

ACCESS

BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Genome British Columbia Enables Innovative Research Capabilities

by Anny Ko

The Prostate Centre's Gene Array Facility at the Vancouver General Hospital is the first of its kind in B.C., and one of only two in Canada. The Centre's leading-edge technology determines the role of genes and supports related genome research. It is a critical technology platform for many of the large-scale genome research projects at **Genome British Columbia (GBC)**.

Working collaboratively with all levels of government, universities and industry, GBC is the catalyst for a life sciences cluster of genome-related institutions and companies, bringing socio-economic benefit to all British Columbians. The B.C. centre is one of five genome centres across the country funded, in part, by Genome Canada.

Western Economic Diversification Canada's (WD) funding for the Gene Array Facility has advanced GBC's research efforts. WD Secretary of State Stephen Owen announced



Dr. Colleen Nelson, Director of Genome BC's Microarray Platform, shows WD's Secretary of State Stephen Owen the Gene Array Facility at the Prostate Centre at Vancouver General Hospital in November 2002.

the support along with Dr. Alan Winter, President and CEO of Genome British Columbia (GBC), in November 2002.

"The Gene Array Facility is critical to advancing our research on a number of fronts — human health, aquaculture, forestry and the environment. The key contributions from WD, as well as additional funds from the Prostate Centre, provide our scientists with the necessary tools to lead world-class research and development

efforts which advance our knowledge in areas of social and economic benefits of British Columbians," said Dr. Winter.

WD encourages diversification of the western economy through support for innovation and the development of industry clusters outlined in the federal Innovation Strategy.

For more information, visit Genome British Columbia's Web site at: www.genomebc.ca. ♣

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Vancouver Photographer Duk

by Anny Ko



Vancouver photographer Robert Melnychuk has a style that is simplistic, refined and artistic.

In Canada, he is known as **Robert Melnychuk**. In the United States, he is **Robert Kent**. Although this exceptional homegrown photographer changed his name to differentiate his persona between both countries, he is still a highly touted and extraordinary talent. The U.S. Department of Justice recognized this, dubbing him an “alien of exceptional talent,” a title often afforded to Canadian transplants that allows them to legally work south of the border.

With his new identity as Robert Kent, he was signed to the prestigious rep agency, Sharpe and Associates. And, soon after the launch of his Web site, Robert landed a job with American department store giant, Target.

“Robert captures imagery that not only feels real, but has a stylistic European look to it, and that is very in vogue at present. His images also create a palatable sense of tension, and that makes them feel different than the other work out there,” said John Sharpe, president of Sharpe and Associates.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) and its **International Trade Personnel Program (ITPP)** played a significant role in Robert’s successful migration to the south. The ITTP gives small and medium-sized companies the opportunity to help their business grow, enhance their international competitiveness and develop innovative ideas that create jobs and growth. For many businesses, the main obstacle is having the personnel with the skills required to help them realize their international marketing goals. Through

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Jobbed an “Alien” by the U.S.A.

the ITPP, WD will provide up to 50 per cent of a recent graduate’s salary, to a maximum of \$20,000, for one year.

In 2002, **Robert Melnychuk Photography Inc. (RMPI)** received funding through the ITPP to hire a director of international sales, an instrumental position that enabled RMPI to access the American market.

“This feels like being signed on by a U.S. sports league — the only difference is the whole team is coming to Canada to play. Some of our production budgets will be from \$50,000 to \$150,000 USD,” said Robert. “I love the idea of injecting this amount of money into the Vancouver economy. Not to mention the opportunities for Canadian models, stylists, locations, caterers and production crews. It really is a proud Canadian moment for me. Thank you to the Canadian government for their support.”

Melnichuk’s new work is made up of stylized, provocative visuals encapsulating 20 and 30-somethings doing ordinary everyday activities. What is most fascinating about the photographs is the way he captures the character, movement and feeling of the subject — alien or not.

To view more of Robert Melnychuk’s photos, visit his Web site at: www.robmelnychuk.com.

For more information about WD’s programs and services to help your business grow and expand, call 1-888-338-WEST (9378) or visit our Web site at: www.wd.gc.ca. 🍁



Many of Melnychuk’s photos capture 20 and 30-somethings doing everyday activities.

Photos courtesy of Rob Melnychuk Photography Inc.

Columbia

WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION CANADA

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Denim Pine™ - An Innovative Marketing Solution to the Effects of the Blue Mountain Pine Beetle

by Anny Ko

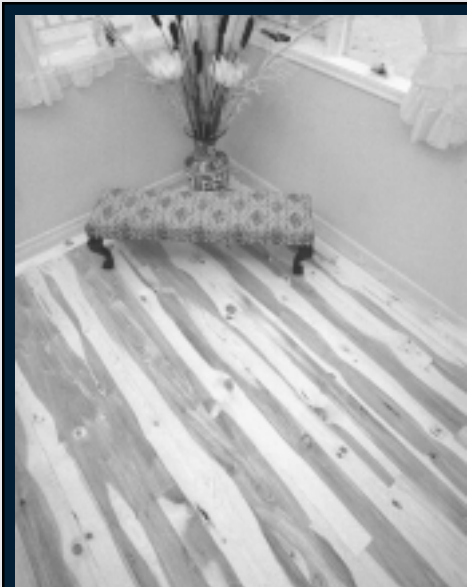
This is too blue to be true. Wood that resembles denim? Who would ever put these two products together?

Lynn Pont did. As the manager of **Custom Wood Fibre Products** and a volunteer for the **Denim Pine Marketing Association**, she turned a devastating blue mountain pine beetle forest infestation into a creative, innovative and profitable endeavour.

The blue mountain pine beetle has wreaked havoc on the lumber industry in the interior of B.C. In 2002, the beetle infected and killed 108 million cubic metres of lodgepole pine worth \$9 billion on nine million hectares of land. Although efforts have been made to prevent the beetle's spread, it has been predicted that this epidemic could shrink future annual timber supply by as much as 10 to 15 per cent.

Once the pine beetles infect the wood, the tree begins to die causing it to discolour and fade to a blue-grey colour. Denim Pine™ gets its name from the blue colouration resulting from the fungus the blue mountain pine beetle leaves behind on the pinewood.

"British Columbia can become a world known firewood supplier, or world known for innovation. The choice is up to



The Denim Pine Marketing Association turned adversity into an innovative idea – wood discoloured to a blue-grey colour by pine beetle infestations is now being used to create products like these unique floorboards.

all of us," said Pont. "We have the best quality wood in the world. Why not provide the world with the best quality finished products?"

As a creative way to counteract this epidemic, the Denim Pine Marketing Association was established to promote this unique marketing opportunity to gain and attract international appeal.

With the help of Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD), the Association has gained the opportunity to market Denim Pine™ globally, specifically at two tradeshows — the Log Home & Timber Frame Expos in both Las Vegas and Portland.

WD assistance will also enable the Association to build and launch a new Web site — a place for customers and manufacturers to visit, learn more and get connected to Denim Pine™.

For more information about Denim Pine™, please contact denimpine@shaw.ca.

For information about WD's programs and services, call 1-888-338-WEST (9378) or visit our Web site at www.wd.gc.ca.♣