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CAPITheticAL
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MEDIA RELEASE

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NOTE: Winners not to be notified in advance

CAPITheticAL competition reveals benefits of a northern capital

The winners of CAPITheticAL, the international competition to design a hypothetical Australian capital city, have been announced in Canberra tonight as a highlight of the capital's Centenary celebrations.

Western Australian landscape architecture firm Ecoscape won the \$70,000 first prize for its submission, *The Northern Capital*.

Drawing on the need to address the issues of population growth; financial, political and economic development; environmental and climate concerns; farming and food production; and acknowledging Indigenous Australian culture, Ecoscape proposed a new northern capital situated on the shores of Lake Argyle in the north of Western Australia.

The jury – Professor Barbara Norman (Chair), Professor Alastair Swain, Councillor John McInerney, Dr Catherin Bull AM and Callum Morton – awarded first and second prize, a commendation and a student prize from the 20 shortlisted entries, which share in a prize pool of more than \$100,000.

First Prize (\$70,000) – *The Northern Capital* by Ecoscape Aust Pty Ltd (FREMANTLE)

Second Prize (\$30,000) – *Sedimentary City Canberra* by Brit Andresen and Mara Francis (BRISBANE)

Commendation – *Made in Australia: The future of Australian Cities* by Dr Julian Bolleter and Professor Richard Weller, of the Australian Urban Design Research Centre (PERTH)

Student Prize – *Proto: Capital* by Kate Dickinson and Annabel Koeck (SYDNEY)

From an exceptionally strong field of 114 Stage 1 submissions from 24 countries, the jury unanimously decided on the final outcome of the design competition.

'The jury believes strongly that the top three entries and the winning student entry form an important and integrated narrative about the future challenges of the nation's capital,' said Professor Norman, CAPITheticAL Jury Chair.

'*The Northern Capital* addresses one of the themes that a number of entrants have considered in the competition - the questioning and future relevance of Canberra's physical location within the Australian continent in the 21st century, however unlike some other entries it does not seek to relocate Australia's capital city but to establish a second capital that better addresses Australia's position in the Asian century,' the jury said.



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Second prize winner, *Sedimentary City Canberra*, was presented as a table top scroll that 'unfurls back to a possible future. Imagined and real mappings of the site of Canberra have been laid one over another to create a "sedimentation" that allows us to trace the past across the landscape,' the jury recorded. Brit Andresen's and Mara Francis's entry ruminates on the layering effect of modern cities.

'In response to changing conditions, cities periodically grow and shrink and some fall into ruin leaving only fragments – seemingly to vanish like many First Cities of pre-history. Cities are therefore rarely built from "scratch" but are, over time, overlaid city-layer upon city-layer – so that within each new city-layer there are remnants of all previous cities,' the pair reflected.

Themes central to the final submissions include better connection to the north, Australia's Indigenous communities and to South East Asia; recognising and responding to extreme weather, climate change and living with our environment; and embracing regional Australia as a critical consideration in our strategic national vision.

CAPITheticAL competition ambassador, His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce AM AE commented on the variety of responses to the hypothetical questions the competition proposed.

'What a package of surprises we had in the entries for the CAPITheticAL design competition for a hypothetical capital, with 114 final entries from 24 countries reminiscent of the original design competition in 1910.

'These entries are not a reflection on the original concept of Canberra by the revered Walter Burley and Marion Mahoney Griffin, but a new way of looking at the nation's capital, as if we were to have started again in 2013. I'm sure everyone will find something that they have always thought about, and of course times have changed, so let's take a wild ride into 2013 and keep an open mind for the future.'

The 20 shortlisted CAPITheticAL submissions will be showcased at **The Gallery of Australian Design**.

Featuring plans, videos and drawings, the exhibition presents a rich trove of ideas, both fantastical and practical, to provoke, amuse and ultimately delight visitors. These hypothetical capitals offer imaginative resolutions to questions of national symbolism and identity, access to government, sustainable development and community building.

This free exhibition is open from 6 March until 11 May 2013. Visit www.gad.org.au for more information.

CAPITheticAL is a Centenary of Canberra project, proudly supported by the ACT Government and the Australian Government and administered by the Australian Institute of Architects.

For more information on the competition visit www.capithetical.com.au.

For media enquiries, high resolution images and details on the winning submissions contact:



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