

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Johns Creek CVB To Host Tunnel Mural Unveiling Ceremony**

“The Johns Creek Tunnel” Will Be Metro Atlanta’s Newest Attraction

JOHNS CREEK, GA (April 19, 2018) - The Johns Creek Convention and Visitors Bureau (JCCVB) will host a ribbon cutting ceremony to unveil their most recent Tourism Product Development project in Johns Creek, Georgia. The event will take place Saturday, April 21st, 2018 at 10am and officially open “The Johns Creek Tunnel”: a 130’ mural designed by internationally esteemed artist, Hanif Kureshi, from New Delhi, India. Kureshi’s work has been exhibited around the globe at venues such as the London Design Biennale, Venice Biennale, and Centre Pompidou; however, The Johns Creek Tunnel is his first work completed in the US.

This project is a result of collaboration between the JCCVB, City of Johns Creek, Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), Urban Catalyst Lab (UCL), artists Kureshi and William Massey; and countless volunteers from the Johns Creek Arts community. The Johns Creek Tunnel is a pedestrian underpass beneath Medlock Bridge Rd./SR 141, just south of McGinnis Ferry Rd. The east entrance of the tunnel is located near street address 11695 Medlock Bridge Rd.

#### **The Process:**

“When new Tourism Product Development funds became available in July of 2016, general improvements to the underpass was one of the recommendations JCCVB made to City Council for partial use of these funds, which were combined with further investment from the JCCVB Board of Directors for the tourism project,” says Shelby Marzen, JCCVB Executive Director. “This tunnel is located walking distance to both hotels in Johns Creek and connects business and leisure visitors to nearby restaurants and shops. Local hoteliers were in agreement that the tunnel played a role in improving the visitor experience for overnight guests,” says Marzen.

With the goal of engaging local artists while also connecting Johns Creek to public art movements on a regional and global level, JCCVB contracted with Urban Catalyst Lab (UCL) to facilitate a community intervention art project that would celebrate the diverse and unified community of Johns Creek. “Public art has the power to transform average public space into a cultural destination. This public art project connects Johns Creek to public art movements happening not just in Atlanta, but around the world,” says Lynda Smith, JCCVB Chairwoman.

Inspired from the ethnically diverse demographics of the City, UCL invited Kureshi to collaborate with Atlanta based artist, William Massey, to engage the community in a mural project that would set Johns Creek apart. Johns Creek community members were engaged in all stages of production, from design input to installation. The JCCVB also partnered with the Johns Creek Arts Center to host community input sessions and engage local artists with this project.

“We are excited to collaborate with JCCVB in launching the first local to global community art intervention in Johns Creek” adds Ruxanda Renita, co-founder of Urban Catalyst Lab. “William and Hanif share the concept of creating inclusive spaces that amplifies and strengthens community’s identity. This project is an example of art building global community with respect to the local one,” sates Ruxanda Renita.

#### **Mural Design:**

The design was inspired from community discussion of the area's rich history, as well as the diversity that is celebrated today. "This project is celebrating unity. It tells a story of how a diverse community, such as Johns Creek, came into being, where it's at now, and where it has the potential to go," says Massey.

Overlapping geometric shapes symbolize the geography of Johns Creek's community areas, while Kureshi's signature letterforms will represent the many languages spoken by the diverse ethnicity of Johns Creek residents, both past and present. Stand at a central point outside the east entrance, and the design takes the shape of both a heart and peace sign, illustrating the sense of unity described from the community.

### **Opening Ceremony:**

JCCVB invites everyone to join them at The Johns Creek Tunnel official ribbon cutting ceremony April 21st at 10am, facilitated by the Johns Creek Chamber of Commerce. The event will take place at the east tunnel entrance and attendees will have an opportunity to meet the artists and be the first to take photos at Metro Atlanta's newest attraction. Following the ceremony, the artists, UCL and JCCVB will be on site at the Johns Creek International Festival to facilitating a letter form workshop, share information about the mural, and gather community feedback on the project.

Visit [www.johnscreekcvb.com](http://www.johnscreekcvb.com) or follow @VisitJohnsCreek for news and updates about this project and Tourism initiatives in Johns Creek, Georgia.

### **About the Artists:**

Hanif Kureshi is an Indian artist and designer working with street and typography. Kureshi is also Artistic Director and Co-founder of St+art India Foundation which organizes street art festivals to make art more accessible to public. His work has been exhibited at the London Design Biennale, Venice Biennale, Centre Pompidou Paris, Triennale Design Museum, Milan among others. In 2016, GQ named Hanif as one of 50 most influential young Indians.

William Massey, an Atlanta-native, has been working as a community artist and public sculptor in Atlanta since 2012. Massey's portfolio includes renowned, large-scale, public art installations, many of which have been seen on the Atlanta BeltLine. Massey is dedicated to creating work that is honoring, unifying, inclusive and inspiring to the communities he creates alongside.

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### **Johns Creek Convention and Visitors Bureau (JCCVB)**

The JCCVB is a 501(c)(6) non-profit that serves as the official Destination Marketing Organization of Johns Creek, Georgia. Their mission is to serve as an economic catalyst by marketing the city as a destination for business & leisure travel.

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