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Canadian and U.S. Photographers Compete for 2010 Grange Prize

2010 partner institution is Chicago-based Museum of Contemporary Photography

TORONTO and MONTREAL, April 28 /CNW Telbec/ - Four leading-edge photographers, two Canadian and two American, will have the opportunity to win the \$50,000 Grange Prize, presented by Aeroplan and the Art Gallery of Ontario. Each year, The Grange Prize partners with one international art institution in an effort to recognize the best in Canadian and international photography - and 2010's partner is the Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP) at Columbia College Chicago.

A joint panel of curatorial experts will meet to review the work of photographic artists from Canada and the U.S., narrowing the shortlist to four. Both the AGO and the MoCP will mount exhibitions of the shortlisted artists' works this fall, and members of the public will vote onsite or online to determine the winner, who will be announced November 2, 2010 at a special event hosted by Aeroplan and the AGO.

Each of the four shortlisted artists will participate in a ten-day residency: the Canadian nominees will travel to the U.S., and the American artists will visit Canada. Additionally, the three artists who are not selected by the public to win the prize will receive \$5,000 toward the creation of work developed during their residencies, bringing the total amount granted to photographic artists to \$65,000. This makes The Grange Prize Canada's largest photography prize. It is also the only major Canadian art prize voted on by the public.

"The AGO is a strong advocate for the diverse and innovative contemporary photographers working both in Canada and internationally," says Matthew Teitelbaum, the AGO's Michael and Sonja Koerner Director, and CEO. "The Grange Prize is a wonderful embodiment of that commitment, and we're thrilled to partner with Aeroplan in bringing the work of these terrific artists to a global community."

"We're proud to be working with the AGO for a third year on The Grange Prize to promote the importance of photography as an art form," says Vince Timpano, President and Chief Executive Officer, Aeroplan. "We look forward to celebrating the works of the selected artists as we encourage the public to take action and vote for their favourite photographer."

The Grange Prize, now in its third year, was awarded to Mexican photographer Marco Antonio Cruz in 2009, and Winnipeg-based artist Sarah Anne Johnson in 2008, when the partner country was China. Johnson's installation *House on Fire* was exhibited at the AGO in Summer 2009; with the generous support of art collector Michael F. Nesbitt, the Gallery acquired the installation in its entirety in September 2009.

On May 26, Aeroplan and the AGO will announce this year's shortlist. The selection committee for the 2010 shortlist includes AGO assistant curator of photography Sophie Hackett; Toronto-based art collector and curator Dr. Kenneth Montague; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago associate curator Dominic Molon; and MoCP curator Karen Irvine.

Says Irvine, "The Museum of Contemporary Photography positions itself to be at the forefront of contemporary photography, so it's very exciting for us to serve as a partnering institution for the Grange Prize. The prize creates a unique dialogue between our two countries, and highlights some of the best photographers working in both the United States and Canada."

Aeroplan and the AGO gratefully acknowledge the support of The Globe and Mail and Bravo!, official Media Partners for The Grange Prize. Contemporary programming at the AGO is supported by the Canada Council for the Arts. Updates, blog postings, and more information about The Grange Prize can be found at www.grangeprize.com.

ABOUT AEROPLAN

Aeroplan, Canada's premier coalition loyalty program, is owned by Groupe Aeroplan Inc., a global leader in loyalty management. Aeroplan is a long-standing patron of the arts, with a history of supporting artists and arts initiatives across Canada. Of particular significance is the company's work, in partnership with the Art Gallery of Ontario, to develop The Grange Prize for contemporary photography. Aeroplan is committed to fostering a long-term, international dialogue about this important art form. Aeroplan has also joined the AGO in a three-year partnership as the Signature Partner of the Photography Collection Program, supporting planned AGO activities to engage visitors with photography, including special lectures and tours.

For more information about Aeroplan, please visit www.groupeaeroplan.com or www.aeroplan.com.

ABOUT THE AGO

With a permanent collection of more than 79,000 works of art, the Art Gallery of Ontario is among the most distinguished art museums in North America. In 2008, with a stunning new design by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry, the AGO opened its doors to the public to international acclaim. Highlights include Galleria Italia, a gleaming showcase made of wood and glass running the length of an entire city block along the Gallery's façade; and the feature staircase, spiraling up through the roof of Walker Court and into the new contemporary galleries above. From the extensive Group of Seven collection to the dramatic new African art gallery; from the cutting-edge works in the Vivian & David Campbell Centre for Contemporary Art to Peter Paul Rubens' masterpiece *The Massacre of The Innocents*, a highlight of the celebrated Thomson Collection, there is truly something for everyone at the AGO.

The Art Gallery of Ontario is funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Culture. Additional operating support is received from the Volunteers of the AGO, the City of Toronto, the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts.

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