

## **Saint John Energy proud to unveil Public Art by artists Bruce Gray and Peter Powning on Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> 2009. All welcome.**

**January 14 2009 - Saint John:** On July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008, as the first organization to implement the City of Saint John's *One Percent for Art Program*, Saint John Energy announced, in conjunction with the construction of its new headquarters facilities at 325 Simms Street, Saint John West, the artists selected for this prestigious competition: Bruce Gray, of Douglas, New Brunswick, and Peter Powning, of Markhamville, New Brunswick. The chosen pieces of public art will be unveiled, on site, to the citizens of Saint John and the general public at large on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

Bruce Gray's winning entry will be permanently installed inside the front entrance vestibule. Gray's work consist of a large wood mural and complementary furniture. The three-panel mural, made from warm cedar shingles, will run from waist height to approximately 14 feet tall. It depicts a graph of Saint John Energy's consumer base layered with an abstract depiction of the natural energy web. This will be overlaid with half a dozen stylized silhouettes of the business and services of Saint John Energy. The complementary eight-foot long bench and table bring the piece down to a level that will welcome public interaction. Made from single slabs of Fredericton elm, these two pieces feature striking elements and sweeping natural edges.

Peter Powning's "*Bolt*," a stylized 20 foot high "bolt" of electricity made entirely of stainless steel, will be erected outside the building in a prominent location in front of Saint John Energy Headquarters, visible from the Throughway and many west side locations.

The *One Percent for Art Program* is part of the Saint John *Arts and Culture Policy* adopted by Common Council on September 20, 2005. The purposes of the *One Percent for Art Program* are to enhance culture and the arts in Saint John, to provide opportunities for established artists to exhibit quality works of art in public spaces, and to enhance public awareness of the visual arts in the City.

Last year in March 2008, Saint John Energy invited all professional artists in New Brunswick to submit formal proposals to create permanent public artwork. A three-person jury was faced with the initial challenge of short-listing candidates from the 24 submissions received in response to the request for submissions. After fully considering the recommendations of the jury and the *Saint John Energy Public Art Advisory Committee*, the Board of Directors of Saint John Energy selected Bruce Gray and Peter Powning as the winning artists.

Chairman of the Saint John Energy Board Chris Titus says, "We're extremely proud to be the first organization to support this marvelous and innovative program and equally proud to work with Peter Powning and Bruce Gray in this exciting installation of artwork at our new Saint John Energy headquarters".

President and CEO of Saint John Energy Eric Marr adds, "We are grateful to the members of the *Saint John Energy Public Art Advisory Committee* for their constant support and expertise in helping our organization bring this selection process to a successful conclusion. In addition, we look forward to hosting the official unveiling when all Saint John Energy customers and residents of the greater Saint John area will be able begin enjoying the unique artwork from both Bruce Gray and Peter Powning ...."

The Saint John Energy Board of Directors, CEO Eric Marr and the staff cordially invite their customers, the citizens of Saint John and the community at large, to a public unveiling of Bruce Gray's and Peter Powning's artwork. His Honour, Herménégilde Chiasson, Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, along with Mayor Ivan Court, Chairman of Saint John Energy Board Chris Titus and CEO Eric Marr, will be present to congratulate the artists.

The general public is invited to gather at the Saint John Energy main lobby inside on Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 12:15 pm. The tour will begin with the unveiling of Bruce Gray's work and then proceed through the new headquarters to Peter Powning's outdoor sculpture (which, in the case of inclement weather, will be viewed from inside). A light lunch will be served, compliments of Saint John Energy. Free Parking will be available on site.

**For more information or media interviews please contact:**

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**Bruce Gray Biography:**

Born in San Diego California in 1957, Bruce traveled widely with his parents, living in Europe and Hawaii. As a youth he began to design and build flying model airplanes and electric powered radio controlled boats. He helped his skilled father on numerous building projects including their passive solar retirement home in the mid 1980's. His mother is an accomplished artist who focuses primarily on seascapes in oil on canvas.

Bruce graduated from Colorado State University in 1981 with a Bachelor of Science in Fish and Wildlife Biology and two years later earned a Bachelor of Arts in Technical Journalism. In 1990, he received a Master of Science in Engineering from the University of Washington, Seattle and moved to New Brunswick. He eventually settled in Fredericton in the mid 1990s. He has been designing and building furniture and art pieces professionally since 1991.

**Peter Powning Biography:**

Since 1970, Peter Powning has lived and worked as an artist in the hills of southern New Brunswick. His life is characterized by intense periods of work preparing for exhibitions and commissions, punctuated by periodic travel. While Powning's award-winning work is shown internationally, it is imbued with qualities distilled from a life lived close to the silence, space and seasonal rhythms of his home, the fields, forests and shorelines of Canada's east coast.