



**Association
of illustrators**

NEWS RELEASE

ASSOCIATION OF ILLUSTRATORS RELOCATES TO SOMERSET HOUSE

The Association of Illustrators (AOI) is moving to a new central London location in the Autumn. The organisation is to be based at the historic Somerset House from 3rd September. This marks a significant development in the organisation's history as it prepares for its 40th anniversary in 2013 and it places the AOI at the centre of a creative hub that has been designed to stimulate an inspirational community environment of private and public sector enterprises that share the same values. Other businesses that are based here include Culture Capital Exchange, The Sorrell Foundation, National Youth Orchestra and Royal Society of Literature. This has been made possible by the continual work of Somerset House Trust, which aims to provide a stimulating environment for exploration and relaxation, hosting a varied, year-round programme including contemporary fashion, photography and art and design exhibitions, and outdoor events such as Film4 Summer Screen, Summer Series and Skate at Somerset House.

Heng Khoo, the AOI's Managing Director says, 'This is a major development in the AOI's history. It has found a lively home in Somerset House that shares the same values and culture across the creative industries. The new location provides the perfect opportunity to build on our current strengths and develop an exciting and interesting programme of events that will benefit members on every level'.

Andrew Coningsby, Chairman of the AOI's Board, says, 'The AOI's very exciting move to Somerset House, in the view of the whole Board, enables the AOI to provide an improved service to its membership as well as developing its professional partnerships. The greater range of facilities also ensures that the AOI has an invigorating showcase for contemporary illustration that will appeal to both aficionados and general cultural enthusiasts'.

The move also coincides with the opening of the AOI's Images 36: Best of British Illustration exhibition at Somerset House in October. The opening of the free exhibition will also initiate a number of on-going events and talks to be held at Somerset House for AOI's members. An accompanying book, *Images 36: Best of British Illustration 2012* is also launched on 2nd October. It features 350 artworks and profiles from 240 illustrators, including those featured in the exhibition and after Somerset House, the *Images 36 Exhibition* begins a national tour.

The AOI organises Images, the UK's only independent jury-only selected exhibition and publishes the quarterly Varoom! magazine. This year it has participated in the New Designers event and Pick Me Up, the annual contemporary graphic arts fair hosted by Somerset House, but it has also produced a varied number of events including the hugely popular children's book illustration one-day industry conference with talks from top industry professionals such as Alex T Smith and Tony Ross. It has also undertaken collaborative projects with organisations such as London Transport Museum (and Ted

Baker). The AOI continues to campaign for illustrators' rights of its members as well as their professional standing artistically and commercially.

For further information, please contact: Paul Smith, press@theaoi.com 020 7613 4417

General website: www.theaoi.com Details of Images exhibition: www.aoiimages.com

Note for editors:

Association of Illustrators

The Association of Illustrators (AOI) is a non-profit trade association with a membership that includes freelance illustrators, agents, clients, students and colleges. Established in 1973, it is the leading body to represent illustrators in the UK and campaigns for illustrators' rights, continually working to increase the professional standing of illustrators, commercially and artistically. The AOI works to improve contract content and contracting practice extended to illustrators by commissioners. It publishes a quarterly magazine, 'Varoom!' and produces the annual 'Images' competition and touring exhibition, now in its 36th year, which celebrates the best in contemporary British illustration.

Somerset House

Somerset House is a spectacular neo-classical building in the heart of London, sitting between the Strand and the River Thames. Since opening to the public in 2000, Somerset House has produced a distinctive public programme that annually draws over 2 million visitors to the site, providing a stimulating environment for exploration and relaxation. The varied, year-round programme includes an open air film and concert season and ice rink, as well as temporary exhibitions focusing on contemporary fashion, design, art and architecture, family workshops and free guided tours. In September 2009, Somerset House became the new home of London Fashion Week.