



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Christina, christina@contemporaryartgallery.ca

October 4, 2007

RSVP - A Series of Dinner Conversations

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA: October 4, 2007 - You're invited to RSVP, a series of meals taking place across the city. For these events curator Germaine Koh borrows the format of the dinner party as a model for unscripted yet conscious social performance. At these dinner parties, nominally hosted by prominent local figures accomplished in performance-based disciplines, audience and actors are one and the same, emphasizing the performative nature of not only social gatherings, but also other social practices such as negotiation, friendship, service, networking, competition, and civil affairs.

PROGRAM

RSVP now to reserve your seat, call the Contemporary Art Gallery at 604-681-2700, seating is limited. No cancellations, no refunds.

Friday 19 October, 7 pm - Downtown loft dinner, home-cooked by your hosts

Hosted by Tony Penikett and Tahmoh Penikett

Cost: \$45 contribution to costs.

Monday 22 October, noon - Campus and Second Life bag lunch at the Centre for Digital Media

Bring your own laptop to participate in Second Life

Location: Centre for Digital Media in Second Life and at Great Northern Way campus

Hosted by Masters of Digital Media Program: Joanna Robinson and Ian Verchere

The virtual performance troupe Second Front will be in attendance.

Cost: Bring your own or reserve \$15 brown bag lunch from Meinhardt Fine Food.

Wednesday 24 October, 7 pm - Comfort food at Sophie's Cosmic Café

Hosted by Maren Hancock and Eliza Griffiths

Cost: Dutch treat

Sunday 28 October, 7 pm - Fine regional cuisine at Gastropod

Hosted by Ian Verchere and Dr. Cynthia Verchere

Cost: Dutch treat

HOSTS

Maren Hancock is a vocalist and MC, promoter and DJ, academic and feminist activist. As DJ Betti Forde, she is one third of the “cougar rap” band Stink Mitt. Amongst her DJ gigs, she founded and continues to be resident DJ for the infamous Stacked Tuesdays at Celebrities. As an academic, she has published journal articles and the book *Lady Lazarus: Confronting Lydia Lunch*.

Eliza Griffiths is a painter noted for her psychologically and sexually fraught depictions of invented characters. She teaches at Concordia University and has exhibited extensively across Canada, in the US, UK and Spain.

Joanna Robinson is Research Assistant in the Masters of Digital Media Program and an MA candidate in Popular Culture at Brock University. Her research explores issues of gender representations, performance, identity, and implications for everyday life in online game and virtual communities; and the use of virtual environments to augment learning.

Tahmoh Penikett is an actor and kick-boxing enthusiast. He plays Lt. Karl "Helo" Agathon on the television series *Battlestar Galactica* and has appeared in *Cold Squad*, *Smallville*, and *The L Word*.

Tony Penikett is a mediator, negotiator, former asbestos-mine labourer, former Leader of the Yukon Government, teacher, and playwright. He has written the books *Reconciliation: First Nations Treaty Making in British Columbia* and *Breaking Trail*; the films *The Mad Trapper* and *La Patrouille Perdu*; and the plays *Separatism Comes to Squatters Row* and *It, She and Me*. He teaches in the Department of Public Policy at Simon Fraser University.

Dr. Cynthia Verchere is a plastic surgeon, administrator, researcher, teacher, mother, and stilt-walker. She is Head of the Division of Plastic Surgery at Children’s Hospital, and former Director of Undergraduate Teaching in the Division of Plastic Surgery at University of British Columbia.

Ian Verchere is a video game designer and producer, former pro skier, writer, visual artist, punk singer, and Faculty in the Masters of Digital Media program. His book *VON 1B0: General Delivery, Whistler, B.C.* is an anti-guidebook to Whistler’s creation myths, and his screenplay *Mom’s Cookies* (co-written with Douglas Coupland) was bought by Disney. His games include the best-selling *SSX Tricky* and *NBA Street V.2* for Electronic Arts and *Beavis and Butt-head* for MTV.

"Aside from spectacles and performances publicized as such, there is a world of social forms and actions each of us performs as part of daily living... Competing, maintaining relationships, conversing, providing good service, making a great party, fulfilling professional duties: all are situations that develop only through the

effective performance of the individuals involved. Some are rituals with set roles, but many others unfold with no fixed guidelines. In situations that collapse distinctions between performer/supplier and audience/recipient, all in attendance are embedded performers equally responsible for the development of the action, defining their own roles in the moment, face-to-face, with no script.

"The dinner party is one of these social forms whose intangible success depends on the active participation of a group of people and their will to forge a remarkable yet intrinsically ephemeral experience on an intimate scale, through improvisation, with no "set menu" of moves, but only the social and personal expertise and intentions that each person brings to the table. It combines openness (in its lack of script and unknown end), constraint (in unspoken rules of etiquette), and pressure (to navigate these). As such, it seems a rich format to borrow in order to table various issues around negotiation and networking, role-playing, obligation, and social anxiety - and to consider the ways in which these are in flux in today's society..."
Excerpt from the essay by guest curator Germaine Koh.

www.germainekoh.com/rsvp.html

www.contemporaryartgallery.ca

www.livebiennale.ca/artists_rsvp.html

-30-

Press Inquiries:
Contemporary Art Gallery
christina@contemporaryartgallery.ca