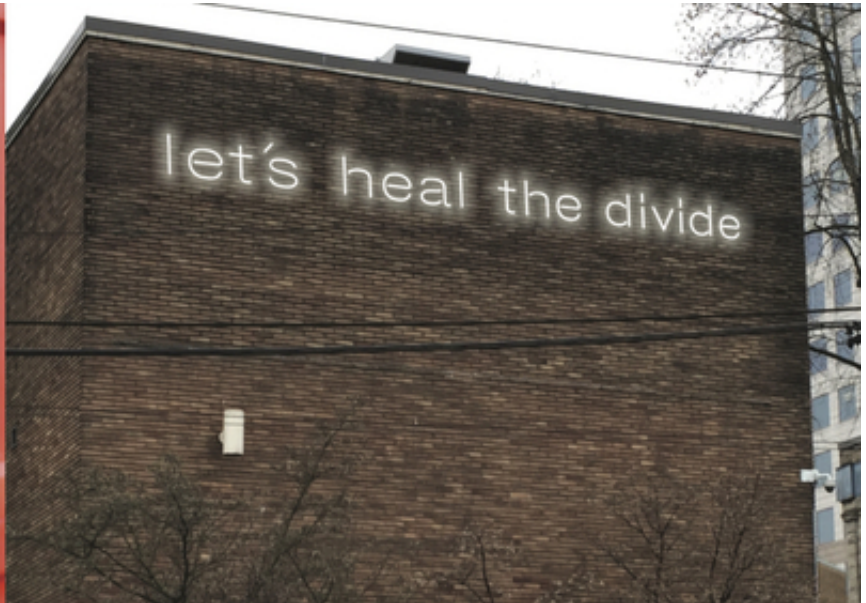


VANCOUVER SCULPTURE PERFORMANCE NEW MEDIA IN PUBLIC SPACES BIENNALE →



MODERATOR
Gordon Price
Director City Program SFU



PANELIST
Michael Geller
Urban Planner
Developer



PANELIST
Sandra Seekins
Gender Studies
Capilano U



PANELIST
Romi Chandra
Director PeerNetBC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver, Canada. The Vancouver Biennale announces its latest public art installation “let’s heal the divide” by Vancouver artist Toni Latour. The site-specific neon work, hung on the façade of the Vancouver Community College building at 250 West Pender Street, marks a physical division between the Downtown East Side and the commercial and financial districts that border it. The location highlights the glaring economic disparity between neighborhoods and addresses the socio-economic, political and cultural points of disconnect. In the spirit of hope, the piece calls for action, collective healing, connectivity, and

inclusion.

"Toni's artwork is a remarkably thoughtful and provocative local response to our curatorial theme, Open Borders Crossroads Vancouver", says President and Artistic Director Barrie Mowatt. "We have Ai Weiwei's *F Grass*, which is a commentary about the individual and collective acts against systemic censorship in China, and now this work has us thinking about divisiveness right here in our own backyard. It's a call to action to our elected government, spiritual leaders, the business community, educators and ultimately all of us as individual citizens to come together as neighbours and lead social change. Our exhibition is heavily inspired by Martin Luther King's *I Have A Dream* that together we rise up and take action for justice, equality and freedom for all".

FREE PUBLIC EVENT: ARTWORK UNVEILING + PANEL DISCUSSION

The Vancouver Biennale invites the public and media to participate in the artwork unveiling, followed by a panel discussion on the role of public art and its potential to act as a catalyst for social change. Is public art a commodity used to promote gentrification, or does it have the capacity to transform, change and heal what divides us?

DATE: Wednesday March 11th, 2015

LOCATION: Vancouver Community College (VCC) 250 West Pender Street, Vancouver

TIME: 6:00 PM Artwork Unveiling Outside of VCC facing Victory Square

6:30 PM – 9:00 PM Panel Discussion VCC Room 420

GORDON PRICE - MODERATOR Director City Program, Simon Fraser University

TONI LATOUR Artist, Faculty Kwantlen University + University of the Fraser Valley

MICHAEL GELLER Architect, Planner, Real Estate Developer

ROMI CHANDRA HERBERT Co-Executive Director PeerNetBC

SANDRA SEEKINS Faculty Art History, Women's & Gender Studies, Capilano University

Note: This event will be filmed.

TWITTER DIALOGUE + VIDEOS

Watch daily video clips and join the online conversation. We've asked some pretty amazing people about "let's heal the divide" and we will share their thoughts daily through Twitter. Now we want to hear from you! What does "let's heal the divide" mean to you? What gender, racial, economic, cultural or other divides exist in your community? Can art be a catalyst for change? Why is it important to overcome what divides us and find what connects us?

DATE: March 11th – March 18th, 2015

HASHTAGS: #Van_Biennale, @Van_Biennale, #letshealthedivide

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Toni Latour is an East Vancouver artist and educator. Her works have been exhibited and collected nationally and internationally for 15 years, including an acquisition by the National Portrait Gallery of Canada. Toni is also a 2-time Vancouver Biennale artist, with work installed at the Brighthouse Skytrain Station in Richmond. She taught at Capilano University for 11 years before the Studio Art program closed in 2014. She currently teaches at Kwantlen University and the University of the Fraser Valley. Her work can be seen at www.tonilatour.com.

ABOUT THE PANELISTS

Gordon Price is the Director of the City Program at Simon Fraser University, www.sfu.ca/city. A former six-term Vancouver city councillor, Price's long political career, knowledge of the city and discerning analysis of urban trends give him a unique perspective that is much in demand. He's been quoted more than 1,200 times in Canada's major newspapers and "thousands more times" in community newspapers, radio and television, says Vancouver urban affairs journalist Francis Bula, who frequently solicits his astute analysis. And his rapport with media extends internationally to The New York Times and other global media outlets. He also served on the Board of the Greater Vancouver Regional District and was appointed to the first board of the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority in 1999. He has spoken at numerous conventions and conferences in many countries, writes a monthly column for Business in Vancouver on civic issues, and conducts tours and seminars on the development of Vancouver. He also blogs on urban issues, with a focus on Vancouver, at "Price Tags" (www.pricetags.wordpress.com), and occasionally publishes an electronic magazine, also called "Price Tags," highlighting a city or issue.

Michael Geller is an architect, planner, real estate consultant and property developer with four decades' experience in the public, private, and institutional sectors. He also serves on the Adjunct Faculty of the SFU Centre for Sustainable Community Development. His notable projects include Bayshore in Coal Harbour, UniverCity at SFU, and innovative mixed-use and residential developments around Metro Vancouver. Michael is a former official with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation in Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver during which time he oversaw the first phase redevelopment of South Shore False Creek. He was also involved with many of the early CMHC social housing projects in the Downtown Eastside. Michael is an internationally recognized expert in planning and housing development and recently served on the jury to select a planning team for Moscow's new International Financial Centre. He is a past president of the Urban Development Institute and has been honoured as a Life Member

of the Architectural Institute of BC and Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners.

Website: www.michaelgeller.ca Blog: www.gellersworldtravel.blogs.com

Sandra Seekins has been a faculty member in the Art History and Women's and Gender Studies departments at Capilano University for the past fourteen years. She has also taught at BC, the University College of the Fraser Valley (now FVU), and the University of Michigan. Her areas of interest include art and technology, art and activism, and art and trauma. She has a particular investment in course and curriculum development. She presents her work regularly at community events and scholarly conferences. Sandra has been involved in curatorial work, and has published essays in exhibition catalogues, art magazines, and The Capilano Review.

Romi Chandra Herbert is the Co-Executive Director of PeerNetBC. Romi was born and raised on the beautiful island of Fiji, the traditional territory of the Polynesian and Melanesian people. In 1989, as a result of multiple racial coups in Fiji, Romi and his family made the traditional territory of Coast Salish People/Vancouver their new home. 8 years after arriving in Canada, he started BC's first Gender/Sexuality Alliance at Thomas Haney Secondary in Maple Ridge in 1997 and has been helping queer and other youth blossom ever since. He has written curriculum on peer support, anti-discrimination and leadership skills development for Qmunity, North Shore Multicultural Society, Out on Screen's Out in Schools program, City of Vancouver and Vancouver Coastal Health. He is currently the co-executive director of PeerNetBC, a not-for-profit organization that delivers inclusive facilitation skills training and they are currently working on a project in partnership with neighbourhood houses to bring Anne's traveling exhibition from Amsterdam to Vancouver. He is married to Spencer Chandra Herbert, MLA for Vancouver West End and they are eagerly waiting to become adoptive parents.

ABOUT THE VANCOUVER BIENNALE

The Vancouver Biennale is a non-profit charitable organization that celebrates art in public space. Each exhibition transforms the urban landscape into an Open Air Museum, creating globally inspired cultural experiences where people live, work, play, and transit. The Biennale features internationally renowned and emerging contemporary artists that represent a diversity of cultural perspectives and artistic disciplines including sculpture, new media, performance works, music and film. The objective is to use great art as a catalyst to dialogue, learning and social action. For more information, visit www.vancouverbiennale.com.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

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