SOCIETY FOR ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY [SAT]

PIXINESS

Press release
For immediate distribution

Montreal, January 17th 2011 – Today's unveiling of **PIXINESS**, the artwork by the visual artist **Axel Morgenthaler**, marks the beginning of a year-long series of events and festivities that will highlight the fifteenth anniversary of the Society for Arts and Technology [SAT].

Starting today, PIXINESS will illuminate St. Laurent Boulevard when it makes its debut as the facade for the new SAT building. This permanent artistic oeuvre commissioned by the SAT is a prototype conceived by the internationally reknown visual artist Axel Morgenthaler and is part of the Quartier des Spectacles Luminous Pathway.

This large scale interactive motorized lighting and digital media artwork measuring 3.6 metres high by 18 meters long, PIXINESS is made up of 12 motorized prisms displaying a mirrored surface on one side and a luminous interface of giant, dome-shaped pixels on the other. This huge ensemble of motorized lights, weighing a total of 2 tons, will generate visual content using a matrix of 960 interactive LED pixels. The horizontal rotation of these prisms will create reflections of the external evironment or produce layers of low-resolution, light-based images that lie at the limits of our figurative perceptions.

The rotation of this artistic work will create a dynamic link between the interior and exterior of the new SAT building. Combining architectural art, light art, and interactivity, PIXINESS is a one-of-a-kind intelligent lighting installation. This monumental digital playground will offer several levels of sensory experience and interaction : passersby and night owls will be invited to observed its endless permutations or to interact with the artwork, sending it commands and transforming its content via their iPhones.

« *This lighting installation is part of a reflection on the pixel and on LED-based creations. Like an urban clock, this piece will form a rhythmic relationship with time by modifying its appearance every fifteen minutes. PIXINESS was conceived from a desire to fuse the urban environment with digital artistic expression. This fusion will offer spectators both a digital playing field and an anthropomorphic artwork capable of engaging them by its sheer dimensions as much as by its playful aspect.* » - Axel Morgenthaler

The production of PIXINESS required two years of reseach and development and was supported entirely by Quebecois specialists and expertise. This production has been made possible through the support of the **Quartier des Spectacles Partnership** and the **Canada Council for the Arts**.

Highly technological, stunning, and seductive; PIXINESS will enlighten you!

For more details, visit : **www.pixiness.org** and **www.facebook.com/pixiness.sat**

Axel Morgenthaler - As a visual artist, Axel Morgenthaler has produced integrative lighting works for architectural and public spaces such as *You Are Almost Their!* at Montreal's Trudeau Airport and *Point 98* at the Henri-Bourassa metro station. He's now a master of lighting creation and has collaborated for the performing arts and architectural domain, having received commissions both for temporary and permanent works in Quebec and abroad. He has completed over 120 works internationally including the creation of Montreal's Quartier des Spectacles signature lighting, the artistic illumination of the Théâtre Monument-National, and the lighting design for the Cirque du Soleil's resident production of *ZAiA* at the Venetian Casino in Macau (China) in 2008. He is also the founder of Photonic Dreams-global visual design.

The Quartier des Spectacles Luminous Pathway - As the district's very first visual identity oeuvre, the Lighting Plan illuminates the richness of the Quartier des Spectacles. The light from various locations is synced to the rhythm of the surrounding cultural activities, thus revealing and forming the community's essence and offering a distinctive urban experience for its numerous visitors. At a glance, the abundance of Montreal's cultural offerings come into view. The project maintains respect for the environment and artistic direction of the Lighting Plan is overseen by Ruedi Baur and Jean Beaudoin.

Society for Arts and Technology [SAT] - Founded in 1996, the Society for Arts and Technology [SAT] is a transdisciplinary centre for research and creation, production, education and dissemination and is devoted to the development and conservation of digital culture. In April 2010, the SAT was recognized as an important member of the EnoLL network (European Network of Living Labs), the first Living Lab in North America. The SAT specializes in immersive environments, the utilization of high-speed networks, and experiential design.

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