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## Visiting sculptor carves gift from Japanese sister-city

World-renowned sculptor Professor Wataru Hamasaka, the Arts Centre Artist in Residence for March, is currently working at the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) on a sculpture that is to be gifted to the city of Christchurch.

*The Canoe in the Canoe* – a 2.2 metre long stone carving featuring a smaller granite canoe inside it - will be given to Christchurch by our Japanese sister-city Kurashiki to mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our sister-city relationship.

An anniversary sculpture has already been gifted to Kurashiki from Christchurch. 'Lines Extending' was installed in Kurashiki by Christchurch artist Graham Bennett in November 2003.

Professor Hamasaka says he chose the theme of canoes as a symbolic idea that Japan and New Zealand share. "When one looks at the founding of New Zealand, you find that the canoe has great meaning." This significance has continued from the canoes used by the early Maori settlers to New Zealand's more recent America's Cup success, he said. "Canoes have also been made in Japan since ancient times and appear often in Japanese myths."

The outer canoe in Professor Hamasaka's sculpture is made from basalt sourced from Timaru. The smaller canoe is of granite found in the Tsurajima area of Kurashiki and has already been presented as a gift to Christchurch Mayor Garry Moore. It is designed to be floated inside the larger vessel for special events or celebrations.

Mark McEntyre, co-head of CPIT's School of Art and Design said, "it is a great privilege to have someone of Professor Hamasaka's outstanding skill and quality working with us. "He is providing a wonderful opportunity for our students to see how people from different cultures go about their work and the different concerns they have," he said

*'The Canoe in the Canoe'* will be exhibited at the Arts Centre, outside the Court Theatre, from 31 March 2004, when it will be unveiled by Mayor Garry Moore.

Professor Hamasaka has given lectures at the CPIT's School of Arts and Design and the University of Canterbury's School of Fine Arts and the Christchurch Art Gallery.