



## MEDIA RELEASE

### 2014 AIMC HONOURS TWO INDUSTRY GREATS AS IT WRAPS 69<sup>TH</sup> CONVENTION

October 16, 2014 – Gold Coast, Queensland: The 69<sup>th</sup> Australian International Movie Convention celebrated its traditional Gala Wrap function by honouring two of the industry’s finest.

**Zareh Nalbandian**, CEO of Sydney-based Animal Logic, was honoured with the Murray Forrest Award for Excellence in Filmcraft.

Zareh co-founded Sydney-based Animal Logic in 1991. It is now one of the world's most accomplished digital studios producing award-winning, ground-breaking and trail-blazing animation, visual effects and design.

The long list of films in which Animal Logic’s visual effects and animation can be seen includes *The Great Gatsby*, *Happy Feet*, *Legend of the Guardians*, *Iron Man 3*, *Hunger Games: Catching Fire* and the blockbuster hit, *The LEGO® Movie*.

Murray Forrest commented: “For me it is hard to imagine a more worthy recipient of the Excellence in Filmcraft Award. Zareh created a world-class animation and visual effects company and is committed to building a globally competitive digital production industry in Australia”.

In accepting his award, Zareh acknowledged his gratitude to Murray.

“For me this award is even more special because it comes from Murray. He was always a huge support to me - even though I do not play golf”, he said.

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#### Australian International Movie Convention

A registered company of the National Association of Cinema Operators-Australasia - ABN 42 009 664 000

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The AIMC Lifetime Achievement Award went to veteran actor, **Michael Caton**, who has acted in some of Australia’s most successful cinematic, television and stage productions since his illustrious career began in 1969.

Michael has inhabited some of the most beloved and iconic characters of the Australian screen. He became a household name in the ‘70s when he established the popular character of Harry Sullivan in *The Sullivans*, a role for which he won two Logie Awards.

His portrayal of Darryl Kerrigan in *The Castle* is not only a seminal work in the Caton canon but has added to the Australian phrase book with gems such as ‘This is going straight to the pool room’.

Michael also appeared in cult ‘70s series such as *Homicide* and *Cop Shop*, as well as a string of successful stage plays and musicals including *Hair* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Other television credits include *Stingers*, *The Flying Doctors*, *The Les Darcy Story*, *Great Expectations*, *Blue Heelers*, *All Saints*, *Wildside* and *A Country Practice*.

His lead role in the film *Strange Bedfellows*, opposite Paul Hogan, won him the SMH Star of the Year Award in 2004. Other film appearances include *The Interview*, *The 13th Floor*, *Monkeygrip* and *Hoodwinked*.

Moved by the enduring applause and standing ovation he received from the room, Michael accepted his AIMC Lifetime Achievement Award from Alan Finney, Chairman of AFI/AACTA and film consultant.

Michael acknowledged the mentors he had had in his life and gave thanks for all the opportunities that had come his way, notably the role in *The Castle*, for which he says he was not the first choice.

He thanked his wife Helen, who was in attendance, whom he said “in stormy seas keeps the good ship Caton on a steady course”.

As he wrapped up his speech, Michael held his handsome glass trophy aloft and said “I wasn’t going to but it really does have to be said – this is going straight to the pool room”.

The AIMC is hosted annually by NACO (National Association of Cinema Operators-Australasia). NACO Executive Director, Michael Hawkins, says: “Congratulations to two most worthy award recipients in Zareh Nalbandian and Michael Caton”.

Michael Hawkins says the convention is a valuable industry event for the Australian, NZ and Pacific region as it offers those in production, distribution, cinema exhibition and allied trades an unparalleled opportunity to come together once a year.

Numbers are still being finalised but it appears around 970 delegates attended this year’s AIMC, which may be a convention record.

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#### Background on Murray Forrest

Murray retired in 2008 when he was Managing Director of Atlab, following a distinguished 43-year film career. His long list of industry achievements includes being the founding chair of Ausfilm; a director of Screen Producers Association of Australia (SPAA), a past president of the Australian Cinema Pioneers, a past Board Member of the Federation of Producers of Asia, a former Chair of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (SMPTE) based in the USA. He is also a Fellow of both the Society of Motion Picture & Television Engineers (SMPTE) and the British Kinematograph, Sound & Television Society. He received the AFI’s Ken G Hall Award in 2001, for his contribution to the preservation of Australia’s film heritage, and in the same year named Australian Cinema Pioneer of the Year. In 2004, the Motion Picture Exhibitors Association honoured him with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

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**About the Australian International Movie Convention (AIMC)**

Continually attracting record numbers of delegates from Australia, New Zealand, Asia, the US and Europe, the Australian International Movie Convention (AIMC) remains the premier event to showcase the Australian film industry and provide opportunities for industry stakeholders to reflect upon and shape the issues that affect the business of motion pictures, and to network with local and international colleagues. The **Australian International Movie Convention** is held annually on the Gold Coast, Queensland and hosted by NACO, the National Association of Cinema Operators - Australasia.

The **Australian International Movie Convention** is supported by the Queensland Government through our Presenting Partner, Tourism and Events Queensland, as part of a growing calendar of sporting, cultural and regional events across the state as well as Screen Queensland and the City of Gold Coast.

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