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POPEYE



MEDIA RELEASE –

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SA's iconic Popeye to become a floating work of art

For the first time in its 88-year history, one of Adelaide's iconic Popeye boats will become a floating work of art, receiving a unique artistic and lighting makeover in time for festival season.

The James and Diana Ramsay Foundation has commissioned local artist Carly Snoswell to create the artwork in celebration of the 100th anniversary of James Ramsay's birth, featuring colour, sequins, stars and lighting, which will illuminate across Karrawirra Pari (the River Torrens) at night.

In partnership with Guildhouse, The Popeye, and The City of Adelaide, the Foundation was looking for a unique way to celebrate the anniversary while providing a significant opportunity for a local artist to engage South Australian and visitor audiences with an inspiring artistic experience.

Executive Director Kerry de Lorme said the commission celebrated James and Diana's special relationship with South Australia and the visual and performing arts throughout their lives, a connection that continues through the Foundation's work.

"James and Diana were known supporters of the arts community and of South Australia in general," Ms de Lorme said.

"Every South Australian knows the Popeye, and visitors will want to take a look at the artwork both outside and inside the boat, and marvel at its stars as they light the river at night".

"Diana and James liked to take a risk in promoting the arts, and they would have loved to see this local artist supported with such a prominent piece of art, which all South Australians can enjoy."

Ms Snoswell's floating artwork, *Good Job*, is a celebration of simple daily pleasures and accomplishments, basking in the nostalgia of the iconic Popeye along Karrawirra Pari. The work features gold stars, a symbol of a job well done, epitomising the small achievements in people's lives and the happy moments, turning those tiny glimmers into giant wins.

Ms Snoswell worked in consultation with Kurna and Narungga man Jack Buckskin of Kuma Kaaru Cultural Services to realise the artwork's references to Kurna language and culture.

She said stars held significant meaning to Kurna language and culture. The river, a mirror of the Milky Way, sparkles with reflected stars in the natural landscape. 'Marngu-marngu', or 'speckled', highlights the many circles of the stars, the glimmering reflection of the water, and in this case, the sequins which bring the artwork together. The artwork can also play tricks on the mind and draw the audience in to take new notice of the Popeye, unabashedly proud and joyous on the Karrawirra Pari.



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She said working on the project, which was about celebration and joy, was very special.

“It's been exciting and challenging to visualise my work in a large scale, public artwork format, which as a textile artist is quite different to how I normally work,” Ms Snoswell said.

“It's a privilege to be given the opportunity to explore my work in this way, which I would not have been able to do without the support of this project, Guildhouse, and the James and Diana Ramsay Foundation. Being able to realise my work in such large-scale, high-profile way is something I've always dreamt of.”

The floating artwork will launch on Friday 24 February 2023 and remain on the Popeye I boat throughout the year.

ENDS

Additional information

An artwork titled *Good Job* by South Australian artist Carly Snoswell has been applied to the Popeye I boat. It is a non-permanent vinyl wrap and includes a lighting element that illuminates at night. It was commissioned by the James and Diana Ramsay Foundation in celebration of the Centenary of James Ramsay's birth.

The artwork was delivered by Guildhouse and received support from the City of Adelaide *Reignite project*, with input from Graphic Designer Jenna Pippett, lighting by Taylor Chadwick at Ctrl Lighting, vinyl by Visualcom, and Double Diamond and James Dodd as fabrication contractors.

The Popeye I boat will operate as usual; tickets can be booked at: <https://thepopeye.com.au/>

The Popeye has generously supported and given life to this project by supplying the Popeye I boat.

Carly Snoswell:

Carly Snoswell is an artist working and living on Kurna Land. Her work has recently examined fandom and the creation of craft objects as an ode to particular pop-cultural phenomenon. While still observing similar notions of obsession, devotion, longing, and identity, Snoswell's practice has recently broadened from themes of popular culture as she begins to explore personal experiences of motherhood, infertility and homemaking.

In 2012 she graduated with First Class Honours at the South Australian School of Art and has exhibited widely. Snoswell was Co-Director of FELTspace ARI and has undertaken residencies in Adelaide, Melbourne, India, New York, Japan, and Iceland. She has been a member of Mint Studios and Holy Rollers Studios, and has taken up studio in Adelaide. She recently completed a Masters by Research at the South Australian School of Art with her thesis “Beyonce is a Port Supporter”. Since 2015 she has built a career as a Youth Arts Worker and is Youth Program Officer for the City of Onkaparinga.



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About the James and Diana Ramsay Foundation

The JDRF was established in 2008 by Diana Ramsay AO to continue the philanthropic work of James and Diana throughout their lifetimes. The JDRF aims to impact the lives of many people by fostering excellence in the arts, health innovations and programs for young people. To date, the JDRF has awarded more than \$20 million in grants to non-profit organisations for the benefit of the community.

About Guildhouse

Guildhouse is South Australia's leading organisation for visual artists, craftspeople, and designers, creating opportunities for artists at all stages of their careers to be sustainable and build the connectivity, capacity, and profile of the arts community. Guildhouse is a dynamic for-purpose organisation with a 56-year history, supporting a thriving visual arts, craft, and design ecology by working directly with practitioners to develop their practice and work with ambition.

With a clear focus on creating opportunities for artists and leading sector development, Guildhouse engages and supports artists with creative and career development programs such as residencies, mentorships, one-on-one advice, tailored business skill development, network development and opportunities to create new work. It supports a growing membership and presents a thriving annual program of events and initiatives in partnership with the state's leading cultural and corporate partners.

About Popeye

The Popeye boats are a State Heritage icon and represent one of the best known and enduring symbols of Adelaide. Popeye boats have been plying Karrawirra Pari since 1935, when Captain Gordon Watt launched his first Popeye. The boat was constructed on the banks of the river using jarrah, measuring 7.6m and accommodating 20 people. In 1977, Popeye V was converted into a Royal Barge for the Queen's visit in March that year. Five years later in 1982, three new fibreglass Popeyes replaced the existing fleet of five boats, and officially unveiled by Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser.

The Popeye and Captain Jolleys Paddle Boats are a small family run business currently owned privately by the Shuman family. Tony and Lidija Shuman purchased The Popeye fleet in April of 2011 after nearly 20 years on the riverbank.

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