

MEDIA RELEASE

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Artists, Awards and Arts Patrons **Goodwill gathers in Australia's capital**

Capital Arts Patrons Organisation (CAPO) Patron, His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce AM AE launches CAPO 28 at a special event tonight at artespresso surrounded by artists, arts patrons and artworks. The program for the evening includes an unveiling of 2011 awards and events and a new logo, a CAPO rap performed by local MC 'Feline' AKA Fenella Edwards, and music by *Frequently Asked Questions*.

For over 28 years, CAPO, a volunteer non-profit organisation, has supported the ACT region's artists through an evolving annual arts program, now featuring nine awards, artists' talks and an art exhibition and auction. Since its establishment in 1983, CAPO has disbursed over \$1.7 million in arts fellowships and awards funded by auction sales and sponsorship from arts and business communities in Canberra.

CAPO 2011 award applications are open until 21 October 2011. Submissions are invited from artists and arts organisations from Canberra and the region. The *Reading Room CAPO London Exhibition Award* is open to artists throughout Australia. CAPO awards support all art forms and mediums. Past award winners include performing artists and companies, visual artists and arts organisations, contemporary craft artists, designer-makers, filmmakers, new media artists and writers.

Last year, visual artist Franki Sparke received CAPO's most prestigious award, the *CAPO Fellowship*, based on the outstanding quality of her work and exciting application. In this she outlined her intent to research and develop characters, locations and plot lines for *Open City*, the working title for a comic narrative series inspired by the unique social and urban landscape of Canberra, her home town.

Fundraising is key to the extent to which CAPO can continue to increase financial and professional development support for artists. Equally important is the generosity of artists and galleries in donating artworks to the auction, highlighting the value of the relationship between artists and arts collectors, and the importance of the role of patronage in cultural life.

CAPO President, Neil Doody, says, "*The CAPO Board's past and present dedication to presenting an exciting and educational annual program is inspired by the support of the community. Each year, it sets out to increase the number of awards and the support it can give to artists. In 2010, we facilitated a new award, the Reading Room CAPO London Exhibition Award. This opened up a great international exhibition and travel opportunity for emerging artists from throughout Australia.*"

Speaking at the launch is Antonia Aitken, a printmaker living and making in Canberra, who received the inaugural Reading Room CAPO London Exhibition Award. *River*, an exhibition of large-scale intaglio and relief prints on paper, investigating rivers and the role they play in our lives and environment., opened at the Reading Room Gallery in London on 26 April this year,

CAPO 28 takes place on Saturday, 26 November at the National Archives of Australia and will feature over 70 artworks. The annual CAPO art auction has become recognised as a significant annual survey of the region's leading established and emerging visual and craft artists.

CAPO Patron, His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce AM AE will announce the winners of the *CAPO Fellowship*, the *Rosalie Gascoigne Memorial Award* and the *Reading Room CAPO London Exhibition Award*. Representatives of sponsoring organisations are invited to present their named awards. Tickets are available from the CAPO website and office.

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