heritage, residential and commercial projects in Vancouver and Victoria that won multiple local and national awards. Reliance Properties has long supported the local arts community in Vancouver and Victoria, including giving the largest-ever donation to **Emily Carr University of Art and Design**.

Stovell also brings vast board and governance experience as well. He sits on the **City of Vancouver's Urban Design Panel** and was a three-time chair of **Urban Development Institute**.

“A new Vancouver Art Gallery was imagined a long time ago, and I am thrilled to become Chair as it turns a corner on becoming a reality,” states **Jon Stovell, the new Chair of the Board of Trustees**. “As an avid lover and promoter of the arts, I look forward to the milestones and challenges of raising capital and delivering a new, larger art gallery for the region and for tourists to enjoy.”

A long-time resident of Strathcona and an artist, **Esther Rausenberg** established what is now known as **Georgia Art Studios**, with her partner **Richard Tetrault**. Together with a small group of local artists, they also co-founded the **Eastside Culture Crawl**, the well-known open studios festival that invites the public directly into artists’ workspaces. In 2013, Rausenberg became the Artistic and Executive Director for the organization, now the **Eastside Arts Society**. Recently, she helped establish the **Eastside Arts District**—an area devoted to the preservation of arts and culture spaces. She also previously volunteered as a Selection Committee member for the **Downtown Eastside Small Arts Grants program**, bringing critical opportunities to underserved artists in the community. From 2012 to 2017, she served as a member of the **Arts and Culture Policy Committee** for the **City of Vancouver**, including one year as Co-Vice Chair. Having just served a six-year tenure on the Board of Governors for **Emily Carr University of Art and Design** and with seven years of experience as a Board of Trustee for the Vancouver Art Gallery, Rausenberg has a foundational understanding of arts and culture and brings a wealth of knowledge to her new role as Vice Chair of the Association Board.

“I am excited to continue on the Board in the role of Vice Chair,” says **Esther Rausenberg, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees**. “The Gallery is going to realize our longtime dream of growth and transformation. This is important not just for our organization, but for the entire arts ecosystem in BC, and I am thrilled to lend my support.”

Five new Trustees have been appointed in 2024 for a total of 19 Board Members, bringing an array of unique skills and perspectives. Kiendl expects their combined expertise will lead the Gallery through an exciting period of transformation. The Vancouver Art Gallery Association Board includes **Jon Stovell (Chair)**, **Esther Rausenberg (Vice-Chair)**, **Fraser Phillips (Treasurer)**, **Alden Habacon (Secretary)**, **Kate Armstrong**, **Jamie Brown**, **Dana Claxton**, **Brenda Crabtree**, **Arya Eshghi**, **Janie Hungerford**, **Sarah Kirby-Yung (City of Vancouver Appointee)**, **Jessica Macintosh**, **Brian Montague (City of Vancouver Appointee)**, **Priscilla Lam**, **Tara Poseley**, **Mayor Ken Sim (Ex-officio member)**, **Rosy Shang**, **Josh Vander Vies** and **Cathy Zuo**.

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Image: Jon Stovell and Esther Rausenberg, Photo: Vancouver Art Gallery

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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 xʷməθkʷəy̍əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔ (Tseil-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.

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