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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver, Canada – The Vancouver Biennale announces the unveiling of the first of three new public art installations in New Westminister. The City of New Westminister is the fourth municipality in the Lower Mainland to participate in the Vancouver Biennale 2014 - 2016 Open Air Museum exhibition. The first of these three artworks is a sculptural piece from the series PUBLIC FURNITURE | URBAN



TREES by Brazilian artist Hugo França. On Thursday, May 28th this artwork will be unveiled along the Waterfront Esplanade in New Westminister's Quayside neighbourhood.

New Westminister has a rich and illustrious history, having played an important role in the economic development and settlement of the Province of British Columbia. The City continues this legacy into the 21st century as a major transportation hub. The theme of the 2014-2016 Vancouver Biennale is Open Borders / Crossroads Vancouver, and the three works scheduled for exhibition in New Westminister provide a local context for an international dialogue on issues of trade, transportation and flow of people and resources, along with sustainability and the natural environment. "We are excited to be partnering with the Biennale on presenting Open Borders / Crossroads Vancouver" said Mayor Johnathan X. Coté. "This exhibition will engage our community in a multitude of conversations that explore who we are as a City, where we've come from and where we are going."

The first artwork to be unveiled in New Westminister is one of the five public furniture sculptures carved by Hugo França and his team on Spanish Banks in Vancouver, in April 2014. "Although the artist has exhibited his artwork internationally, this was the first time in his 20-year career that he created public sculpture outside Brazil using a variety of local wood species, which makes this a truly unique Biennale project and experience for the artist," said Barrie Mowatt, President and Founder of the Vancouver Biennale.

Since the 1980s, França has developed a unique sculpting process which respects and accentuates the natural features of condemned trees, promoting minimum waste while celebrating the beauty of organic curves, lines, flaws, and imperfections. The memory of the trees is kept alive through his unique sculptural forms, offered back to the community in a balance between function and form in harmony with the environment.

This sculpture highlights the important role of lumber resources to the economy and existence of New

Westminster and other cities that continue to thrive along the banks of the Fraser River.

Many of the twelve sculptural artworks created by Hugo França will remain on public display in partnering communities as a legacy of the 2014 – 2016 Vancouver Biennale exhibition.

### **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 objective is to use great art as a catalyst for transformative learning, community engagement, and social dialogue.

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