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Aeroplan and the AGO Launch Photography Prize

MONTREAL and TORONTO, Feb. 6 /CNW Telbec/ - Aeroplan and the AGO are partnering to establish The Grange Prize, an annual award recognizing the work of Canadian and international contemporary photographers.

Named in honour of the AGO's historic home, The Grange Prize is the largest of its kind in Canada. The winner of the \$50,000 prize will be selected from among five Canadian and international artists each year. The international candidates for the award will be invited to Canada for artist-in-residency programs at art centres or photography schools. A student or practising photographer will also be selected to intern with each international candidate.

"Photography transcends borders," said Matthew Teitelbaum, the Michael and Sonja Koerner director, and CEO, Art Gallery of Ontario. "The Grange Prize will nurture and advance the careers of artists and engage Canadians in the burgeoning genre of art photography. Our commitment to the form is evident in our future plans - when complete in 2008, the transformed AGO's display area of photography will increase by 242 per cent."

"The Grange Prize is a natural extension of our aspiration to deliver unique, first-rank global experiences to our members," said Rupert Duchesne, President and CEO, Aeroplan. "Discussion between the two organizations started more than a year ago with the goal of raising the profile of photography at home and abroad, and encouraging engagement and educational possibilities in this, the most accessible and ubiquitous field of the visual arts."

The first Grange Prize recipient will be announced in spring 2008.

About Aeroplan

Aeroplan is Canada's premier loyalty marketing company, dedicated to developing and executing programs designed to engage the loyalty of its prestigious membership.

Aeroplan's millions of members earn Aeroplan Miles with its network of more than 60 world-class partners, representing more than 100 brands in the financial, retail and travel sectors.

Miles earned may be redeemed for Aeroplan's industry-leading ClassicFlight Rewards, innovative ClassicPlus Flight Rewards and global Star Alliance Flight Rewards, offering travel to more than 842 destinations worldwide. In 2005 alone, more than 1.35 million round-trip flight rewards were issued. Aeroplan's roster of non-flight rewards includes more than 400 exciting specialty, merchandise and experiential rewards, as well as hotel and car rental rewards.

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

About the Art Gallery of Ontario

With a permanent collection of more than 66,000 works of art, the Art Gallery of Ontario is among the most distinguished art museums in North America. In 2002, the Gallery began an extraordinary chapter in its 107-year history when it launched Transformation AGO. Multi-faceted in scope, Transformation AGO involves the unprecedented growth of the permanent collection, an innovative architectural expansion by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry, and the strengthening of the museum's endowment resources. As the imaginative centre of the city, the transformed AGO will dramatically enrich our visitors' experiences and provide new access to the full vibrancy of the art museum. Boldly declaring that art matters, the new AGO will re-open fully in 2008.

For more information about the AGO, please visit www.ago.net.

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