



hitchBOT

HITCHBOT PREPARES TO VACATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

hitchBOT to explore the region of Twente for an arts and culture trip, June 7-24

TORONTO, ON, JUNE 1, 2015 – Canada’s first hitchhiking robot, [hitchBOT](#), will be shining its wellies and packing a suitcase for a vacation in the Netherlands on June 7. hitchBOT will stay in the region of Twente for three weeks, returning to Canada on June 24. During its holiday, hitchBOT will be introduced to some of Twente’s most notable arts and culture locations, including the Roombeek area in Enschede, the art villages Diepenheim and Ootmarsum, and Twickel Castle.

Following a busy year of hitchhiking and generous invitations to participate in events locally and abroad, hitchBOT is eager for a little vacation in Europe. Along with its co-creators, Dr. David Harris Smith (McMaster University) and Dr. Frauke Zeller (Ryerson University), hitchBOT will hop on one of Air Canada’s new flights to Amsterdam. Both Smith and Zeller are looking forward to the robot’s engagement in popular events in Twente, such as the [Twente Biënnale](#), [Kunst in het Volkspark](#) or [Midzomerfeest Mariënheem](#). “hitchBOT has always been an arts and science project,” say Zeller and Smith, “so we are always delighted when hitchBOT can play a role in promoting art and culture all over the world.”

The region of Twente is located in the province of Overijssel in the eastern part of the Netherlands. Twente is home to approximately 620,000 people and a culturally rich and diverse area with 55 museums and 100 galleries and studios. Almost every town and village in Twente has its own summer event; hitchBOT will have plenty of opportunities to visit all these events thanks to friendly hosts from the region of Twente.

In July and August of 2014, hitchBOT charmed its way across Canada, hitching rides along the TransCanada highway. This February, it learned German and made its way across Germany where it enjoyed German hospitality, participated in carnival festivities, and even went on a bicycle ride. hitchBOT’s ability to converse with humans is thanks to [Cleverscript](#) speech technology, which allows hitchBOT to answer questions about where it comes from or its favourite pastimes. hitchBOT’s co-creators Dr. Frauke Zeller and Dr. David Harris Smith originally developed the collaborative art and science project to see whether robots could trust humans. Its family consists of an interdisciplinary team of researchers from the fields of media arts, engineering, computer science, and communication.

Fans can follow hitchBOT’s journey online on its website ([hitchbot.me](#)), or on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). hitchBOT also invites users to share their hitchhiking stories and pictures using #hitchbot on Twitter and Instagram.

For media requests, please contact Johanna VanderMaas (details below).

About hitchBOT

hitchBOT is an outgoing and charismatic robot that began hitchhiking across Canada in July 2014. In less than four weeks, hitchBOT charmed its way through rides from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to Victoria, B.C. For more information, visit hitchBOT's website at www.hitchbot.me.

Ryerson University is Canada's leader in innovative, career-oriented education and a university clearly on the move. With a mission to serve societal need, and a long-standing commitment to engaging its community, Ryerson offers more than 100 undergraduate and graduate programs. Distinctly urban, culturally diverse and inclusive, the university is home to more than 38,000 students, including 2,300 master's and PhD students, nearly 2,700 faculty and staff, and more than 155,000 alumni worldwide. Research at Ryerson is on a trajectory of success and growth: externally funded research has doubled in the past four years. For more information, visit www.ryerson.ca

McMaster University, one of four Canadian universities listed among the Top 100 universities in the world, is renowned for its innovation in both learning and discovery. It has a student population of 23,000, and more than 160,000 alumni in 140 countries. McMaster's core research community is comprised of individuals from around the globe and is constantly rated very highly for its discoveries, quality of research enterprises, excellence of its research programs and the amount of funding it receives from the government. For more information, visit www.mcmaster.ca

Concordia Film | Theater | Expositie is a multidisciplinary art venue in the city of Enschede. It organises exhibitions of contemporary art in its multi functional exhibition space, offers daily a wide variety of contemporary movies in its cinema and presents all kinds of performances in its beautiful Baroque theatre. Concordia's mission is to get everybody in touch with arts and culture because we believe that art adds value to life. For more information, visit www.concordia.nl

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