



His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce AM AE  
CAPO Patron

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **The CAPO Fellowship *recognising excellence in the arts***

Since its establishment in 1983, the Capital Arts Patrons' Organisation (CAPO) has awarded a CAPO Fellowship to 19 artists. The CAPO Fellowship is CAPO's most prestigious award and is open to established artists working in any discipline or art form, who are residents of Canberra or the region.

The purpose of the CAPO Fellowship is to enable an artist to concentrate on his / her work for a set period of time, up to one year. The financial assistance given is aimed at enabling that artist to complete a body of work, develop a new technique, or simply improve the standard of work by concentrating on it more fully for a period. As with all of CAPO's awards, the amount of financial assistance is subject to funds raised during the year, and at the CAPO annual art exhibition and auction.

The CAPO Fellowship for 2010 has given Franki Sparke, a visual artist, printmaker and illustrator, the opportunity 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.

*"The aim of OPEN CITY is not to recreate a literal representation of Canberra or focus on parochial issues, but to invent a new and unique graphic landscape - a slightly surreal place in which familiar elements are celebrated, challenged, or turned upside-down",* explains Franki.

*"I believe the arts can challenge and dramatically reshape the way a place is perceived, and that Canberra – an unusual and often misunderstood city – is long overdue for a positive and edgy mythology to call its own. I hope that an alternate creative vision might have significant impact on our identity and self-image, engage a substantially new audience, and become a framework through which I can both celebrate and confront aspects of my home town.*

*"No narrative world can exist convincingly without a sustained period of research and development. In practice this means months of drawing and studying the urban life and landscape, and long stretches of studio time – all of which has been made possible by the CAPO Fellowship" she added.*

Neil Doody, CAPO President, said *"Franki Sparke is an admirable ambassador for CAPO and recipient of the CAPO Fellowship, representing excellence in her chosen field. She is an inspiration to all artists".*

Who will be awarded the CAPO Fellowship in 2011? This award and nine others will be announced at CAPO 28 on 26 November 2011 at the National Archives of Australia.

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