

PLEASE SEND LETTERS TO MEDIA RELATIONS AND DIRECTORS - Vancouver Art Gallery, media@vanartgallery.bc.ca

April 7, 2007

Press Release

Re: Animal Cruelty at Vancouver Art Gallery

A new Vancouver Art Gallery exhibit with live lizards, toads, scorpions, tarantulas, cockroaches, millipedes, and a snake subjects them to unnatural living conditions and cruelty. The installation entitled Theatre of the World is basically a two-metre-long plywood-and-wire-mesh cage.

“The species are from different ecosystems and are subjected to a forced predator/prey relationship. Society must not condone promoting violence and cruelty in our society and to other sentient creatures, stated Peter Hamilton, Lifeforce Director,”Forcing animals to fight is not art, it is sadistic”.

The exhibit, is one of many of Mr. Huang's pieces in the current exhibit called House of Oracles. A text on the wall beside the piece says "the work functions as a metaphor for the conflicts among different peoples and cultures -- in short, human existence itself."

Reviewer Michael Harris had this to say about the reptiles and insects. "Live pink-toed tarantulas, scorpions and snakes might kill each other in Theatre of the World, (1993), a Battle Royale-style microcosm of global conflict compacted into one snug, gruesome arena."

Lifeforce has contacted the Vancouver Art Gallery to voice our concerns. Our calls were not returned. We sent background information to Councilor Kim Capri who fought for a new bylaw banning such acts.

Another piece that has been in other shows titled "The wise man learns from the spider how to spin a web" uses a lamp to cast a shadow of a spider on the wall. In previous circumstances the spider has been fatally charred by the heat of the lamp.

The French public to successfully protest against the use of live animals in this show in 1994, causing the Pompidou Centre to replace them with art- that is photographic representations of the animals.

In 1990. Lifeforce stopped Rick Gibson from crushing "Sniffy" the rat and in 1992 spoke out against the decaying cat display (advising the Health Department that it was a hazard and when the glass enclosure was proven not to be air tight it was taken down).

Lifeforce is considering what action will be necessary and is urging people to voice their opposition to the Vancouver Art Gallery.

For further information: Peter Hamilton 604-649-5258 or lifeforcesociety@hotmail.com