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Shanxi Datong Culture and Arts Center Awarded / LOH ARCHITECTS Associates Inc

TORONTO, September 10, 2012 – The Shanxi Datong Culture and Arts Centre, designed by Toronto firm LOH ARCHITECTS Associates, thoughtfully incorporates architecture with diverse uses, artfully woven into the urban fabric of the ancient capital city of Datong in northwestern PRC.

The dynamic, avant-garde design combines the functional spaces - commercial and cultural - into a unified architectural composition that transforms four city blocks.

Situated prominently along Weidu Grand Boulevard, the 32,000-square-foot (3,000 square metre) fine art gallery intertwines with the lobby of the 55,000-square-foot (5,000 square metre) performance hall, designed to float boldly above the street-front plaza. The performances and classical art will enliven the commercial activities, while the business activities will sustain the cultural arts towards mutual success.

The new construction comprises 6.2 million square feet (580,000 square metre), making this the largest multi-functional culture and arts centre in Shanxi province. With an estimated capital investment of USD \$500 million, and groundbreaking scheduled for the end of 2012, the design work by the dedicated Toronto team is currently in overdrive.



LOH ARCHITECTS Associates will infuse a humanistic facet to the master plan and, along with the performance hall and fine art gallery, the Shanxi Datong Culture and Arts Centre will feature 5 world-class office towers built over a 3- to 8-storey retail podium. The buildings will include a luxury shopping centre with twin hotels (one an upscale international hotel and the other a business inn); multiplex cinemas and live entertainment venues; a community recreation centre, and public services such as conference facilities, restaurants and banquet halls. The focus is to create an attractive destination permeated with pleasant pedestrian amenities, intimate streetscapes, sidewalk cafes, wind-sheltered gardens and courtyards, to generate a critical mass of popular year-round activities.

LOH ARCHITECTS Associates is also pioneering sustainable innovations in a city with notoriously adverse atmospheric conditions. *“Our design for the Culture and Arts Centre includes a winter garden and a curvilinear glass rooftop conservatory, both of which will actively circulate high-quality refreshed air for the buildings’ occupants,”* says Joseph C. Loh, design principal of the firm. *“Expressed as a graceful green arc suspended eight storeys above ground level, the rooftop link will unify the site from north to south, symbolically bridging the relationship between art and commerce.”*

MEDIA CONTACT

LOH ARCHITECTS Associates Inc. 416.690.3212 office@loharchitects.ca