

For immediate release

Lighting up the Gesù exhibit 37 creative proposals, from Montreal and around the world

Montreal, January 20, 2009 – As part of the ideas competition for the illumination of the Gesù façade, the Gesù, in collaboration with the Quartier des spectacles Partnership and the Design Montréal office of the City of Montreal, is proud to present *Lighting up the Gesù*. This exhibit, which will run until March 28, 2009, brings together 37 proposals for architectural and scenographic lighting, including ideas from three continents.

This unique exhibit, part of the Quartier des spectacles Lighting Plan, offers the public the chance to discover an important cultural and historic site through the creativity of designers from Brazil, India, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, the United States and across Canada. All responded to the invitation, issued last November, to reveal the unique personality of the Gesù through the use of light.

During the exhibit, members of the public will be able to vote for their favorite concept. A “public’s choice” prize of \$2,000 will be awarded to the team whose proposal wins the most votes. The deadline to vote is February 28, the date of the Montreal High Lights Festival All-Nighter.

“To illuminate in the façade of this building with light is to reveal the artistic, human and spiritual aspects that dwell there. We are very happy to see such creative ideas from different perspectives – it’s moving!” declared Ms. Marilyn Carnier, artistic director of the Gesù.

“During the Montreal, cultural metropolis – November 2007 Rendez-vous event, the five partners agreed to promote excellence in architecture and design, specifically by making greater use of contests, workshops and expert advisory panels,” said competition sponsor Mr. André Lavallée, who is responsible for urban planning and development and public transport for the City of Montreal Executive Committee.

“Internationally, these processes have promoted the emulation of ideas. The success of this competition demonstrates that Montreal, and the Quartier des spectacles in particular, is a source of inspiration for creative people around the world. It’s essential to take advantage of the potential of the Quartier des spectacles Lighting Plan to highlight the expression of creativity through the medium of light.”

The Lighting Plan, launched in 2006 by the Quartier des spectacles Partnership, aims to use light to reveal and enhance the activity in the performance halls and other cultural venues of the neighbourhood. “The concepts put forward by these 37 ‘architects of the night’ illustrate the versatility of light as a means of urban revitalization. This is a key element in the visual identity of the Quartier des spectacles, and has the capacity to transform an ordinary building into a technological and artistic masterpiece. When the building in question is as architecturally interesting as the Gesù, the result will be that much more spectacular,” emphasized Charles Lapointe, president of the Quartier des spectacles Partnership.

The competition

A jury composed of members known for their activities in the fields of architecture, heritage conservation, lighting and the arts will evaluate each proposal submitted to the competition along the following criteria: its contribution to the heritage represented by the Gesù, its affirmation of the identity and the presence of the Gesù hall in the contest of the Quartier des spectacles, the innovative and aesthetic qualities of the project and the ambiance created by the installation.

In addition to the public’s choice prize, the jury will select three entries and award \$10,000 to the contest winner, \$5,000 to the runner-up and \$3,000 to the third-place entry. The winners of the competition will be announced in March 2009.

About the Gesù

The only church in Montreal built entirely in the Baroque style, and the location of the first “electric candle” ever lit in Canada, the Gesù houses the oldest active performance hall in Quebec and was classified as a cultural asset in 1975.

An important actor in Montreal’s cultural life since 1865, the Gesù is a place that is unique in multiple ways. At once a place of art and a place of history, a performance hall, an exhibition center for contemporary art, a living space for artists and their creations and a religious site, its living heritage is guided by its mission: to emphasize the artistic, the human and the spiritual.

For more information on the exhibit, visit www.gesu.net.

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