

DVBIA SET TO LAUNCH LATEST LANEWAY TRANSFORMATION

Ackery's Alley is located beside the Orpheum Theatre and will feature interactive public art installation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JULY 24, 2018, VANCOUVER, BC— The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) will officially launch their newest laneway project, Ackery's Alley, on August 9, 2018. Ackery's Alley is located in a working laneway behind the Orpheum Theatre, and follows the success of the first "*More Awesome Now*" laneway, Alley Oop.

Ackery's Alley is part of a movement that is helping to transform downtown Vancouver laneways into places of connection and engagement. This laneway project flips performance theatre inside out with the interior of The Orpheum Theatre—red carpet, gold detailing and performance— featured in the lane's design.

Ackery's Alley is named after Ivan Ackery, a movie theatre manager and entertainment promoter in Vancouver, British Columbia. He was the manager of Vancouver's Orpheum Theatre during its peak period from the 1930s to the 1960s, and was instrumental in making Granville Street an entertaining and vibrant place.

Together with key partners including HCMA Architecture + Design (HCMA), the City of Vancouver's VIVA Vancouver Program and Vancouver Civic Theatres, the DVBIA raised money through a Kickstarter campaign to fund FIELD, the key piece and focal element of the Ackery's Alley redesign.

FIELD is a permanent, interactive art installation by international artist Alex Beim, founder of Tangible. FIELD's immersive experience senses a person's presence and their movements, and responds by creating a light and soundscape which gives the participant the opportunity to create their own unique composition. FIELD was created in collaboration with celebrated Vancouver-based composer Adam Lastiwka. With its potential for constant reinvention, FIELD in Ackery's Alley taps into the basic human instincts to play and explore.

Along with the FIELD installation, the laneway development will include red velvet paint, artful signage, gold paneling, and reflective metals. It will be a space that fosters social connection and social engagement with others and the public realm.

The public launch will take place on Thursday, August 9, from 7-9 p.m., and will include music by Public Disco and surprise pop-up performances by the Vancouver Street Dance Community.

QUOTES:

Charles Gauthier, DVBIA's President & CEO

"This development will help continue to change the way people in Vancouver see public space. Why can't a lane be used for garbage collection in the early hours of the morning, commuters on their way to work, morning deliveries and dancing, selfies and socializing in the afternoon and into the night?"

Melissa Higgs, Principal at HCMA and member of DVBIA Board of Directors

“HCMA is proud to be part of the More Awesome Now movement together with the DVBIA and City of Vancouver. Alley Oop, or the ‘Pink Alley’ as it is fondly known, was a transformative project for the city and we hope Ackery’s Alley has the same positive impact on our community. From basketball games to public discos, we encourage all Vancouverites to play, explore and use these public spaces in creative ways.”

Alexandra Kenyon, Associate at HCMA

“The More Awesome Now partnership is both a ‘call to action’ empowering citizens to make their own cities better, and a statement that demands more awesomeness,” says Ali. “The parties involved are forward thinking organizations who care deeply about making Vancouver a better place and are willing to put in the leg work to make it happen!”

Steve DiPasquale, Architect at HCMA

For Steve, Ackery’s Alley means a lot of things. “It’s so many things at once. It’s about inclusivity and giving performance, entertainment and life to the street. It’s a historical nod to a man who gave Vancouver a little extra uniqueness and idiosyncrasy. It’s also an invitation for city dwellers to reimagine their city and to inspire a new vitality that Vancouver is sometimes criticized for lacking.”

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ABOUT DVBIA

The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) supports, promotes and represents the shared interests of 8,000 businesses and property owners in the central 90-block area of Vancouver’s downtown core. The support from Vancouverites about transforming the downtowns laneways has been so overwhelming that the DVBIA has written a Laneway Learning Guide to help encourage more groups to complete projects like this one. For more information on the DVBIA, please visit www.downtownvancouver.net.

ABOUT HCMA ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

HCMA Architecture + Design challenges the traditional boundaries of architectural practice by asking one question: “How do we achieve the maximum positive impact through design?” That curiosity leads to technological innovations, valuable community engagements, and ultimately to positive changes in people’s lives. From planning and design, to consultation and evaluation, HCMA takes projects beyond what’s expected, and beyond what’s trending, to deliver places that maximize potential. www.hcma.ca.

ABOUT MORE AWESOME NOW

The DVBIA’s 2015 “Reimagine Downtown” engagement report highlighted Vancouver’s appetite for improved public spaces, specifically laneways. The DVBIA shared this with HCMA and the City of Vancouver who both decided then and there to join forces with the DVBIA – and the “More Awesome Now” team was born.