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Requiem for a Glacier

Video installation comes to Oxygen

Requiem for a Glacier, a video and sound installation by Victoria artist/composer Paul Walde, will be exhibited at the Oxygen Art Centre from January 4 to February 8.

Local, independent curator Klara Lynch, who led the coordination efforts for the project, is the guest curator at Oxygen Art Centre for this exhibition. This work was produced in part through a creative partnership between the artist and Oxygen Art Centre, The Langham Cultural Centre in Kaslo and volunteers from the Kootenay community.

The 40-minute video will be presented on a 27 by eight foot screen inside the gallery. It features two, site-specific performances of *Requiem for a Glacier*, performed this summer in the East Kootenays to the glacier audiences of Farnham and Commander Glaciers (two of the glaciers in an cluster of five glaciers which includes Jumbo).

Documented by five video cameras and a sound engineer specializing in outdoor location sound, the project brought nearly 100 participants together in what would result in an experience of a lifetime.

The volunteer chorus and orchestra from Nelson and the surrounding region were made up of amateur and professional musicians ranging in age from 12 to 84-years-old. They were accompa-

nied by Hungarian soloist, Veronika Hajdu and conducted by Ajtony Csaba, conductor for the Central European Chamber Orchestra and the University of Victoria Symphony Orchestra. Paul Walde composed the original, four-part score.

According to Walde, "the sheer number of people involved and the political motivation of the collaborators has given the work a dimension of social practice which is entirely new for my practice."

Requiem for a Glacier speaks to the issue of climate change, resulting in rapid and unprecedented glacial melt, as well as to the highly contentious issue of the BC government's approval of the Jumbo Glacier Alpine Resort. The video installation portrays both the stunning magnificence of the glacial landscape as well as a deep sense of foreboding and impending loss.

This is represented both visually, through symbolic imagery applied in the video editing process as well as acoustically through the impressive musical composition itself. The audio recordings of the requiem were made during two public performances in Nelson last July as well as during the on-site performances in the alpine. The musical tracks have been overlaid with ambient sounds sourced at the glacier locations such as wind and trickling water/melting ice.

The exhibition is at the Oxygen Art Centre (320 Vernon Street, alley entrance). There will be an opening reception on Friday, January 3 from 7 to 9 p.m. and an artist talk on Saturday, January 4 at 4 p.m. The exhibition continues until Saturday, February 8. Gallery hours are Wednesday to Saturday from 1 to 5 p.m.