

MEDIA RELEASE

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The Tree: From the Sublime to the Social

Impressive and expansive exhibition meditates on the meaning of the *Tree*

October 23 – November 28, 2009

COQUITLAM, BC — *The Tree: From the Sublime to the Social*, on view at the Evergreen Cultural Centre from Oct 23 to Nov 28, 2009, provides a provocative exploration of the tree's significance in art spanning time, culture and media. Organized and circulated by the Vancouver Art Gallery the touring exhibition is comprised of 28 works by 18 local, national and international artists, including Emily Carr, Rodney Graham, Lawren Harris, Jack Shadbolt and Ian Wallace.

"The tree offers an intriguing focus for an exhibition in this part of the world," said Vancouver Art Gallery director Kathleen Bartels. "It acts as powerful visual representation of Canada's national identity, while also serving as a reminder of our precarious ecological condition. The diverse representations of the tree in this exhibition are indicative of its enduring power as an evocative symbol of our complex and changing relationships with our natural environment."

The Tree: From the Sublime to the Social includes a wide selection of artistic perspectives focused on the tree as inspiration and a subject of investigation. The exhibition incorporates historical images of the forest that evoke the grandeur and power of the natural world and includes works by contemporary artists who use the tree as a device to consider abstraction and figuration, as well as to question humankind's relationship with the natural environment, especially the growing sense of alienation from the natural world. Some artists depict trees as a resource for economic development and the devastating consequences of severe logging practices, while others present life-affirming projects that engaged in both metaphorical and actual tree-planting projects.

The works range from photography, oil and acrylic paintings, woodblock, screen print and charcoal drawings. In addition, the gallery's storage area will be converted to accommodate a hydroponic grow-op of Western red cedar seedlings. The list of artists in *The Tree* is impressive: Sybil Andrews, Karin Bubaš, Emily Carr, Andrew Dadson, Patricia Deadman, Lorraine Gilbert, Rodney Graham, Lawren Harris, Geoffrey James, Liz Magor, David Milne, Pedro Reyes, Jack Shadbolt, Gordon Smith, Philip Timms, Ian Wallace, William Percival Weston and Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun.

The Tree: From the Sublime to the Social is part of "Across the Province" the Vancouver Art Gallery's provincial touring program and is curated by Daina Augaitis, Chief Curator/Associate Director, with Assistant Curator, Emmy Lee.

RELATED EVENTS:

Opening Reception

Sunday, October 25, 4 – 5:30pm

Join us at the official opening of *The Tree* with special guests, Coastal Sound Music Academy's Children's Concert Choir performing tree-themed songs including "Klee Wyck" (by Brian Tate), "Beauty of the Trees" (words by Chief Dan George, music by Donna Otto) and others. Refreshments will be served.

Connoisseur's Night

Thursday, November 12, 7 – 9pm

Calling all art lovers! Evergreen's Visual Arts Manager, Ellen van Eijnsbergen will host this cultural immersion to include a guided tour and Q & A, ending with a social mingling of minds over wine and cheese. COST: \$10 + GST. Must reserve in advance. Call 604.927.6555 or buy tickets through the website.

Gallery Tour & Workshop – To date, Evergreen has over 700 school children registered in the arts education program for *The Tree*. Not just for students, any group can partake in this program, from scouts to seniors. Call 604.927.6552 for more information.

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