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The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery welcomes 11 new members to its Board of Directors

Toronto - The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery is pleased to announce the appointment of 11 new members to its Board of Directors: Naman Budhdeo, Cara Eastcott, Hirbod Human, Maria Hupfield, Richard Lee, Antoine Mindjimba, Nasir Noormohamed, Jason Ryle, Roula Shimaly, Adam Vigna, and Ethel Weiner (bios below). The nominees bring a wide range of lived experience and expertise, and diverse perspectives to the Board’s leadership.

“We are excited to welcome this dynamic group of individuals to our Board of Directors,” said Jacques Bernier, Board President. “Each of our new members displays a sense of strength, determination, and generosity.” The role of the Board of Directors is to provide governance in support of the gallery, oversee the strategic vision and activities of the institution, and to lead fundraising activities.

“Now more than ever, the leadership and governance of the Board is vital for our organization,” said Gaëtane Verna, Director, The Power Plant. “Their unwavering passion and determination were inspiring as we have broken down barriers to accessing contemporary art throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.”

With thanks to the work of the Board and the employees, The Power Plant saw numerous successes during the 2020-21 fiscal year—despite the challenges during the global pandemic. The Power Plant presented 10 exhibitions, including six traveling exhibitions, featuring eight artists from Canada and around the world, and produced eight print publications. The Power Plant’s 105 public programs reached communities across Canada and around the world.

The Power Plant thanks retiring Directors for their hard work and dedication to fulfilling The Power Plant’s mandate, mission, and vision. “I would like to extend my gratitude to Debra Campbell, Robert B. Bell, Peter M. Ross, Catherine G. Barbaro, and Brian Pel for their many contributions to the organization,” said Bernier.

The Power Plant is committed to the highest quality of programming in its exhibitions and outreach activities. The Board of Directors, together with the entire team at The Power Plant, continue to work to serve as Canada’s leading forum for the advancement of the artistic culture of our time.

The Power Plant welcomes the following new members to the Board:

• **Naman Budhdeo** is a serial entrepreneur who has founded multiple businesses in the travel sector including Flight Network in 2005 and TripStack in 2016. Naman believes strongly in the importance of education. In collaboration with “Free the Children,” Naman and “The Budhdeo Family Foundation” built a school in Bagar, India. He has been a member of YPO for nine years; was a finalist for Ernst & Young’s Entrepreneur of the year in 2009 and 2010; and was honoured to be one of Canada’s top leaders in the Top 40 under 40, a national program that uniquely celebrates the achievements of 40 Canadians in the private, public, and
not-for-profit sectors, who have reached a significant level of success before the age of 40.

- **Cara Eastcott** is a freelance cultural producer based in Toronto, who has been shaping multi-disciplinary arts spaces for the last 15 years. Her work focuses on highlighting storytellers of all forms who help communities gain a deeper understanding of place and public history. From 2011-2018, Cara held multiple leadership positions at Tangled Art + Disability, a Deaf and disability arts gallery and arts organization in Toronto. During this time, she produced year-round programming, curated gallery exhibitions, and expanded the organization’s connection to new and racialized communities. She has supported multiple arts organizations in bettering their accessibility practices, including SummerWorks, Toronto Arts Council, and the National Arts Centre.

- **Hirbod Human** is an entrepreneur deeply steeped in the arts. Having obtained a degree in Fine Arts (Graphic Design, Print & Publishing), he left Iran in 2002 and immigrated to California where he pursued further education in Cinema, Communications, and post-graduate studies in Business Management in 2004. Starting his career as a writer, director, and producer in various news services and TV channels, he then transitioned to an executive position as Executive Vice President of Marketing with Crown Equity Holdings, a publicly traded company in Las Vegas in 2008. In 2011, he started TRIXMEDIA, a full-service branding platform utilizing his many talents to attract major clients, including Coca-Cola, Starbucks, and Hilton Hotels. TRIXMEDIA is one of the top 1,000 agencies globally and one of the top 100 agencies in the United States today.

- **Maria Hupfield** is an Anishinabek citizen of Wasauksing First Nation and an artist whose digitally enhanced performance practice bridges traditional and contemporary Indigenous arts. She has an extensive record of solo and group exhibitions in Canada, the US, and Europe. Maria was the first strategic Indigenous faculty hire at Emily Carr University of Art and Design (2007 to 2011). She has also taught art and aboriginal studies at York University, the University of Toronto, and The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. Currently, she is a Canadian Research Chair in Transdisciplinary Indigenous Arts at the University of Toronto Mississauga where she runs the Indigenous Creation Studio and teaches in the Department of Visual Studies/English and Drama, as well as the Masters of Visual Studies program in the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design at the University of Toronto. Maria has many years of experience working with Indigenous communities. She is the founding coordinator of 7th Generation Image Makers at Native and Family Child Services of Toronto; has worked with many Indigenous artists across Turtle Island; and served as the 2012 Artist Ambassador for the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC.

- **Richard Lee** is an Award-winning actor, fight director, sound designer, theatre educator, and theatre producer. In his career he’s had the joy of playing many interesting roles, including Bruce Lee (Little Dragon – K’now/Theatre Passe Muraille); Rick Wong (Banana Boys – fu-GEN Theatre Company); Sun WuKong (The Forbidden Phoenix – Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People/Citadel Theatre); Falkor (The Neverending Story – Roseneath Theatre), all roles for which he nominated for Dora Mavor Moore Awards. He received three Dora Awards, one for his work in sound design and two for performance. In 2013, for his work in In the House of Sarah Stanley, he received the infamous Harold Award, a
theatre award bestowed by a previous recipient to recognize the outstanding work of often under-recognized theatre individuals on or off the stage. Richard is a Professor at Humber College and teaches a course in Collective Creation using the Belshaw Method. He was a founding member and former General Manager of fu-GEN Asian-Canadian Theatre Company. Richard is quite passionate about issues of Cultural Diversity as it relates to the Canadian Performing Arts Industry and seeks to raise awareness and actively address this issue.

• Antoine Mindjimba is an Associate Partner at Ernst & Young, in the People Advisory Services practice in Toronto, and has over 15 years of consulting experience. He specializes in EDI, Culture Evolutions, Transformative Leadership, and Change Management. Born in France to a French mother and Cameroonian father, Antoine sees himself as a citizen of the world as he had the opportunity to work and live in all European countries, in North America, Asia, and Africa. His purpose in life is to set up environments in which humans can unleash their power to achieve the extraordinary; environments where individuals feel equipped, empowered, and excited about an ever-changing business world. Antoine holds a Master in Strategy & Management of International Business from ESSEC (France) and an MBA (Finance and Behavioral Economics) from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

• Nasir Noormohamed is the Co-Founder of Drug Intelligence Inc., which provides syndicated and custom market research services to most of the larger, research-based pharmaceutical companies in the areas of specialty and emerging therapies, with a focus on oncology. Previously, Nasir provided management consulting services to numerous healthcare organizations. Nasir has served on the boards and executive committees of numerous national, provincial, and local organizations. He speaks multiple languages, and is fully bilingual in English and French. Nasir is passionate about the arts, loves to travel, cook, and to sample others’ cooking.

• Jason Ryle is a producer, programmer, curator, story editor, and arts consultant based in Toronto. He is Anishinaabe from Lake St. Martin, Manitoba. From July 2010 to June 2020, Jason was the Executive Director of imagineNATIVE, an Indigenous-run organization mandated to support Indigenous filmmakers and media artists. In this capacity, Jason oversaw all operational and artistic activities of the annual imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, the world’s largest showcase of Indigenous screen content. Under his leadership, imagineNATIVE became the global hub for Indigenous film and a highly respected part of the Canadian industry. Since 2006, Jason has been a script reader for the Harold Greenberg Fund (which provides financial support to Canadian narrative screenwriters), contributing to story development and market assessment. He currently serves as the President of Toronto Arts Council and is a member of the National Film Board of Canada’s Indigenous Advisory Group.

• Roula Shimaly is a contemporary art lover with a background in management consulting. In her 20 years of consulting, she has worked with Canadian and global corporate clients on a broad range of projects and initiatives focused on overall business and culture transformations, strategic visioning and planning, governance and oversight, talent and human resource management, board effectiveness, and more.

• Adam Vigna has been Vice-President of Power Corporation since 2016. He
currently serves as the Managing Partner and Chief Investment Officer of Sagard Holdings. He is a Director of Peak Achievement Athletics and is a member of the Investment Advisory Committee of Grayhawk Investment Strategies Inc. Prior to his appointment, Adam was a Managing Director at the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) responsible for leading the Global Principal Credit Investments Group. Prior to joining CPPIB in 2009, he was a Vice-President at Goldman Sachs in the Special Situations Group in New York and Toronto, and was a founding member and co-head of the Canadian Special Situations Group. Adam holds a Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) degree from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. Adam is an active supporter of the United Way in Toronto and is involved each year in a number of philanthropic activities in the community.

• Ethel Weiner is a Wealth Consultant and Chartered Investment Manager (CIM®) at Cidel. She works closely with clients to define their goals and offers a holistic approach to wealth management. Ethel provides the highest level of service by integrating Cidel's three areas of expertise: Asset Management, Structuring & Trust, and Specialized Banking. Prior to joining Cidel, Ethel worked in community and art not-for-profit organizations in New York. Ethel earned her BA in Art History and MA in Art History and Museum Studies from Tufts University in Medford, MA. She is a member of the Integrated Development Committee at UJA-Federation of Greater Toronto and a Campaign Cabinet Member at SickKids Hospital.

About The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery

The Power Plant is Canada's leading public gallery devoted exclusively to contemporary visual art. It is a vital forum for the advanced artistic culture of our time that offers an exceptional facility and professional support to diverse living artists, while engaging equally diverse audiences in their work. The Power Plant pursues its activities through exhibitions, publications, and public programming that incorporate other areas of culture when they intersect with visual art.

Director: Gaëtane Verna

ADMISSION: ALL YEAR, ALL FREE
presented by BMO FINANCIAL GROUP

Providing as many people as possible with access to these programs and events remains the gallery's top priority. The initiative leading these efforts is a renewed partnership with BMO Financial Group, whose support of the ALL YEAR, ALL FREE initiative is vital to expanding and diversifying audiences by eliminating the cost of admission to The Power Plant's exhibition program.

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