

# Collection Close-up

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**Alan Wood** (b. 1935; d. 2017)

***Beach Walk*, 1992**

Richmond Art Gallery Permanent Collection

Alan Wood's oeuvre reveals a deep fascination with time, process, and documentation as well as a long-term interest in colour and the BC landscape. In *Beach Walk*, he captures the gradual accumulation of debris on a Gulf Island beach, shaped by the relentless waves that bring marine life and particles from the Gulf onto the sand. Wood methodically maintained sketchbooks, working drawings, and studies as a personal archive. When he donated *Beach Walk* to the Gallery's Permanent Collection, Wood expressed a wish to display this ephemera alongside the print, inviting viewers—especially students—"into the mind of the artists [*sic*]."

This collection of artist ephemera and an artwork print documents Wood's creative process, allowing viewers to witness the work's development. He made key artistic decisions visible—colour choices, methods, even the pressure applied—through his studies and notes. By preserving these archival materials alongside the finished work, Wood ensured his art would continue to educate teachers, students, and artists, particularly regarding the precise techniques of screenprinting. Wood also donated the woodblock for *Beach Walk* to the Gallery, and compiled artwork lists, promotional materials, and press coverage of his exhibitions, providing insight into the artwork's life cycle—from conception and creation to exhibition.

The *Beach Walk* series was originally created by Wood to benefit Artists for Kids, an organization founded by artists Gordon Smith, Jack Shadbolt, and Bill Reid. Proceeds from the sale of his limited-edition prints supported the organization's mission to help children access art education.

Alan Wood was born in Widnes, Lancashire, England, in 1935. He moved to Canada in 1973, settling in Vancouver the following year. He is best known for *Ranch*, a temporary outdoor installation on a 320-acre site at Rocky Mountain Ranch near Priddis, Alberta from 1983 to 1984.

- **Maria Filipina Palad**

*Collection Close-up* is an ongoing initiative highlighting works from the Permanent Collection that share a formal or thematic connection with the Gallery's featured exhibition. This particular piece was selected for its emphasis on ephemera, documentation, and archive, linking it to the exhibition *I digress*.