

VANOC names Vancouver's Patrick Roberge Productions as 2010 Paralympic Winter Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies Producer

After a three-month international search, the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) announced today that it has selected Vancouver-based Patrick Roberge Productions (PRP) Inc. as producer of the Paralympic Opening and Closing Ceremonies. PRP Inc. will collaborate with VANOC to develop the overall theme and content of both ceremonies and will create and direct both shows.

"We are thrilled to select a local Vancouver company that has excelled over the last two decades in producing world-class events that celebrate Canada's unique culture, including the highly successful and engaging 2010 mascot launch that captured the hearts and imagination of adults and children across Canada," said David Guscott, VANOC's executive vice-president, celebrations and partnerships. "British Columbians and Canadians are renowned for their hospitality and generous spirit. We want the world's top Paralympians to feel inspired and embraced by the entire nation as we celebrate the hallmarks of the Paralympic Movement: enabling Paralympic athletes to achieve sporting excellence and inspire and excite the world."

In 410 days, an estimated 1,350 of the world's top winter sport Paralympic athletes and team officials from more than 40 countries will gather in BC Place in downtown Vancouver to celebrate a spectacular indoor Opening Ceremony. A cast of thousands, including performers with a disability, will delight the crowd of 55,000 and showcase the unique heritage and creativity of British Columbians and Canadians from coast to coast to coast during the two-hour celebration on March 12, 2010. The lighting of the Paralympic Cauldron will provide an inspirational climax to the Opening Ceremony and signal the start of the Games.

Nine days later, the Games will draw to its official end in the Host Mountain Resort of Whistler in a unique outdoor amphitheatre designed especially for the two-hour Closing Ceremony. The event will include a special handover ceremony for the next Paralympic Winter Games, to be held in Sochi, Russia, in 2014.

"It's an honour to be selected for such a prestigious event," said PRP company president and creative director Patrick Roberge. "Our team's goal is to produce a ceremony that celebrates the possible. The Ceremonies will offer a tremendous opportunity for the community to share in this Paralympic celebration. We want to create a memorable, inspirational experience for the live and television audiences, and remind them that when it comes to what an individual can accomplish the only limit we have is our imagination."

Since 1986, Vancouver-based Patrick Roberge Productions has produced events and spectacles around the world. Veterans of Expo 86 and the 1988 Olympic Winter Games in Calgary, PRP has created memorable events including Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Royal Jubilee visit to Vancouver; the inaugural Chinese New Year Parade in Hong Kong; the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Emblem launch and mascot launch; and most recently produced the Canada Games' ceremonies in Whitehorse and events at the BC Canada Pavilions in Torino, Italy and Beijing, China. PRP's experience in telling unique Canadian stories has included anniversary celebrations for Rick Hansen's Man in Motion Tour, the 25th anniversary of the Terry Fox Marathon of Hope and the opening of the North American Indigenous Games. The company will work hand-in-hand with the Ceremonies team already in place at VANOC.

VANOC's mission is reflected in the official Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games Emblem, which will be woven throughout the Paralympic ceremonies. The heart of the Games, the emblem represents the athletes' inner strength and personal transformation as they push themselves to new heights in the pursuit of excellence and a celebration of the possible.

"It's hard to describe what it's like for us as athletes to walk out into the stadium during the Opening Ceremony and hear the roar of the crowd," recalled Paralympic alpine skier Karolina Wisniewska of Calgary, who has won six medals since first competing at the Nagano 1998 Paralympic Winter Games. "I remember it was the most amazing feeling that came over me in

Salt Lake City in 2002 to see all of those people going crazy cheering and waving. There were so many Canadian flags in the crowd! It was truly overwhelming and emotional and I was so happy to be there representing Canada.”

Events on the Paralympic sport program are fast-paced and highly physical, including alpine skiing, biathlon and cross-country skiing, which will all take place in Whistler, and ice sledge hockey and wheelchair curling in Vancouver, resulting in small-town spirit and big-city facilities with world class exposure for the more than 64 Paralympic events.

Vancouver and Whistler will host the Paralympic Winter Games from March 12 to 21, 2010. Tickets to the Paralympic Opening Ceremonies go on sale May 6, 2009.

About VANOC

VANOC is responsible for the planning, organizing, financing and staging of the XXI Olympic Winter Games and the X Paralympic Winter Games in 2010. The 2010 Olympic Winter Games will be staged in Vancouver and Whistler from February 12 to 28, 2010. Vancouver and Whistler will host the Paralympic Winter Games from March 12 to 21, 2010. Visit www.vancouver2010.com.

About PRP

PRP Inc. is a live entertainment and show production company that specializes in creating spectacular, large-scale shows and events. Based out of Vancouver, BC, PRP's award winning team boast more than 20 years of high profile international events and entertainment production. Visit www.prpconnect.com.

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