

For immediate release  
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## SITE-SPECIFIC ARTWORKS TAKE CENTRE STAGE AT CHINATOWN MALL RE-OPENING

An exciting new site-specific art project that forms part of the much anticipated redevelopment of Brisbane's Chinatown Mall was unveiled to the public yesterday.

The outcome of a public art collaboration between Brisbane-based international art consultant Urban Art Projects (UAP), landscape architects Urbis and Brisbane City Council, the project gives expression to ancient Chinese mythology within the mall's contemporary civic design.

The permanent art project is a combination of a bronze water feature designed by UAP's Jamie Perrow and a carp sculpture by local artist Catherine Chui, which join together to represent the ancient Chinese legend of *"The Carp leaps over the Dragon Gate"*. According to the legend, the Chinese carp faces challenges with great courage to undergo a metamorphosis from fish into dragon as it leaps the Dragon Gate, and so represents a spirit of initiation, exploration, persistence and willpower. Carp figures also featured strongly in Chinatown's original fountain.

Urban Art Projects CEO Ben Tait said "This collaboration has provided an opportunity for artists, designers and council to contribute to the creative process behind a considered site-specific art project. The Chinatown Mall is such a significant cultural space within Brisbane and it has been a privilege to develop some primary artworks for this landmark site."

The 40 metre long water feature, cast from 6.6 tonnes of bronze, is the longest of its kind in Australia. Conceived by UAP lead designer Jamie Perrow, the design is based on a pattern abstracted from the scales of carp and dragon, which causes water to mimic the appearance of scales as it flows. Departing from convention, Perrow developed an elegant concave channel such that the water is bounded not by defined edges, but by the gentle curve of the patterned surface. Perrow commented, "The raw energy of water and how it moves is often what can keep us staring at a waterfall, or the moving ocean for long periods of time. There is a calming, contemplative quality about it." Water appears to flow continuously between four separate sections before running into a pool surrounded by seating elements, and live fish swim in a second pool nearby. All elements of the landscape design were master-planned by Urbis to reference three major Chinese dynasties through the use of pattern and colour.

Urbis Director Paul Hardyman said, "The project demonstrates what amazing results can be achieved where there is strong collaboration between landscape architects, artists and skilled artisans. Great support from Brisbane City Council's Project Manager, Mark Theobald and Senior Landscape Architect, Darryl Mills was critical to the success of the outcome."

The second element is the iconic Carp sculpture by Brisbane-based Chinese artist Catherine Chui. The Carp, which measures over three metres in length, stands at the north-eastern entrance of the mall and appears poised to leap over the Dragon Gate, represented by Chinatown's new Grand Awning. The shape of the Brisbane River forms the Carp's spine, taking a symbolic place as the city's backbone in economic, cultural and social life, similar in significance to China's Yellow River. Chui's Carp uses layers of meaning to connect the two cultures. "The Brisbane River weaves itself through the segments that make up the Carp's body," describes the artist, "These 12 segments represent the importance of the number 12 to both Eastern and Western cultures, reflecting the various ways our histories are inextricably intertwined." An elaborate and opulent artwork, the Carp is made from highly polished cast aluminium and embellished with glass and auto-grade 2pak paintwork.

The Chinatown Mall, including both new artworks, was formally opened by Lord Mayor Campbell Newman for Chinese New Year yesterday, Sunday 14 February, followed by an afternoon of festivities for the beginning of the Year of the Tiger.

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**ABOUT UAP**

Urban Art Projects is a specialist design consultancy creating site-specific art and design commissions for architectural and landscape environments. We ensure art and design outcomes align with a project's aesthetic and the client vision. We collaborate with project teams in master-planning, art strategy, artist appointment, design, construction, installation and project management. We ensure the creative intent of an installation is preserved and delivered on time and to budget. UAP offers a unique turn-key approach to commissioning large-scale artwork and creative design solutions, providing low-risk solutions for clients.

**ABOUT URBIS**

Urbis is multidisciplinary property consulting firm with a strong team of landscape architects who provide creative yet practical design solutions to the complex issues encountered in the continually evolving urban and suburban landscape. We address and overcome design challenges for clients using our diverse skills, expertise and knowledge. Our intent is to create a specific long-term sustainable vision for each project. We develop liveable urban environments ready to support active and diverse communities. We bring flair and creativity to

the use of space and focus on landscapes that are engaging, functional and stimulating for the community it serves.

#### ABOUT CATHERINE CHUI

As an artist, Catherine Chui has exhibited works in a range of media and around the world. Her practice includes drawing, printmaking, sculpture and installation art, while her design works include novelty objects, toys, games and artistic jewellery. Catherine was the design director for an American-based toy company for 13 years. As the head of the design department her responsibilities included overseeing the design and development of all projects and supervising 50 design staff. After she migrated to Australia 14 years ago she changed her focus to visual art. Her artworks exhibited locally and internationally including Beijing, Hong Kong, Japan, Warsaw and Australia. Catherine graduated from Griffith University with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Art with First-Class Honours and a Master's degree in Visual Art.

#### ABOUT JAMIE PERROW

Jamie Perrow is an artist and designer whose expertise spreads across a complex range of disciplines, from urban and object design to craft based design practices such as ceramics and woodwork. Jamie is also UAP's senior lead designer, responsible for an artwork's concept and visual communication through design development. He interfaces with clients and instructs UAP's documentation team in the creative intent of an installation. Key projects Jamie has designed for UAP include: *Shanghai World Expo 2010 Entry Artworks* (China), *La Mondial* (Egypt), *King Abdullah University of Science and Technology* (Saudi Arabia), *Akbulak Resort* (Kazakhstan), *Roma Street Subtropical Boulevard* and *Nambour Town Square*. Jamie has a Bachelor in Design from the University of New South Wales.

#### ABOUT THE LEGEND

"The Carp leaps over the Dragon Gate" is a well-known Chinese fable. The waterfall at the Dragon Gate in the Yellow River of China was known for its height and rapidity. Carps reaching the foot of the waterfall had to swim against the current and leap if they wanted to continue their journey. Many of them failed and gave up the attempt easily. Only one red carp never gave up and after numerous attempts and much hardship, it finally succeeded - transforming into a dragon after going over the Dragon Gate.

The red carp's success tells of the importance of courage, persistence, determination and hard work - as it bravely accepted the challenge and worked to achieve the seemingly impossible goal. This spirit lives on in many people as they too are working hard to achieve their goals and dreams.