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Squamish joins Biennale

Art piece to move into town next year, says official



APRIL 25, 2013

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In 2014, Squamish residents can expect to see a world-class public art piece roll into town.

At a special business meeting on Tuesday (April 23), District of Squamish council committed \$20,000 to partner with the world-renowned outdoor art exhibit Vancouver Biennale. Curators for the outdoor show are scouring artwork around the globe for the 2014-'15 exhibit.

The move makes Squamish the first municipality outside the Lower Mainland to join the project. Vancouver's most recognizable art installations, including the A-maze-ing Laughter figures near English Bay, were a part of the 2009 show, district planner Elaine Naisby said.



Vancouver Biennale/Dan Fairchild Photography
Yue Minjun's A-maze-ing Laughter gets put in place at the start of the 2009-2011 Vancouver Biennale exhibit.

"[Vancouver Biennale] is more than just public art pieces," she added.

The program is accompanied by education initiatives, self-guided tours, residency programs and international marketing campaign. The community's next opportunity to get aboard would have been four years down the road, Naisby noted.

Community stakeholders have pledged to pay for half of the exhibit's \$40,000 overall costs, she said.

The exhibit fits in with the district's push to revitalize downtown Squamish, Coun. Ted Prior said.

"We spent four hours today talking about downtown and 'quick wins,'" he said. "I really like the idea of supporting this."

Ironically, more residents have stopped Coun. Patricia Heintzman to talk about the Biennale opportunity than to chat about utility tax increases, she said. Heintzman's motion to pay for the district's portion of participating in the show from this year's downtown initiative fund and next year's Squamish centennial celebrations budget was backed by council.

There are some risks with the proposal, Coun. Doug Race said, noting officials don't know what the piece of artwork will look like, nor do officials currently know where it will be placed in town. But overall, he said he sees it as a "quick win."

"The community is also putting up money toward this," Race added.

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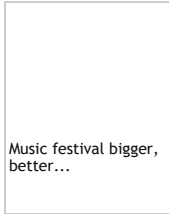
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Squamish residents can expect to see an installation in town by April 2014, Naisby said.

To learn more about visit www.vancouverbiennale.com.

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