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*Press Release*

*Office of Economic Development*

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## **GROUP OF THREE FINALISTS SELECTED FOR CLIMATE CLOCK DESIGN COMPETITION**

*“Climate Clock” competition integrates Silicon Valley technology to produce art that amplifies San Jose Green Vision ideals*

SAN JOSE, CALIF. (September 25, 2008)—The City of San Jose and San Jose State University have selected three finalist teams for the Climate Clock international public art competition to design a landmark artwork for a potential location in Downtown San Jose. The finalists were selected by a jury consisting of artists, curators and scientists, as well as stakeholders from 1stACT Silicon Valley, the City of San Jose, Montalvo Arts Center, the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, San Jose State University and ZER01.

The lead artists of the three finalist teams are Usman Haque and Robert Davis; Chico MacMurtrie with Amorphic Robot Works; and Freya Bardell, Brian Howe and Brent Bucknum. The Climate Clock project challenges artists’ teams to incorporate Silicon Valley’s measurement, data management, and communications technologies into a significant art work to help people understand and act on climate change.

Since understanding climate change is extremely data intensive and requires the use of exceptionally sensitive instruments, computers and networks—

cornerstones of Silicon Valley's economy and culture, the development of the Climate Clock will bring together the unique talents and resources of the region. The Climate Clock can also incorporate technologies from the new clean technology industry cluster that has emerged in Silicon Valley.

According to San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed, "Great cities throughout the world are known for landmark artworks that establish a sense of place for residents and visitors. Through our Green Vision initiative, San Jose residents are leading the nation in addressing one of humanity's greatest challenges. The Climate Clock will showcase how this innovative region is linking art and technology to address this pressing issue." San Jose's 15-year Green Vision includes 10 bold goals that will serve as a roadmap to reduce the carbon footprint of the tenth largest city in the nation by more than half.

The international Climate Clock ideas competition was announced in February 2008. Artists were asked to respond to a challenge of imagining a significant artwork that would a) measure changes in greenhouse gas levels; b) be an instrument of data measurement that can collect data for 100 years; and, c) be sustainable, feasible and have educational value. In May, the artist selection jury assembled to review ideas submitted by approximately 50 artists. Seven artist teams were chosen and presented their team composition and concept proposals at the Climate Clock Colloquium in June at San Jose State University. The Colloquium was a gathering of thought leaders, researchers, curators and artists to discuss a global public art initiative aimed at changing individual and public behavior to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Following the Colloquium, the selected artist teams are further developing their project ideas. The Climate Clock final proposals will be developed during 2009 and 2010 within the educational context of the CADRE Laboratory for New Media at San Jose State University and the Montalvo Arts Center and ZERO1. At the end of the

2009-10 academic year, one proposal will be selected to be developed in detail and considered for location and construction.

“It is our intention that The Climate Clock will be an iconic artwork and catalyst for social change,” Joel Slayton, executive director, ZER01.

The San Jose Redevelopment Agency is also a partner in the project, providing background on urban design in downtown San Jose and working with the artists during the residencies to identify potential sites.

“Investments in public art projects such as the Climate Clock demonstrate our Agency’s commitment to creating visually appealing public spaces for our citizens,” said Harry Mavrogenes, executive director, San Jose Redevelopment Agency. “This signature artwork will add to Downtown San Jose’s already rich cultural offerings and further Downtown’s image as a place where culture and technology meet.”

The artist-led teams that were selected are:

- **Usman Haque and Robert Davis**--Usman Haque is a London-based architect who has created responsive environments, interactive installations, digital interface devices and mass-participation performances. His skills include the design of both physical spaces, and the software and systems that bring them to life. Robert Davis is a systems developer in the Psychology Department of Goldsmiths College, University of London, who is particularly interested in systems that are contingent upon the environment and the entities that inhabit it, as well as the adaption within such systems. His particular interests include analog neural networks and chemical systems.
- **Chico MacMurtrie and Amorphic Robot Works**--Chico MacMurtrie works using sculpture to animate space and stimulate public dialogue. Together with his collaborative studio of artists, technicians, and programmers’ known as Amorphic Robot Works he has exhibited work throughout the world. Many of these projects have poetically raised questions about birth, death, renewal,

mechanical vs. organic life, and the resilience of nature within the urban habitat. Geo Homsy is a long-time collaborator with Amorphic Robot Works as a software choreographer and chief technical consultant on projects involving pneumatics, hydraulics, electronics, and real-time control and performance software. Bill Washabaugh is trained as an aerospace engineer and mechanic. Architect Gideon Shapiro is the researcher/designer for this proposal.

- **Freya Bardell, Brian Howe and Brent Bucknum**--Freya Bardell is an ecological designer and artist based in Los Angeles, California. She and her partner, architect Brian Howe, are partners in Greenmeme and design consultants for Rana Creek, two innovative, environmentally-oriented companies based in California. Ecological Designer, Brent Bucknum, founded the Hyphae Design Laboratory in February 2008, a consulting and design firm dedicated to bridging the gap between innovative architecture and hard biological sciences.

For further information about the Climate Clock ideas competition and the proposals submitted: <http://misc.montalvoarts.org/climateclock/exhibition>

### **About San Jose State University**

San Jose State University, Silicon Valley's largest institution of higher learning with 32,000 students and 5,700 employees, is part of the California State University system. SJSU's 154-acre downtown campus anchors the nation's 10th largest city.

### **About the Office of Cultural Affairs Public Art Program**

The City of San Jose Public Art Program, a division of the San Jose Office of Economic Development, seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enliven our community. Through active engagement between the artists and project stakeholders, public art strives to reflect the City's ethnic diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future. [www.sanjoseculture.org](http://www.sanjoseculture.org).

### **About the San Jose Redevelopment Agency**

The Agency is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all who live and work in San Jose. Governed by the City Council, the Agency facilitates and oversees comprehensive programs for development to revitalize and strengthen quality of life and competitiveness for San Jose's downtown, neighborhoods, and industrial areas.

[www.sjredevelopment.org](http://www.sjredevelopment.org)

### **About the City of San Jose**

From its founding in 1777 as California's first city, San Jose has been a leader, driven by its spirit of innovation. Today, San Jose stands as the largest city in Northern California and the Capital of Silicon Valley—the world's leading center of innovation. The city, the 10<sup>th</sup> largest in the U.S., is committed to remaining a top-ranked place to do business, work, live, play and learn. For more information, visit, [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov).

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