



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jaime Marland
401.427.6954
jmarland@risd.edu

Rhode Island School of Design to Present Showcase Addressing Climate Change at Democratic National Convention

*Partly Sunny – Designs to Change the Forecast highlights initiatives, policies
and products that have potential for immediate and significant environmental benefit*

PROVIDENCE, RI – On the basis of Rhode Island School of Design’s [RISD] innovative approach to the challenges of climate change through design, the City of Denver and the Host Committee of the Democratic National Convention [DNC] have selected the school to showcase new ideas and designs during the August nominating Convention.

RISD will present *Partly Sunny – Designs to Change the Forecast*, to showcase design initiatives, public policies and products that have the potential for immediate and significant environmental benefit. Ranging in scale from individual lifestyle choices to national policies, six categories will be examined: transportation, food, buildings, energy, landscape and water. At the policy level, for instance, a display explaining the London congestion pricing program illustrates how a toll for driving in the central city has reduced traffic and emissions while raising revenue to improve public transportation. A non-profit venture, The Chicago Urban Farm, is featured because of the benefits of raising produce on vacant lots around the city; and building projects highlighted include the Burnside Office Building in Portland, OR – a platinum LEED-certified construction built at remarkably low cost.

The project is a multi-departmental initiative, with students in six different design disciplines working to curate, design and produce the exhibition. Students working in a research seminar sponsored by the Department of Landscape Architecture and led by RISD faculty member and project director Charlie Cannon is selecting projects for the exhibition. Ootje Oxenaar’s studio in Graphic Design is working on a visual identity scheme for the exhibition, while sophomores in Industrial Design are developing collateral items (including water bottle labels and bike flags) for potential production and distribution during the convention.

Furniture Design senior Kallie Weinkle is using the event as the focus for her degree project: she’s reclaiming wood from used shipping pallets to create a table that will serve as a central meeting and activity point for *Partly Sunny*. Consisting of six separate trapezoidal units, the table can be configured into a variety of shapes and can accommodate more than 40 people for salons,

discussions, dinners and letter writing campaigns. “I wanted to highlight the beauty of what we think of as waste,” Weinkle explains..

“If we are to avert the most significant effects of climate change,” Cannon says, “we can’t just talk about the weather – we have to act.” RISD’s exhibition promises to convey two important points to visitors: that responsibility lies with both individuals and governments, and that procrastinating is not an option. As the projects collected in *Partly Sunny* indicate, forward-thinking designers, scientists and engineers are giving us the tools we need to address climate change; now it’s up to us to commit to adopting them.

Partly Sunny is part of Dialog:City, Denver’s official Democratic National Convention public program, an event converging art, democracy and digital media, designed to catalyze public discourse. *Partly Sunny* is one of 10 site-specific interactive public art and design initiatives that will be presented concurrently at different locations throughout the city. The exhibitions and installations are intended to encourage creative interaction and discourse on a number of timely topics. DJ Spooky (a.k.a. Paul Miller), for example, is also focusing on environmental issues: his multimedia piece *Terra Nova: The Antarctic Suite* is assembled from images and sounds of ice breaking and melting in Antarctica. Daniel Peltz, an assistant professor of Film/Animation/Video at RISD, takes political rhetoric into an unexpected context in his new work *Participatory Democracy and the future of Karaoke*. Performance artist Ann Hamilton, the sparse collective and architect Minsuk Cho are among the other featured artists and designers whose work can be seen in Dialog:City from August 21-30, 2008

For more information about *Partly Sunny* visit: <http://partlysunny.risd.edu>

About RISD

Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) has earned a worldwide reputation as the preeminent art and design college in the country. Today, with more than 22,000 alumni, the college enrolls roughly 2,000 undergraduates and 400 graduate students from the United States and almost 50 countries, offering degree programs in the fine arts, architecture, and design disciplines, and art education. Academic programs include research and design initiatives, the exploration of art criticism and contemporary cultural concerns, as well as international exchange programs. Each year, RISD hosts prominent and accomplished artists, critics, and authors to its campus. Included within the college is The RISD Museum of Art, which houses a world-class collection of art objects from Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome and art of all periods from Asia, Europe and the Americas, as well as the latest in contemporary art. For more information go to www.risd.edu.