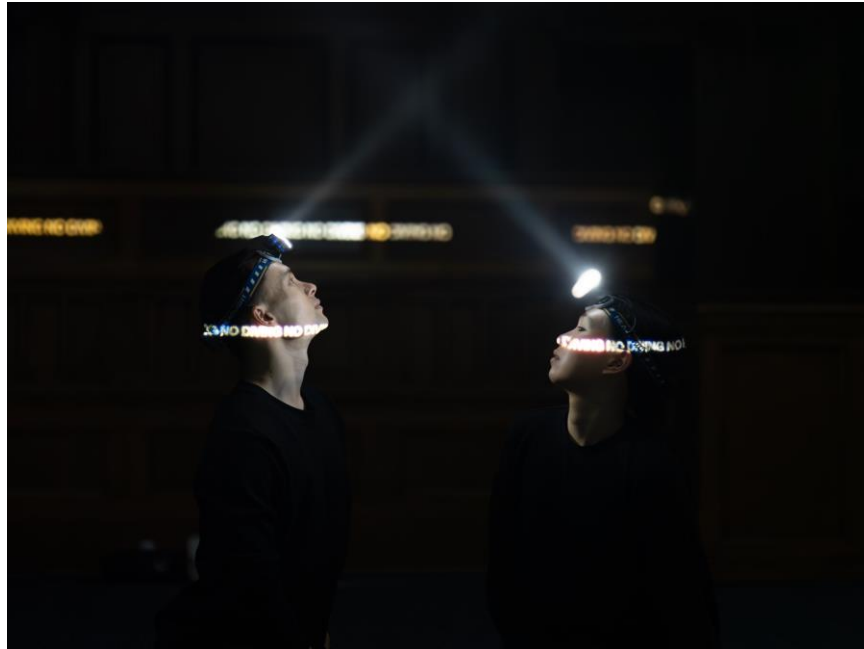


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Asian Heritage Month at the Vancouver Art Gallery

The Gallery launches a month-long program featuring a world-premiere performance

Vancouver
Artgallery | **ASIAN HERITAGE
MONTH**



April 29, 2025, VANCOUVER, BC // Traditional Coast Salish Lands including the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlliwətaʔ (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

The Vancouver Art Gallery honours Asian Heritage Month with a vibrant lineup of programs and events showcasing the depth and diversity of Asian cultural expression. From Punjabi and Mandarin art tours to weaving workshops, new exhibitions and a world-premiere performance, the Gallery offers a platform for artistic innovation and community connection.

Visitors of all ages, cultures and backgrounds are invited to explore the many facets of Asian identity and creativity through art. In a spirit of reflection and resilience, the program offers a space to come together through art, performance and shared experience.

"We are proud to celebrate Asian Heritage Month and to shine a light on the richness and complexity of global Asian cultural expression. Guided by the spirit of the Gallery's Centre for Global Asias, we honour the many Asias that flourish across time and place, inviting audiences to see, feel and connect across cultures," says **Sirish Rao**, Interim Co-CEO at the Vancouver Art Gallery

As part of its Asian Heritage Month programming, the Vancouver Art Gallery is pleased to present the world premiere of *HEAVEN FM (2025)*, a bold new performance by Vancouver-based, interdisciplinary arts company **Hong Kong Exile**, to be presented in six public performances from May 15 to 18. Blending dance, theatre and multimedia performance, five artists navigate a universe alive with spirit and sound, using low-tech tools to tune into surreal and sacred stories. At once absurd and sublime, *HEAVEN FM* explores themes of loss, joy and connection in a digitized world.

HEAVEN FM (2025) was developed as part of a residency at the Vancouver Art Gallery from January to May 2025. **Hong Kong Exile** are the Gallery's first-ever Performers in Residence, reflecting the Gallery's ongoing commitment to supporting artists and representing diverse artistic mediums within the museum space. Rooted in Co-Artistic Director **Natalie Tin Yin Gan**'s reflections on Chinese ancestral ritual, this collaboratively devised work continues Hong Kong Exile's 13-year journey into the intersection of performance and technology.

"We are profoundly grateful to be the first Performers in Residence at the Vancouver Art Gallery, and to premiere our work as part of its Asian Heritage Month programming. This is an incredible platform to share space with visual arts audiences and connect with the broader public," says **Natalie Tin Yin Gan**, dance artist and Co-Artistic Director of Hong Kong Exile. "It is an honour to bring Hong Kong Exile's energy, sensibilities and protocols into this iconic and unlikely venue and to contribute to the living history of the building, the former Provincial Courthouse. This residency has allowed us to assemble an exceptional ensemble of artists to complete the creation of a show that is deeply meaningful to us. After six years of evolving and transforming, it's truly exciting to present the world premiere of this work at the Vancouver Art Gallery."

Asian Heritage Month at the Vancouver Art Gallery culminates on May 24 with Art Party—an unforgettable evening of live performances, DJ sets and immersive art experiences, including performances by **Theatre Replacement**, **Wei Chang** and **DJ Ephemeral Objects**, as well as a hands-on activity with Vancouver's Community of Adult LEGO Fans, an artist-led talk with **Sara Khan** and much more. Partygoers will also be among the first to experience the Gallery's highly anticipated summer exhibitions: *Otani Workshop: Monsters in My Head* and *Written in Clay: From the John David Lawrence Collection*—one showcasing contemporary ceramic innovation from Japan, and the other tracing the history of British Columbia's studio pottery movement.

For more information, please visit: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/asian-heritage-month-2025/

In Grief and Solidarity with the Filipino Community

Our hearts are heavy following the violent act that took place in our city this past weekend. We grieve the devastating loss of life and the profound impact this tragedy has had—especially on our friends, family and neighbours in the Filipino community. During this time of heartache and grief, the Vancouver Art Gallery believes in the power of art to offer space for reflection, healing and connection.

The Gallery offers a place for remembrance and care, and through the [BC Parks Foundation's PaRx program](#), healthcare professionals can prescribe a visit to the Vancouver Art Gallery as part of people's healing journeys. The Gallery extends complimentary admission to all those directly impacted by this tragedy event through May 31, 2025. Simply speak with our staff at the Admissions Desk, and we will honour your visit.

We send our deepest condolences and unwavering support to everyone affected by this heartbreaking event.

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH PROGRAM

Performance: *HEAVEN FM* by Hong Kong Exile

Thursday, May 15, 2025, 7 PM

Friday, May 16, 2025, 7 & 9 PM

Saturday, May 17, 3:30 PM & 7 PM

Sunday, May 18, 2025, 3:30 PM

Courtroom 302 at the Vancouver Art Gallery

In this hour-long premiere performance, five artists journey towards the edge of a universe that is teeming with spirit and sound. Equipped with low-tech gear, they attempt connection—tuning in and out of otherworldly stories. The absurd is juxtaposed with the sublime; the comedic revealed within the sacred. Powered by joy, grief and battery-operated magic, *HEAVEN FM* dances with the unseen and the ever-shifting gravity of loss.

General tickets are \$39 and \$30 for Gallery Members. For more information, visit:

www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/events/performance-heaven-fm-may-18/

Tours in Punjabi and Mandarin | Vancouver Art Gallery

Sunday, May 11 and May 25, 2025, 11 AM, 12 PM & 1 PM

Delve deeper into *Riopelle: Crossroads in Time* and *Emily Carr: Navigating an Impenetrable Landscape* with guided exhibition tours in Punjabi and in Mandarin. Led by an experienced Art Educator, each tour is unique and reflects the guide's passions and interests.

Each 45-minute tour meets in the Gallery's Forecourt. Tours are free for Members or by Gallery admission.

For more information, visit: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/events/public-tours-punjabi-may-11

Art Party | Vancouver Art Gallery

Saturday, May 24, 2025, 8–12AM

Mark your calendars! On May 24 the Gallery's much-anticipated Art Party returns for an unforgettable evening of thought-provoking performances, live DJ sets and immersive art experiences. Dance the night away, make art with friends and explore the exhibitions in an atmosphere designed to surprise, delight and inspire. This late-night party will feature a range of performances by artists of Asian descent, including performances by Theatre Replacement, Wei Chang and DJ Ephemeral Objects.

Ticket pricing varies. For more information, visit: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/events/art-party-spring-2025
Email media@vanartgallery.bc.ca to RSVP to [Art Party](#)

The Making Place

Sunday, May 25, 2025, 11 AM–4PM

Room 4East, 4th Floor, Vancouver Art Gallery

Discover the beauty and tradition of *banig*—handwoven mats of the Philippines, predominantly used for sleeping and everyday living. In this hands-on workshop, art educator **Yvette Salazar** will guide participants through a simplified banig weaving technique, using vibrant strips of colourful paper to create a personal woven item to take home.

Inspired by long-standing Filipino craft traditions using pandanus leaves, this workshop offers a thoughtful introduction to the cultural and artistic significance of banig weaving—reimagined with accessible materials for all ages.

For more information, visit: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/events/the-making-place-may-25

Exhibition: Otani Workshop: Monsters in My Head

May 25–November 9, 2025

Otani Workshop: Monsters in My Head offers visitors a look into the mind of one of Japan's leading contemporary ceramic artists. Born in 1980 in Shigaraki—one of Japan's oldest pottery centres—Shigeru Otani, known as Otani Workshop, is an important figure in Japanese ceramics. This visionary exhibition marks Otani's first solo presentation in North America and retraces his artistic journey, providing insight into the mythical figures and contemporary imagery that have come to characterize his work. Featuring new paintings inspired by personal memories alongside hand-built ceramic sculptures in varying scales, the exhibition is a compelling introduction to Otani Workshop's unique practice, which blends time-honoured Japanese artistic techniques with a bold, contemporary aesthetic.

Organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery and curated by **Diana Freundl**, Senior Curator

For more information, visit: <https://www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/exhibitions/otani-workshop-monsters-in-my-head>

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Image: HEAVEN FM, Courtesy of Hong Kong Exile

[Download images here](#)

ABOUT HONG KONG EXILE

Hong Kong Exile is a Vancouver-based, interdisciplinary arts company made up of three contemporary artists: **Natalie Tin Yin Gan**, **Milton Lim** and **Remy Siu**. The three have been consistently creating and producing work since 2011, developing a reputation as an engaged, rigorous and prolific arts company. Since its inception, Hong Kong Exile has created thirteen original works presented in dance, theatre, film/media and new music contexts across Canada and internationally. Projects over the last several years include an ambitious month-long gallery exhibition, presentations at CanAsian International Dance Festival, Prairie Theatre Exchange, Dancing on the Edge Festival, Gaudeamus Muziekweek and PuSh International Performing Arts Festival, as well as various

collaborative international initiatives. Hong Kong Exile aims to create vital and innovative performance drawing from their diasporic experiences as first-generation Chinese-Canadian settlers. The company values pushing beyond the conventions of their respective disciplines, seeking expressions/aesthetics that evoke the strange and speculative as much as they speak to contemporary political realities.

ABOUT THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

Founded in 1931 and located on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations, the Vancouver Art Gallery is Western Canada's largest public art museum. Our mission is to create—through art—paths to share perspectives, build and engage communities and shape our collective future together. This is expressed through exhibitions showcasing outstanding examples of historical, modern and contemporary art from British Columbia and around the world; education programs that encourage dialogue and understanding; and publications that advance scholarship on a wide range of artistic subjects. Our permanent collection, representing the most comprehensive resource for visual culture in British Columbia, has more than 13,200 works. Committed to inclusivity and accessibility, we serve a broad public across the region. Each year, hundreds of thousands of children, youth, students, families, adults and seniors of all backgrounds benefit from our programs.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is situated on the ancestral and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (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.