

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Caponi Art Park celebrates the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of its founder**

*Public open house on May 7 to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of Anthony Caponi, founder and artistic director*

(Eagan, Minn., April 14, 2011) --- Anthony Caponi, Italian sculptor, author, art professor emeritus of Macalester College and founder of Caponi Art Park and Learning Center, a nonprofit in Eagan, is turning 90 years old. Anthony Caponi has been a pioneer in the movement to promote public art, community involvement and preserving open space. He continues to actively shape the direction of one of his greatest contributions to the public, Caponi Art Park and Learning Center. Caponi Art Park and Learning Center invites the public to an open house on Saturday, May 7 from 1-4 p.m. to celebrate Anthony's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and the reopening of Caponi Art Park for its 2011 season.

Anthony Caponi has lived in Minnesota for over 55 years and has made significant contributions to Minnesota's vibrant arts community.

He rediscovered how to cast metal using the Lost-Wax Process by reading Benvenuto Cellini's autobiography in its original medieval Italian, successfully introducing the process for others to use. While teaching at Macalester College from 1942-1991 Anthony was a driving force in creating the Janet Wallace Fine Arts Center, the first college building in the country that was designed and built specifically for the fine arts. Anthony Caponi has devoted himself for more than 30 years to developing Caponi Art Park and Learning Center as a center for the arts, a place where visual and performing arts are presented and fostered in a natural setting.

"Anthony Caponi is a vital community leader and advocate for the arts," says Craig Harris, composer, new media artist and Caponi Art Park and Learning Center's board chair. "His long and distinguished career as a sculptor, teacher, art administrator, and writer exemplifies what it means to be thoroughly engaged in life as an artist and is something that should be celebrated."

All are invited to an open house at Caponi Art Park and Learning Center on Saturday, May 7 from 1-4 p.m. to celebrate the 90th birthday of Anthony Caponi. The birthday party and spring open house will also celebrate the reopening of Caponi Art Park and Learning Center for its 2011 season. Visitors can explore Caponi Art Park, eat some cake, and enjoy ongoing family-friendly activities, including performers, art activities and Italian games. A formal presentation

honoring Anthony Caponi will occur at 1:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. More information is available at [www.caponiartpark.org/birthday](http://www.caponiartpark.org/birthday).

### **ABOUT CAPONI ART PARK AND LEARNING CENTER**

Caponi Art Park and Learning Center is a nonprofit organization located on 60 acres of rolling wooded hills in Eagan that includes a 20 acre sculpture garden, Theater in the Woods outdoor amphitheater and miles of walking paths. Caponi Art Park and Learning Center makes art accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds by providing a cultural and educational center where people come together with art and nature to restore, nurture and maintain the basic unity of the human spirit. The park is open free to the public Tuesday through Sunday from May through October. Donations are graciously accepted to help maintain the park and make quality programs possible. [www.caponiartpark.org](http://www.caponiartpark.org)

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