

For Immediate Release: 12/09/2011

UAP CONNECTS SHINING ARTISTS WITH SYDNEY'S NEW STAR

Leading international art-based design studio Urban Art Projects (UAP) today announced the completion of three high profile public art commissions for The Star in Sydney, Australia.

The Star, formerly Star City, has undergone an \$860 million transformation into a one-of-a-kind entertainment destination, which officially re-opens its doors on 15 September 2011. The redevelopment and expansion includes 20 new bars and restaurants, a new five-star lifestyle hotel called The Darling, a 16 room spa, plus a retail area housing a collection of luxury fashion brands.

Understanding the need to create a sophisticated and highly engaging public artwork program for The Star, UAP's Curatorial Team drew on local knowledge and global networks to create an art strategy that considered the unique cultural, social and physical roles of the site while addressing the practical commercial and urban requirements, this led to engaging some of the brightest artistic talent from Australia and across the globe to develop concepts for the redevelopment.

The project consisting of a 40-metre LED backed water wall by emerging Australian artist Jonathan Jones and UAP lead designer Jamie Perrow; a suspended, faceted sculpture of a gliding swallow by British born collaborative James and Eleanor Avery; and two large scale suspended lighting installations by highly acclaimed New York based artist Leo Villareal are the results of a successful collaboration between UAP, Echo Entertainment, Brookfield Multiplex, Fitzpatrick & Partners, Cox Richards and the contributing local and international artists.

Leo Villareal – *Flying Star*

Leo Villareal whose immersive digital sculptures echo organic and architectural forms are showcased in some of the world's most prestigious galleries including the MoMA PS1 in New York and National Gallery of Art in Washington, has created his first major three dimensional piece for the project, a site-specific response titled *Flying Star*.

Suspended both within The Star's main entrance and 16 metres in the air within the entertainment complex's glass void, *Flying Star* is a constantly evolving starburst of tubular LED fixtures arrayed in a radial pattern. Villareal has created a number of digital sequences that the artwork's programming will randomly illuminate, generating constantly evolving patterns capable of incorporating up to 16 million individual colours.

Flying Star's patterns take inspiration from the research of mathematician John Conway who invented *The Game of Life*, the best known cellular automata program, and explores the brain's compulsion to recognize patterns and the hard coded desire to understand and decipher meaning.

The work which has also been adopted as the focal point of the entertainment venue's branding, brings life, energy and an iconic form to the space and is capable of being seen from as far as the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

“My work is very fleeting; it’s really about that moment, the instance. I think that in the void space within the architecture of The Star the piece will bring life to the space. There are many different vantage points for the piece; you could be right next to it in the bar, you could be below it going up an escalator, catch a glimpse of a fragment and then be drawn towards it, or see it from the street or Darling Harbour. Its legible on multiple scales as it activates the surrounding environment.” Villareal said.

When asked about the collaborative process working with UAP’s Australian studio Leo commented saying; *“In the last few years I have begun working more outside the USA. It’s nice when you are travelling and out of your comfort zone to work with an organisation that knows what’s going on. UAP is very technically able and are undaunted by complicated fabrication and installation issues. It was great to discover UAP as they allow me to be able to focus on the idea.”*

James & Eleanor Avery – Lucky Dip

James and Eleanor Avery are British-born artists based in Brisbane, Australia. Their collaborations which, have appeared across the globe including Italy, the United Kingdom and Australia, exist at the interface of sculpture and installation, drawing on architectural sensibilities and historical references to realise ambitious works that explore the dislocated layers of order and disorder within contemporary culture. Their works conflate concerns within contemporary culture with historical notes, drawing on a sci-fi aesthetic.

The Avery’s commission for The Star is a suspended 3.5m² vibrant red Swallow which greets guests at the entrance to the Star complex’s five star boutique hotel, The Darling Hotel.

Titled *Lucky Dip*, the gracious bird is formed by over 400 individual facets and is carrying two diamonds in the shape of the cheeky ‘double cherry’ symbol.

“Our understanding is that a major focus of the development is the regeneration of the site, making it once again a vibrant and energized space. The artwork we have proposed respond to this concept of ‘regeneration’ through the sculptural representation of vital life forms and positive symbolism,” Eleanor Avery said.

“The swallow is a symbol of hope, fertility and the renewal of life. Our swallow is carrying in its beak two diamonds, on a cherry-like stem which symbolises love, excellence, purity, strength, power and brilliance,” James Avery added.

Jonathan Jones & Jamie Perrow Water wall – Untitled (Eora: water seasons)

Created by Indigenous Australian artist Jonathan Jones with Designer Jamie Perrow, The Star will be home to an important example of contemporary Australian new media art – a 40-metre long LED water wall ‘Untitled (Eora: water seasons)’.

This highly innovative installation celebrates traditional Aboriginal knowledge and heritage by conceptualising the seasonal calendar of the surrounding Sydney Harbour environment, translating each season in to animated patterns and imagery. The water wall is integrated harmoniously into the building’s

entry façade and provides an engaging experience for visitors to The Star and pedestrians and motorists in the surrounding public realm.

This artwork will pay homage to the traditional Aboriginal people of Sydney Harbour, the Eora, and their strong and vibrant seafaring culture, while directly acknowledging the traditional custodians of the site, the Wongal people.

The work has been created with the collaboration and contribution of local Aboriginal communities, marine biologists, archaeologists, historians and underwater filmmakers. The result is a considered, site-specific artwork that recalls the beauty, marvel and power of Sydney Harbour and its traditional owners.

Leo Villareal's *'Flying Star'* and Jonathan Jones and Jamie Perrow's *'Untitled (Eora: water seasons)'* will be viewable by guests at The Star's opening on the 15th of September whilst James and Eleanor Avery's *'Lucky Dip'* will greet guests to The Darling Hotel's opening in late October.

PROJECT: The Star
CLIENT: Echo Entertainment
LOCATION: Sydney, Australia
ARTISTS: Leo Villareal
James & Eleanor Avery
Jonathan Jones & Jamie Perrow
CURATORIAL: UAP Curatorial Team; Jodie Cox, Simone Manwarring
DESIGN: UAP Studio; Amanda Harris
FABRICATION: UAP Workshop
ARCHITECTS: Fitzpatrick & Partners
Cox Richards (The Darling Hotel)
DBI Design (The Darling Hotel)
DEVELOPER: Brookfield Multiplex

For further information, please contact:

Scott Miller
Marketing Manager
Urban Art Projects
+61 413 752 186
scott.miller@uapstudio.com



Notes to Editors

Urban Art Projects – <http://www.uapstudio.com>

Urban Art Projects (UAP) is a multidisciplinary studio creating site-specific art and design commissions for architectural and landscape environments.

Our unique methodology ensures art and design outcomes align with a project's aesthetic and the client vision by collaborating with project teams in master-planning, strategy, design, construction, installation and project management. This ensures both the creative and functional intent of an installation is preserved and delivered on time and to budget.

Our studio + workshop is located in Brisbane, Australia and our sister studio is located in Shanghai, China.

The Star - <http://www.star.com.au/>

Opening from September 2011, The Star will offer a one-of-a-kind entertainment destination. The redevelopment includes the re-orientation of the casino to embrace Sydney Harbour and the city skyline. The expansion will include 20 restaurants, bars and cafes and exciting entertainment, set on an open promenade lining Sydney's waterfront.

Also launching as part of the transformation is a new five-star lifestyle hotel. This imaginative hotel will offer 171 rooms and suites, a day spa and a swimming pool with cabanas and outdoor bar – plus being home to Sokyō Japanese restaurant.

Complementing the existing hotel, apartments and suites, the new hotel will bring the total rooms at The Star to over 650 across three towers. The spa will have 16 private rooms delivering an extensive array of Asian and European inspired treatments.

UAPSTUDIO.COM

Leo Villareal

Leo Villareal lives and works in New York City. Villareal creates digital sculpture that echoes organic and architectural forms. Utilizing the latest LED (light emitting diodes) technology, the artist creates a palette of millions of colours. This palette is then governed by the artist's digital sequencing and an exclusively written computer program that samples each of the artist's sequences randomly.

Villareal graduated from Yale with a B.A. in Art with a concentration in sculpting and he went on to study interactive telecommunications at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts.

Villareal recently created 'Multiverse' a finely tuned computer generated cosmology which unfolds in a futuristic I.M. Pei - designed passageway at the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C, a monumental installation consisting of approximately 40,000 LED's.

Leo Villareal is represented by Gering and Lopez Gallery, New York.

Flying Star Artist Rationale

The Flying Stars is a diptych of artworks to be suspended in the Entry Void and Atrium Void of the Star City Hotel and Casino. Each is a starburst of tubular LED fixtures arrayed in a radial pattern. These works will activate the Voids from within and the building from without, bringing life, energy and iconic form to the architecture. Each segment has individually controllable 'pixels' that can each be any of 16 million colours allowing for a tremendous amount of animation throughout the piece.

This is a continuation of Villareal's exploration of radial structures, which illustrates a sequenced topography combining both spatial and temporal resolution. The work functions as a type of dynamic map or diagram, as colours move across its array. Viewers will be able to identify individual elements within a larger context and track this movement. The work explores the compulsion to recognise patterns and the brain's hard coded desire to understand and decipher meaning. The patterns also take inspiration from the research of mathematician John Conway who invented the Game of Life, the world's best-known cellular automata program. The work is constantly evolving as new patterns are generated and overlaid.

The name Flying Star is inspired by one of the disciplines of Feng Shui and focuses on balancing yin and yang to create a positive aura.

Jonathan Jones

Jonathan Jones is an Indigenous artist belonging to the Kamilaroi/Wiradjuri people of New South Wales. Jones currently lives and works in Sydney. He works in varied media, including printmaking, drawing, installation and film. From 2000 to 2002 he was the curator at Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative in Sydney.

In his major installations, Jones explores notions of community from a contemporary urban Indigenous perspective. Jones's work reveals a sophisticated understanding of Indigenous arts practice today. The work explores the complexities and dualities of physical and metaphysical ideas — open and closed, secular and sacred, seen and unseen, masculine and feminine.

In 2002 Jones was awarded the New South Wales Indigenous Arts Fellowship, and in 2003 he was included in Primavera, the annual exhibition for artists under 35, at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

Jamie Perrow

Jamie Perrow is an Australian designer who has his own diverse multi-disciplinary design practice, as well as working on high profile national and international projects as Design Manager at Urban Art Projects (UAP). Working most recently within the context of public art, he has delivered a range of both large and small scale public and private commissions

His practice is conceptually grounded in an exploration of the emotional connection and relationships between people and objects. He believes that if a design has no story, it has no meaning and is therefore merely ornament. Through design, Jamie tells a story, exploring the way in which people emotionally respond to things that are inanimate, forging a new narrative in order to influence the way people engage with a designed object and space.

In 2011 Perrow was a finalist in the Queensland Government's Emerging Design Leader Award.

Untitled (Eora: water seasons) Artist Rationale

This artwork pays homage to the traditional Aboriginal people of Sydney Harbour, the Eora, and their strong and vibrant saltwater culture, while directly acknowledging the traditional custodians of the site, the Wongal people [1]. Eora waters, since time immemorial, have acted as cultural highways, traditionally linking people to their past and future, and providing the basis for a saltwater economy. Sydney's colonial history built on this maritime culture and, since invasion, the port city has witnessed waves of migration; today Sydney is identified and world-renowned by its beautiful harbour.

Eora knowledge and custodianship of this unique environment forms the basis of this artwork, creating a physical manifestation of memories and connections by highlighting the region's traditional seasons. This artwork recalls and acknowledges local Indigenous knowledge alongside leading scientific research in an

effort to raise awareness of the local history and ecology of one of the world's most beautiful harbour cities. The artwork is broadly based on the six traditional Eora seasons, that profile burra, or eel, wobbegong shark, kelp, mullet, grey nurse shark and the rocky foreshore. Burra season occurs at the end of the year – a key cultural event before and during European settlement in Sydney. During this season, which is loosely defined around the months November/December, long finned eels (*Anguilla reinhardtii*) congregate in what is today known as Parramatta, derived from burra-matta (place of the eels). During the colder months (June/July) wobbegong sharks (*Orectolobidae*) gather in the bays and shoals of the harbour to breed. Sharks and rays were traditionally not harmed by Eora, and the word 'wobbegong' is one of the few Aboriginal words to be accepted within the mainstream vernacular.

Sydney's vast kelp (*Ecklonia radiata*) beds have been instrumental in reviving the environment as kelp absorbs toxins, including heavy metals, and has been responsible for the environment's recovery. Kelp beds also provide an important habitat to Sydney's unique marine life; including many of the 16 species of seahorse contributing to it being one of the world's most bio-diverse harbours.

Traditional Aboriginal knowledge such as this is framed within scientific research, activating an amalgamation of scientific, emotive and cultural knowledge. This process has developed with the collaboration and contribution of local Aboriginal communities, marine biologists, leading marine institutions, archaeologists, historians and underwater filmmakers.

This work creates a dialogue between the viewers and nature, and connects people to the transcendental nature of the harbour, the unique seasonal changes often overlooked and wider concepts of traditional Indigenous knowledge, all within an urban environment.

The seasonal variations involved in the work will help identify the site, and will play an important role in reminding people of the beauty and transcending nature of Sydney Harbour.

1[1] Wongal extended along the south side of the harbour from Long Cove (Darling Harbour) to Rose Hill/Parramatta.

James & Eleanor Avery

James and Eleanor Avery have been collaborating on large scale sculpture/installation projects since 2004. Their works exist at the interface of sculpture and installation, drawing on architectural sensibilities and historical references to realise ambitious works in diverse international locations.

Their installations explore the dislocated layers of order and disorder within contemporary culture. Within their collaborations they use elements of a recurring visual language to build layers and to make parallels and shifts across multiple platforms. James and Eleanor Avery conflate concerns within contemporary culture with historical notes.

The Avery's collaborations are generally site-specific and through their many forms explore notions of days out, armchair tourism and cult ideology, drawing on a sci-fi aesthetic.

Their works are ambitious in scale and often indicate an underlying system of meaning. James and Eleanor Avery's installations suggest a social space for audience connection.

Lucky Dip Artist Rationale

Our understanding of The Star complex is that a major focus of the development is the regeneration of the site, making it once again a vibrant and energized space. The artwork we have proposed respond to this concept of 'regeneration' through the sculptural representation of vital life forms and positive symbolism.

The artwork has been constructed from aluminium with a wet spray finish. We favour red to add energy and vibrancy to the space and to work with the surrounding décor. The geometric and faceted construction of these works reflects the industrial heritage of the site, reinterpreted in a contemporary manner.

The swallow is a symbol of hope, fertility and the renewal of life. It represents resurrection and the return of summer. Our swallow is carrying in its beak two diamonds, on a cherry-like stem. Diamonds symbolise love, excellence, purity, strength, power and brilliance. In Buddhism, diamonds are implemented to cut through worldly illusion to illuminate what is real and everlasting. The cherry-like stem is a whimsical reminder of the cheeky 'double cherry' symbol which was fashionable in the 70's and has recently seen a revival.