



March 18, 2022

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Donnie Rosa - General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT : **Tom Cone Memorial at Charleson Park - Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the Tom Cone Memorial, which has been installed in Charleson Park. An unveiling event will be held on Saturday, March 26, 2022.

Background

In May 2015, the Park Board accepted the donation of a sculpture/bench to commemorate the work of Vancouver's renowned playwright Tom Cone, the first recipient of the Mayor's Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement in Arts and Culture. The [Tom Cone Memorial](#) was donated by Music on Main Society, and in accordance with the [Acceptance Guidelines for Long Term Gifts of Public Art](#), was fully funded by the sponsor.

Although the original proposed site was at Jericho Beach Park, staff learned shortly thereafter that the site was of cultural significance to the Host Nations and thus not suitable. A new site was sought that provided similar features: a natural berm and adjacent to water.



In an [Arts & Culture Planning presentation](#) to the Board in February 2020, Charleson Park was identified as a suitable location that met these criteria. Staff completed a technical review for the Charleson Park site to ensure structural compliance and confirm the placement was at an appropriate distance from the bike path and seawall. Public consultation conducted for the new site in the fall of 2021 received a 90% positive response rate.

Tom Cone

As a playwright, librettist, teacher, impresario, curator, philanthropist, and cultural catalyst, Tom Cone (1947-2012) was a major force behind the creation and exhibition of new works of theatre, visual art, experimental music, and literature. Through his visionary leadership, dozens of dazzling new works have taken their place in Vancouver's rich artistic repertoire and in the hearts and minds of new and diverse audiences. March 25, 2012 was proclaimed Tom Cone Day in honour of his nurturing influence on local and national artists.

Sculpture

Designed and made by Vancouver artist Alan Storey, the memorial faces the False Creek waterfront and offers a contemplative place to sit in the park. The sculptural bench is comprised of two curved horizontal elements that extend out of the landscape berm. The materials include a curved zinc-primed and powder coated steel 'I' beam and wood slats which form the seating

element. The text of Tom Cone's poem, "Somewhere Along the Line", is cut out of the front edge of the 'I' beam flange.

Artist - Alan Storey

Alan Storey is a sculptor and installation artist working locally and internationally from Vancouver. He has a 40 year history of site specific public art making and is best known for the 'Pendulum' installation in the HSBC Bank on Georgia Street in downtown Vancouver. Alan's practice also includes gallery installations of site responsive, interactive works including an ongoing series of circumstantial drawing machines. A close personal friend of Tom Cone, Alan designed and fabricated this memorial bench to celebrate Tom's life and legacy.



Unveiling Event

The artist, family, and friends of Tom Cone will gather on Saturday, March 26, 2022 at 1pm in Charleson Park to celebrate this public artwork and hear the song created by Jocelyn Morlock to accompany the words by Tom that are embedded in the sculpture "Somewhere Along the Line".

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donnie Rosa".

Donnie Rosa (*they/she*)

General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

/jh/jsl/clc

Copy to: PB Leadership Team
PB Decolonization, Arts and Culture
PB Communications