



Barbara Fischer Appointed Director of the University of Toronto Art Centre

Toronto – The University of Toronto is very pleased to announce the immediate appointment of Barbara Fischer as Director of the University of Toronto Art Centre.

A Senior Lecturer and Director of the Master of Visual Studies - Curatorial Studies Program in the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design at the University of Toronto, Fischer is also currently Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery at Hart House. She will continue in these roles.

“Fischer’s multifaceted position will allow her to pursue the goal of federating the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery and UTAC by unifying their staff while maintaining their distinctive institutional histories. The new federated model will enable both public galleries to strengthen their support of the University’s academic mission while continuing to offer ground-breaking exhibitions,” said University College Principal Donald Ainslie.

“It is a great honour to be offered the position of Director of the University of Toronto Art Centre with the mandate to bring two thriving institutions together. I am looking forward to working with the exceptional, joint teams of the UTAC and the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery to create a greater place for art at the heart of the university, the city, and beyond. Most of all, I am very excited at the opportunity to expand the productive and stimulating dialogues between students, staff, faculty, and diverse publics. Together, the galleries present an exceptional site for fostering new, interdisciplinary encounters between modes of artistic and curatorial thinking, and the research, scholarship, and knowledge that the resources of the university can offer.”

“The UTAC Board is thrilled to have Barbara Fischer as Director as we embark on a new chapter for both galleries. Barbara has the experience and vision to bring together the strengths and capacities of the two galleries to create an exciting new institution that will make significant contributions to the University and the wider city,” said UTAC Board Chair Diana Bennett.

Fischer has held curatorial positions at Open Space Gallery, the Walter Phillips Gallery, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and The Power Plant and has curated numerous solo and group exhibitions of Canadian and international artists, including solo debuts and surveys of Fastwürms, Stan Douglas, Rebecca Belmore, Kelly Mark, Kevin Schmidt, James Carl, Will Kwan, Melanie Gilligan, Ron Terada, Charles Stankieveh, Bouchra Khalili, and the internationally circulated exhibition *General Idea Editions 1967-1995*. Major curatorial projects include *Love Gasoline* (1996), *food culture* (1997), *Logo-City* (2000), *New Modular* (2002), and *Projections* (2007), the first major survey of projection-based works in the history of contemporary art in Canada, as well as the collaboratively produced exhibitions *Soundtracks* (2003) and *Traffic: Conceptual Art in Canada 1965-1980* (2010-14). In her work as Director of the Masters of Visual Studies Program at the University Toronto, and throughout her directorships at the Blackwood Gallery (University of Toronto Mississauga) and Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, she has fostered emerging curatorial talent through internships, residencies, and academic programs.

Fischer was the Commissioner and Curator of *Mark Lewis: Cold Morning* for the Canada Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2009, and is the recipient of numerous exhibition and publication awards, including the 2008 Hnatyshyn Award for Curatorial Excellence in Contemporary Art.

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