



Media Release
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Giant Dice Portrait Pays Homage to Vancouver Artist

Vancouver (BC) — There are few better ways to pay homage to an artist/designer than to create a portrait made of the same number of dice as the days they lived. Frederick McSwain, a friend of Tobias Wong's, did just that, creating one of the world's largest dice portraits using 13,138 die.

Now accompanying the exhibition *Object (ing): the art/design of Tobias Wong*, at the Museum of Vancouver, McSwain's piece "DIE" is a tribute to Wong, a Vancouver/New York artist who passed away unexpectedly at the age of 35 in early 2010.

"The idea of a die itself was appropriate—the randomness of life," explains Frederick McSwain, who produced the dice portrait for NY Design Week, 2011. "It felt like a medium he would use. The idea of every decision you make and everything you've done in your life defines who you are. All of those days symbolically make up the image of Tobi."

The medium was chosen from an exchange McSwain once witnessed — a stranger approached Wong to ask for a cigarette, and Wong accepted a cheap six-sided die in exchange.

The portrait also pays homage to Wong's own style of conceptual art/design. Wong was well known in New York as a provocative artist, re-designing every-day objects and making poignant statements about the world around him.

The dice were organized into individual sheets of 361 pieces and then laid to rest free on the floor without adhesive. A time lapse video of the piece being assembled can be seen online.

US Furniture giant Bernhardt Designs bought the piece in 2011 and is currently touring it across North America. The portrait will be on display at the Museum of Vancouver until the end of October.

The exhibition *Object(ing)* at the Museum of Vancouver is the first major showing of Tobias Wong's body of work. Since opening on September 19, it has received public accolades from the likes of Douglas Coupland and Jason Heard (show director of IDS West). Wong himself has been referred to as one of more influential and provocative designers of his generation.

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The Museum of Vancouver is an independent non-profit organization which holds a mirror to the city and leads provocative conversations about its past, present, and future.

Media Contact

Amanda McCuaig, Marketing Officer
T: 604.730.5309 C : 604.312.8791
E: amccuaig@museumofvancouver.ca