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Artist uncovers False Creek's lost industrial history with Acoustic Anvil sculpture for Vancouver Biennale

by [Laura Sciarpelletti](#) on July 18th, 2018 at 3:41 PM



Maskull Lasserre's sculpture *Acoustic Anvil: A Small Weight to Forge the Sea* is set to be installed at Leg-In-Boot Square along Vancouver's seawall.

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Tomorrow morning (July 19), the Vancouver Biennale 2018-2019 will install Squamish-based artist Maskull Lasserre's sculpture *Acoustic Anvil: A Small Weight to Forge the Sea* in Leg-In-Boot Square along Vancouver's False Creek seawall.

Acoustic Anvil—in keeping with the quality of the biennale's installation lineup this year—is a nearly three-by-eight-metre monolithic red sculpture, and draws attention to the little-known industrial history of False Creek. The anvil symbolizes the essential forger's tool in a grand way.

Organizers believe it will have an immediate impact on the public and is true to the biennale's mandate to "activate, animate and 're-IMAGE-n' public space."

The dramatic second biennale sculpture of the year follows last month's Vanier Park [installation](#) of Saudi Arabia-based artist Ajlan Gharem's *Paradise Has Many Gates*.

Leg-In-Boot Square was historically a place of industry, forges, boat-building, and stevedores. Its name comes from a particularly odd piece of history: the square once played host to a police station where a human leg—still trapped in a boot—stood on display, in the hope that someone would claim it. The origin of the leg was never revealed.

The industrial history of False Creek was largely wiped out in preparation for Expo '86, the 1986 World's Fair. The area became a residential project and a model for housing communities around the world. *Acoustic Anvil: A Small Weight to Forge the Sea* physically represents both real and imagined histories, relationships, and resonances that mark the quiet False Creek spot.

According to Lasserre, who was born in Calgary, the sculpture references the "massive tapered

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"My hope is to develop a work that does not simply occupy the heavy end of the spectrum, but opens a territory between weight and sound, massive permanence, and the fugitive fragility of an imagined fluid core," said Lasserre of his sculpture.

The anvil's form displays hot hammered iron and represents the patterns demanded by industry and the movement of people. A violin f-hole slices through the anvil's core, turning a previously familiar object into something a little more ambiguous: a tool-turned-instrument. The public will get to hear sounds of the sea permeating from the industrial piece of art. Listening to the spiral opening of the anvil is not unlike turning a conch shell to the ear.

The installation will provoke these questions: What is the sound? Where is it coming from? Where does it transport you?

The Leg-In-Boot Square will also host a summer series of classic black-and-white films centered on the industrial era. The collaboration with the biennale's film program, CineFest LIVE, will feature works by pioneering filmmakers and will kick off on July 30 for six consecutive Mondays.

***Acoustic Anvil: A Small Weight to Forge the Sea* is set for arrival and installation at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, July 19.**

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