

VANCITYBUZZ

Bold public art combines natural history with modern culture

BY [JILL SLATTERY](#)

2:26 PM PDT, THU MARCH 26, 2015

[Comments](#)



Image: [Indiegogo](#)

A new public art display blending car culture with environmental history is coming to Downtown Vancouver.

The “Trans Am Totem” artistically combines consumer culture with ancient Vancouver history by stacking a pile of junkyard cars on top of a 20 feet high old growth cedar tree. North Vancouver artist Marcus Bowcott describes the piece as a “meditation on contemporary technological culture” while relating it to the history of the False Creek region.

“Each car – ‘extension of our bodies’ – projects it’s own, unique aesthetic. In aggregate, they refer to our dominant consumer culture. The ubiquitous presence of cars in our midst has fundamentally re-shaped our landscape,” Bowcott describes.

The landscape he refers to is the False Creek of 150 years ago, one shadowed by a pristine old growth forest verging on the shoreline’s tidal flats. It would later

become Vancouver's core industrial zone and sawmill site, pumping out old growth trees into timber. In the years before Expo '86, the sawmills were removed and dense high-rises, roadways and stadiums sprouted.

Bowcott explains, "Trans Am Totem reflects upon this site and its history through references to old growth forest, logging and stacked, manufactured structures."

As part of the Vancouver Biennale, the "Trans Am Totem" installation will be placed on a traffic median on Quebec Street at Milross Avenue, just beside the Georgia Viaduct and the Expo SkyTrain line, on Monday.

In order to install the large piece, Bowcott needs to raise another \$6,500 and has started an [Indiegogo campaign](#).





[Share on Facebook \(205\)](#) [Share on Twitter \(9\)](#)

About the author



Jill Slattery Jill Slattery was born and raised in Vancouver, where she also earned an Arts degree from UBC in English and Creative Writing. She is an avid TV-watcher and a shameless Taylor Swift fangirl. Jill is a Staff Writer at Vancity Buzz. Contact her at jill@vancitybuzz.com

[@jillslattery](#)

[More from Jill Slattery](#)