



National
Gallery
of Canada

Musée
des beaux-arts
du Canada

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Breathtaking photographs and films, immersive augmented reality experiences, cutting-edge technology: *Anthropocene* opens Friday in Ottawa

- Groundbreaking exhibition explores human impact on the planet through large-scale photographs by Edward Burtynsky, film installations by Jennifer Baichwal and Nicholas de Pencier and, new from the artists, augmented reality installations
- Free with admission to the National Gallery of Canada from September 28, 2018 to February 24, 2019

OTTAWA, September 26, 2018 –[*Anthropocene*](#), the new multimedia exhibition on view at the National Gallery of Canada from September 28, 2018 to February 24, 2019 is the result of an ambitious four-year collaboration between the renowned artist **Edward Burtynsky** and award-winning filmmakers **Jennifer Baichwal** and **Nicholas de Pencier**. Using the most cutting-edge technology of our time, combining film, photography, augmented reality (AR) and scientific research, the exhibition offers a spectacular panorama of the enormous impact humanity has had on the planet.

“Photography is among some of the most transformative inventions – and this ambitious exhibition takes the medium to the next level with the use of immersive technology,” said **Marc Mayer**, Director and CEO of the National Gallery of Canada. “Through stunning photographs, films and innovative augmented reality installations – we are encouraged to explore and reflect upon the consequences of our modern way of life.”

Measuring 66 metres high, 12 metres in circumference and with a canopy spread of 18.3 metres, the artists transported a near-to-scale rendering of “Big Lonely Doug”, Canada’s second largest Douglas Fir tree, from its home in a clear-cut on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, to the Gallery’s Scotiabank Great Hall. This AR installation of the 1,000-year-old tree, triggered using a specially designed mobile app, towers over visitors as they make their way to the entrance of the exhibition.

Once inside the show, visitors come face-to-face with Sudan, the last male northern white rhinoceros who died in March 2018 at the Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya, brought back to life through a detailed 3D image triggered by the same app. The app also enables visitors using their smartphone or tablet to walk around a third AR installation – a near-to-scale experience of the largest pile of elephant ivory, poached from between 6,000 and 7,000 elephants, which was set on fire at Nairobi National Park in Kenya on April 30, 2016.

“Many people now use cell phones to interact with the world”, said **Andrea Kunard**, Associate Curator at the Canadian Photography Institute of the National Gallery of Canada and curator of the exhibition at the Gallery. “We wanted to incorporate that aspect of lived experience in the art gallery setting. Including new lens-based technologies in the exhibition provides a richer experience for the visitor.”

Visitors to the show will also be able to access an interactive film wall displaying nine short and stunning clips by Baichwal and de Pencier depicting diverse subjects such as the huge landfill site in Nairobi, Kenya, a seemingly endless procession of coal trains in Wyoming, and coral bleaching in Australia’s Great Barrier Reef. Film extensions by Baichwal and de Pencier are also triggered through the mobile app to complement wall-sized, high-resolution murals photographed by Edward Burtynsky.

The exhibition is part of a larger project which includes the documentary film, *ANTHROPOCENE: The Human Epoch*, which had its world premiere at TIFF ’18 and will have its Ottawa premiere at the National Gallery of Canada September 27, 2018, and an art book published by Steidl, on sale at the Gallery Boutique. *Anthropocene* is based on the research of the Anthropocene Working Group, an international organization of scientists working to determine whether the Earth has left the Holocene and entered a new geological epoch — the Anthropocene. The exhibition is complemented by an educational program organized by the Gallery that explores the issues raised in the photographs, films and augmented reality installations, and includes an interactive area where visitors can learn more about [The Anthropocene Project](#), and share their comments on a social media wall about what they have seen and experienced. As Burtynsky himself noted, “The work asks more questions than it answers; which is what artists are there to do.”

To fully experience the exhibition, visitors to the National Gallery of Canada are encouraged to download the free AVARA app, available on [Google Play](#) and the [Apple App Store](#) in advance of their visit. The app can then be used to activate each of the augmented reality installations, interactive experiences and film extensions within the high-resolution murals. iPads with the app pre-installed will also be available within the exhibition space.

Anthropocene is organized by the Canadian Photography Institute of the National Gallery of Canada and the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), and co-produced with the Fondazione MAST,

Bologna, Italy. A complementary exhibition will run at the AGO in Toronto from September 28, 2018 to January 6, 2019. The exhibitions each offer a rich and distinct experience, with key works on display at both venues.

Anthropocene is presented at the National Gallery of Canada with the generous support of **Scotiabank**, Founding Partner of the Canadian Photography Institute, and project partner **TELUS**.

Follow **#AnthropoceneProject** for updates.

Publications

The exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue published by the Art Gallery of Ontario. The English and French editions are available for a special National Gallery of Canada Exclusive Price of \$30 onsite at the Boutique and online at ShopNGC.ca.

Anthropocene, a 224 page clothbound, hardcover book (English only) featuring photographs by Edward Burtynsky, essays by the three artists, and specially commissioned poems by Margaret Atwood, is on sale at the Boutique and online at ShopNGC.ca for \$127.50.

Members' preview

On September 26, from noon to 5 pm, Members of the Gallery will have exclusive access to the exhibition. In the Contemporary Galleries. Learn more about NGC Membership, visit gallery.ca.

Exhibition opening

The public is invited to attend the official exhibition opening on Wednesday, September 26, starting at 6 pm in the Scotiabank Great Hall of the National Gallery of Canada. Admission is free.

Film screening

The Ottawa premiere of the TIFF Special Presentation film ***ANTHROPOCENE: The Human Epoch*** (dir. Jennifer Baichwal, Nicholas de Pencier, Edward Burtynsky, 2018, 87 minutes) and post screening panel discussion with the artists and curator, scheduled for Thursday September 27 is sold out.

Meet the expert series

Andrea Kunard – Art and the Anthropocene

On Saturday, September 29, from 1:30 to 2:30 pm, join Andrea Kunard, Associate Curator at the Canadian Photography Institute of the National Gallery of Canada and co-curator of ***Anthropocene***, as she explains how art and museums can help us understand, reflect on, and engage with pressing issues of our time. In English with bilingual question period.

David Jaclin – Exploring anthropos

On Saturday, November 3, from 1:30 to 2:30 pm, join David Jaclin, Professor of Sociological and Anthropological Studies at Ottawa University, in an exploration of the concept of *anthropos* (Greek for “human”): “If Anthropos is indeed at the origin of a new geological epoch, then we should ask ourselves who is this human we’re talking about; to which concept of humanity does the word refer, and how do we identify responsibilities and powers, problems and solutions?” In French with bilingual question period.

Heather Davis – Consequences of the Anthropocene

On Saturday, November 24, from 1:30 to 2:30 pm, join Heather Davis, Assistant Professor of Culture and Media at The New School in New York, as she explores some of the queer, unintended consequences of the current environmental crisis, from the birth of new organisms to re-envisioning wasted landscapes. Drawing on new work by Edward Burtynsky, Jennifer Baichwal and Nicholas de Pencier, the talk will focus on how artists are approaching the novel ecologies of the Anthropocene. In English with bilingual question period.

Sean Kheraj – The Anthropocene in Canada

On Saturday, November 3, from 1:30 to 2:30 pm, join Sean Kheraj, Associate Professor of Canadian and Environmental History at York University, as he examines the history of the creation of Canada’s first transcontinental oil pipelines and their subsequent expansion and growth from the late 1940s to the mid-1970s as the country made this consequential energy transition. In English with bilingual question period.

Lecture series

Curator’s overview

On Wednesday, January 23 from 10:30 am to noon, as part of the National Gallery of Canada Lecture Series, Andrea Kunard, Associate Curator at the Canadian Photography Institute of the National Gallery of Canada and co-curator of *Anthropocene*, will provide an overview of the exhibition. In English with bilingual question period. Individual ticket: \$12 (\$8 for Members); Lecture Series subscription: \$60 (\$40 for Members).

Group tours

From October 1, 2018 to February 22, 2019, learn how human activities are transforming our planet through a selection of large-scale interactive photographs and augmented reality installations. iPads will be available for augmented reality interaction. Price: \$8 per adult plus admission.

Hours of operation

Until September 30, 2018, the Gallery is open daily from 10 am to 6 pm, and on Thursdays from 10 am to 8 pm. As of October 1, 2018, the Gallery will be open Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, and on Thursdays from 10 am to 8 pm. Holiday exceptions apply, and hours are subject to change without notice. For more information, visit gallery.ca.

Admission

The exhibition is free with admission to the Gallery: \$15 (adults); \$13 (seniors); \$7 (age 24 and under and full-time students); \$30 (families: two adults and three youth, 17 and under). Museum admission is free for children age 11 and under and for Members. Price includes admission to the national collection, and all exhibitions. Free admission on Thursdays from 5 pm to 8 pm. [To find out more](#), visit gallery.ca.

Boutique

Exhibition catalogues are available for purchase at the Gallery Boutique and online at ShopNGC.ca, allowing visitors to revisit their favourite works of art for years to come. The Boutique opens at 10 am daily. There is a 15% discount for Members.

NGC Magazine

NGCmagazine.ca is a beautifully illustrated online source of information about the Canadian and international art world, as well as the National Gallery of Canada's activities and programming. The digital magazine includes articles about upcoming and travelling exhibitions, behind-the-scenes features, artists' profiles, book reviews and interviews. This month, read [The Proust Questionnaire: Edward Burtynsky](#). NGC Magazine is free and published [here](#). Subscribe to the NGC Magazine newsletter [here](#).

Connect with the Gallery

Follow the Gallery's latest news on its social media networks: [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

About the artists

Edward Burtynsky is known as one of the world's most respected photographers. His remarkable photographic depictions of global industrial landscapes are included in the collections of over 60 major museums around the world, including the National Gallery of Canada, the Tate Modern in London, the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum and the Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in California. His imagery explores the collective impact we as a species are having on the surface of the planet - an inspection of the human systems we've imposed onto natural landscapes. Burtynsky's distinctions include the TED Prize, The Outreach award at the Rencontres d'Arles, the Roloff Beny Book award, and the Rogers Best Canadian Film Award. He sits on the board of directors for CONTACT: Toronto's International Photography Festival, and The Ryerson Gallery and Research Center. In 2006, he was awarded the title of Officer of the Order of Canada; in 2016, he received the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts. Most recently Burtynsky was named Photo London's 2018 Master of Photography and the Mosaic Institute's 2018 Peace Patron. He currently holds eight honorary doctorate degrees. The National Gallery of Canada organized and toured the first retrospective of Burtynsky's work, *Manufactured Landscapes*, in 2003.

Jennifer Baichwal has been directing and producing documentaries for 25 years. Her films have played all over the world and won multiple awards nationally and internationally, including an International Emmy, three Gemini Awards, and Best Cultural and Best Independent Canadian Documentary at Hot Docs for features such as *Let It Come Down: The Life of Paul Bowles*, *The Holier It Gets*, *Act of God*, and *Payback*. *Manufactured Landscapes* won, TIFF's Best Canadian Film and Al Gore's Reel Current Award, among others. It played theatrically in more than 15 countries worldwide, and was named as one of 150 Essential Works In Canadian Cinema History by TIFF in 2016. The feature documentary *Watermark* premiered at TIFF 2013, and won the Toronto Film Critics Association prize for Best Canadian Film. It has since been released in eleven countries. In recent years, Baichwal and filmmaker Nicholas de Pencier have expanded into film installation work, and have exhibited at the Art Gallery of Ontario and Nuit Blanche, among others. Baichwal and de Pencier were also co-directors of *Long Time Running*, a feature documentary on the Canadian rock band *The Tragically Hip*'s final tour which premiered at TIFF 2017. Baichwal sits on the board of Swim Drink Fish Canada, and is a member of the Ryerson University School of Image Arts Advisory Council. She has been a Director of the Board of the Toronto International Film Festival since 2016, and is a passionate ambassador of their *Share Her Journey* campaign, a five-year commitment to increasing participation, skills, and opportunities for women behind and in front of the camera. *Anthropocene* is her tenth feature documentary.

Nicholas de Pencier is a documentary Director, Producer, and Director of Photography. Selected credits include *Let It Come Down: The Life of Paul Bowles* (International Emmy), *The Holier It Gets*, (Best Canadian Doc, Hot Docs), *The True Meaning of Pictures* (Gemini, Best Arts), *Hockey Nomad* (Gemini, Best Sports), *Manufactured Landscapes*, (TIFF Best Canadian Feature; Genie, Best Doc), and *Act of God* (Gala Opening Night, Hot Docs). He was the Producer and Director of Photography of *Watermark*, (Special Presentation, TIFF & Berlin; Toronto Film Critics Award, Best Canadian Film; CSA Best Documentary), and *Black Code* (TIFF 2016), which he also wrote and directed. De Pencier's video art installations with Jennifer Baichwal include *Watermark Cubed* at Nuit Blanche 2014, *Music Inspired by the Group of Seven*, 2015, with the Rheostatics in Walker Court at the Art Gallery of Ontario, and *Ice Forms*, an installation room as part of the Lawren Harris Exhibition at the AGO in the summer of 2016. Most recently, de Pencier and Baichwal were co-directors (and de Pencier DOP) of *Long Time Running*, a feature documentary on the Canadian rock band *The Tragically Hip*'s final tour, which was a Gala presentation at TIFF 2017. De Pencier is on the board of directors of Hot Docs and DOC Toronto.

About the Canadian Photography Institute

The Canadian Photography Institute of the National Gallery of Canada is a creative and innovative centre dedicated to sharing, collecting, and questioning photography in all its forms. It brings people and communities together at the museum, online, and around publications to see, appreciate, and study photography. The Canadian Photography Institute was established in 2015 and officially launched in October 2016. Its collections build upon the National Gallery's Photographs Collection. The Institute benefits from the unprecedented support of CPI's

Founding Partner Scotiabank, the Archive of Modern Conflict and the National Gallery of Canada Foundation. For more information, visit: gallery.ca/cpi.

About the National Gallery of Canada

The National Gallery of Canada is home to the most important collections of historical and contemporary Canadian art. The Gallery also maintains Canada's premier collection of European Art from the 14th to the 21st centuries, as well as important works of American, Asian and Indigenous Art and renowned international collections of prints, drawings and photographs. In 2015, the National Gallery of Canada established the Canadian Photography Institute, a global multidisciplinary research centre dedicated to the history, evolution and future of photography. Created in 1880, the National Gallery of Canada has played a key role in Canadian culture for well over a century. Among its principal missions is to increase access to excellent works of art for all Canadians. For more information, visit gallery.ca and follow us on Twitter @NatGalleryCan.

About the Art Gallery of Ontario

Located in Toronto, Canada's largest city of 6.5 million, the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) is one of the largest art museums in North America. The AGO's collection of close to 95,000 works ranges from cutting-edge contemporary art such as *Untilled* by Pierre Huyghe to European masterpieces such as Peter Paul Rubens's *The Massacre of The Innocents*; from the vast collection by the Group of Seven to works by established and emerging Indigenous Canadian artists; with a photography collection that tracks the impact of the medium with deep holdings of works by artists such as Garry Winogrand and Diane Arbus; and with focused collections in Gothic boxwood miniatures and Western and Central African art. Drawing on this collection—as well as collaborations with museums around the world—the AGO presents wide-ranging exhibitions and programs, taking special care to showcase diverse and underrepresented artists. A major expansion designed by Frank Gehry in 2008 with lead support from the family of Ken Thomson makes the AGO a highly-photographed architectural landmark. Visit ago.ca and follow @AGOToronto to learn more.

About Fondazione MAST

Fondazione MAST is a non-profit institution in Bologna, Italy, created in 2013 to develop a cultural centre (MAST), which aims to promote corporate and social welfare, to foster creativity among the younger generations by offering educational programs for children, teenagers and adults, and to support projects related to photography. The MAST Collection consists of more than 3000 works that trace the history of photography and tell the story of the extraordinary significance of industry and labour from the end of the 19th century until today. The PhotoGallery is an exhibition space curated by Urs Stahel presenting group and solo projects by celebrated photographers and younger talents. Fondazione MAST also organizes *Foto/Industria*, the Biennial of Photography on Industry and Work, which celebrated its third year in 2017 with 14 exhibitions. Visit mast.org for more information.

About the National Gallery of Canada Foundation

The National Gallery of Canada Foundation is dedicated to supporting the National Gallery of Canada in fulfilling its mandate. By fostering strong philanthropic partnerships, the Foundation provides the Gallery with the additional financial support required to lead Canada's visual arts community locally, nationally and internationally. The blend of public support and private philanthropy empowers the Gallery to preserve and interpret Canada's visual arts heritage. The Foundation welcomes present and deferred gifts for special projects and endowments. To learn more about the National Gallery of Canada Foundation, visit ngcfoundation.ca and follow us on Twitter [@NGC_Foundation](https://twitter.com/NGC_Foundation).

— 30 —

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