

For immediate release

Vancouver's *SweaterLodge* selected to represent Canada at Venice Biennale in Architecture

Ottawa, October 4, 2005 – *SweaterLodge*, a project by Pechet and Robb Studio of Vancouver, has been selected through a national juried competition to represent Canada at the 2006 Venice Biennale in Architecture. Marking its 10th anniversary, the Biennale, which is the world's most prestigious architectural exhibition, will take place in Venice, Italy from September to November 2006.



SweaterLodge considers how nature and leisure culture influence the urbanity of Vancouver. The major element of *SweaterLodge* is a giant polar fleece enclosure. The polar fleece fabric is made from recycled plastic drink containers. Suspended within the Canadian pavilion, an inhabited garment becomes a lodge, a voluminous soft orange interior space. As visitors enter the sweater, they encounter a series of digital film projections showing vignettes about a city that intertwines wilderness and modern urban life. Each projection is activated by a viewer peddling a stationary bicycle: the faster they peddle, the faster the video plays. The shipping crates and baggage used to transport the exhibition will transform to become pavilion furniture as *SweaterLodge* envisions a future where daily objects become multifunctional: a sweater becomes a lodge, packs become sofas and bicycles become projectors. Together these elements provide a portrait of a city where the veneration of nature and the density of urban culture often overlap in surprising and meaningful ways.

The exhibition will be co-curated by Chris Macdonald and Greg Bellerby with the support of the School of Architecture, UBC and the Charles H. Scott Gallery, Emily Carr Institute. The two curators bring many years of experience in the field of exhibition organization in art, architecture and design. This is the collaboration between two institutions, which also have a long history of initiating projects that generate dialogues about the development of critical practices in architecture and design.

The Canada Council for the Arts and Foreign Affairs Canada are working in partnership in the administration and financial support of Canada's architectural representation in Venice.

"*SweaterLodge* offers a sharp and witty slice of Canadian life to the world," said Canada Council Director John Hobday. "Pechet and Robb Studio captured the dynamism of our culture, and plan to superbly re-stage it at the Biennale, the most important crossroads of international architecture culture."

"Originality and innovation define Canada's project at the 2006 Venice Biennale in Architecture," said the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pierre Pettigrew. "This prestigious event provides a forum for Canadian architects to exhibit their talent and creativity on the world stage. Their involvement helps promote Canada's image and values to the international community."

Media and invited guests will have the opportunity learn more about *SweaterLodge* at the official project launch event, being held in Vancouver on October 21. The *SweaterLodge* model and exhibit prototypes will be on display, with members of the design and curatorial team in attendance to field inquiries. For more information on this event, please contact *SweaterLodge* media relations.

Pechet and Robb Studio

Pechet and Robb Studio is an interdisciplinary design practice, based in Vancouver with a background in both architecture and fine art. Since 1991, they have produced a portfolio of projects which include private residences, cemeteries, memorials, public art, commercial interiors, exhibitions, set designs and furniture. In all of this work, their interest lies in developing environments which bridge the worlds of art and imagination to everyday life. They engage in varying scales of projects, from large to small with trademark theatricality, wit and cultural commentary.

Pechet and Robb Studio's work has been represented in both national and international publications and exhibitions and they have lectured across Canada, the US and in Japan. They are recipients of a 2005 Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia Award for Excellence in Architecture, as well as recent awards from the American and Canadian Societies of Landscape Architecture. Pechet and Robb dance sets have been enjoyed by audiences in North America, Europe and Asia. Visit their website at www.pechetandrobb.ca.

Bill Pechet

Bill received a BA (Urban Geography) in 1979 and a BFA in 1981 from The University of Victoria. He graduated from The University of British Columbia School of Architecture in 1987. In addition to his practice, Bill is also on faculty at the UBC School of Architecture. He has lectured across Canada, the US and in Japan. Mr. Pechet is a member of the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada.

Stephanie Robb

Stephanie Robb received her undergraduate degree in Fine and Performing Art (with a visual art concentration) from Simon Fraser University in 1985 and her graduate degree in Architecture from the University of British Columbia, School of Architecture in 1989. Ms. Robb is a member of the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada, and an associate member of the Architectural Institute of British Columbia.

General information

In addition to its work in determining and assisting the official Canadian representation at the Venice Biennale in Architecture, the Canada Council for the Arts supports architecture and architectural design through grants and special awards such as the Professional Prix de Rome in Architecture. The Canada Council also works in collaboration with the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in the administration of the Governor General's Medals in Architecture.

The Canada Council provides grants with a view to enhance public awareness and enjoyment of architecture. For more information on these programs contact Brigitte Desrochers, Architecture Officer at the Canada Council for the Arts, (613) 566-4414 or 1-800-263-5588, extension 5109, or by e-mail at brigitte.desrochers@canadacouncil.ca.

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