

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 30, 2015

Vancouver, Canada.

NATURE AND CARS COLLIDE

ONSITE INSTALLATION:

MONDAY MARCH 30TH: 9 AM – 4 PM

TUESDAY MARCH 31ST: 9 AM – UNTIL
THE TOTEM IS ERECTED

The Vancouver Biennale announces its latest public art installation “*Trans Am Totem*”, by Vancouver artist Marcus Bowcott. The 10 meter high, 11,340 kilogram (33 foot, 25,000 pound) sculpture, located at Quebec Street and Milross Avenue, is composed of five real scrap cars stacked upon an old growth cedar tree. The artwork considers our consumer “out with the old, in with the new” culture in relation to the site, its history and Vancouver’s evolving identity.



“With Vancouver’s Greenest City initiative, investment in cycling lanes and even the transportation referendum, *Trans Am Totem* is a timely and important catalyst to discussion about our identity as a city”, says Barrie Mowatt, President and Artistic Director of the Vancouver Biennale. “The artwork asks us to consider where we come from, where we are now and where we want to be.”

“The automobile holds a unique position in our culture”, says artist Marcus Bowcott. “It’s a manufactured want and symbol of extremes; practicality and luxury, necessity and waste. We can see this in the muscular Trans Am, the comfortable BMW, and the workhorse Civic. *Trans Am Totem* also questions the cycle of production and consumption”.

Before the introduction of heavy industry, this site was a shoreline of tidal flats and massive forest with old growth cedars and Douglas Firs in the vicinity of Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. Later, False Creek became an industrial zone of sawmills, beehive burners and ringed with

ever increasing collections of log booms. Just before Expo '86 the mills were removed and the area transformed. Now the area is a constant flow of transportation and interconnections: residential tower blocks, commercial business and entertainment centers encircled by cyclists, light rail and most dominant of all – cars.

COMMUNITY GATHERING WITH THE ARTIST:

The Vancouver Biennale invites the public to a community gathering. Come learn about the sculpture, take a selfie, talk to the artist and celebrate art in public space. Light refreshments and snacks will be served.

Date: Monday, April 6th, 2015

Time: 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Location: Triangular green space at Quebec St. & Milross Ave.

SOCIAL MEDIA DIALOGUE – JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

“The wood and the cars of *Trans Am Totem* speak to the identity of Vancouver, where we were, where we are, and where we are going to be. I don't claim to have answers, but I'm interested in the conversation” – Marcus Bowcott.

What does “*Trans Am Totem*” mean to you? What are your thoughts on our consumer culture and the “planned obsolescence” it depends upon? Send us your thoughts, inspirations, and photos.

Facebook: VancouverBiennale

Twitter: @Van_Biennale

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Hashtag: #VanBiennale

ABOUT THE ARTIST

"I was born in Vancouver General Hospital. I grew up in Burnaby, Delta, and Langley on the fringes of suburbia. I returned to the city as a young man. My early working life was spent in heavy industry, especially on boats. I was a longshoreman. The labour was intense, but the money and the time off were instrumental in helping me develop my art. Later in my 30's I transitioned to teaching painting and drawing. I traveled to London where I completed a M.A. in 1984. One of my most notable friendships developed with David Mach, who I remain in touch with to this day. I became an instructor at several Vancouver locations, including: Emily Carr, Vancouver Community College, Kwantlen, and Capilano University. I draw inspiration and support from my family and friends. In the last few years I have made a full time commitment to my art, especially with the Vancouver Biennale installation of *Trans Am Totem*." – Marcus Bowcott.

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.

MEDIA CONTACT

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