

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver, Canada – **Art changes the face of a city**

**As part of the Vancouver Biennale International Artist Residency Program, four international rising young art stars from Syria, India, Australia and Canada transform the cultural face of Squamish, Canada’s outdoor recreation capital.**

On Saturday July 4th between 6:30 PM and 9:00 PM, inspired by the Biennale’s theme of Open Borders, four artists from four continents and varied artistic disciplines will share their experiences from their six weeks in the District of Squamish.

From riverbank to mountain park, their large-scale interactive public installations and interventions will transform perceptions of both the City and public art.

With a quixotic cardboard-fabricated “pop-up” installation by a Kolkata-based artist; a 26-foot neon sign on an inaccessible, raging river crossing; a performance and 20-foot high installation of community-donated suitcases by an exiled Syria-based artist; and a guerrilla photographic intervention by a Canadian outdoorsman in the pristine backdrop of Shannon Falls Provincial Park, you will **discover a Squamish you have never seen before.**

**DATE:** Saturday, July 4th, 2015

**LOCATION:** Water Shed Grill (41101 Government Rd, Squamish, BC V0N 1H0)

**TIME:** 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### RATHIN BARMAN, INDIA

Born in Tripura, a state in northeast India, and now living and working in Kolkata, artist and engineering graduate Rathin Barman witnessed the effects of globalization first-hand, as isolated, rural areas were thrust into communication with urban centres. Barman’s residency artwork, which includes exquisitely crafted temporary physical spaces made out of cardboard, deals with the aspect of unexpectedness while commenting on the social practices of virtual mapping. Through his “pop-up” cardboard installations, installed in unexpected places throughout the community, Barman brings aspects of the unmapped histories of Kolkata to Squamish.

### TAMMAM AZZAM, SYRIA

Following the outbreak of violence in Syria and having been uprooted from his home and studio in Damascus, Tammam Azzam found new ways to express himself with the events that were unfolding in his homeland. Forced to shift from painting to digital art, Azzam discovered a new world beyond his confined Middle



Eastern borders. Rejected for a Canadian visa four times, Azzam has created a project that deals with the displacement of people through changing borders. His installation *The Wall of Travelers*, which includes more than 60 suitcases acquired through the kindness of others, provokes dialogue on aspects of memory, travel, and immigration.

#### JONATHAN LUCKHURST, CANADA

Jonathan is a photography-based artist who currently lives and works in Edmonton, Alberta. His Vancouver Biennale residency project pushes personal and societal boundaries using the medium of photography and projection to provoke engagement and discussion by inserting large-scale constructed interventions into nature. Luckhurst's residency project pushes personal and societal boundaries using the mediums of projection and photography to provoke engagement and discussion by inserting large-scale constructed interventions into nature. Luckhurst's installation reflects on the urban-nature split and the resulting ecological crossroads that confront us.

#### KRISTIN MCIVER, AUSTRALIA

Kristin McIver is a Melbourne-born artist whose practice includes sculpture, painting and installation. For her Vancouver Biennale residency artwork, McIver has inserted a four-part installation along the Squamish River while loosely capturing the four elements of Wind, Water, Earth and Fire. The Squamish residency has allowed her to explore intervention within a grand public format via a 26-foot solar powered neon sign highlighting the traditional First Nations acknowledgement of gratitude ("this beautiful day").

#### **About the Vancouver Biennale's International Artist Residency Program**

The Vancouver Biennale's Residency Program supports the professional development of emerging artists with an unprecedented opportunity for a cultural exchange between nations and artistic disciplines. Selected artists are invited via curatorial recommendation to participate and dialogue within a small, cross-cultural, multidisciplinary group to create public interventions and community engagement while pushing artistic and community boundaries.

#### **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, facilitating globally-inspired cultural experiences where people live, work, play and transit. The Biennale features internationally renowned and emerging contemporary artists that represent a diversity of cultural perspectives and artistic disciplines, including sculpture, new media, performance works and film, which create a catalyst for learning, community engagement and social action. For more information, visit [vancouverbiennale.com](http://vancouverbiennale.com).

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#### **For Artist Interviews:**

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