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“Good morning, creative Calgary!” says new graffiti on downtown underpasses

[Calgary, Canada] — Calgary woke up to new “green graffiti” murals this morning on two busy underpasses that take commuters into the downtown core.

A pair of 27-foot murals were spray-chalked onto the 4th Street SW underpass and a similar pair of 12-foot murals appeared on the 14th Street SW route. Both sets are part of the ramp up to Beakerhead, an ambitious spectacle of art, science and engineering that will erupt on the streets of Calgary for the second time this September. The September 10-14 program will be announced in three weeks.

The underpass artwork is created by a team of artists, Michael Mateyko and Hans Thiessen, known as Komboh.

“Think of this as a call-out for creativity. We believe that creativity is in everyone, and shows up in every imaginable form. And it may or may not show itself in our day jobs,” says Mateyko. “So Beakerhead asked us to help inspire people to ‘let go.’ We were thrilled to help out.”

“Creativity in any form is exciting, but somehow it becomes incandescent when you bring together scientists, engineers, artists and makers,” says Jay Ingram, chair of Beakerhead and one of Canada’s most well-known personalities bringing science into popular culture. “We think there’s room for everyone here at that fabulous crossroads.”

The green graffiti uses eco-chalk, which is environmentally friendly in both the application and removal process. Unlike most graffiti, this application and its eventual removal have been approved in advance by the City of Calgary.

In 2013, more than 60,000 people took part in Beakerhead events. This large-scale participatory, citywide spectacle invites local and international artists, engineers, scientists, builders, and makers to create and exhibit interactive works each fall.

Highlights of Beakerhead 2014 will be shared on June 10, 2014, when the fall line-up is announced. Beakerhead is funded by the corporate donors including Suncor Energy and Talisman Energy, as well as the Government of Canada, Government of Alberta, Calgary Hotel Association, Travel Alberta and the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA).

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