

Chain link mosque first installation for Vancouver Biennale 2018-2020

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Ajlan Gharem, with his piece The work is called Paradise Has Many Gates in Vanier Park. ARLEN REDEKOP / PNG

A transparent mosque made out of the same material as a chain-link fence is the first installation for the fourth [Vancouver Biennale](https://www.vancouverbiennale.com/) (<https://www.vancouverbiennale.com/>).

The work is called Paradise Has Many Gates by [Ajlan Gharem](http://www.ajlangharem.com/) (<http://www.ajlangharem.com/>), an artist from Saudi Arabia. It was officially unveiled Tuesday in Vanier Park.

The work, which is 9.7 m by 29.8 m (32 ft by 98 ft), is recognizable as a mosque by its minaret, dome, and ornate windows.

“The mosque is a conduit for the symbolic power wielded by all those above the unwitting individual, from elder brother to father, neighbourly imam and, eventually, the state,” Gharem has said about his work.

“The mosque is the public square reincarnate but with attendance mandatory, at least socially.”

On Wednesday, June 27, The Vancouver Biennale will hold a Sunset Picnic in the park to celebrate Multiculturalism Day. The picnic starts at 6 p.m. and continues to 9:22 p.m.

During the picnic, the mosque will be illuminated green as the sun sets.

Gharem is one of Saudi Arabia’s leading contemporary artists. He’s a co-founder of [Edge of Arabia](http://edgeofarabia.com/), (<http://edgeofarabia.com/>) which promotes contemporary art in the Arab world, and [Gharem Studio](http://www.gharem.studio/) (<http://www.gharem.studio/>) in Riyadh, which acts as an incubator for contemporary art in Saudi Arabia.

Other works being installed as part of [Vancouver Biennale](https://www.vancouverbiennale.com/) (<https://www.vancouverbiennale.com/>) 2018-2020 include Maskull Lasserre’s Acoustic Anvil: A Small Weight to Forge the Sea in early July in Leg-in-Boot Square in False Creek South and an interactive work that combines art and science by Melbourne artist Patricia Piccinini’s Curious Imaginings in a wing of the Patricia Hotel in the Downtown Eastside in September.

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