



The Commerce Canoe to be Officially Unveiled

Date: Thursday, November 6, 2008

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Media is invited to join Acting Mayor Geoff Young, Jaime Tiampo, President of the Bastion Square Revitalization Association (BSRA), Bill Porteous, the City's Public Art Advisory Committee Co-Chair and local artist Illarion Gallant, for the official unveiling of *The Commerce Canoe*, a dynamic new public art piece designed to draw residents and visitors into Bastion Square.

What: Official Unveiling of *The Commerce Canoe*
When: Friday, November 7, 2008, from 11:30 a.m. – noon
Where: Bastion Square (top Plaza closest to Wharf Street)

The new artwork will be christened with a bottle of champagne. Media will have the opportunity to interview the artist and project partners immediately after the ceremony. A reception will follow at the Maritime Museum of British Columbia.

The Commerce Canoe is a 30-foot long, sparkling aluminum ribbed canoe with a paddle resting across it. Suspended 16-feet above the top plaza of Bastion Square, the canoe will be anchored by three, 36-foot tall, powder-coated steel green reeds, arched above the ground and topped with a red fibreglass seedpod. Through the canoe's skeletal frame, one will see a collection of red harvested seeds. Two additional reeds will look as if they are being pushed aside by the oncoming canoe. The artwork's overall colours of silver, green and red will provide a contrast to the architecture of Bastion Square and serve as a focal point.

The art piece was one of three submissions shortlisted from 21 applicants in a three-staged juried competition to design a three-dimensional work of art for Bastion Square. The competition followed the City of Victoria's Public Art Policy, which encourages the creation of new works of art for the enhancement of public spaces.

The City of Victoria and the Bastion Square Revitalization Association have partnered to implement a series of improvements to the area, one of which is the commission and installation of this public artwork. The BSRA raised \$90,000 to cover all costs required to create and install the art piece.

Historically, canoes supported trade and commerce in the Inner Harbour, making Bastion Square Victoria's first commercial core.

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