



**For immediate release  
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## **Cross-Canada pilot HD video installation opens up possibilities of real-time collaboration for art & design**

**Toronto, Ontario** - Some of Canada's top schools are collaborating this week in transmitting high-definition video over advanced networks, in an experimental installation spanning three cities and nearly 5,000 kilometres. It's a project they expect will trigger greater real-time collaboration on art and design using new digital technologies.

The Ontario College of Art & Design (OCAD) joins Concordia University in Montreal and Simon Fraser University in Vancouver to concurrently broadcast a live high-definition video stream for 72 consecutive hours over Canada's regional advanced networks, including ORION in Ontario.

The digital transmission is on display over a large high definition LCD screen in OCAD's Great Hall, at 100 McCaul Street. Similar installations are in place at Concordia and Simon Fraser University, displaying scenic images broadcast live in digital HD to and from Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal.

The east-west transmission over Internet Protocol (IP) is streaming dual sets of data at 25 megabits per second, for a combined 50 Mbps. The sustained video stream began Monday, April 2 and continues until Wednesday afternoon.

The OCAD camera is trained on a scene shot from the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Sharp Centre for Design looking west over Grange Park and the skyline of the west end of Toronto.

"This is a terrific opportunity for students and faculty to build a creative and learning network that extends beyond one institution," says OCAD President Sara Diamond. "It heralds the maturation of digital media. OCAD is proud to be a key part of the growing accessibility and capability of HD research and roll out."

It is expected that future use of this technology includes presenting guest lecturers from around the world, student and faculty-driven art projects, special events and technology education.

"The fidelity of high definition video creates a very real and tangible experience comparable to looking through a window that somehow leaps over space and time connecting to far away locations," said OCAD Director of Information Technology Services, Alastair MacLeod.

The project makes use of Canada's top regional research and education (R&E) networks, BCnet in British Columbia, ORION in Ontario and RISQ in Québec, all interconnecting over CANet 4, Canada's R&E network backbone.

"Advanced networks, such as ORION, allow for the immediacy of the experience by bridging the vastness between geographic distances, at light speeds, allowing for a direct encounter with any other connected site on the network," says MacLeod.

"It's simply not possible to do with a commodity Internet connection. We're sending the native HDV stream across the research network without any re-compression of the camera's HDV Fire wire output," adds Andrew McAllister, OCAD Manager, Digital Studios. The ground-breaking

demo is using relatively accessible equipment, such as the Sony HDR-HC3 HDV video cameras, with a special MPEG-2 Transport stream that can be streamed using Video Lan Client (VLC), a free and open-source software.

The event is the first pilot project of a high-definition streaming consortium, led by OCAD, involving seven other universities from across Canada, looking at the adoption of HD video streaming by the cultural and arts and design communities.

Along with Concordia and SFU, the other members include the Banff New Media Institute, the University of Regina, University of Calgary and the Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design in British Columbia. A second HD video streaming event is being explored for fall, 2007 with wider participation from current consortium members as well as other institutions across Canada and internationally.

#### **About OCAD**

The Ontario College of Art & Design (OCAD), located in downtown Toronto, is Canada's largest university for art and design, specializing in creativity and innovation. Established in 1876, the university has more depth and breadth in visual arts and design programs than any school of its kind in Canada. Programs at OCAD provide a one-of-a-kind learning environment combining an experiential, studio-based education with liberal studies, recognized with a Bachelor of Fine Art or Bachelor of Design. OCAD's research profile includes an institute for art and design education, the Beal Centre for Strategic Creativity at OCAD, an institute in design, creativity and innovation and large-scale projects in mobile content and technology. [www.ocad.ca](http://www.ocad.ca)

#### **About ORION:**

The Ontario Research and Innovation Optical Network (ORION), operated by a not-for-profit organization, is Ontario's next-generation, ultra high-speed research and education telecommunications network. ORION connects all of Ontario's universities, most colleges, several medical and other public research facilities and a growing number of school boards to one another and to the global grid of research and education networks. [www.orion.on.ca](http://www.orion.on.ca).

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