

Cooperation and Emergency Architects Canada

Cooperation and Emergency Architects' Kitcisakik Mission: Recipient of the Governor General's Medals in Architecture

Last May 8th, Canada Council for the Arts and Architecture Canada were awarded one of twelve Governor General's Medals in Architecture 2012 with the **Kitcisakik Mission of Cooperation and Emergency Architects Canada (CEA)** and Architect and Project Manager, **Guillaume Lévesque**. Described as an original and innovative initiative and although this is an unconventional architectural project, the jury recognised the value and importance of the mission, "At its essence, and with great power, it incorporates the most fundamental aspect of architecture: to transform and enhance human life. Project participants have responded to real and urgent needs and they applied their technical skills with energy and enthusiasm. We hope that similar initiatives are under way." The medal will be presented later this year at Rideau Hall.

His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, had the following to say regarding this year's selection: "The recipients of the Governor General's Medals in Architecture 2012 have distinguished themselves as Canada's visionary architects. The works they have designed are places where communities are forged, where memories are made and where identity is created..." This review certainly echoes the Kitcisakik Mission whereby Cooperation and Emergency Architects Canada and the Frontiers Foundation



following the lead of Guillaume Lévesque, used their knowledge and professionalism to improve aboriginal homes located outside the Kitcisakik reserve. Produced in close collaboration with the Anishnabe (Algonquin) nation, the project has and continues to develop skills, confidence and autonomy of individuals while intervention focuses on the improvement of living conditions, child health, overcrowding in housing, materials recovery, self-sufficiency in wood needs, sustainable forest management and knowledge transfer. Descriptions, images and photos of the Kitcisakik project are available at www.raic.org.

For Emergency Architects Canada, this medal solicits a feeling of pride and accomplishment. It also marks a renewed appreciation for the Algonquin community of Kitcisakik and their workers. Even more, this affirmation from the National Order

foreshadows the possibility of supporting many other Aboriginal communities in Canada who live in conditions similar to those of the Kitcisakik.

Created by Architecture Canada, the Governor General's Medals in Architecture contribute to the advancement of the discipline and practice of architecture, in addition to increasing public awareness of the crucial cultural role of architecture in Canadian society. These awards are administered jointly by the Arts Council of Canada, which contributes to the publication produced in honour of the winners and administers the award process.

Emergency Architects Canada is a non-governmental organization recognized as a charity since its founding in Quebec in October 2007. It joins forces with the international consolidation of Emergency Architects, which was founded in France in 2001. Chaired by architect Yves Langevin, the founding partners are the Canadian Association of Architects of Quebec and the Société d'habitation du Québec. By grouping these building professionals, Emergency Architects Canada fulfils its mission to provide support to populations affected by natural, technological or human crises by providing specific expertise in prevention, risk management and management of sustainable reconstruction.