

**VANCOUVER THRIVES WHEN IT EMBRACES ITS MANY ORIGINS, PEOPLES, IDEAS AND FORMS. VANCOUVER FALTERS WHEN IT STRIVES FOR PURITY, ISOLATION, UNITY OF FUNCTION. WE ARE A CITY OF HYBRIDS, SO INTEGRATED THEY SLIDE INTO EACH OTHER AS HYBRID-CITY. OUR METROPOLITAN STRENGTH, OUR URBAN ENGINE'S POWER IS CREATIVE DIVERSITY—WITHOUT IT, WE BECOME BRITTLE, UNCARING AND DULL.**

**INVENTING HYBRIDCITY:**

**THIS CITY WAS INVENTED AT THE STROKE OF A PEN. IN UTTERLY NO SENSE DID VANCOUVER EVOLVE ORGANICALLY—AS IN STANDARD URBAN NARRATIVES, BE THEY OF ETRUSCAN ROME OR HOMER SIMPSON'S SPRINGFIELD—BUT RATHER CONCEIVED IN A SINGLE BUSINESS AND POLITICAL CONTRACT FOR THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY. VANCOUVER WAS BORN AND RAISED IN A REAL ESTATE DEAL TRANSFERRING A PUBLIC GOOD TO PRIVATE DEVELOPERS, AND THIS PRECEDENT, THIS FUSION OF CASH WITH BUILDING DEEDS, HAS SHAPED US EVER SINCE. VANCOUVER HAS ALSO ALWAYS BEEN MÉTIS IN SPIRIT, A MELDING OF FIRST NATIONS VISUAL/MATERIAL CULTURES WITH THOSE OF ASIA AND EUROPE. THE RAILWAY WAS BUILT WITH CHINESE LABOUR, AND VANCOUVER'S POPULATION HAS BEEN ONE FIFTH OR MORE ASIAN FROM THE GET-GO, MAKING OUR DIETS, BUSINESS CULTURE, ARCHITECTURE AND GLOBAL OUTLOOK PERMANENTLY EURASIAN. FOR OUR HYBRIDCITY, I PROCLAIM THE PENTECOSTAL POTLATCH, AND CELEBRATE EQUINOX, EID AND EASTER WITH BUBBLE TEA!**

**FORGETTING AND DENYING HYBRIDCITY:**

**FOR GRANVILLE'S SAWMILLS, THEN VANCOUVER'S HOUSES AND AVENUES, THE SALISH WERE PERCHED IN PERIMETERS—WHAT ARE LATER KNOWN AS STANLEY PARK, KITSILANO AND THE SOUTHLANDS. VANCOUVER WILL NEVER BE AT PEACE UNTIL IT RECONCILES WITH ITS INDIGENAIITY, A CORNERSTONE OF HYBRIDCITY. VANCOUVER MUST ALSO CONFRONT ITS HISTORY OF APARTHEID. EARLY 'RACIAL ZONING' MANDATED ASIANS' RESIDENCES AND BUSINESSES TO BE LOCATED IN CHINATOWN'S FEW BLOCKS, AND NOWHERE ELSE. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY 'CHEMICAL ZONING'; THROUGH MUCH OF THE 20TH CENTURY, THE DTES WAS THE ONLY NEIGHBOURHOOD WHERE THE CITY GRANTED BAR AND TAVERN LICENSES. FINALLY, IN A DEADLY COLLUSION OF CIVIC LEFT WITH RIGHT, THE DTES BECAME THE SOLE LOCUS FOR SOCIAL HOUSING AND POVERTY SERVICES IN THE TWO DECADES BEFORE 2005.**

**BUILDING HYBRIDCITY:**

**VANCOUVER NOW GROWS NEVER BEFORE-SEEN HYBRIDS OF BUILDING FORMS AND TYPES: THIN CONDO HIGH RISES SET ON TOWNHOUSE PODIA (A HYBRID OF MID-LEVELS HONG KONG WITH BROOKLYN BROWNSTONES); TOWERS LAMINATING OFFICE WITH RESIDENTIAL WITH HOTEL; FOUR CONDO SKYSCRAPERS ERUPTING UP OUT OF A COSTCO; A VILLAGE FOR 400 RESIDENTS SET ON THE ROOF OF A HOME DEPOT, ITSELF SET ON A SAVE-ON FOODS. OUR BEST PLANNING ACTUALLY BUILDS (NOT JUST PROMISES) HOMES FOR THE POOR, THE ELDERLY AND THE CREATIVE, ALL INTEGRATED SEAMLESSLY WITH THOSE FOR THE WEALTHY, THE GLOBAL AND THE ITINERANT. OUR CITY-BUILDING SUCCESSES ARE REAL AND EXPORTED HAPPILY AS "VANCOUVERISM," A NOW-GLOBAL COMMODITY SHAPED OUT OF OUR COLLECTIVE FANTASIES OF SPLENDID PROTECTED VIEWS, EVER INCREASING VALUE, AND A FEW CUTE SHRUBBERIES OUT FRONT.**

**HYBRIDCITY NOW:**

**REAL ESTATE IS VANCOUVER'S CIVIL RELIGION, AND MARKETERS, POLITICIANS, DEVELOPERS AND PLANNERS ARE THE DESCENDING RANKS OF ITS PRIESTLY CLASS. HYBRIDCITY AT ITS BEST IS A CREATION OF OUR REALTORS, BUT WITHOUT PUBLIC GUIDANCE, THEY ARE JUST AS LIKELY TO DESTROY IT. REAL ESTATE IS REALITY FOR EVERY CITY, BUT FEW THIS LARGE ARE SO SINGULARLY CONCEIVED, NAMED, SHAPED, IMPROVED AND GOVERNED BY THIS ONE INDUSTRY.**

**VANCOUVERITES NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THEIR HYBRIDCITY—AS ARTIFACT AND IDEA—IS THE CREATION OF PUBLIC POLICY. THE DTES IS AS MUCH A CREATION OF VANCOUVERISM AS YALETOWN'S GLASS TOWERS. A DTES SOLELY FOR THE ADDICTED POOR IS AS MUCH A CORRUPTION OF HYBRIDCITY AS A DOWNTOWN GIVEN OVER SOLELY TO HIGH-END CONDOS UNLEAVENED BY NEW WORKPLACES AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING. TO CONCENTRATE BAR AND CABARET LICENSES ALONG GRANVILLE DENIES THE NECESSARY NOISE AND CONFLICT OF HYBRIDCITY ELSEWHERE. TO GHETTOIZE CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN AN ARTS PRECINCT DENIES VARIETY AND ANIMATION TO OTHER DISTRICTS. TO MAKE OURS THE GREENEST CITY WILL REQUIRE A LOT OF GREENWASHING. HYBRIDS CAN BE STERILE, OR THEY CAN FLOURISH—THE CHOICE IS YOURS.**

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VAN.  
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VER**

**12 MANIFESTOS FOR THE CITY**

**2011**

**05.01 - 02.12**

**ORGANIZED BY THE  
VANCOUVER ART  
GALLERY**