

For immediate release

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OCAD President Sara Diamond joins board of Ontario research network

TORONTO – Sara Diamond, President of the Ontario College of Art & Design (OCAD), and celebrated artist and new media designer, has joined the Board of the Optical Regional Advanced Network of Ontario (ORANO).

Unanimously recommended by the Council of Ontario Universities to represent Ontario universities, Diamond joins senior representatives of Ontario's research and education and business community on the board of ORANO, the organization which owns and operates the ORION ultra high-speed optical research and education network.

"We are thrilled to have someone of Sara's calibre join us, says ORANO Board Chair Maxim Jean-Louis, President and CEO of Contact North/*Contact Nord*. "Sara will bring a fresh and unique perspective, and I'm personally very pleased that she will be part of our governance team during this next phase of ORION," he said.

"We've had the privilege of working with Sara and her colleagues at OCAD," says Phil Baker, President/CEO. "She is a strong advocate for new technologies to drive research and innovation in the arts, design and new media. We're looking forward to having her insights," he says.

Diamond, who joined OCAD as President in 2005, has also most recently been among the catalysts behind ground-breaking collaborations. She has spearheaded the Digital Futures Initiative, which is a key part of her transformational agenda for OCAD. DFI is a cross-disciplinary program that links knowledge in art and design to emerging digital forms and technologies. OCAD is also a partner in the Consortium on New Media, Culture, and Entertainment R&D in the Toronto Region (CONCERT), which supports the advancement of a regional innovation network to build R&D capacity within the entertainment and creative sector.

Diamond received her post-secondary education in Canada and the United Kingdom as a social historian, communications and new media theorist and practitioner. She came to the Ontario College of Art & Design as President from The Banff Centre, Canada's national and international premier professional development institution.

She began her work there in 1992 and served as the Artistic Director of Media and Visual Art until 2003, and then as Director from 2003 to 2005. She created the renowned Banff New Media Institute (BNMI) in 1995 and led this research and development centre for ten years. She led research teams and received significant research awards in data visualization, mobile new media content and engineering, fashion and technology, distance learning, collaborative methods and tools for collaboration, and art and technology.

She also taught at the Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design, and the California Institute for the Arts. She remains Adjunct Professor, University of California, Los Angeles in the Design/Media Department. A practicing artist and new media designer and new media curator, she has represented Canada in international biennials and festivals. Her work has won awards in Canada and abroad and resides in collections such as the National Gallery of Canada and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. She has acted as a new media and arts consultant to the Ontario Government, the City of Toronto, Heritage Canada, and DFAIT, as well as international governments, institutions and agencies as diverse as China, United Kingdom, Argentina, Finland, Australia, Brazil and the USA. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Toronto Arts Council

Foundation and on the advisory board of NextMedia. She is also active in several task forces on sustainability.

About ORANO

Diamond joins other ORANO board members, including Anne Sado, President of George Brown College in Toronto, and Vice Chair of the ORANO board; Lisa de Wilde, CEO of TVOntario; Dr. Khaled El Emam, Canada Research Chair, Electronic Health Information Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa; Terry Mosey, Past Executive Vice-President, Bell Canada; Robert J. Kennedy, Educational Consultant, Apple Canada; Patrick Spence, Vice-President, Cingular Wireless & Rogers Wireless Business Unit, Research In Motion (RIM), and President/CEO Phil Baker.

About ORION

The Ontario Research and Innovation Optical Network (ORION) is Ontario's ultra high-speed research and education network which connects all of Ontario's universities, most colleges, several medical and other public research facilities and a growing number of school boards to one another and to the global grid of research and education networks. Stretching 5,800 kilometres over 21 communities throughout Ontario, ORION connects over 1.3 million Ontario researchers, scientists, students, teachers and staff to critical infrastructure for research, education and innovation. Learn more at www.orion.on.ca.

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