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For Immediate Release  
July 7, 2020, Vancouver, BC

## This show must go on. The Vancouver Biennale launches first installation of 2020 Wednesday, July 8.

On Wednesday, July 8th 2020, from 10am – 1pm, the Vancouver Biennale, known for transforming public space with large-scale art installations, will unveil its first major public sculpture in the era of COVID-19. With many arts and cultural organizations cancelling and postponing programming until 2021 and beyond, the Vancouver Biennale team has instead chosen to focus on engaging with the local communities, foregrounding Canadian artists, and inspiring Vancouverites and visitors to safely get outside and get to know the history of their city.

The first installation of the launch will take place this week, on July 8, 2020, at the intersection of Melville, Jervis, and Pender Streets, with the unveiling of a 17' bronze sculpture by Iranian-Canadian artist Kambiz Sharif, titled *Need*. Inspired by his experience of immigrating to Canada in 2009, the piece is the first public sculpture by the artist in Canada. This artwork will be one of the four new installations that will be the focus of the new **BIKEnnale/WALKEnnale**. For **SIX SUNDAYS THIS SUMMER**, starting July 26th through August 30th, registrants will be virtually guided week by week through 18 of Vancouver's diverse neighbourhoods and their cultural, architectural, and community landmarks.

Events of the past six months have deeply shifted how we look at public space: from empty streets and boarded up store windows in the early days of the pandemic, to cautiously open patios and socially distanced picnics, Black Lives Matter marches, and the toppling of monuments. Questions around public art and public space have never been more urgent. While cultural organizations around the world begin to rebuild and re-IMAGE-n their place in this “new normal”, as the saying goes—this show must go on.

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### ABOUT THE SCULPTURE

Despite its apparent abstraction, this shape carries deep personal meaning. It reaches upwards with an expression of need and gratitude and the potential of reciprocity, like three outstretched fingers or a seedling pushing upwards. *Need* marks a junction where the converging streets lead the flow of traffic to vastly different neighbourhoods of the city. At these crossroads, the sculpture's reflective surface makes it come into view like a mirage, or a flash of recognition of shared experience.

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Kambiz Sharif was born in 1978 in Tabriz, Iran. Beginning with his experimentation with line while painting, he felt an instinctual desire to create three dimensional forms. After graduating from the Mirak Arts School in Tabriz, Sharif moved to Tehran where he opened a studio and began working in sculpture full-time, using form to express his thoughts and feelings. He opened his own sculptural school in 2001 with classes in clay, wood, stone, and in bronze casting. Sharif immigrated to Vancouver in 2009 and has started a new life, opening an art studio and foundry in Maple Ridge. During his years as a practicing artist, he has received many awards and recognitions, including the first-place prize in the Third Tehran Sculpture Biennial in 2002, a diploma in Arts from the Ministry of Arts and Culture in 2003, and the Diploma of Courageous Ideas in Art from the Fourth Tehran Sculpture Biennial in 2004. Sharif is a member of the Institute for the Promotion of Visual Arts in Iran, the Society of Iranian Sculptors in Tehran, the International Sculptors Center and Sculptors' Society of BC. He is currently working on a new public art commission in Vancouver, to be unveiled in 2022. For more information, visit the artist's [website](#).

### ABOUT THE VANCOUVER BIENNALE

The Vancouver Biennale presents and 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, becoming a catalyst for community engagement, learning, and social action. The Vancouver 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.



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