



# GASTOWN STREETCAR MUSINGS WALK

By Vancouver Biennale

4 KM / 5,000 - 6,000 STEPS  
1 - 2 HOURS

## ABOUT THE TOUR

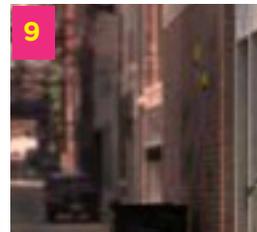
Come for a walk with us in the West End, passing along Davie Street and heading to English bay, and enjoy Vancouver's LGBTQIA2+ culture in addition to a number of recent artworks, installed just in time for PRIDE!!

Tip: If you walk with us on the 24th or 31st, you might be able to catch the live painting in Jim Deva Plaza.

If you find something colourful, tag us in a photo (#VanBiennale) and share it on your favourite social-media platform.

## ROUTE STOPS

1	NEED - KAMBIZ SHARIF	
2	VANCOUVER ART GALLERY OFFSITE	
3	VANCOUVER ART GALLERY	750 Hornby St
4	FOUR BOATS STRANDED: RED AND YELLOW, BLACK AND WHITE - KEN LUM	750 Hornby St
5	1907 STREETCAR ROUTE	570 Granville St.
6	VICTORY SQUARE	
7	DOMINION BUILDING	207 W Hastings
8	WOODWARD'S SIGN AT WOODWARDS 43	
9	BLOOD ALLEY + GAOLER'S MEWS	
10	GASSY JACK	
11	GASTOWN STEAM CLOCK	
12	SUNZEN ART GALLERY	420 Howe St.





**#1 - NEED - KAMBIZ SHARIF**

**Need**  
**Kambiz Sharif**  
**Current Vancouver Biennale exhibition**

Need by Iranian-Canadian artist Kambiz Sharif is a summation of his experience as a new immigrant, a life based on re-imagining oneself in a new place. The idea for the sculpture came to Sharif during his first year in Canada in 2009.

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. Its core contains the untold desires held by all new immigrants and the continuous re-imagining of one's home in this new place.

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 in a stranger's eyes.

What is your experience of displacement or rootedness? What shape does it take? Where do your roads cross? Let us know your thoughts by tagging your photo with #VanBiennale.



**#2 - VANCOUVER ART GALLERY OFFSITE**

**Pedestrian Protest, 2021**  
**Evann Siebens + Keith Doyle**  
**APRIL 9 - OCTOBER 11, 2021**

In a new commission for Offsite, Evann Siebens and Keith Doyle explore how the moving body, whether in solitude or en masse, can become a political act. Incorporating image and sculpture into a multimedia installation, Pedestrian Protest considers themes of gathering and protest along Georgia Street—a connective artery that runs through the unceded territories of the  $x^w m \theta k^w \acute{e} y \acute{a} m$  (Musqueam),  $S k w x w \acute{u} m e s h$  (Squamish) and  $s \acute{a} l i l w \acute{e} t a \eta \ddot{t}$  (Tsleil-Waututh) nations.

Siebens collaborated with nearly 50 local dancers, visual artists and activists to create 24 media performances that reference a historical or recent protest. Each collaborator's singular artistic voice combines with the others in a chorus of protest and gathering that maps our changing city. Doyle responds to this mapping through his sculptural intervention, referring to the precarious and temporary conditions of Vancouver's constantly changing built environment.



### #3 - VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

In 1975, the Provincial government proposed a municipal center building in the heart of Vancouver. The proposal included a tower that was over 200 meters (682 ft) tall. Opponents worried that the tower would cast a “dark shadow” over the heart of the city, and interrupt the skyline that was, until then, preserved.

Community Arts Council of Vancouver (CACV) worked to secure an alternate proposal from legendary architect Arthur Erickson. When Erickson described the project, he said:

“This won’t be a corporate monument. Let’s turn it on its side and let people walk all over it.”

He anchored it in such a way with the BC courts — the law — at one end and the museum (Vancouver Art Gallery) — the arts — at the other.

In 1949, CACV’s exhibit at the Vancouver Art Gallery, *Designed for Living*, posed the question “Does your house fit you?” The show attracted over 14 thousand visitors and has been credited with marking the beginning of Canada’s West Coast Modernist style of art and architecture.



### #4 -FOUR BOATS STRANDED: RED AND YELLOW, BLACK AND WHITE - KEN LUM

#### ***Four Boats Stranded: Red and Yellow, Black and White*** **Ken Lum** **2001**

Comprised of four, scaled-down boats, this installation is located on the Gallery’s uppermost rooftop.

“Taking into account several important attributes of the Vancouver Art Gallery’s site, Ken Lum has created a work that serves as a directional, geographical and historical marker. The four installed boats include scaled-down versions of a First Nations Longboat, Captain Vancouver’s ship, the Komagata Maru (the infamous 1914 Indian immigrant ship) and a cargo ship that recently carried migrants from China’s Fujian Province. The boats are each painted a single colour which speaks to a colonial stereotyping of cultural, racial and historical identification. The First Nations boat is red, Captain Vancouver’s ship is white, the Komagata Maru is black and the Fujian ghost ship is yellow.” (From a Vancouver Art Gallery press release, September 2001)



### #5 - 1907 STREETCAR ROUTE

Streetcars were once commonplace in Vancouver, one of them running along Granville Street and eastbound on Hastings Street. Streetcars were built in urban centres throughout North America in the early 1900s; however, they were ripped out in parallel to the appearance of the personal automobile.

Follow the historic streetcar path by walking north down Granville Street and turning right on Hastings to Victory Square.



### #6 - VICTORY SQUARE

Once the grounds of B.C.'s provincial courthouse (torn down 1911-1913), standing at the intersection of the old Granville townsite (now Gastown) and the CPR townsite (a land grant to locate a terminus in the city). In the northwest corner, at the intersection between Hamilton and Hastings, the first survey stake was driven into the ground to begin laying out the street system for the city.

Picture this, right here: A dense west coast rainforest. The trees are standing in thick groves, reaching hundreds of feet high. The area was logged and closely followed by the Great Fire of 1886.



### #7 - DOMINION BUILDING

Upon its completion in 1910, this building was Vancouver's first steel-framed high-rise (13 stories) and the tallest commercial building in the British Empire.

It is currently filled with varied tenants including a film production company (Haddock), a law firm, clothing designers, record labels, antiquarian booksellers, Kokoro Dance, professional web developers, a marketing agency, Bowery Creative, the office of the Green Party of Vancouver, a dentist, non-profit organizations such as Living Oceans Society and Fair Trade Vancouver, an artist's supply store (Opus), and a Lebanese restaurant (Nuba).



### #8 - WOODWARD'S SIGN AT WOODWARDS 43

The Woodward's building was constructed in 1903 for the Woodward's Department Store. During that time, this area of Vancouver was the premiere shopping district and always full of city life. Woodward's pioneered the idea of "one-stop-shopping," as the store included a food floor (the supermarket was North America's largest supermarket), household items, men's and women's fashion, and even cheque cashing and travel bookings!

In 1944, the sign was originally erected atop a 25-metre replica of the Eiffel Tower (shown above). This sign now resides on the ground outside The Charles Bar, the original site of the Woodward's building.

In 2010, a replicate of the sign was created and installed atop the new Woodward's building.



## #9 - BLOOD ALLEY + GAOLER'S MEWS

**Blood Alley (left):** You now stand in Blood Alley, rumored to have been home to some of the city's finest butchers. With all of the butchering, the street would quickly become "painted red." Alternatively, some claim that hangings once took place in this location. Regardless of the origins of the name, there are tacos to be enjoyed in the near vicinity. If you're hungry, check out Gringo or Tacofino.

**Gaoler's Mews (right):** If you step into the building on the north side of the alleyway and then enter a lovely interior courtyard, you will have stepped into Gaoler's Mews: the first building erected in this small alley in the mid-1800s. Vancouver's first jail was also located here before it burnt down in 1886: a brush fire levelled the city to the ground in less than 30 minutes.



## #10 - GASSY JACK

Gassy Jack is actually John Deighton (originally from Hull, England), who operated a Vancouver saloon in the 1860s. Locals called the area around his bar "Gastown," and the name has endured.

Recently, this statue has received some negative attention as details of Gassy Jack's life have come to light, including his marriage to a 12-year-old Squamish girl, Quahail-ya. To many, the statue is symbolic of colonialism's ongoing damages to Indigenous peoples.



## #11 - GASTOWN STEAM CLOCK

Under Vancouver's city streets, there is a series of steam pipes that connect to a generating plant at Georgia and Beatty streets. This system provides heat to most of the downtown core and the steam for the whistles of the Gastown Steam Clock, which was built in 1977 by horologist Raymond Saunders and metalwork specialist Doug Smith.

The steam clock chimes every 15 minutes, and plays a longer tune on the hour. If you don't feel like sticking around to see it in person, check out the video above!

Fun fact: In addition to the clock's partial reliance on steam to wind its mechanisms, the structure has an electric motor. The clock whistles and shoots steam at the top of every hour and also announces quarter hours with the Westminster Quarters (a common clock chime, which is also used by London's "Big Ben").

# 寓 ALLEGORY 言

THE STORYTELLING OF CHEN WENLING

**JULY**  
七月  
**30**

MATERIALISM  
EXPANDING DESIRES  
& ENVIRONMENTAL  
ISSUES LED BY RAPID  
DEVELOPMENT.

**SEPT**  
九月  
**21**

## #12 - SUNZEN ART GALLERY

**SUNZEN ART  
GALLERY  
420  
HOWE ST**

THROUGH  
ALLEGORIES, HE  
CREATES AN  
ALLURING  
NARRATIVE THAT  
CONVEYS THE  
PHILOSOPHY OF  
SYMBIOSIS.

**IN COLLABORATION WITH  
VANCOUVER  
BIENNALE**



To promote great Chinese art and cultural artifacts to its Vancouver audience, Sunzen focuses on its unique collection of rosewood furniture, calligraphy, paintings, Pu'er tea, and authentic tea sets.

In collaboration with the Vancouver Biennale, the gallery presents Allegory: The Storytelling of Chen Wenling (July 30 to September 21), the artist's first exhibition in Canada.

As some of you may already know, Chen Wenling has a sculpture, *The Proud Youth*, in the Biennale's open-air exhibition. If you haven't yet seen this artwork, be sure to visit the south end of Drake Street along the Yaletown Seawall.

This concludes the Gastown Streetcar Musings Walk. We hope you enjoyed your walk and learned a thing or two about the history of Gastown. We'd love to see any photo highlights; be sure to tag us (#VanBiennale) in your social-media posts!

See you on your next WALKennale!