



Dear Selection Committee;

It is our pleasure to submit this proposal for place-based public art in conjunction with the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Vancouver Design Nerds are a network of collaborating artists designers who share a desire to engage with creative opportunities and to challenge the normative environment of the city. The diversity of the group yields rich collaboration, reveals unseen opportunities and realizes inspiring results. Since 2004, the Design Nerds have undertaken a number of projects; exploring a specific interest in social and environmental sustainability by focusing on engagement with public spaces. Members share a deep interest in mapping as a tool to explore the social and psychological geography of Vancouver. Further information can be found at [www.designnerds.ca](http://www.designnerds.ca).

### **INTRODUCTION: If These Streets Could Talk**

For six weeks in 2010, the world's attention will be focused on Vancouver. Athletes, their families and friends, global media, officials and sports fans will congregate in the city to enjoy the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. The media focus will be on the stadium events, but the Olympic Games themselves will constitute only a part of visitors' experience of the 2010 Vancouver Olympics; much of people's time will be spent engaging in more peripheral activities and encounters beyond the official Big 'O' Olympic venues: eating in restaurants, inhabiting temporary accommodations, shopping, sight seeing, exploring Vancouver's unique landscape and meeting people from all over the world. Beyond the media spectacle there is a vast multitude of diverse personal experiences, a constellation of little 'o' events. For visitors and residents alike, it is these personal moments that will ultimately define what the Olympics means to people. The proliferation of electronic media communications tools such as blogs, microblogs, SMS and MMS has given people the means to share these moments. And millions of people are now making avid, and often poetic, use of these tools. For the first time in history, we can collectively explore this landscape of personal experiences and emotions and map its geography.

### **CONCEPT: Collaborative Memory**

The Vancouver 2010 Relational Map project proposes to create a real-time, immersive, interactive map of this constellation of personal little "o" experiences of the 2010 Olympics. The map will be presented to the public in the form of an animated urban video projection. (The mockup below illustrates how the completed installation may look.) By projecting people's sentiments directly onto the urban landscape, this project realizes the goals of Mapping and Marking quite literally. An ephemeral geography of personal experiences becomes marked onto a physical site that visitors can collectively inhabit. The project is envisioned as a temporary installation but it can be maintained after the Olympics (either in situ or on a website) to preserve a record of this fleeting social geography arising during what promises to be a highly significant turning point in Vancouver's history.

## **INSTALLATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The installation site is somewhat flexible but will be subject to a number of critical considerations such as public visibility, accessibility, architectural context, ambient lighting conditions, and coordination with Olympic activities and facilities. It is also possible to feed the map display to one or more LED video screens. A brief study during Phase3 will generate a shortlist of preferred locations. The project will encourage people to contribute their experiences directly via micro-blogging and through a simple SMS-based interface. This will make it easy for people to participate immediately via cell phone or web browser. However, project success will not be dependent on direct audience participation since the map will also source existing data from many independent blog and microblog networks.

If These Streets Could Talk will build on precedents and open-source technologies established by existing web-based, communications-mapping projects such as Jonathan Harris' "We Feel Fine" ([www.wefeelfine.org](http://www.wefeelfine.org)) and David Troy's "Twittervision" ([www.twittervision.com](http://www.twittervision.com)). While these projects are experienced by isolated users via web browsers, our Relational Map will adapt their technologies for use in a public context that can be experienced collectively by Olympic audiences. Although the Relational Map will also be viewable online, the focus of our project is to implement the map at a public site where visitors can experience it and interact with it collectively.

## **BUDGET**

The project is scalable according the amount of funding available. A basic implementation, as described above could be achieved at a cost of \$55,000 - 65,000. Further funding would allow the development of more sophisticated interactivity. Identifying additional third party funding, sponsorship, and partnership opportunities could form a component of the project development process, if permitted under the Olympic and Paralympic Public Art Program guidelines.

This opportunity was brought to our attention through the Emily Carr University community by word of mouth and forwarded email.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vancouver Design Nerds

Project team: Mark Ashby, Alex Grunenfelder, Sarah Hay, Francisco MacDougall, Peter MacLachlan

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Initial mock-up:

## If These Streets Could Talk...



## **Annotated Work Sample List** (please see attached project images)

### **01. World Green Building Mapping Project, 2008 (in development)**

- Artist: Vancouver Design Nerds
- Budget: \$68 000
- Project credit: Eesmyal Santos-Brault, Alex Grunenfelder, Per Nilsson, Eric Lorenz
- Contact: info@designnerds.ca
- Project status: In development
  
- Description: The World Green Building Map is a worldwide, community-generated and moderated, geographical database of green buildings, made publicly accessible through an intuitive and interactive web-based map interface.

### **02. CUBE Living, 2008 (ongoing)**

- Artists: Mark Ashby, Alex Grünenfelder
- Materials: Multimedia performance
- Dimensions: 12"x12"x12"
- Budget: -
- Contact: info@cubeliving.ca
- Project credits: Alex Grünenfelder (Concept design & development, graphic description), Mark Ashby (Concept development, narrative development & script)
- Project status: Ongoing
  
- Cube is a multimedia exploration of land speculation an hyper-dense real estate development in the globalized urban environment, Cube is a one-cubic-foot unit of real estate. Cube Living was presented at the Vancouver Museum Pecha Kucha Night and at Centre A Gallery in Vancouver in conjunction with "Showroom".

### **03. Mobile Sustainability Display, 2006**

- Artist: Vancouver Design Nerds
- Materials: Aluminum, steel, fabric, rubber
- Dimensions: Approx. 20'x 2'x 6'
- Budget: \$12,000
- Contact: info@designnerds.ca
- Project credits: Eesmyal Santos-Brault, Ruben Anderson, Alex Grünenfelder, Sarah Hay, Richard Siengethaler
  
- Description: The Vancouver Design Nerds were commissioned by the City of Vancouver's Sustainability Office to create a mobile display system that could be used both to promote and to represent the values of sustainability.

#### 04. Urban Video Intervention, 2006

- Artist: Vancouver Design Nerds
  - Materials: Digital projector, tripod, computer
  - Dimension: Varies by location
  - Budget: \$200
  - Contact: [info@designnerds.ca](mailto:info@designnerds.ca)
  - Project credits: Alex Grunenfelder, Eesmyal Santos-Brault, Mark Ashby
- Description: The Urban Video Intervention Project is a site-specific installation involving projecting forms and animations that play on the geometries of the physical space. The objective is to integrate them with the site in a way that creates an interesting visual counterpoint to the existing structures. The installation challenged visitors' perceptions of the site and encourage them to consider this environment in a new light. The first installation was at the Vancouver Law Courts and was part of 30 Days of Sustainability 2006.

#### 05. Car Park, 2004

- Artist: Vancouver Design Nerds
  - Materials: Flowers & plants, soil, filter-fabric, solar-panels, low voltage lights, Pontiac
  - Dimension: Approx. 20'x 2'x 6'
  - Budget: \$2000
  - Contact: [info@designnerds.ca](mailto:info@designnerds.ca)
  - Project credits: Eesmyal Santos-Brault, Alex Grünenfelder, Ruben Anderson, Carla Weinberg, Richard Andrews, Richard Siegenthaler, Keona Wiley, Claire Chhor, Todd Beermink, Shirlene Cote, Adam Thomas, Heather McDermid, Barbara, Alicia, and their gardening friends, Al and his sons, Sarah Albertson, Craig Edwards, Ifny LaChance, UBC Supermileage Team, Bill Andrews, Ian Marcuse
  - Project status: Completed
- Description: After winning a City sponsored competition "21 places for the 21st century," the City of Vancouver co-sponsored the development and construction of "CarPark" for Car-Free Day 2005. CarPark has made numerous appearances at community and sustainability-related festivals where it was received as a positive, affirming and playful statement on the allocation of urban land.

#### 06. Urban Mobility Mapping Project, 2004

- Artist: Vancouver Design Nerds
  - Materials: Trace paper, Photoshop
  - Contact: [info@designnerds.ca](mailto:info@designnerds.ca)
  - Project credits: E Eesmyal Santos-Brault, Alex Grunenfelder, Richard Siegenthaler, Andrew Thomson, Margaret Floyd, Kevin Rinfret Christy Love, Chris Whitmore, Chelsea Bort, Bill Andrews
  - Project status: Completed
- Description: This psychogeography experiment involved nine friend's mobility patterns throughout Vancouver during the month of February 2005. Each person was given large format trace paper, a map of Vancouver, and a black Sharpie pen. At the end of each day, participants traced their movements throughout the city - a fascinating journaling exercise. Many observed that the habit patterns of their movements through space reflect the habit patterns of the mind, and that changing how we move through space changes how we think and what we experience.

## 07. iSPY interactive installation, 2003

- Artist: Sarah Hay (initial concept development, story boards, interaction design, usability testing, installation)
- Materials: Smart Board, wood, burlap, projector, computer
- Dimensions: 36"x48"x28"
- Budget: \$2000
- Contact: Carleton University School of Industrial Design
- Project credits: Sarah Hay, Serge Beaulieu, Ryuta, Shane Ellis, Geoff Hunt, Nadia Collins
  
- Description: An interactive installation whereby visitors are challenged, in a playful manner, with questions surrounding energy consumption in the home. The design features an interactive 'Smart Board' hidden within a custom built table, with the flash based game being projected from above.

## 08. 'evo' Contextual Recording Device for Travelers, 2003

- Artist: Sarah Hay - (initial concept development, story boards, interaction design, usability testing, appearance model)
- Dimensions: 6cm x4cm x2cm
- Contact: sarah@breavo.com
  
- Description: evo is a personal recording device which can be worn as a pendant or pocket watch. An intuitive interface provides contextual information: location, direction, time, atmospheric pressure. It also captures still and moving pictures with audio and is designed to take with you on your travels. A GPS receiver enables the recorded files to be referenced with geographic information so, not only is the information valuable at the time of experience, but opens up wonderful possibilities for re-experiencing the personal media in a dynamic map based software environment upon return.

## Professional References

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