

Whistler's Audain Art Museum Presents a Ground-Breaking Celebration of Women Carvers on the Northwest Coast

Curve! Women Carvers on the Northwest Coast celebrates the often-overlooked contributions of women to the rich tradition of carving wood and argillite on the Northwest Coast. This ground-breaking exhibition at the Audain Art Museum (AAM) in Whistler will showcase over 125 remarkable works that intertwine traditional knowledge with artistic innovation.

Co-curated by 2023 Audain Prize Winner Dana Claxton and AAM Director & Chief Curator Curtis Collins, this exhibition will display an impressive collection of masks, panels, poles and bowls on loan from public and private collections across North America. *Curve!* will feature 14 women carvers active from the 1950s to the present day, highlighting their pivotal roles within the indigenous carving traditions of British Columbia.

Ellen Neel (1916-1966), Freda Diesing (1925-2002), and Doreen Jensen (1933-2009), three iconic artists on the Northwest Coast, serve as historic context for this extensive exhibition. Their contributions paved the way for subsequent generations of carvers and left an indelible mark on carving in this province. Susan Point, Dale Marie Campbell, and Marianne Nicolson represent a group of highly accomplished senior artists, while Marika Echachis Swan, Morgan Asoyuf, Cori Savard, Stephanie Anderson, Veronica Waechter, Arlene Ness, Cherish Alexander, and Melanie Russ represent emerging/mid-career talents that continue to push carving traditions forward.

Dana Claxton says, "*Curve!* brings together artists whose practices sustain cultural ways of being in the world. From spirit to matter - these magnificent and magical art works are tied to the ancients."

Curtis Collins, Director & Chief Curator of the AAM, explains, "The Museum is honoured to be hosting such a comprehensive exhibition that explores carving traditions among indigenous women from communities throughout the Northwest Coast."

Accompanying the exhibition will be a hard-cover book issued by Figure 1 Publishers in Vancouver. This publication features texts by Dana Claxton, Skeena Reece, and Marika Echachis Swan; and interviews with renowned artists Mary Anne Barkhouse and Dale Marie Campbell conducted by Curtis Collins. The book will document over 75 years of artistic production, complete with full-colour images of the works by the 14 featured artists.

Curve! Women Carvers on the Northwest Coast seeks to celebrate and elevate the contributions of women in a traditionally male-dominated field. This exhibition is made possible in part thanks to the support of Presenting Sponsor TD Bank Group (TD), and will be on display in Whistler from November 23, 2024, to May 5, 2025.

In addition to TD Bank Group (TD), this exhibition is supported by Major Sponsor the Audain Foundation, Publication Sponsor Dixon Mitchell, Government Partner BC Arts Council, Supporting Sponsor YP Heung Foundation, Additional Support from McCarthy Tetrault and Yosef Wosk Family Foundation, and Hotel Partner Fairmont Chateau Whistler.

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About the Audain Art Museum

Established in 2016, the Museum was founded via a major philanthropic gift of Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa. The Permanent Collection is focused on the art of British Columbia, exemplifying the richness of cultural difference in Canada. Highlights include hereditary Haida Chief James Hart's *The Dance Screen*, an exceptional collection of historical and contemporary Indigenous art, a comprehensive selection of paintings by Emily Carr and a brilliant range of works by Vancouver's photo-conceptualists. The Museum hosts numerous special exhibitions per year that feature artists and collections of national as well as international significance.

Media Interviews, Press Kit & Images

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AUDAIN ART MUSEUM

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