



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
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Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao

Newsletter – 18 March 2005

This is the 66th in a series of occasional newsletters from the Victoria University centre of the International Institute of Modern Letters. For more information about any of the items, please email modernletters@vuw.ac.nz.

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1. Laurel crown for Miss New Zealand

Wellington poet Jenny Bornholdt was announced as the new Te Mata Poet Laureate at a function in Hawke's Bay last Friday. As Laureate, she will receive \$5000, a ceremonial tokotoko, and of course some fine Te Mata wine. Each poet laureate is also expected to produce a book of poems as part of their two-year tenure and *Footfall*, the volume by outgoing laureate Brian Turner, was launched in late February. Event organisers and schools should note that there is a travel fund to subsidise laureate appearances (see www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/activities/poet-laureate.aspx for details).

Jenny Bornholdt was Meridian Energy Katherine Mansfield Fellow in Menton in 2002, and in 2003 became an Arts Foundation laureate. Her selected poems, *Miss New Zealand*, appeared from VUP in 1997, and her most recent book, *Summer* (VUP, 2003), records her Menton experiences as well as reaching back to reflect on her family in New Zealand. The New Zealand Electronic Poetry Centre (<http://www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz>) has just added a page on her work.

2. The departure lounge

We have now said farewell and thanks to Earle McCartney and Megan Johnson, who taught the Iowa Fiction and Poetry Workshops during December, January and February. Earle is returning to Philadelphia to complete his novel, and Megan's award-winning collection of poems *The Waiting* will appear from the University of Iowa Press in April. Samples of both writers' work appear in *Turbine* 04 (www.vuw.ac.nz/turbine).

We have also reluctantly farewelled Fiona Wright – well, almost, since she has been prevailed upon to do the production work for the annual *Best New Zealand Poems* 04, coming soon to our new-look website. We wish her all the best in her legal pursuits, and hope she will come back to visit often.

3. The arrival gate

In the additions column, we welcome Clare Moleta, a recent arrival from across the Tasman (although born in Wellington, we hasten to add) as our new administrator extraordinaire, joining Katie Hardwick-Smith. While ethics did not permit us to clone Fiona, staff and students should be reassured to know that Clare, too, is studying law part-time. She also has a background in arts administration.

We also welcome Nick Twemlow, a Fulbright Fellow from Chicago. While in New Zealand Nick will be working on a manuscript titled *First Crossing*. He will also explore a family connection, researching the life and works of New Zealand children's author Joyce West. *The Canary*, an annual magazine of poems Nick co-edits back in the States, will be publishing its fourth issue in early April. Featuring the work of Cole Swensen, Fanny Howe, Dan Beachy-Quick, and many others, the issue is also (Nick says) 'packed with several long, emphatically wondrous poems.' Copies will be available for sale in late April, and an issue of each *Canary* will be in the Institute library, as well. Check out <http://www.thecanary.org>, for more information (the website is currently undergoing a facelift, and should be fully functional by early April).

4. Teaching writing in the USA (1)

2001 MA graduate and Adam Prize winner Paula Morris has just been appointed assistant professor of creative writing at Tulane University, New Orleans, against a field of over 150 candidates. Paula was the recipient of a Schaeffer Fellowship to attend the Iowa Writers' Workshop, and of the three finalists for the tenure-track job, two were Iowa graduates. The final campus interviews took place over 30 hours, a grueling schedule of lunches, dinners, meetings and a public reading. The other full-

time creative writing teacher at Tulane is the poet Peter Cooley, a visitor to the MA workshop here at the IIML in 2004.

Paula continues to maintain New Zealand links as a reviewer for the *Listener* and *Landfall*; some recent fiction and a perspective on book reviewing in New Zealand appear in *Landfall* 208. Her first novel, *Queen of Beauty*, won the award for Best First Book of Fiction in the 2003 Montana New Zealand Book Awards.

5. Teaching writing in the USA (2)

Meanwhile, longtime director of the Iowa Workshop Frank Conroy has stepped down, and the hunt is on for his successor. Students are apparently taking a keen interest in the process, and discussion is running hot on the internet. No doubt the selection process is even more high-pressure than that at Tulane. Reports on the shortlisted candidates are at

http://www.mediabistro.com/galleycat/authors/the_directors_cut_19255.asp

Further comment on US creative writing programmes can be found in *Poets and Writers* magazine, which has just started a regular column on the subject.

(<http://pw.pmail.biz/pmailweb/ct?id=-40+48606633+46+1+18340>)

6. Choosing the moment (or, the Sweetman Technique)

The power of literature knows no bounds. At a post-launch event for Katy Robinson's novel *The Linoleum Room*, the writer's partner, music critic Simon Sweetman, proposed marriage in front of assembled family and friends. Reports have it that Katy said yes. Katy was a member of our 2001 MA workshop, where *The Linoleum Room* first found its way to the page. We wish both her and Simon all the best for their life together - much happiness and, of course, great reviews.

7. Undergraduate prizes

We're pleased to announce the winners of the IIML's undergraduate writing prizes for 2004. The Maurice Gee Prize in Children's Writing goes to Hannah Jolly and Jillian Sullivan. The Story! Inc Prize for Poetry goes to Daniel Musgrove, and the Prize for Original Composition (for which members of the fiction and creative non-fiction workshops are eligible) has been awarded to Penny Walker from the short fiction workshop. Congratulations to all.

8. New URLs for IIML

The IIML's web URLs have changed. Our home page will remain the same, <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters>, as will the Best New Zealand Poems and Turbine index pages, but if you have links to other pages please note these will need to be updated. The basic URLs are:

IIML website:

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters>

Best New Zealand Poems:

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/bnzp>

Turbine (electronic journal):

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/turbine>

9. Beowulf vs. Beowulf: the battle for box office

Anglo-Saxon poetry is suddenly hot property. Two films of the epic *Beowulf* are currently in production. The first, a \$12m co-production filmed in Iceland and directed by Sturla Gunnarsson, is described by its producers as a 'spiritual film'. The second, a \$70m Hollywood production directed by Robert Zemeckis, is described by one of the scriptwriters, author Neil Gaiman, as "... a sort of dark-ages *Trainspotting* [as in the film], filled with mead and blood and madness". This renewed interest in *Beowulf*, which has been filmed twice previously, is credited to the success of the *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy, and the fact that *Beowulf* was a key inspiration for JRR Tolkien.

10. Writing elsewhere (1)

The number of residencies on offer to New Zealand writers seems to increase every year. Fiona Farrell will spend part of 2006 living in Ireland and working on a new project as one of three inaugural recipients of the Rathcoola residency, which is open to writers and artists from Australia and New Zealand. Closer to home, playwright and novelist Renée will take up the place recently vacated by French writer/translator Pierre Furlan at the Randell Cottage in Thorndon (a fellowship with joint New Zealand-French support). And writers wishing to explore the French connection further should note that the French Embassy has put together a list of residencies and programmes for individuals and institutions available in France. These include residencies for writers, artists and translators, as well as a range of residencies, grants, internships and training promoted by the French Ministry of Culture. Some programmes require the support of the applicant's workplace or institution. Information and closing dates for applications may be found at www.ambafrance-nz.org.

11. Writing elsewhere (2)

Creative New Zealand and Fulbright New Zealand are calling for applications to their residency for New Zealand writers of Pacific Islands heritage, based at the Centre for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawaii for three months from late August 2005. The residency is open to Pacific writers across all genres, including playwrights, fiction and non-fiction writers, poets and screen writers, and applications close at 5pm Friday, 1 April 2005. For more details and application forms, visit the Fulbright New Zealand website (www.fulbright.org.nz).

Creative New Zealand is also offering New Zealand writers, visual artists and craft/object artists the chance to apply for residencies in New Delhi and Beijing, in partnership with the Asia New Zealand Foundation.

The three-month residencies are available at the Sanskriti Foundation of India's Kendra campus on the outskirts of New Delhi and at Redgate Gallery in Beijing, China. Both residencies are aimed at established artists who wish to pursue projects related to the location or the facilities of the host organisation. Priority will also be given to applicants who show an appreciation of the environment and culture of the residency's country.

The deadline for applications for both residencies is 5pm, Friday 20 May 2005. For application forms and guidelines or visit the Resources section of Creative New Zealand's website (www.creativenz.govt.nz).

12. Recent web reading

Kill Bill vol 3

<http://www.listener.co.nz/default,3520.sm>

Another bad creative writing course

<http://www.cbc.ca/arts/books/storiedfranchise.html>

English 1: the poet laureate on English teaching in the UK

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/news/articles/0,6109,1419994,00.html>

The pen and the sword: Orhan Pamuk

<http://observer.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,5136333-102275,00.html>

Clint Eastwood and WB Yeats

<http://www.utvlive.com/newsroom/indepth.asp?id=8107&pt=e>

Writing and rapping

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/fridayreview/story/0,12102,1429414,00.html>

Googling oulipo

<http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/print?id=544142>

Speakers corner for the digital age

<http://www.speakerscorner.org.uk/index.html>

Bad book covers

<http://punkrockpenguin.net/waste/amuse/badcovers/>

Screenplay pitches

<http://www.queryletters.blogspot.com/>

Writers' Guild Awards

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/film/4281705.stm>

Man Booker International Prize – what are the odds?

<http://www.complete-review.com/quarterly/vol6/issue1/mbiodds.htm>

Engineering, intercultural capital and Auckland

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,5132607-110428,00.html>

Who was Shakespeare?

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/news/articles/0,6109,1423471,00.html>

Language and the Web

http://www.wired.com/news/culture/0,1284,66671,00.html?tw=wn_tophead_4

Wittgenstein's dictionary

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/news/articles/0,6109,1418116,00.html>

13. Great lists of our time

It's over between us... break up lines grounded in philosophical disciplines

The Consequentialist: We aren't optimal for each other.

The Solipsist: It's not you, it's me.

The Empiricist: I think we should see other people.

The Rationalist: I'm not a priority to you any more.

The Rationalist, v 2.0: I've been doing some thinking...

The Content Externalist: Ever since we moved, you've changed.

The Continentalist: You've lost that love and feeling.

The Egalitarian: This is the best thing for both of us.

The Paternalist: In time you'll come to see that this is the best thing for both of us.

The Reliabilist: This just isn't working anymore.

The Functionalist: I don't care about accommodating your feelings.

The Foundationalist: We have nothing left to build upon.

The Relativist: It's no one's fault.

The Atheist: These things just happen.

The Kantian: You lied to me!

The Consequentialist, v 2.0: You should have lied to my mother about her pot roast!

The anti-Fictionalist: I'm sick of faking it.
The Cartesian: I don't clearly and distinctly perceive a future together.
The Motivational Externalist: Even though I believed it at the time,
I know now that I never really loved you.
The Behaviorist: I just can't keep going through the motions anymore.
The Presentist: There just isn't any future for us.
The Eternalist: At least we'll always have that weekend in Paris.
The Modal Realist: This will never work—we're from different worlds.
