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Vancouver Public Art: 17 Pieces That Wouldn't Belong Anywhere Else

The Huffington Post B.C. | By [Andree Lau and Rhianna](#)

[Schmunk](#)

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From spray-painted giants to a giant poodle, there's no question that Vancouver is home to a colourful collection of public art.

It's debatable if the pieces are equally loved, but they certainly are eye-catching.

The Guardian's readers certainly think so, anyway. Three Vancouver pieces made it onto the British newspaper's roundup of standout urban art from around the world.

The city is in good company, making the list alongside other metropolises like Berlin, Chicago, and Istanbul.

You may recognize the Vancouver installations, but perhaps wonder about their origins or symbolism. So, we put together a handy guide to some of our favourites:

- Granville Island Silos



Vancouver Biennale/Roaming-The-Planet

Six concrete silos were transformed into six, vibrant giants with spray paint. The artists are Brazilian twin brothers, and this project was their biggest to date.

Installed: 2014
Location: Granville Island
Artist: OSGEMEOS

- Trans-Am Totem



HuffPost B.C.

Symbolizes society's "out with the old, in with the new" consumer culture by stacking five scrap cars on top of one another.

Location: Downtown
Installed: 2015
Artist: Marcus Bowcott

- Inukshuk



Ahmed Bukhamsin/Flickr

Installed at Expo 86 as a welcome symbol to tourists flooding the city.

Installed: 1986

Location: English Bay

Artist: Alvin Kanak

- Rainblossom Project



Nhi Le

An ode to the rain-soaked city of Vancouver.

Installed: 2014 (temporary)

Location: Seawall, West Side

Artist: Anonymous

- Human Structures (Vancouver)



[Instagram/teknoology](#)

Focuses on the idea that people need to work together for a better society.

Location: Olympic Village/Hinge Park

Installed: 2014

Artist: Jonathan Borofsky

- Lightshed



[colink/Flickr](#)

Based on the boat sheds that used to line Vancouver's shores.

Location: Stanley Park Seawall

Installed: 2004

Artist: Liz Magor

- Totem Poles



Getty

The nine-totem collection began with four poles in the 1920s and continues to grow.

Location: Stanley Park

Installed: 1920s-2009

Artist: Various

- Main Street Poodle



Maureen Smith

The seven-foot-tall poodle statue embraces the wide variety of people in the city, as it's a breed "not associated with a particular

culture," according to the artist.

Location: Mount Pleasant

Installed: 2013

Artist: Gisele Amantea

- Engagement



[somecanuckchick/Flickr](#)

Represents the delicate balance in relationships. Its installation coincided with same-sex marriage debates taking place in Canada during the early 2000s.

Location: English Bay

Installed: 2005

Artist: Dennis Oppenheim

- Everything Is Going To Be Alright



[Ryan Cousineau/Flickr](#)

Installed in the Downtown Eastside as a symbol of optimism and hope.

Location: Chinatown

Installed: 2008

Artist: Martin Creed

- The Words Don't Fit The Picture



[Edna Winti/Flickr](#)

Touches on the idea that words and speech have no boundaries. The piece also acknowledges Vancouver's history as one of the "neon-light capitals of North America."

Location: Vancouver Public Library/Downtown

Installed: 2010

Artist: Ron Terada

- Digital Orca



[vapourtrails/Flickr](#)

Represents the harmony between technology and nature in B.C.

Location: Jack Poole Plaza

Installed: 2010

Artist: Douglas Coupland

- A-maze-ing Laughter



[Kyle Wang/Flickr](#)

The bronze sculptures were loaned to Vancouver just before the 2010 Winter Olympics. About two years later, Lululemon founder Chip Wilson and his wife donated \$1.5 million to buy the statues for the city.

Location: English Bay

Installed: 2009

Artist: Yue Minjun

- East Van Cross



[Paul Krueger/Flickr](#)

Developed from a decades-old graffiti symbol, the cross is said to be "an expression of hope and defiance."

Location: East Vancouver

Installed: 2010

Artist: Ken Lum

- The Birds



[Ian Fisher/Flickr](#)

Symbolizes the threat that a non-native species can have on its new environment, even though they may look beautiful.

Location: False Creek

Installed: 2010

Artist: Myfanwy MacLeod

- Nobody Likes Me



IHeart

Honourable mention: The street art piece is a commentary on people's reliance on social media for personal gratification, and quickly became a worldwide sensation.

Location: Stanley Park

Installed: 2014

Artist: IHeart

- Stanley Park Inukshuks



[Instagram/sanomar](https://www.instagram.com/sanomar)

Not an official public art piece in the city, but take a walk on Stanley Park's infamous seawall and you're sure to see a couple Inukshuks around.

What did we miss?

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Conversations

**Mark La Fleche** · ★ Top Commenter

The Inukshuk was part of the NWT pavilion at Expo '86. It really wasn't set up as a welcome for tourists flooding the city, but set up as welcome to tourist coming to their pavilion. It was installed in it's present location in 1987.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [👍 4](#) · [Follow Post](#) · May 31 at 10:58am**Michael Leger** · ★ Top Commenter · Burnaby, British Columbia

What about the devil that was excited ?

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [👍 2](#) · [Follow Post](#) · May 31 at 8:46am**Gail Hirst** · ★ Top Commenter · Sr. Horticultural Consultant at Hirst Plantscapes

There is a lovely sculpture in Princess Park in North Vancouver called 'Mirage'. It is a tree trunk in silver at it's base, with fungi and all! The eye moves upwards and the silver becomes sleek and smooth then ends with 'bubbles' in the structure, emulating clouds. Oh, my words do not do this beautiful piece justice. Brings me to wonder each time i visit it...at least once weekly!

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [👍 1](#) · [Follow Post](#) · June 2 at 11:07pm**Howard Burbidge** · ★ Top Commenter · Burnaby, British Columbia

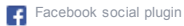
How about that crazy serpentine metal sculpture at Kits Point?

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [👍 1](#) · [Follow Post](#) · May 31 at 8:38am**Denis O'Brien** · ★ Top Commenter · University of Victoria

what? They missed the scrotum pole?

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [Follow Post](#) · May 31 at 8:36am**Cesar Chavez**

When is the Trans-Am thing going to be removed. It is an eyesore. It is literally stacked junk. Nothing special. Just junk.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [Follow Post](#) · June 1 at 8:16pm

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