

Harbourfront Centre Presents RESPECT: A Photo Odyssey Celebrating Canada's Boreal Forest

Summer-Long Outdoor Exhibition at Harbourfront Centre Promotes Awareness of One of the World's Greatest Living Resources

Toronto, ON (June 2, 2009) – Harbourfront Centre is proud to present the unparalleled outdoor photo exhibition ***RESPECT: A Photo Odyssey Celebrating Canada's Boreal Forest***. More than 70 giant-sized aerial photographs of Canada's boreal forest will occupy the grounds of Harbourfront Centre, from **June 26 through October 12, 2009**. The exhibition is **free** and open to the public seven days a week, 24 hours a day. This impressive exploration of one of Canada's most important natural resources is presented in partnership with Montréal-based **Boreal Communications** and **SAJO**.

RESPECT is the result of a journey that began in 2006 to document and capture the quintessence of Canada's boreal forest in order to raise awareness for the preservation of our natural environment, and promote the boreal region as one of the Earth's most crucial resources. Outstanding works from a team of 9 renowned photographers demonstrate the complexity and beauty of the boreal region. The exhibition at Harbourfront Centre will feature exclusive, never-before-seen photographs of the Far North of Ontario taken between October, 2008 and June, 2009.

RESPECT allows visitors to Harbourfront Centre the opportunity to discover Canada's boreal region – the forest, the land, the people and the thriving biodiversity that occupies the vast area to our north. "Millions of Canadians and visitors will experience the astonishing beauty of our boreal forest as they visit the Harbourfront Centre site this summer," said William J.S. Boyle, Chief Executive Officer of Harbourfront Centre. "It will stimulate a profound understanding about the importance of Canada's natural resources."

Financial support through the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund is helping to promote this unique exhibition to tourism markets. Natural Resources Canada has also provided support for the exhibition at Harbourfront Centre. A new component to the ongoing *RESPECT* project is photographs of the Far North of Ontario.

RESPECT is a major project that was developed by **Louise Larivière**, president of Boreal Communications, a Montréal-based organization that specializes in developing and mounting predominantly large-scale outdoor photography exhibitions that are open to the public.

“RESPECT is truly a journey as we discover our own land, seen through the eyes of photographers who fly with the pilot,” said Larivière. “RESPECT is an adventure we want to share with Canadians, especially people living in the city...if those urbanites don’t go to the forest, the forest will come to them. *RESPECT* will reach millions; it’s awesome, exciting and quite a challenge to produce.”

Larivière interviewed indigenous and non-indigenous people living in the Far North of Canada for the accompanying multimedia and film documentary *Take me to the River*, part of the *RESPECT* program. In addition to the aerial photography, *Take me to the River* features footage of a canoe expedition along the Albany River with Eabametoong First Nation, depicting Native traditions and historical sites. The Ontario trek follows the Albany River to Moosonee, on James Bay.

In addition to the outdoor photographs and *Take me to the River*, visitors to Harbourfront Centre can also see the accompanying exhibition *People We Met Along the Way: a photo essay on the boreal forest of Canada and those who live there*, which provides intimate portraits of First Nations people that the team met as they crossed Canada in 2007, and more recently as they travelled through the Far North of Ontario. This complementary exhibition and the film documentary form part of Harbourfront Centre’s Planet IndigenUs, a 10-day festival August 14-23, 2009, exploring contemporary expressions of world indigenous cultures.

Montreal-based SAJO has worked closely with Boreal Communications since the beginning of this project generously providing financial and in-kind support. SAJO also designed and built the stands on which the photographs are showcased. Epson Canada and Seal Graphics are corporate partners working on the production of the exhibition.

Prominent photojournalists **Allen McInnis, Kazuyoshi Ehara, Jim Ross, John Woods, Todd Korol, Dan Riedlhuber, Jeff Bassett, Chris Young** and **Andy Clark** are the lens through which the public will see the boreal region of Canada.

For information about *RESPECT: A Photo Odyssey Celebrating Canada's Boreal Forest* at Harbourfront Centre, the public can call **416-973-4000** or visit www.harbourfrontcentre.com.

For information and bios about the team and the story behind *RESPECT*, visit www.borealcommunications.com

About the Boreal Forest (*Source MNR):

The boreal forest is a worldwide band of conifer-dominated forest that typically stretches across the 50th and 60th parallels of Scandinavia, Russia, Alaska and northern Canada covering an estimated 1.7 billion hectares. These boreal regions store more freshwater in wetlands and lakes and more carbon dioxide in trees, soil and peat than any other terrestrial ecosystem. Within Canada, the boreal forest region covers more than 290 million hectares. Ontario’s portion of the boreal forest extends from the northern limits of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forest to the Hudson Bay Lowlands. With an area of 50 million hectares, this forest region contains two-thirds of Ontario’s forest.

The Ontario expedition for *RESPECT* was made possible through the support of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). The MNR sees this as an opportunity for Southern Ontario residents to recognize the significance of the Far North boreal region

of Ontario, and its many First Nations communities. The Wasaya First Nations Group has also been instrumental in making the Northern Ontario journey a success.

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About Harbourfront Centre

Harbourfront Centre, a non-profit organization, is Canada's leading centre for explorations in contemporary culture. A 10-acre site located on Toronto's central waterfront filled with recreational, dining and shopping experiences, Harbourfront Centre works with more than 450 cultural communities to present over 4,000 events each year which attract in excess of 13 million visits annually.

Harbourfront Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Natural Resources Canada.

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