

# The Winter Mascots – From Games symbols to historical and cultural representations\*

By Larry R. Gerlach

Souvenirs, souvenirs...  
As in 2010 in Vancouver  
the Olympic mascots  
wait for their  
purchasers.

Photos: picture-alliance



Symbols, ceremonies and rituals constitute the visual framework of the Olympics, ancient and modern, promoting both the Games and their institutionalized values and culture. Since 1914 five multicolored, interlocked rings have been universally recognised as the symbol of the Olympic Movement. Less well known, however, are the unique emblems and logos of the individual Games since 1896. Similarly, the mascots of Summer and Winter Olympics, widely publicized before and during each Games since 1972, are little understood and quickly forgotten save for the most and least popular examples of the genre.

Recognizing the growing popularity of sports mascots, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) approved the concept of a Games mascot in the summer of 1972 just prior to opening of the Munich Games.<sup>1</sup> Because IOC regulations for emblems apply to mascots as legally protected (i.e. copyrighted) Olympic symbols, the Executive Committee must approve the mascots. But the selection and usage is essentially left to the

local Organising Committee. As a result of local option, mascots have varied widely in design as well as function before and during Games. Traditionally presented three years before the Opening Ceremony, mascots share a creative rationale: to embody distinctive cultural attributes of the host city or country, to promote festive excitement about the Games, and generate income for the Organising Committee.<sup>2</sup>

Initially presented as mere Games symbols, mascots, in concert with the overall growth of the Olympics, underwent a dramatic transformation and became fully integrated into the Organising Committee's public relations and fund-raising programs. Striving to promote positive images of the host city and country, local committees greatly expanded the use of mascots as visual identifiers of individual Games; the advent of life-size mascots, humans dressed in costume, greatly expanded their visibility and impact as advertising agents. Simultaneously, they became a major source of revenue, increasingly marketed nationally and internationally as toys and as decorative emblems on numerous commercial products.<sup>3</sup> More slowly but steadily, mascots expanded their function as significant cultural and historical representations.

Despite their financial and iconic importance, mascots have received little serious attention. Tara Magdalinski's insightful, pioneering overview of the "ideological and political functions" of mascots with special reference to Sydney 2000, and a few descriptive accounts of individual Games mascots in IOC publications stand alone.<sup>4</sup> Histories of individual Games as well as general Olympic studies rarely mention mascots.<sup>5</sup> There is also a curious disconnect between the heavy promotion and ubiquitous visibility of mascots before and during individual Olympics and their absence in Games programmes, handbooks, guides, and commemorative games pictorials – not to mention neglect in Official Reports. Consequently, information about Olympic mascots resides primarily on the Internet. The dozens of web sites treating mascots individually and collectively vary greatly in reliability according to provenance. Most contain repetitive, cursory and inaccurate depictions; many offer flippant personal opinions. Mascot neglect is due to two factors: perception and procedure.

Mascots are often perceived as trivial, promotional and commercial ephemera that do not address substantively the political and economic issues confronting the Modern Olympics. But the significance of mascots extends far beyond popularity as Games icons and Olympic collectibles.<sup>6</sup> They have become an increasingly important component of Olympic commercialization, upwards of a third of local committee income through sales and sponsorship fees. And local committees do not underestimate the importance of mascots as multidimensional promotional tools before and during Games. Moreover, popularity as merchandise and prominence in publicity efforts do not diminish the artistic design merit of mascots individually as Games icons and collectively in terms of the evolution of the genre from event symbols to significant cultural and historical representations. In the end, the phenomenally rapid increase of mascots usage by local committees and growing popularity of the icons with the public testify to their importance as research topics in Olympic studies.

Procedurally, comprehensive mascot research is an enormously difficult task, involving travel to host cities and design firms, consultation with artists and perusing four years of newspapers for each Olympics. Local Organising Committee records rarely have substantive information about the selection process and finances. The papers of the Salt Lake Organizing Committee at my university contain nothing about the 2002 mascots not readily available in newspapers.<sup>7</sup> Commercial design agencies are reluctant to open business archives to researchers. My numerous requests for information have gone unanswered or denied.

Given the paucity of authoritative information about most mascots, let alone the overall historical evolution of the genre, I surveyed the Olympic mascots from 1968 to 2014 in terms of design process, publicity impact, commercial appeal, and heritage significance. The coverage given each mascot varies according to the availability of information, the significance of the design element, the commercial success and the importance of the historical and cultural representation. For reference convenience and design comparison, Summer and Winter icons are considered separately. As material has been drawn from many sources containing only bits of different information, to avoid repetitive endnote citations, I list here the most important general references for Olympic mascots and restrict documentation for individual Games to little known or essential items.<sup>8</sup> Internet URLs, easily identifiable, are not provided unless especially important either for content or for references to other significant sources of information. *Olympic Review* "press release" blurbs, easily accessible through digital collections, notably the LA84 Foundation, are not cited unless unusually informative.

**1968 Grenoble.** Without advanced publicity, the first acknowledged, albeit unofficial, Olympic mascot appeared during the 1968 Winter Games: "Schuss", a one-legged, stylized skier with a giant red-faced head. The name was apropos as "schuss" in German signifies a fast downhill ski run and France's Jean-Claude Killy won gold in all three Alpine events. But the cartoonish humanoid designed by Parisian animation filmmaker Madame Aline Lafargue, creator of the popular "Titus the little lion" television series, was devoid of any endearing qualities. Ridiculed by some people as a Tadpole on a Skate or a Sperm on a Ski, "Schuss" appearance on numerous small items such as badges, glassware, key rings and fabric toys made him a popular, de facto symbol of the Grenoble Games. Endorsed by France's Prime Minister Georges Pompidou as an "emblematic character of the Olympics", "Schuss" symbolized nothing more than the Winter Games themselves. While not authorised by the Grenoble Organising Committee – the intended Olympic rings imprinted on his head are not connected – the unsanctioned figure nonetheless became the progenitor of the Olympic mascot family.<sup>9</sup>

**1972 Sapporo.** The first Winter Games in Japan did not produce a mascot, but four brightly colored plastic bears issued by Takushoku, the largest bank on the home island of Hokkaido, circulated widely as quasi-totems. Called "Takuchan" (little brown bear), three of the savings banks that doubled as toys depicted athletes – a ski jumper on skis, a downhill skier holding a pair of skis, and a luger wearing goggles sitting on a sled; the fourth held a flaming relay torch.<sup>10</sup> Collectors often refer to them as mascots, but they were never presented as Games icons.

**1976 Innsbruck.** The Austrian Olympic Committee's "Schneemandl" was the first official Winter Games mascot. "Schneemann" (snowman) in German, was an appropriate, if unimaginative, name given the committee's desire for him to symbolize an intended "Games of Simplicity". His inspiration may have been the traditional playful anthropomorphic snow sculpture or the animated movie, the "Schneemandl" (aka "Snowman in July" or "The Magic Snowman"), a remarkably optimistic film of determination produced in Potsdam-Babelsberg during the Nazi regime.<sup>11</sup> Marketed on a variety of products, including a plush toy, the stylized snowball with a carrot nose, stubby feet and hands, and sporting a traditional Tyrolean hat, was unpopular at the time, but is now prized by collectors of Olympic Games memorabilia. A secondary mascot, "Sonnenweiberl" ("Sun Wife" or "Sun Woman"), a depiction of the sun with a warm smile and flaming rays for hair, had a minimal presence.<sup>12</sup>





**1980 Lake Placid.** The Games organisers hoped to make history with the first live mascot, "Rocky," a raccoon. Alas, the first and last live Olympic mascot died a year before the Games began. The committee then hired artist Donald Moss of Capital Sports & Entertainment to design a stuffed version. The result was "Roni," named after the surrounding Adirondack Mountains. (It is also claimed, questionably, that "Roni" derived from the Algonquian word for raccoon – "Rkacon", meaning "place where there are animals and beautiful forests" – thus honoring the Iroquois people native to eastern New York and the Lake Placid region.)<sup>13</sup> A stark representation of the Winter Games, "Roni" was the first and only mascot ever shown as an actual athletic competitor in a variety of sporting poses. "The mask across its eyes makes it very similar to the mask and goggles and caps worn by Olympic skiers", Moss said. Athletic representation notwithstanding, "Roni" was not a successful commercial product.<sup>14</sup>

**1984 Sarajevo.** "Vučko", the mascot for the initial Winter Olympics held in a Communist country, was the first chosen by popular vote. A panel made up of members of the local Organising Committee, artists, a poet, and a sociologist, pared a list of 870 proposals to six – wolf, chipmunk, lamb, mountain goat, porcupine and snowball. Not surprisingly, the readers of three major Yugoslavia (now Bosnia and Herzegovina) newspapers accorded seventy percent of the vote to the wolf as wolves were numerous in the region and featured prominently in Slavic fables. To counter the negative image of the wolf as a frightening, even bloodthirsty, animal dangerous to humans, Slovenian illustrator Jozе Trobeć of Kranj designed a friendly and playful wolf cub, "Vučko" ("Vootch-ko" – "little wolf").

"Vučko" was enormously popular as a plush toy and important as a cultural instrument. This first attempt to

attach "high social purpose and meaning" to mascots was successful in changing the fearful perception of the wolf and invoking the human desire to be friend animals. No doubt his image benefitted from daily comic strips that ran for more than a year in at least five Yugoslav newspapers. The Sarajevo Organising Committee's Official Report thusly quoted a city official: "Grandparents used to tell stories of the wolves in the mountains around Sarajevo to scare children." Now, they fall asleep with Vučko in their arms. There isn't a child without one."<sup>15</sup>



**1988 Calgary.** Thinking that a single male or female mascot might be considered discriminatory, the Calgary Organising Committee made history three-fold with the first dual, sibling and gendered mascots. Sheila Scott of Great Scott Productions designed the brother and sister polar bears, whose names, "Hidy" and "Howdy", were chosen from nearly 7000 entries submitted in a contest sponsored by the Calgary Zoo. Polar bears replaced brown bears, the original choice, because they more effectively symbolized winter by virtue of color, habitat and activity (they do not hibernate). Still, arctic polar bears seemed a curious choice for Calgary, but their names, slang western "hello" greetings, and attire – a blue dress (or vest) emblazoned with the Calgary logo and Olympic rings, red scarves and red-banded white cowboy hats – clearly exemplified Alberta's cowboy heritage and the home of the famous Calgary Stampede rodeo.

Here is the first forthright depiction of distinctive local culture and heritage. Students from Calgary's Bishop Carroll High School, dressed as the mascots, participated in some 50,000 promotional activities over four years, including 424 appearances during the Games at venues and associated events. The ability of the paired mascots to interact with each other and the public increased their effectiveness as public relations agents. Alas, they could not hug anyone wearing dark clothing as their white costumes shed. "Hidy" and "Howdy" were utterly conventional and thus modestly successful as





merchandise. Post-Games the twin cubs had a cameo appearance in "Cool Runnings", the 1993 Disney film about the Jamaican bobsled team's Olympic debut in Calgary, and were depicted on various "welcome" signs in the city until the billboards were relocated in 2008 to Canada Olympic Park, a training and recreational venue used for ski jumping and sledding in 1988.<sup>16</sup>

**1992 Albertville.** The Albertville and Savoie Winter Games were represented by the first replacement mascot. The original mascot, "Chamois", a mountain goat from the Savoie Alps, was so unpopular, the local committee hired French artist Philippe Mairesse to design a substitute. The result was the most unusual Winter mascot to date – a gnomish, ostensibly male, star-shaped "snow imp" called "Magique". Sporting France's national colors with a blue "suit" and a red, fez-like hat, "Magique", the first non-animal mascot, appears to be human, but has no identifiable hands, feet or nose and is obese.



Some people thought Mairesse's inspiration was the traditional Savoy song, "Etoile des Neiges" ("Star of the Snows"), but he more likely intended a philosophical idealism that contrasted with the technical and commercial realities of the Games as the mascot's star-shape suggests dreams and imagination, perhaps even an athlete's "shooting for the stars". Ironically, "Magique's" greatest contribution may have been "starring" in an interactive computer programme developed by IBM to educate Olympic volunteers. Although the unappealing Savoyar Star was a commercial flop and is universally considered the second worst, if not the worst, of all Olympic mascots, it was a fitting representation for the problem-plagued Albertville Games. (Coincidentally or not, a character known as Magic in a Marvel Universe comic book series was renamed "Magique" in March 1992).<sup>17</sup>

**1994 Lillehammer.** The first of Games of the new two-year, alternating cycle of Winter and Summer Olympics was also the first to issue mascots in human form. "Håkon" (or Haakon) and "Kristin", blond, blue-eyed child-like dolls depicted actual personages from the glory days of medieval Norwegian history. They bore the names of Prince Håkon (later King Håkon IV, 1217–1263), infant son of King Sverre Sigurdson of Lillehammer (1184–1202), who led the rebel Birkebeiners in the destructive Norwegian civil war in the late twelfth century, and Håkon's paternal aunt, Princess Kristin, who by marrying Filippus, a rival Baglar claimant to the throne, did much to unite Norway.

Mexico's Javier Ramírez Campuzano, who accompanied his father, Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, head of the IOC Cultural Commission, to Norway during the early stages of the bidding process, on his own initiative drew the initial representation of the child-king Håkon used in marketing Lillehammer's application for the Games. Following protests by Norwegian artists about authenticity, a "Disney-like" image, and foreign involvement in a Norse presentation, illustrators and authors of children's books, Kari (Jacobsen) and Werner Grossmann, produced the official "Viking kids" consistent in appearance, hairstyle and dress with medieval times.

The first (and only) mascots to represent actual historical characters lent themselves to real-life portrayal by three boys and three girls in publicity efforts before and during the Games. The direct connection with the formative period of Norwegian history increased popular interest in the mascots and led to an extensive collection of commercial merchandise from typical plush dolls to intricately carved figurines.<sup>18</sup> They remain celebrated in Norway for their representation of Norse history and culture.

**1998 Nagano.** Snopie, an Okojo or snow weasel native to the Japanese Alps, was conspicuous during Nagano's successful bid campaign. But Susumu Matsushita's creation subsequently failed to obtain much popular support, so the Nagano Organising Committee, a la Albertville, replaced the ermine with four baby snow owls. They were collectively called "Snowlets", the name derived from the first syllable of each individual name – "Sukki", "Nokki", "Lekki" and "Tsukki".

With little sense of what the minimally, even crudely drawn "Snowlets" signified, the committee ambitiously assigned multiple meanings to the mascots. It was said realistically they embodied "the wisdom of the woods" conventionally attributed to owls. Abstractly, it was said not only that the first Olympic mascot quartet represented the four seasons and the quadrennial between Games, but also that the name "Snowlets" was both a winter designation ("snow") and an invitation to participate ("let's") in Olympics activities. They also



supposedly represented Japan's four main islands – Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu. Although it was claimed that two "Snowlets" were girls and two were boys, all four had juvenile female names. They were given distinctive attributes which represent four classical elements of Japanese philosophy and presumed traditional feminine personality traits: "Sukki", who spoke the language of fire, was kind and passionate; "Nokki", who knew the language of the wind, was curious and friendly; "Lekki", who was fluent in the language of the earth, was calm and attentive; and "Tsukki", who understood the language of water, was romantic with a fondness for music, singing and dancing.<sup>19</sup>

Chosen primarily for their anticipated appeal to children, the fuzzy foursome lent their name to the "Snowlets Club" intended to educate school children about the Olympic Games as well as "Snow children" camps and activities programmes. A chain of seven official souvenir stores dubbed "Snowlets House" was established in 1996, but there was little interest in the mascots as merchandise until the Games got underway. Then, perhaps in a burst of nationalistic frenzy fed by "live" costumed promotional appearances, the little sprites became an obsession throughout the country and a lucrative source of revenue as plush toys as well as decorations on products ranging from ear muffs and lunch boxes to the condoms available at the athletes' village. They remain one of the most sought after and costliest plush mascot collectibles.<sup>20</sup>

**2002 Salt Lake City.** Through the combined efforts of Landor Associates of San Francisco, a design firm; Publicis of Salt Lake City, an advertising firm; and London-based illustrator Steve Small, known for his work on animated movies, including "Rugrats" and

Disney Studio's "Hercules," the Salt Lake Organizing Committee issued the most culturally and historically expressive mascots to date. At first glance the triumvirate – a snowshoe hare, coyote and black bear – simply continued the native animal tradition, but they were fundamentally innovative in three respects.

First, the names – "Powder", "Copper" and "Coal" – identified the three principal natural resources critical to the state's economy – powder snow (skiing), copper ore and bituminous coal. The appropriateness of the names was evident: For the first time in Olympic history mascot names were chosen by public vote from a slate of finalists drawn from suggestions by schoolchildren.

Second, the mascots honoured not only the state's five aboriginal tribes (Ute, Paiute, Goshute, Shoshoni and Navajo), but also the nation's Native American heritage. In the ceremony unveiling the mascots Billy Daydodge, an Ojibwa from Minnesota, linked the mascots to common Indian folkloric traditions. When the closeness of the sun was scorching the earth, the hare raced to the top of a mountain and shot an arrow into the sun, thereby lowering it in the sky and cooling the land. When the world became darkened and frozen, the coyote climbed to the top of the highest mountain and stole a flame from the Fire People, thereby bringing warmth to the earth and light to the people. When subjected to relentless pursuit, the bear's strength enabled it to outlast a group of hunters, whose sons as constellations continue the chase it in the night sky. In recognition of ancient Anasazi or Fremont artists who left historical narratives through rock art, each mascot wore a charm around the neck with a petroglyph signifying its feats.

Third, the animals' folkloric physical feats echo the three elements of the Olympic Motto – Citius, Altius, Fortius – and it was stipulated they always be referenced publicly and in print in sequence: first the hare (faster), then the coyote (higher) and finally the bear (stronger). (Featuring the coyote was both apropos and ironic in as much as there was and is a \$50 state bounty for killing them.)<sup>21</sup>

If the designs are no more than ordinary, cartoonish depictions of the animals, the Salt Lake trio is extraordinary in ingeniously touching all aspects of desired mascot rationale: indigenous animals, aboriginal culture and natural resources represented the land and history of Utah while the Native legends meshed with the Olympic Movement, specifically the Olympic Motto. Arguably the finest mascots in Olympic history, they marked a turning point in design from primarily emblematic Games symbols to more conscious representations of history and culture. Previously only Calgary and Lillehammer had, albeit more narrowly, conspicuously portrayed heritage; after Salt Lake City, it would be "de rigueur" to do so.





**2006 Torino.** Torino's mascots were the first to be created by a designer not native to the host country. Departing from tradition, Torino organisers deferred selection of the mascot design to an international committee, which from 237 entries eschewed the adorable animal concept in favor of an elemental representation of the Winter Games submitted Portuguese designer Pedro Albuquerque. Fascinated by the shapes water takes when transformed into snow and ice, Albuquerque designed a pair of welcoming, energetic, gendered humanoids that reflected both the winter season and the Winter Games: A snowball and an ice cube. Their names were literal Italian designations – "Neve", snow, and "Gliz", short for "Ghiaccio", ice. (Albuquerque perpetuated the theme in creating the 2006 Winter Paralympics mascot, "Aster", a stylized snowflake.) Whether siblings or friends, they were given gendered qualities: "Neve", a male, represented enthusiasm, joy and playfulness while the female "Gliz" was said to be gentle, kind and elegant.

At first blush it appeared that Torino had returned to the tradition of Games-specific symbols with the simple snowball and ice cube. In fact, it also continued the recent emphasis on historical representation as the mascots literally, if cleverly, conveyed both the surfaces on which winter sports are contested and the true nature of the Winter Olympics as composed of snow and ice, not wintertime, sports. With arms and legs but no hands or feet, the Gumby-bodied mascots, "Gliz" blue and "Neve" red, were easily configured to represent various sports. Regarded as "official communication tools", the duo was physically present at all major Games activities including competitive events in addition to being decorative emblems on merchandize. They also appeared in a televised cartoon promotion produced by RAI, the national Italian broadcasting company, and Prague's Laterna Magica for six months before the Games and also as costumed characters in numerous public appearances before and during the Olympics.<sup>22</sup>

**2010 Vancouver.** Apropos the growing connection between the Olympics and Paralympics, Vancouver was the first to pair simultaneously mascots for each Games. The local committee's intended theme of indigenous iconography was evident with the selection of the Games symbol – a contemporary interpretation of the "Inukshuk", a stone reference landmark used by the Inuit people of the Arctic regions. Thus from 177 international design entries, winners Michael Murphy and Vicki Wong of Meomi Design of Vancouver and Los Angeles commemorated British Columbia's aboriginal heritage with a trio of mythical animals drawn from First Nations' legends and language.

Two were Olympic mascots: "Miga", a mythical sea bear that was part Orca (killer whale) and part white Kermode bear (Spirit Bear), and "Quatchi", a sasquatch, a mysterious half-man forest creature. The Paralympic mascot, "Sumi", whose name derives from the Salish word "Sumesh," was an animal guardian spirit dwelling in British Columbia mountains near Whistler, site of



skiing competitions. In keeping with the penchant for humanizing mascots, each had its own profile. "Miga", able to transition easily from sea to land, lived to surf-board in summer and snowboard in winter. "Quatchi", traditionally elusive by nature, now wore blue earmuffs, loved to travel across Canada and dreamed of becoming an ice hockey goalie. "Sumi", boasting the wings of a thunderbird and the legs of a bear, was a devoted environmentalist.

The Organising Committee ambitiously thought the mascots would "appeal to children from all over the world; represent the people, geography and spirit of British Columbia and Canada; and personify the values and essence of the 2010 Winter Games". But the trio was unable to sustain much public enthusiasm, and was upstaged in popularity and merchandising by a "sidekick", the rare and endangered Vancouver Island marmot. "Mukmuk", whose name derived from "muckamuck," a Chinuk Wawa word meaning "food" or "eat", enjoyed eating and cheering for competitors during races and games. Although their designs defied gender identification, "Miga" was labeled a female; "Quatchi", "Sumi" and "Mukmuk" were deemed males.

A group photo: "Neve" and "Gliz" together with the Italian ski legend Alberto Tomba.

Photo: picture-alliance





Whether or not the choice of mascots reflected sensitivity to Native People's concerns – and subsequent protests – about Euro-Canadian appropriations of aboriginal lands, they were excellent, if overdrawn, representatives of West Coast native traditions. They were popular with children as stuffed playthings, but had only a modest commercial success.<sup>23</sup>

**2014 Sochi.** The Organising Committee inaugurated the use of high-tech communications to choose the Games mascots. First, the committee invited online and mail suggestions from across Russia. Then, from the 24,048 submissions received, a judging panel selected a slate of thirteen finalists for a national popular vote, ten for the Olympics – a doe Hare, Dolphin, Bullfinch, Polar Bear, Brown Bear, leopard, Little Sun, Fire Boy (Ray of Light), Snow Girl (Snowflake), and "Ded Moroz" ("Father Frost" aka "Father Christmas") – and three for the Paralympics – Bullfinch, Dolphin, and "Matryoshka" (nestled) Dolls. The official Olympic mascots were chosen in February 2011 by national vote during a ninety-minute television program "Talismaniya Sochi 2014 – The Final." From the 1.4 million votes cast by sending text messages to the number 2014 or by dialing a toll-free telephone line keyed to a special number for each candidate, three Olympic mascots were chosen – a snow leopard (28%), polar bear (18%), and doe hare (16%). Following the vote, individual designers were chosen for each mascot: Vadim Pak from Nakhodka, the snowboarding leopard; Oleg Serdechniy from Sochi, the polar bear ("Bely Miska"); and Silviya Petrova from the Chuvash Republic, a figure skating doe hare ("Zaya"/"Zaika").

For sale: drawn up  
in rank and file!  
Handpainted Polar  
bears from the Gzhel  
Porcelain Factory.

Photo: Picture-alliance



Electronic nationwide voting facilitated participation, but raised questions about fairness. Concerns were initially raised when a popular front-runner, "Ded Moroz", Russia's "Father Christmas", was suddenly dropped without explanation before the final vote.<sup>24</sup> They increased after interest in the leopard sharply spiked when just before the voting Premier Vladimir Putin announced it was his "symbolic choice". The mascots themselves created controversy. Some people found it curious that all three animals were found only in the Caucasus Mountains in Southern Russia

near Sochi, the more so since the leopard had recently been hunted to extinction. Opposition party politicians charged the selection of a bear, the symbol of Putin's ruling United Russia party, was politically inspired. And Viktor Chizhikov, who created "Misha", the popular Moscow mascot, accused the designer of the Sochi bear with plagiarism.

While reflecting popular preferences, the straightforward renditions of indigenous animals represented a return to an early, seemingly outdated practice instead of pursuing more contemporary, even innovative, design concepts. As yet none of the mascots have names and while native to Russia, none of the animals have substantive cultural or historical significance. The chairman of the Organising Committee said only that the troika represented the three places on the medals podium. Ultimately, the process may prove more important than the products as other host cities follow Sochi's lead in involving for the first time in Olympic history the entire country in the selection of its mascots.<sup>25</sup>

The Winter Games not only inaugurated, if informally and unofficially, the concept of an Olympic mascot, but also produced some of the most unusual, controversial and path-breaking mascots in Olympic history. The twelve Winter mascots from 1968 to 2014 include the first dual and quartet icons, the first gendered representations, the first human figures and the initial-paired Olympic and Paralympic mascots, the first chosen by popular vote and the first to employ high-tech electronic communications throughout the selection process.

Unique attributes aside, Winter mascots have differed from Olympiad icons in three basic respects. While Summer mascot design has always been open-ended, Winter creations must exhibit some specific identification with the season, whether an elemental symbol such as a snowball and ice cube or a characteristic animal like a polar bear or snow owl. They also were more constrained in utilization and promotion until the 1990s when the addition of new sports and events coupled with more extensive television coverage brought greater exposure and thus prominence to the Winter Olympics. And like the Winter Games themselves, the mascots have generated far less international recognition and revenue than their larger and more geographically inclusive Summer counterparts.<sup>26</sup>

A significant aspect of Olympic studies in their own right, the twelve Winter mascots more importantly contribute in concert with their eleven Summer counterparts to an understanding of the historical evolution of the mascot genre. ■

1 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the International Olympic Committee Maximilianeum, Munich: 21<sup>st</sup>–24<sup>th</sup> August 1972, 365; Olympic Charter,

- Lausanne, SW: I; OC, 2011, Chapter 1, Rule 14, Bye-law 4: "Creation and use of an Olympic emblem by an NOC or an OCOG," 22-26; Chapter 5, Rule 50, "Advertising, Demonstrations, Propaganda", Bye-law 3-4. For protection of Olympic symbols, see Robert K. Barney, Stephen R. Wenn and Scott G. Martyn, *Selling the Five Rings: The International Olympic Committee and the Rise of Olympic Commercialism* (2002), pp. XII-XIII, 153-154.
- 2 See, for example, Paula Welch, "Cute little creatures: mascots lend a smile to the Games", *Olympic Review*, No. 250/51 (September-October 1988), pp. 436-441; Marie-Helene Roukhadze, "The Olympic Mascot", in: *Olympic Torches and Mascots, Olympic Message*, No. 30 (August 1991): 8-15; How Well Do You Know the Olympic Games? (Lausanne: The Olympic Museum, 2011), 28.
- 3 "On Commercial Elements of Beijing 2008 Olympic Mascots Fuwa", October 4, 2010, <http://mt.china-papers.com/3/?p=93384>; Brian Cazeneuve, "Lions And Tigers And Bears, Oh Buy, Olympic cities beg you to purchase their mascots, and Bob Christianson does", *Sports Illustrated*, Vol. 90, No. 24 (June 14, 1999), 28-29; Darren Rovell, "More marketing disaster than success", September 19, 2000, ESPN.com.
- 4 Magdalinski, "The Place and Significance of Mascots in the Olympic Movement", *Olympika: The International Journal of Olympic Studies*, Vol. XIII (2004): 75-92. *Olympic Message* and *Olympic Review* articles on, Calgary, Albertville, Barcelona and Lillehammer are conveniently cited in endnotes pertaining to their respective mascots.
- 5 For example, only three of the essays in John E. Findling and Kimberly D. Pelle, *Encyclopedia of the Modern Olympic Movement* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), note mascots: Robert Dunkelberger, "Sarajevo 1984", 384; Miguel de Moragas, "Barcelona 1992", 231-231; and Larry Maloney, "Lillehammer 1994", 407.
- 6 See Robert J. Christianson, "Olympic Memorabilia Collecting, Citius, Altius, Fortius", Vol. 3, No. 2 (Spring 1995): 27-36; for an example of Olympic merchandize, see [www.ioniel.com](http://www.ioniel.com).
- 7 Salt Lake Organising Committee for the Olympic Winter Games of 2002, *Graphic Standards Manual*, Book 7: Mascots (1998); Salt Lake Organizing Committee for the Olympic Winter Games Records, Carton 155, folders 9-14, 30 and Carton 163, folders 1-3, Special Collections and Archives, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.
- 8 For convenient listings of all mascots through 2014, see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Olympic\\_mascots](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Olympic_mascots). Other important general sources include [http://www.aaflo.org/6oic/OlympicPrimer/OlympicPrimer\\_.htm#IV\\_MASCOTS](http://www.aaflo.org/6oic/OlympicPrimer/OlympicPrimer_.htm#IV_MASCOTS); [http://anotherworldblog.wordpress.com/2012/08/09/a-comprehensive-rundown-on-every-olympics-mascot](http://anotherworldblog.wordpress.com/2012/08/09/a-comprehensive-rundown-on-every-olympics-mascot/); [www.hickocksports.com/history/olmascots.shtml](http://www.hickocksports.com/history/olmascots.shtml). For winter mascots, see Shane Igoe, "Winter Olympic mascots – a closer look," <http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/page2/story?page=igoe/100212--cU>; "Winter Olympic Mascots", <http://www.topendsports.com/events/winter/mascots.htm>; and <http://talisman.sochi2014.com/en/history/#olymp-talisman>.
- 9 [www.grenoble-1968.com/shuss](http://www.grenoble-1968.com/shuss); [http://collectionolympique.free.fr/article\\_olympique\\_mascotte\\_shuss\\_4.html](http://collectionolympique.free.fr/article_olympique_mascotte_shuss_4.html).
- 10 In an October 28, 2012, email, Professor Naofumi Masumoto, Tokyo Metropolitan University, kindly provided me with leads regarding the Takuchan. See also [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hokkaido\\_Takushoku\\_Bank](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hokkaido_Takushoku_Bank); <http://blogs.yahoo.co.jp/soccer6nicgame/6203327.html>; <http://www.worthpoint.com/worthopedia/1972-sapporo-olympic-mascot-set-131165450>.
- 11 Produced in 1944 by cartoonist Horst von Möllendorff and animator Hans Fischerkoesen, the film is the story of a happy-go-lucky snowman who, having come to life, steadfastly overcomes obstacles to achieve summertime bliss before becoming an inevitable puddle of water. See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Der\\_Schneemann](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Der_Schneemann).
- 12 The Innsbruck mascots lack a Wikipedia entry. Numerous collectors post images on their web sites, for example <http://www.theolympicdesign.com/deu/olympic-collection/classification/mascots-3d>.
- 13 This reference is from the LA84 Foundation web site <http://www.aaflo.org/6oic/OlympicPrimer/roni.htm>. The staff of the Lake Placid Olympic Museum has no knowledge of a linguistic connection. Alison Haas, Lake Placid Olympic Museum, email to Larry R. Gerlach, September 13, 2012.
- 14 <http://www.mentalfloss.com/blogs/archives/47533#ixzz26HmfEavk>.
- 15 Final Report of the XIV<sup>th</sup> Winter Olympic Games 1984 at Sarajevo, p. 139; "Sarajevo", *Olympic Review*, No. 186 (April 1983), pp. 231-232; <http://www.ksl.com/?nid=711&sid=21301376>; <http://www.flickr.com/photos/iocmedia/6068508041>.
- 16 XV<sup>th</sup> Olympic Winter Games: Official Report, Vol. I, p. 259; William H. Wardle, Phyllis Barck and Francis Jackson Dover, "The Mascot of the Calgary Winter Games", in: *Olympic Torches and Mascots, Olympic Message*, No. 30 (August 1991), pp. 13-18. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hidy\\_and\\_Howdy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hidy_and_Howdy); (2007-05-09). "Hidy and Howdy hit the road", May 9, 2007 <http://www.canada.com/calgaryherald/news/story.html>. For description of costume construction, see and physiological affects of wearing it, see William A. Whitelaw, John Evans, Karen Rimmer and Bruce Challis, "Olympic mascots: a breath of fresh air", *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, Vol. 137, No. 9 (November 1, 1987), p. 787.
- 17 Marie-Helene Roukhadze, "Magique at Work", *Olympic Torches and Mascots*, pp. 19-21; *Quasar*, No. 32 (March 1992); <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magique>.
- 18 Final Report of the XVII Lillehammer Olympic Games, Vol. I "1994 Campaign" and Vol. II "Public Relations" and "Real-Life Mascot Project" (the Report is unpaginated); Arild Vollen, "Modern Mascots of Medieval Origin", *Olympic Review*, No. 286 (August 1991): 372-373; Arne Martin Klausen ed., *Olympic Games as Performance and Public Event: The Case of the XVII Winter Olympic Games in Norway* (1999), 39-40; Roel Puijk, ed., *Global spotlights on Lillehammer: How the World Viewed Norway during the 1994 Winter Olympics* (1997), p. 31; [http://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kari\\_Grossmann](http://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kari_Grossmann); <http://www.olympic.org/content/museum/museum-treasures/mascots/mascottes-lillehammer>; [www.la84foundation.org/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicReview](http://www.la84foundation.org/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicReview); [http://www.olympic.org/content/museum/mosaic/mascots/mascot\\_lillehammer\\_19941V](http://www.olympic.org/content/museum/mosaic/mascots/mascot_lillehammer_19941V).
- 19 There are five go dai ("five great") classical philosophy elements. The fifth component is "void," which signifies sky, heaven, creativity, anything beyond temporal experience. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five\\_elements\\_%28Japanese\\_philosophy%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_elements_%28Japanese_philosophy%29).
- 20 The XVIII Olympic Winter Games Official Report, Vol. I, pp.18-19, 79, 99, 102; <http://www.shinmai.co.jp/oly-eng/alacarte/mascot.htm>; [www.washingtonpost.com/wp/srv/sports/longterm/olympics1998/nagano/articles/mascots.htm](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp/srv/sports/longterm/olympics1998/nagano/articles/mascots.htm).
- 21 *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 14, 1998 and February 10, 2002; *Salt Lake City Weekly*, August 1, 2002; *Deseret News*, May 13 and September 26, 1999; "Salt Lake City 2002", *Olympic Review*, No. 27 (June-July 1999): 64; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Powder,\\_Copper\\_and\\_Coal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Powder,_Copper_and_Coal); [http://www.utah.com/olympics/emblem\\_mascots.htm](http://www.utah.com/olympics/emblem_mascots.htm).
- 22 XX Olympic Winter Games Torino 2006, p. 56; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neve\\_and\\_Glizi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neve_and_Glizi); <http://en.beijing2008.cn/spirit/symbols/mascots/n214068244.shtml#28>.
- 23 Final Report XXI Winter Olympics Vancouver, Vol. II, pp. 10-11. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miga,\\_Quatchi,\\_Sumi,\\_and\\_Muk-muk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miga,_Quatchi,_Sumi,_and_Muk-muk); "2010 Vancouver Olympics' mascots inspired by First Nations creatures", <http://www.cbc.ca/sports/story/2007/11/27/bc-mascot.html>; <http://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com/Daily/Issues/2007/11/Issue-54/Olympics/VANOC-Unveils-Three-Mascots-For-2010-Games-With-Regional-Ties.aspx>; <http://www.nationalpost.com/most-popular/story.html?id=127450>; <http://www.vancouver.sun.com/travel/Mascots+Quatchi+Sumi+Miga+will+never+animated+again/3002101/story.htm>.
- 24 Officials said he had been eliminated because if chosen the mascot would become the property of the International Olympic Committee and it was unacceptable that the traditional gift-bearing icon would belong to an external body.
- 25 <http://talisman.sochi2014.com/en/#/en/about>; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014\\_Winter\\_Olympic\\_and\\_Paralympic\\_Games\\_mascots](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014_Winter_Olympic_and_Paralympic_Games_mascots); <http://www.sochi2014.com/en/media/news/38689>; <http://www.insidethegames.biz/olympics/winter-olympics/2014/11887-russian-public-to-vote-for-sochi-2014-mascot>; <http://sports.nationalpost.com/2011/02/09/the-daily-post-up-vote-on-sochis-olympic-mascot/>; <http://www.newser.com/story/113003/sochi-olympic-mascots-to-include-snow-leopard-polar-bear.html>.
- 26 Histories of the Winter Games are few, but see Larry Gerlach, ed., *The Winter Olympics: From Chamonix to Salt Lake City* (2004).