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## **I did it.': 'It's a real Frank Gehry.**

The famed architect discusses the Great One, his AGO redesign and his new exhibition in Toronto

**J. Kelly Nestruck**

National Post

*Wednesday, February 15, 2006*

Yesterday, Frank Gehry laced up to play defence for Wayne Gretzky. The famed architect showed up at an Art Gallery of Ontario press conference wearing a Gretzky-style Canada bomber jacket in "solidarity" with his hockey superstar friend and launched a slap shot straight at the members of the press who have gone after the Great One over the NHL gambling scandal.

"[Gretzky] is one of the straightest arrows in history," said Gehry, who is more often associated with curved or squiggly lines. "I guarantee he did nothing wrong and I'll swear by it."

The Toronto-born master builder and hockey fan, who designed a new championship trophy for the World Cup of Hockey in 2004, added: "I love hockey."

Gehry, the occasional subject of media highsticking himself, said he didn't like seeing No. 99 get "beat up by the press." He then delivered a cross-check to his own local critics, those who have huffed that his hockey-themed redesign for the AGO is at best a minor work. "It's a real Frank Gehry," he said of the gallery's \$195-million renovation and expansion, which aims to be complete by 2008. "I did it."

It was an unexpected but exciting way to drop the puck on the media preview for Frank Gehry: Art + Architecture, a new exhibition focusing on four of Gehry's architectural feats from the past decade (the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, the DZ Bank in Pariser Platz, Berlin, Millennium Park in Chicago and Ray and Maria Stata Center in Cambridge, Mass.) and his ongoing AGO Transformation. "We did something that I think is going to be pretty nice," said Gehry, who said he was reluctant to "glow" about the AGO, his first major project in the country where he was born and lived in until he was 17, until it was finished.

Gehry grew up a stone's throw from the AGO, located right near Chinatown on Dundas Street in Toronto, and it was the first museum he visited as a kid. The sought-after sculptor of public space talked about wanting the transformed AGO



CREDIT: Brent Foster, National Post

Although Gehry carries a cane, the 76-year-old isn't about to slow down anytime soon. Last week, he announced a new project in Las Vegas.

to be an inviting atmosphere with places to rest. "If you go to the Met in New York, by the time that you get out, you feel extruded," said Gehry, who carried a plain cane and proudly noted that he will turn 77 on Feb. 28.

The jet-setting architect shows no sign of lightening his workload. Just last week, he appeared with Siegfried and Roy in Las Vegas to announce his design for a new medical centre. There aren't many architects who would share a press conference with the sequined magicians, but then there aren't many architects who have appeared on *The Simpsons*.

In the episode "The Seven Beer Snitch," which is included in the AGO show, Gehry designs a concert hall for Springfield based on a letter that he crumpled up from Marge, whose towering, crinkly blue hair would certainly be considered Gehryesque were it made of steel or Douglas fir.

The AGO's Frank Gehry exhibition is very much a valentine from the gallery to the man who has given it such an anticipated future. "Yes, we did plan our love-in on Valentine's Day," chief executive Matthew Teitelbaum confirmed at the beginning of the press conference where Gehry defended Gretzky. "The timing couldn't be better."

The cranky craftsman, who lives in Los Angeles, wasn't quite as thrilled. "It's Valentine's Day and I'm not home with my wife," he said. "And another client has screwed up my birthday."

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## Architect lambastes treatment of Gretzky

**Angela Pacienza**

The Canadian Press

*Wednesday, February 15, 2006*

TORONTO -- Renowned architect Frank Gehry returned to his hometown Tuesday to unveil a new exhibit of his life's work, but his thoughts were with his friend Wayne Gretzky.

"He's getting beat up by the press," Gehry said of the former hockey superstar who's been besieged with media questions about an NHL gambling scandal.

"The guy is one of the straightest arrows in history. He deserves better. I guarantee he did nothing wrong. I'll swear by that," said Gehry, sporting a hockey-style Roots bomber jacket to show his "solidarity" with The Great One.

Gretzky, who coaches NHL's Phoenix Coyotes and is executive director of Canada's Olympic hockey team, has been surrounded by controversy over gambling allegations involving his wife Janet Jones and his Coyotes assistant coach Rick Tocchet.

Currently in Turin with Team Canada, Gretzky has repeatedly said he's not involved in the alleged U.S. gambling ring.

Gehry, who now lives in Los Angeles, was in town Tuesday to chat about the Art Gallery of Ontario show, featuring models and sketches of his illustrious designs. The architect, who will turn 77 at the end of the month, is perhaps best known for designing the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.

He also designed the trophy for the World Cup of Hockey.

His Toronto show, called Arts + Architecture, opens Saturday and runs through May 7. It comes as the downtown gallery is undergoing a major expansion project designed by Gehry, who grew up around the corner from the building. Expected to be completed in 2008, Gehry says the gallery's redesign, which will include his signature contorted steel, was inspired by hockey and skating.

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## Gehry's head is in the clouds

### New lamp design calls for user input

**Lee Jacobson**  
National Post

*Saturday, February 11, 2006*

Haven't made it to the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao? No tickets to the Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles? Don't fret. Just in time for the exhibit of the work of architect Frank Gehry at the Art Gallery of Ontario (Feb. 18 to May 7) comes a chance to own a work by the super-star designer of shimmering metal-swathed buildings and friend of Brad Pitt.

Cloud is a collection of lamps that is both ingenious and poetic. Working with the innovative German furniture company Vitra, Gehry created a series of irregular translucent shades that envelop an incandescent bulb. Each luminous shape is made of paper-like polycarbonate and is reminiscent of an Asian shrimp cracker, a puffy pillow designed by Issey Miyake or a soft snowball (Gehry is, after all, Canadian-born). Shipped flat, the individual pieces snap together to form globes that can be squashed and crimped to appear voluminous or slender. It's your chance to participate in the design process. Use one form for a free-standing floor or table lamp (stand included), hang it as a pendant from the ceiling or cluster several together to create a cumulus cloud over your dining table.

Gehry has long been interested in furniture and lighting and he's designed whimsical lamps in the shape of fish and a series of bentwood chairs called Cross Check in honour of Canada's national obsession. Cloud is Gehry's homage to the paper and bamboo lamps of Japanese-American sculptor Isamu Noguchi. Like Noguchi, Gehry is fascinated by the infinite sculptural possibilities of paper, and his initial explorations for Cloud involved crushing and stapling paper cups together. By using a tactile plastic instead of fragile paper, Gehry's lamp is at once tear-resistant and washable as well as stunningly beautiful and ephemeral. This is a design icon of the very-near future.

Cloud is available through Design Within Reach ([www.dwr.com](http://www.dwr.com)) in the United States. Prices start at \$US498. Available soon in Canada at Caban.

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