



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des arts  
du Canada

## Communiqué

*For immediate release*

### **Exhibition on Nunavut will represent Canada in Venice**

*Ottawa, March 26, 2013* – “Arctic Adaptations: Nunavut at 15” has been selected through a national juried competition to represent Canada at the 2014 Venice Biennale in Architecture, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) announced today. The exhibition will be organized and curated by Lateral Office of Toronto.

As Nunavut celebrates its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2014, “Arctic Adaptations” will present innovative architecture proposals rooted in Nunavut’s distinct land, climate and culture, reflecting local traditions of migration, mobility and seasonality. It will also explore how, in light of dramatic environmental, social and economic forces that are transforming the Arctic today, architecture might help nurture robust, prosperous and vibrant Northern communities.

The Venice Biennale in Architecture is the world’s most prestigious architecture exhibition and competition, equivalent to an Olympics of Architecture. It takes place in Venice, Italy from June 7 to November 23, 2014, and will receive more than 350,000 visitors.

[Downloadable images of “Arctic Adaptations: Nunavut at 15”](http://www.arcticadaptations.ca). More information and images can also be found at [www.arcticadaptations.ca](http://www.arcticadaptations.ca).

“This is the first time that we are sending an exhibition about Canada’s North to the Venice Biennale in Architecture,” said Robert Sirman, Director and CEO of the Canada Council. “Given the rise in national and international interest in the Arctic, this is a timely exhibition. ‘Arctic Adaptations’ will bring attention and insight to the unique challenges and opportunities that Nunavut is facing, and the possibility for architecture to positively impact its future.”

Five design teams will work in collaboration with five Nunavut-based organizations. Each team will be made up of a Canadian school of architecture and a Canadian architecture office with extensive experience working in the North. They will create proposals that respond to regional as well as local realities, including climate change, resource extraction and a young and rapidly growing population. A proposal will be developed on each of the five following themes: Health, Education, Housing, Recreation and Arts.

The themes will be explored through architectural models, videos, interviews, photographs, maps, animations and soundscapes within an immersive environment that evokes the unique landscapes and architecture of Nunavut. The exhibition will tell emblematic stories of Nunavut today and in the future, through architecture.

A broadly accessible publication will accompany “Arctic Adaptations.” The exhibition will embark on an extensive Canadian tour after it returns from Venice.

“Arctic Adaptations: Nunavut at 15” was chosen by an independent peer assessment committee selected by the Canada Council for the Arts, which was comprised of Amale Andraos (Principal, WorkAC, New York, USA), Elisabetta Terragni (Principal, Terragni Architetti, Como, Italy), and Charles Walker (Head of Architecture, Royal College of Art, London, UK).

The Canada Council for the Arts and the RAIC are working together to provide financial and project support for Canada’s representation in Venice. This collaboration is part of a larger project to promote the presentation and appreciation of contemporary Canadian architectural excellence in Canada and abroad.

## **Lateral Office**

Lateral Office was founded in 2003 by Lola Sheppard and Mason White as an experimental design practice. It is dedicated to architecture that poses questions and responds to the wider context and climate of a project – social, ecological or political. Lateral Office believes that the role of the architect is not simply to be a problem solver or designer, but to act as a cultural, environmental and spatial detective, bringing to light new opportunities and synergies, and seeking out new roles for architecture.

The architecture firm has been pursuing research and design work on the role of architecture in the Arctic for the past five years. Recognizing that the challenges for Arctic inhabitation extend beyond merely more infrastructure or new technologies, Lateral Office's work in the North tests the potential for architecture and infrastructure to be adaptable and responsive to geography, climate and cultures.

Lateral Office has been recognized with numerous awards for their work in the Arctic, including a Progressive Architecture Award (2013), the inaugural Arctic Inspiration Prize (2012), the Holcim Foundation for Sustainable Construction Gold Award for North America (2012), an Emerging Voices award from the Architectural League of New York (2011), and the Canada Council for the Arts [Professional Prix de Rome \(2010\)](#). Their work has been exhibited internationally. They are also the co-authors of *Pamphlet Architecture: COUPLING / Strategies for Infrastructural Opportunism*, published by Princeton Architectural Press (2011).

### **“Arctic Adaptations” Collaborators**

- **Nunavut-based Organizations:** Ilisavvik, Nunavut Housing Corporation, Nunavut Sport and Recreation, Qaggiavuut!, and Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre.
- **Architects:** Fournier Gersovitz Moss Drolet Architectes Associés (Montreal), Kobayashi + Zedda Architects (Whitehorse), Lateral Office (Toronto), Pin/Taylor Architects (Yellowknife), and Stantec (Iqaluit);
- **Architecture Schools:** Dalhousie University, Université de Montréal, University of British Columbia, University of Manitoba, and University of Toronto.

### **“Arctic Adaptations” Advisory Council (to date)**

- The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson
- Kirt Ejesiak
- Peter Harrison
- Bruce Kuwabara
- Shelagh Rogers
- John Ralston Saul
- Brigitte Shim
- Hunter F. Tura

### **“Arctic Adaptations” Sponsors, Partners, and Supporters (to date)**

- Canada Council for the Arts
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- Kriss Communications

## **Canada Council for the Arts**

The Canada Council for the Arts is Canada's national arts funder. Its grants to artists and arts organizations contribute to a vibrant arts scene in Canada. Its awards celebrate creativity by recognizing exceptional Canadians in the arts, humanities, and sciences. The [Canada Council Art Bank](#) is a national collection of over 17,000 Canadian contemporary artworks – all accessible to the public through rental, loan, and outreach programs. The [Canadian Commission for UNESCO](#) operates under the general authority of the Canada Council.

## **Royal Architectural Institute of Canada**

Established in 1907, the RAIC is a voluntary national association representing more than 4,300 architects. As the leading voice of architecture in Canada, it works to affirm that architecture matters, to celebrate the richness and diversity of architecture in Canada and to support architects in achieving excellence.

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