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Rammed-earth Wall Building Awarded Canada's Highest Honour in Architecture

Vancouver, BC - Vancouver-based Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden Architects (HBBH) has been awarded Canada's highest honour for the design of a First Nations cultural centre, which includes the largest rammed-earth wall in North America. Announced yesterday by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada and Canada Council for the Arts, the Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre, in Osoyoos, BC, will receive a Governor General's Medal in Architecture, to be awarded at a ceremony in Ottawa later this year.

Located in the endangered landscape of the Osoyoos Desert, the centre was designed for the Osoyoos Indian Band and reflects their cultural heritage; while at the same time incorporates sustainable building design features, such as rammed-earth technology. Constructed from local soils mixed with concrete, the rammed-earth wall is a stunning architectural structure that retains heat in the winter and allows for substantial thermal mass cooling in the summer.

"The project speaks to the advanced vision of the Osoyoos Indian Band, and their commitment to environmental, social and economic sustainability, said Partner-in-Charge, Bruce Haden, "It celebrates the Okanagan Nation's long tenure on this extraordinary, endangered landscape, as well as the bright future of First Nations in Canada."

The centre design also includes careful water-use management; in-slab radiant cooling and heating; a habitable green roof; and an endangered species research area.

In addition to the accolades for Nk'Mip, HBBH will receive a Governor General's Medal for another project. ROAR_One, a collaboration between LWPAC (Lead Designer) and HBBH Associated Architects, is an edgy, industrial, residential unit, located in Vancouver's Point Grey neighbourhood. *"We were delighted to hear ROAR_one will be recognized as well,"* said Haden. *"To be acknowledged with one Governor General's Medal is quite an accomplishment, but being honoured with two in the same year is exceptional."*

Further information is available at www.raic.org and www.canadacouncil.ca.

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About Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden architects + urbanistes

Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden is a firm with expertise in mixed-use waterfront development, urban planning, historic restoration, residential, municipal, cultural and academic building types. The firm is responsible for a wide range of work in Canada, the USA, Australia and China. The firm's pursuit of design excellence has been acknowledged nationally and internationally through more than 40 design awards, including a 2002 Governor General's Medal for Richmond City Hall, designed in association with KPMB Architects.

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