

For Immediate Release – September 30, 2010

Let It Snow featuring Pierre Lemire **October 16, 2010 – January 30, 2011**

Banff, Alberta – The Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies is pleased to celebrate the glories of winter with the exhibition ***Let It Snow featuring Pierre Lemire***.

Most places in Canada may lament when the snow comes, but in the Canadian Rockies, snow is cause for celebration. When the snow lies on the ground, it's time for skiing or snowshoeing. The backcountry in winter is transformed by snow into a magical landscape. Certainly there are hazards. In the bleak mid-winter, bitter cold and avalanches are real risks, but care can be taken and the risks have never been any reason to stay inside.

Let it Snow is a celebration of the beauty and fun that snow brings to an area where winter can seem longer than all three other seasons put together. In addition to featuring snowy works by a local photographer Pierre Lemire, the exhibition highlights art and artifacts from the Whyte Museum's collection, some which seldom emerge from the vault.

It is a comfort to know that we can always be home for Christmas, but Christmas cards remind us of friends far away. Cards from our collection include those sent and received by Peter and Catharine Whyte, and cards from Mary Andrews' weaving students.

When it's cold outside, there is nothing more welcoming than a backcountry lodge. The history of skiing and backcountry ski lodges such as Skoki, Norquay, and Sunshine are all represented in the Whyte Museum's collection. Today helicopters slice through frosty air to bring people to lodges built by "the Father of heli-skiing," Hans Gmoser.

When it is too cold to play outside, *Let it Snow* is a warm indoor experience of winter and snow.

Opening Reception, October 16, 2010, 7 to 9 PM

Pierre Lemire's Photography by Michale Lang, Executive Director, Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

"Photography is an instrument to help people see."
~ Pierre Lemire

Pigeon Feathers, feathers of frost on Lake Louise, trees cloaked in snow, toboggans careening down a hill in the village of Field, snow slumping from rooftops, or winter mountaineering in rugged snow-cruled peaks, Pierre Lemire's photographer's eye misses little. "We all see these things, but we don't always stop to take a photograph." Pierre has chosen the lifestyle of an internationally accredited mountain guide, but he also feels fortunate to have been able to live and work in the places we see in his photographs. He never takes his good fortune for granted.

Although he has been fortunate, it also took a lot of persistence and effort to carry and use a camera when he was responsible for the safety of skiers in the backcountry of the Canadian Rockies. “They are often so concentrated on skiing that they stop looking. It is wonderful to simply sit down and look.” The groups he guided also managed to get some good photos.

Pierre is driven by rocks and snow, but he is also passionate about photography. He is always looking for a different angle, texture or light in his everyday surroundings. “Even when you’re having a bad day, photography takes you out of your cocoon. Pursuing the image, I become like a dog chasing a stick.”

Pierre has made many friends through photography and he continues to learn more about both the artistic and the technical sides of photography by talking to other photographers from all walks of life. “It is a shared knowledge that builds on those who have come before. People give freely of their time and knowledge.” Lemire also acknowledges the support along the way from individuals who have bought his work and galleries that have featured or sold his photographs.

Pierre became interested in photography when, as a child, he perused family albums which included the negatives. In the 50s most photos were in black and white. He had an uncle who was interested in it and his brother had a passing interest in photography as well. It was when Pierre took over his brother’s dark room that his lifetime obsession began in earnest. “There is something magical about putting paper in the developing liquid and slowly the image emerges. It appears as an apparition of a person or a moment that is gone.” He also joked that “a lot of these apparitions end up in the wastepaper basket. Every printing session is practicing for the next one.”

Although Pierre has traveled the world over, the images in this exhibition are focused on the Canadian Rockies.

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The Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies welcomes those who are drawn to the power and inspiration of these mountains. We are the gateway for experiencing and enjoying its art, culture and history in order to inspire and cultivate knowledge and the exchange of ideas. Visitors from near and far experience the Museum’s galleries, programs, archives and library, heritage homes, museum shop, guided walks, tours, and special events.

For more information about the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, contact:

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