

MEDIA INFORMATION:
Debra Zhou, Communications Specialist
dzhou@vanartgallery.bc.ca
Direct: 604-662-4722 Mobile: 604-671-2358



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver Art Gallery Presents BC's Most Prestigious Prizes on April 16, 2015

April 10, Vancouver, BC – Three distinguished individuals in the field of visual arts in British Columbia will receive the most prestigious awards in this province: the **Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts**, the **VIVA Awards** and the **Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize**. This year, **Michael Morris** is awarded the thirteenth Audain Prize, funded by the Audain Foundation for the Visual Arts. **Elizabeth Zvonar** is the recipient of the 2015 VIVA Award, granted annually by the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation for the Visual Arts. The Foundation will also present the second biannual Alvin Balkind Curator's Prizes to **Cate Rimmer** and the Charles H. Scott Gallery, the institution where she works as Curator of Gallery + Exhibitions.

To mark this annual celebration with the visual arts community, a ceremony honouring the recipients will be held at **7:00 pm on Thursday, April 16** in The Great Hall of the BC Law Courts building in downtown Vancouver. **This ceremony is free and open to the public.**

Audain Prize honouree **Michael Morris** is a highly acclaimed painter, photographer, video and performance artist, and curator. His work is often media-based and collaborative. He has been a key figure of the West Coast art scene since the 1960s. Together with Vincent Trasov, he founded Image Bank—a platform for personal exchange between artists in 1969. In 1973, Morris co-founded the Western Front Society—one of Canada's first artist-run centres—and served as co-director of the Front for seven years. In 1981, he was invited with Trasov to Berlin as guests of the Berliner Künstlerprogramm DAAD. He and Trasov founded the Morris/Trasov Archive in 1990, currently housed at the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. Morris' work is represented in private and public collections nationally and internationally, and he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities in 2005 by Emily Carr University of Art + Design. He currently lives and works in Victoria, British Columbia.

Elizabeth Zvonar is the recipient of this year's VIVA Award, presented by the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation for the Visual Arts. Zvonar graduated from Emily Carr Institute of Art + Design (now University) with a BFA in 2001. She has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in Vancouver at Artspeak, Malaspina Printmakers, Western Front, Contemporary Art Gallery, Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver Art

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**Vancouver Art Gallery Presents
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Page 2

Gallery, Presentation House Gallery, Exercise Projects and Simon Fraser University Galleries among others. Nationally, she has exhibited in Toronto at Daniel Faria Gallery, Oakville Galleries, Mercer Union and internationally in New York, Australia, Japan and Belgium. Zvonar received the 2009 Mayor's Award for

Emerging Visual Artist, selected by Marian Penner Bancroft. In 2011, she was presented with the Emily Award for outstanding achievement by an Emily Carr alumna. From 2012-15, Zvonar held the post of City of Vancouver Artist in Residence. She is represented by Daniel Faria Gallery in Toronto.

The recipient of the Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize is **Cate Rimmer**, Curator of Gallery + Exhibitions at the Charles H. Scott Gallery where she has curated numerous group and solo exhibitions. She was the founding Director/Curator of Artspeak Gallery in Vancouver, served as Director of Truck Gallery in Calgary, and was a Curator in Residence at the Saidye Bronfman Centre in Montreal. In 2010-11 she curated a year-long public art project for the City of Vancouver entitled *Walk In/Here You Are*. Her recent projects include *The Voyage, or Three Years at Sea* (2013), a multi-part exhibition project at the Charles H. Scott Gallery which looked at our relationship to the sea. Rimmer has a Master of Letters Degree (MLitt) with Distinction in Museum and Gallery Studies, School of Art History, University of St Andrews in Scotland.

Established in 2004, The Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts has become one of Canada's most prestigious honours. Supported by the Audain Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Audain Prize grants \$30,000 annually to a senior British Columbia artist selected by an independent jury. Previous winners of the Audain Prize include Fred Herzog (2014), Takao Tanabe and Gathie Falk (2013), Marian Penner Bancroft (2012), Rodney Graham (2011), Robert Davidson (2010), Liz Magor (2009), Jeff Wall (2008), Gordon Smith (2007), Eric Metcalfe (2006), E.J. Hughes (2005) and Ann Kipling (2004).

Funded by the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation for the Visual Arts, the VIVA Awards are created to nurture the advancement of the visual arts in British Columbia and their appreciation by the public. Providing \$12,000 annually since 1988, these awards celebrate exemplary achievement by British Columbia artists in mid-career.

Provided through the generosity of the estate of Abraham Rogatnick to honour the memory of renowned Vancouver curator Alvin Balkind, the Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize is a biannual award that recognizes outstanding innovation, original research and critical engagement through curatorial work in the visual arts.

The Audain Prize, the VIVA Award and the Balkind Prize will be presented by the Vancouver Art Gallery in The Great Hall of the BC Law Courts at 800 Smithe Street on April 15 at 7:00 pm. Free and open to the public. For event information, please phone 604-662-4747.