

RELEASE
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**Audain Prize Marks 10th Anniversary with Two Winners:
Artists Gathie Falk & Takao Tanabe
Viva Award Winner Elizabeth McIntosh; Balkind Prize Helga Pakasaar**

Vancouver, B.C. – The annual celebration of the visual arts in British Columbia will be an even grander occasion, as the Audain Prize observes its 10th year of honouring lifetime achievement in the visual arts. To mark this landmark anniversary, the Audain Prize will be awarded to two artists in 2013: **Gathie Falk** and **Takao Tanabe**. A ceremony honouring the winners will be held at 7:30 pm on April 4th in the Great Hall of the BC Law Courts building.

Elizabeth McIntosh is the winner of the 2013 VIVA Award, granted annually by the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation. The foundation will also be presenting its new award, the Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize. The Balkind Prize will be given to **Helga Pakasaar** as well as to the institution where she curates,

“We are honoured to celebrate the career achievement of these important British Columbia artists, all of whom have exhibited or curated at the Vancouver Art Gallery,” said Vancouver Art Gallery director Kathleen Bartels. “These awards exemplify the high standards set by the artists of this region, and we sincerely congratulate all of the recipients.”

In its tenth year, the **Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts** has become one of Canada's most prestigious honours. The Audain Prize, funded by the Audain Foundation for the Visual Arts, grants \$30,000 annually to a senior British Columbia artist, selected by an independent jury. Previous winners of the Audain Prize include 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).

Over the last 20 years, Michael Audain, Chairman of Polygon Homes Ltd., has been a leading supporter of the visual arts in British Columbia.

Audain Prize honouree **Gathie Falk** is a highly acclaimed artist whose work has been exhibited nationally and is held in numerous collections, including at the Vancouver Art Gallery and the National Gallery of Canada. A recipient of the Order of Canada, the Order of British Columbia, and the Governor General's Award in Visual Arts, Falk is best known as a painter, sculptor and performance artist whose work reflects the objects and activities of everyday life. Born in Alexander, Manitoba, she moved to Vancouver and

worked as an elementary school teacher while undertaking formal art training at the University of British Columbia. In 1962, she began exhibiting her paintings in group shows and, in 1965, had her first solo exhibition in Vancouver. In the late 1960s, Falk began to focus on making innovations in ceramic sculpture and performance art, and continues to be prolific in her studio to this day.

Also an **Audain Prize** honouree, **Takao Tanabe** is a distinguished artist whose work has been exhibited internationally, as well as featured in solo and group exhibitions throughout Canada. He is a Member of the Order of Canada, the Order of British Columbia and recipient of the Governor General's Award in Visual Arts. Born in Prince Rupert, BC, Tanabe attended the Winnipeg School of Art, the Brooklyn Museum Art School and the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London. He also studied with Hans Hoffman in New York and Isao Hirayama at the Tokyo University of Fine Arts. While he was head of the Art Department at the Banff School of Fine Arts between 1973 and 1980, Tanabe began to paint the landscapes for which he is best known. His evocative landscape paintings are represented in over 50 public collections in Canada and 120 corporate collections internationally.

Elizabeth McIntosh is this year's winner of the **VIVA Award**, presented by the Jack and Doris Shadbolt Foundation for the Visual Arts to recognize BC artists who demonstrate exceptional creative ability and commitment. Elizabeth McIntosh has had exhibitions of her abstract paintings across Canada and the United States. Notable group exhibitions include *PAINT* at the Vancouver Art Gallery, and *Spell: A Travelling Exhibition of Contemporary Abstraction* at the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon. Her artworks are in public and private collections across the country. In addition to her work as an artist, she is an influential teacher currently working as an Assistant Professor of Painting and Visual Arts at Emily Carr University.

The recipients of the **Alvin Balkind Curator's Prize** are **Helga Pakasaar** and **Presentation House Gallery**. Provided through the generosity of the estate of Abraham Rogatnick to honour the memory of renowned Vancouver curator Alvin Balkind, this biannual award recognizes excellence in the field of curating in the visual arts. This award celebrates innovation, original research and critical engagement through the organization of exhibitions that expand an understanding and appreciation of the visual arts. Helga Pakasaar has been the curator at the Presentation House Gallery for the past decade, curating such noted exhibitions as c. *1983: Camera Art in Vancouver* and *Not Necessarily In That Order*.

The Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts, the VIVA Award, and Balkind Prize will be presented at the Great Hall of the B.C. Law Courts at 800 Smithe Street on April 4th at 7:30 pm with a reception following. This event is free and open to the public. For event information, please phone 604-662-4747.