

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Vancouver Art Gallery Announces Exhibition Highlights for Fall/Winter 2024

Highly anticipated exhibitions include
Firelei Báez, Shelley Niro: 500 Year Itch and Multiple Realities



September 4, 2024, VANCOUVER, BC // Traditional Coast Salish Lands including the xʷməθkʷəy̍əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətaʔ (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

Today the Vancouver Art Gallery unveils its fall program, with major surveys and pop-up exhibitions featuring a variety of mediums from paintings, sculptures and photographs to immersive installations, mixed media works and music. The lineup includes Canada's first and much-awaited solo exhibition dedicated to the powerfully layered work of **Firelei Báez**, showcasing the full breadth of the artist's career to date and confirming her as one of the most important artists of the early 21st century. Also opening this fall is **Shelley Niro: 500 Year Itch**, the first major retrospective of multimedia work by celebrated Bay of Quinte Mohawk artist **Shelley Niro**, and **Multiple Realities: Experimental Art in the Eastern Bloc, 1960s–1980s**, an extensive survey of experimental art that brings together works by over 100 artists and collectives from Central Eastern Europe.

"The Vancouver Art Gallery's upcoming exhibitions are truly global in scope, connecting the past with possible futures," says **Anthony Kiendl, CEO & Executive Director of the Vancouver Art Gallery**. "This ambitious program is challenging and ultimately uplifting. It addresses the important issues of our time and the interconnections of art and politics, including the impacts of colonialism and oppression on the everyday lived experience of individuals and communities around the world. In many ways, we see how people repeatedly rise above struggles and affirm the human spirit."

The Vancouver Art Gallery is proud to present a career-spanning solo exhibition dedicated to one of the most exciting painters of her generation, **Firelei Báez**. Over the past fifteen years, she has made work that explores the all-too-real legacies of colonial rule in the Americas and the Caribbean, drawing on sci-fi, fantasy, folklore, social history and mythology. Spanning nearly two decades, Báez's first survey exhibition opened to critical acclaim in

Boston in the spring, and the presentation at the Vancouver Art Gallery will be the first in Canada and on the West Coast of North America.

History and imagination come together in this exhibition, from elegant, richly coloured paintings to visceral sculptural installations that offer visitors the sensation of stepping into Báez's imaginary worlds. Featuring the largest number of Báez's paintings gathered in one place, this sweeping survey offers audiences a timely opportunity to gain a holistic understanding of her career and capacity for storytelling. This is the first major exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery curated by **Eva Respini, Deputy Director & Director of Curatorial Programs**, and is indicative of the wide-ranging and global vision she brings to Vancouver.

"I can't wait to bring Báez's extraordinary work to audiences in Vancouver," says **Eva Respini, Deputy Director & Director of Curatorial Programs**. "Presenting Báez's first major showcase, together with Shelley Niro's long-overdue retrospective and *Multiple Realities*—a group reflection of artists' lived realities—the exhibitions this fall are bold, rigorous and conceptually rich. With works ranging from heartbreaking to fantastical, the program encourages audiences to think about the role of history and how artists help us explore new worldviews."

The Vancouver Art Gallery launches its fall/winter season with ***Shelley Niro: 500 Year Itch***, a groundbreaking retrospective that surveys the 50-year career of a truly multidisciplinary artist. For more than five decades, Niro has been creating art reflecting contemporary life and building upon Kanyen'kehá:ka (Mohawk) philosophies, deep understandings of history and a woman-centred worldview. She delves into the timeless cultural knowledge and generational histories of her Six Nations Kanyen'kehá:ka community to make art that provides purpose, hope and healing.

This exhibition is **Shelley Niro's** first major retrospective and brings together over 70 of Niro's iconic works. Accessible, humorous and peppered with references to popular culture, this sharp-witted showcase explores the extraordinary depth of Niro's prolific career, bringing together works across painting, photography, mixed-media and film.

In December, the Gallery will present ***Multiple Realities: Experimental Art in the Eastern Bloc, 1960s–1980s***, a rare survey of art made in six Central Eastern European nations between the 1960s to 1980s. Charting a generation invested in experimentation, the exhibition sheds light on the diverse experiences of artists as they navigated varying degrees of control and pressure from authoritarian regimes.

Drawing on visual art, performance, music and material culture, ***Multiple Realities*** brings together works by over 100 artists and collectives from six countries: East Germany (now Germany), Poland, Czechoslovakia (now Czechia and Slovakia), Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia (now Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia). With a spirit of adventurousness, these visionary artists crafted works that challenged the limitations imposed upon them. They created pieces infused with wit, humour and irony, reflecting their refusal to conform to official systems. This substantial exhibition offers viewers a rare opportunity to view artworks seldom or never seen in Canada.

Continuing throughout the fall and into 2025, ***1:1 Artists Select*** invites Vancouver-based artists to select one work from the Gallery's collection to be displayed in dialogue with their own, resulting in a dynamic series of short, pop-up projects in the Gallery's Forecourt. The series will continue to spotlight both well-known and emerging artists including **Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill, Jin-me Yoon, Liz Magor, Douglas Coupland** and **Paul Wong**.

The Vancouver Art Gallery has transitioned to fall/winter hours and is now closed to the public on Tuesdays.

Vancouver Art Gallery Fall/Winter Hours:

Sunday: 10 AM – 5 PM

Monday: 10 AM – 5 PM

Tuesday: CLOSED

Wednesday: 10 AM – 5 PM

Thursday: 10 AM – 8 PM

Friday: 10 AM – 8 PM

Saturday: 10 AM – 5 PM

EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

SHELLEY NIRO: 500 YEAR ITCH

SEPTEMBER 27, 2024 – FEBRUARY 17, 2025

An exclusive exhibition tour with a conversation between the curator and artist will take place on Thursday, September 26 at 4 PM. [RSVP here](#) or by emailing media@vanartgallery.bc.ca.

Organized and circulated by the Art Gallery of Hamilton with the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian and with curatorial support from the National Gallery of Canada. Curated by Melissa Bennett, AGH Senior Curator of Contemporary Art; Greg Hill, Independent Curator, formerly Audain Senior Curator, Indigenous Art, National Gallery of Canada; and David Penney, formerly Associate Director of Museum scholarship, Exhibitions, and Public Engagement at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. The Vancouver Art Gallery presentation is coordinated by Richard Hill, Smith Jarislowsky Senior Curator of Canadian Art.

Organized by:

AGH

Major support for this project is provided by the Canada Council for the Arts and Terra Foundation for American Art.



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Additional support from:



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Indigenous Cultures Program Partner:

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FIRELEI BÁEZ

NOVEMBER 3, 2024 – MARCH 16, 2025

An exclusive exhibition tour with a conversation between the curator and artist will take place on Friday, November 1 at 9 AM. [RSVP here](#) or by emailing media@vanartgallery.bc.ca.

Organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston and curated by Eva Respini, Deputy Director & Director of Curatorial Programs, Vancouver Art Gallery (former Barbara Lee Chief Curator, ICA/Boston), with Tessa Bachi Haas, Curatorial Assistant, ICA/Boston.



Major support is provided by the Henry Luce Foundation and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.



This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, Karen and Brian Conway, David and Jocelyne DeNunzio, Mathieu O. Gaulin, The Kotzubei-Beckmann Family Philanthropic Fund, Lise and Jeffrey Wilks, and an anonymous donor.



Generously supported by:

Jane Irwin and Ross Hill Contemporary Arts Fund

Government partner:



MULTIPLE REALITIES: EXPERIMENTAL ART IN THE EASTERN BLOC, 1960S–1980S
DECEMBER 13, 2024 – APRIL 21, 2025

Organized by the Walker Art Center with major support provided by Martha and Bruce Atwater. Exhibition research was supported by a curatorial fellowship from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Curated by Pavel Pyš, Curator of Visual Arts and Collections Strategy; with William Hernández Luege, curatorial assistant, Visual Arts; and Laurel Rand-Lewis, curatorial fellow, Visual Arts. The Vancouver Art Gallery presentation is coordinated by Diana Freundl, Senior Curator.

1:1 ARTISTS SELECT

GABRIELLE L'HIRONDELLE HILL
SEPTEMBER 18 – NOVEMBER 3, 2024

JIN-ME YOON
DECEMBER 14, 2024 – JANUARY 26, 2025

Organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery and curated by Eva Respini, Deputy Director & Director of Curatorial Programs, with Julie Martin, Curatorial Assistant

Media partners:



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VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

[Media Kit: Fall/Winter Exhibitions \(The Vancouver Art Gallery\)](#)
media@vanartgallery.bc.ca

Image: Firelei Báez, *Untitled (Temple of Time)*, 2000, oil and acrylic on archival printed canvas, Wilks Family Collection, Courtesy the Artist and Hauser & Wirth, New York, Photo: Phoebe d'Heurle © Firelei Báez

ABOUT THE 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 xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (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.