

BC artist to represent Canada at the *Cultural Olympiad* for the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Italy

November 23, 2005 - Sunshine Coast artist Gordon Halloran, creator of the *Ice Painting* will take Canada to the world with his ice art installation *Pittura Sotto Zero* to the XX Olympic Winter Games as the only Canadian visual artist invited by the Turin Olympic Committee to be in the official line up of the 2006 Cultural Olympiad in Italy.

Paintings Below Zero, a collection of abstract paintings in ice, will be featured as a special "Homage to Canada" as the next host of the Olympic Winter Games. The Fortezza di Fenestrelle, the largest military fort in Europe, located in the mountains outside Turin, is slated to host Halloran and his huge, icy, colourful paintings. Halloran's works will stretch across floors, up walls, and in the windows of the ancient church on the site. The entire *chiesa* will be brought to below freezing to accommodate the artwork. This kind of installation -- the location, the art form -- has never been tried before. January 28, 2006 is the date for the opening.

The exhibit, *Pittura Sotto Zero/Paintings Below Zero*, takes its inspiration from the Canadian winter landscape, and the artist's experience playing hockey as a boy on homemade, backyard ice rinks. This new art form, (dubbed "*the quintessential Canadian art form*" by The Globe & Mail"), blends color, composition and new technological processes developed in Canada into a showcase of the imaginative energy of Canadian art. The 450 year-old fortress where Halloran's work will be showcased, stretches across the mountain top for 3.5 kilometers and is the symbol of the people and the Region of Piemonte. The artist's work will be featured solo as the only Olympic event at the site.

In August of 2004, Halloran received the invitation from the Turin Olympic Committee. Because of Olympic regulations, Halloran was not given any financial assistance to produce the work, although the project is widely supported in media and marketing materials produced by the Turin Olympic Committee. With little more than a year to raise the funds, Halloran attracted a number of cultural sponsors, including the Province of British Columbia through The BC Olympic & Paralympic Winter Games Secretariat, Legacies Now, Government of Canada through Foreign Affairs and Heritage Canada, Vancouver 2010 and The Spratt Foundation.

From his studio in Roberts Creek, Halloran is planning the ambitious exhibit. A shipping container, packed with essential refrigeration substructure (the base for the paintings), left Victoria November 16th. The artist loaded the container, insulating buckets of ice paint with bubble wrap for the three week ocean journey to Italy. He packed tools, machinery -- and hockey gear among other things.

www.icepaintingproject.com / www.paintingsbelowzero.com
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