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MAJOR INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE EXHIBITION OPENS AT MISSION HILL FAMILY ESTATE

*'Encounters with Iceland' Features the Magnificent Life Size Works of
Acclaimed Icelandic Artist Steinunn Thórarinsdóttir*

Kelowna, Okanagan Valley, British Columbia – June 21, 2014 – Iceland is a land of intrigue and discovery, where rugged landscapes and the beauty of nature co-exist to create a rich and vibrant culture. The *'land of fire and ice'* comes alive at Mission Hill Family Estate with **'Encounters with Iceland'** a major sculpture exhibition devoted to the works of **acclaimed Icelandic artist Steinunn Thórarinsdóttir**.

Inspired by Iceland itself, the new interpretive exhibition **featuring more than 40 large-scale sculptures** is the largest exhibition of the artist's works ever in North America. **'Encounters with Iceland'** is **open to the public from June 22nd to October 2014**.

The exhibition at Mission Hill Family Estate features the artist's dynamic sculptures on display throughout the winery grounds as well as in interior spaces, including the winery's spectacular underground barrel cellar.

Steinunn Thórarinsdóttir travelled to the winery from Iceland to personally place each piece in their most ideal setting. The artist made a special return trip to Mission Hill Family Estate to preside over the exhibition's official opening ceremony which was attended by numerous international guests.



A life size sculpture at the base of the iconic 12-storey bell tower at Mission Hill Family Estate

'Encounters with Iceland' at Mission Hill Family Estate

Proprietor Anthony von Mandl and his wife Debra first encountered these works during a visit to Iceland in the summer of 2013. On meeting Steinunn and becoming more familiar with her work, they immediately pictured her powerful sculptures on the grounds of Mission Hill Family Estate overlooking the stunning Okanagan Lake and Valley.

"What immediately struck me about Steinunn's sculptures is her art promotes self-reflection and connectivity to nature through their quiet intrusion into our everyday lives," explains von Mandl. *"The sculptures are arranged throughout the winery grounds, and most striking are the pairs of forms, some cast in aluminum and others in cast iron, that mirror each other in silent conversation. The difference of materials provides a striking visual contrast, highlighting the forms as both familiar and distant, all surrounded by the magnificent architecture of the winery."*

'Encounters with Iceland' presents an expansive collection of work with themes of spirituality, introspection and physicality. Steinunn uses the human figure to evoke a sense of the sublime that is tied to both our sense of being in the natural world and our sense of identity within it.



Acclaimed Icelandic artist Steinunn Thórarinsdóttir

"My works explore the human condition in all its variety and how man relates to the environment and to each other," explains Steinunn. *"Often a dialogue between the viewer and the work is formed with a tactile and personal interaction as the figures occupy the same space as we do. The aim is to leave a lot to the imagination and experience of the viewer. Each piece is firmly rooted in my Icelandic origin, reflecting the power and proximity of the elements."*

"Steinunn Thórarinsdóttir makes an outstanding contribution to the country of Iceland with her art. Through her endeavors, she brings great recognition to our country," says Illugi Gunnarsson, Icelandic Minister of Education, Science and Culture. *"With all her international success, she never forgets her deep Icelandic roots and continues her tremendous involvement with the arts and cultural organizations in communities throughout the country. We are proud to present her work at The National Gallery of Iceland and thrilled Canadians now have the opportunity to experience an impressive collection of her sculptures at Mission Hill Family Estate."*

‘Encounters with Iceland’ at Mission Hill Family Estate

About Steinunn Thórarinsdóttir

Born in Reykjavik, Iceland, Steinunn Thórarinsdóttir received her training as a sculptor in Italy and in England. Steinunn’s career spans 35 years and she exhibits widely with shows in Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, the United States and Canada. Her work permanently resides in prominent public and private collections worldwide including the National Gallery of Iceland, The Collection of Carl XVI Gustav, the King of Sweden, the Copenhagen State Hospital, The Danish Banker’s Association, the Estate of Sir Rocco and Lady Forte in England, the City of Hull in England, the University of Aberdeen, Cawdor Castle in Scotland, the Elgiz Museum in Istanbul and the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art. As a guest speaker and lecturer, her engagements include The Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, Cleveland State University, The Goethe Institute in Toronto, The Sculpture Society of Canada, Concordia University, the Georgia Museum of Art and the Birmingham Museum of Art in Alabama. In 2009 she was granted the prestigious *Order of the Falcon* by the President of Iceland for her contribution to the visual arts in Iceland and abroad. Steinunn lives and works in Reykjavik, Iceland. steinunnth.com

About Mission Hill Family Estate

Mission Hill Family Estate, located in the heart of British Columbia’s pristine Okanagan Valley, offers visitors an exceptional, authentic experience in an exclusive setting of unparalleled natural beauty and extraordinary architecture. Established in 1981 by Proprietor Anthony von Mandl, O.B.C., the family-owned winery is known for its exemplary vineyard estates and award-winning wines. Conceived and built to endure for centuries, the dramatic architecture of the winery by acclaimed architect Tom Kundig, creates an ideal environment for the celebration of fine wine, food and the arts. A sophisticated portfolio of wines perfectly suits fresh locally grown cuisine served at the winery’s award-winning Terrace Restaurant named “one of the top five winery restaurants in the world” by Travel + Leisure Magazine. Called “the gold standard of wineries” by Condé Nast Traveler, the winery offers cultural programs through the summer concert series, ongoing culinary programs and international art exhibitions. Sustainable practices in the vineyards and operations of the winery ensure a strong future. Visitors find a tranquil retreat from the hurried pace of daily life and the surprise of an exceptional environment in which to be immersed in the experience of fine wine. For more information visit missionhillwinery.com

Media Contacts:

Ian Galbraith, Corporate Communications
Mission Hill Family Estate
Email: igalbraith@missionhillwinery.com
Tel: 604.269.7017

Jessica Burchill, Public Relations
Mission Hill Family Estate
Email: jburchill@missionhillwinery.com
Tel: 604.264-4003