

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Drawn 2009 presents "City Hall," a public drawing performance in Gastown

Vancouver, BC — Four Vancouver artists will transform one of the city's most historic public spaces into a site-specific drawing performance as part of this summer's **Drawn** festival. In a work called **City Hall**, artists **Dylan McHugh, Leisha O'Donohue, Ian Prentice** and **Rachel D. White** (known collectively as **DRIL**) will draw directly onto a wood-and-canvas replica of the tent that, according to a well-known photograph, served as a temporary city hall after the Great Fire of 1886 destroyed most of Vancouver. Comprising a series of seven scheduled public performances, the unique collaboration will unfold at the foot of Carrall Street in Gastown, just metres from where the original make-shift structure stood more than a century ago.

The performances will be one of the highlights of **Drawn**, Metro Vancouver's inaugural multi-venue festival of drawing. "With the *City Hall* project, we are seeing the definition of drawing expanded in some very creative and critical ways," said Lynn Ruscheinsky, one of the festival's co-founders. "Works like *City Hall* show that drawing as an art form can assume many different formats. By taking drawing outside of the traditional gallery context and transforming it into live performance art, moreover, the artists are making the form more accessible to members of the general public.



DRIL,
untitled (collaborative drawing collage)
2009
Graphite and water colour on paper

In the original black and white photograph, one of the most iconic in Vancouver's past, several formally attired men in period moustaches and beards are gathered around tables in front of a tent-like structure. The words "City Hall" appear on an improvised sign affixed to the tent's entrance. This suggests that the men are city councillors who are having their first meeting after the Great Fire of 1886 reduced most of Vancouver to ashes, including the building that served as the newly incorporated municipality's first city hall.

Taking the historic photograph as their point of entry into the subject of buildings, shelters and architecture of all kinds, the collective will reintroduce the city hall tent of 1886 into present-day Gastown. In a contemporary collaborative performance, the group will rebuild the tent out of lumber and canvas and proceed to cover it in drawings on the subject of man-made dwellings, addressing our assumptions about what goes on within these structures. By using approximate replicas of all of the objects in the photograph as a blank

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canvas to draw on with black ink, graphite and charcoal, the tent, tables and chairs will be amazingly transformed into a sculptural drawing surface.

The performances will take place Friday evenings 4 - 9 PM and Sunday afternoons 12 - 5 PM. The first performance will be on Sunday July 19. Admission is free for all ages, and spectators are welcome to offer suggestions as the artists work. For more details and a complete performance schedule please visit drawnfestival.ca.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Dylan McHugh is a young Vancouver based artist. He received his BFA at Halifax's NSCAD University and has exhibited across Canada and in the US. Specializing in ceramics, painting and textiles, McHugh is developing a fluid and dynamic multimedia practice founded in drawing that evolves, changes and adapts from project to project. He is especially interested in exploratory collaborations and large scale installations.

Leisha O'Donohue is a multimedia artist focusing on drawing, painting, textiles and sculpture. In 2007 she received her BFA from NSCAD University and is currently working and living in Vancouver. Themes that are recurring within her work include death, violence and subjective realities, often explored through black humour. Many of her projects focus on community involvement and direct interaction with the work.

Ian Prentice recently received a BFA from NSCAD University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and has returned to his roots in Vancouver. His practice traverses media such as drawing, digital media and sculpture. With his recent video project, Prentice is continuing his interest in exploring aspects of labour and leisure in the representation of landscapes, addressing concepts of absence, abundance, impermanence and the subject of wilderness.

Rachel D. White currently lives and works in Vancouver, having recently received her BFA from NSCAD University. Specializing in painting, drawing and sculpture, White's recent work is inspired by literary devices such as metaphor, allegory and onomatopoeia. Much of her work is based specifically on the texts of Edgar Allan Poe, Robert Frost and James Joyce.

Generously sponsored by the Gastown Business Improvement Society and Opus Framing and Art Supplies.

ABOUT DRAWN

For three weeks in July and August, Vancouver-area galleries and museums will join forces to host an unprecedented series of exhibitions devoted to the medium of drawing. The first city-wide celebration of its kind in Canada, this unique multi-venue event will include an exciting program of free lectures, gallery tours, exhibition openings, performances, artist talks and more. **Drawn / Artists and Drawings / Vancouver 2009** is presented by the Vancouver Drawing Festival Society, a non-profit society dedicated to raising awareness and appreciation for the artistic medium of drawing.

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