



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS

Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao

Newsletter – 10 July 2007

This is the 110th 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

1. UK writer leads off Writers on Mondays	1
2. Best New Zealand Poems live	2
3. But wait, there's more	2
4. Dr Dagg, we presume.....	3
5. Turbine needs you	3
6. The expanding bookshelf.....	3
7. Shurely shome mishtake.....	3
8. Winter poetry workshop	4
9. From the whiteboard	4
10. The expanding bookshelf (2)	5
11. Prize in Modern Letters	5
12. Lord Cottage welcomes biographers (and a playwright).....	5
13. A Scottish prize.....	5
14. An appeal for solidarity with Sir Salman	6
15. Recent web reading.....	6
16. Great lists of our time.....	8

1. UK writer leads off Writers on Mondays

A lively line-up of local and international authors is set to warm up the weeks of winter in the International Institute of Modern Letters' annual Writers on Mondays series. The 2007 season starts this coming Monday, 16 July, from 1-2 pm at City Gallery Wellington with visiting UK novelist and poet Lavinia Greenlaw. Admission is free, all welcome.

Lavinia Greenlaw (www.lavinia-greenlaw.com) has written three highly regarded volumes of poetry and two novels: *Mary George of Allnorthover*, winner of France's Prix du Premier Roman Etranger, and *An Irresponsible Age*.

She has recently edited a volume of poems about medicine, and a new non-fiction book, *The Importance of Music to Girls*, is due from Faber in August. Lavinia Greenlaw has won the UK's Forward Prize for Best Single Poem, and has produced a variety of programmes for BBC radio. Last seen in Wellington as a guest of Writers

and Readers Week, she is back in New Zealand at the invitation of Victoria University, where she will offer the fourth in a series of international masterclasses for writers enrolled in the MA in Creative Writing. Later this year she will take up a job teaching creative writing at the University of East Anglia, the UK's oldest and most prestigious writing programme. An interview with Lavinia Greenlaw will be broadcast this weekend on Radio New Zealand National's Arts on Sunday programme (2.30 pm).

2. Best New Zealand Poems live

Writers on Mondays continues on 23 July with *Best New Zealand Poems 06*, an early contribution to Montana Poetry Day activities, most of which take place on Friday 27 July. This reading features some of the Wellington poets selected for the annual online anthology of New Zealand's best poetry. Jenny Bornholdt, James Brown, Geoff Cochrane, Anna Jackson, Andrew Johnston, Gregory O'Brien, Chris Price, J C Sturm (whose work will be read by Roger Steele) and Alison Wong perform work chosen by editors Anne Kennedy and Robert Sullivan for *Best New Zealand Poems 06*. James Brown's *The Year of the Bicycle* and Alison Wong's *Cup* are on the Montana New Zealand Book Award shortlist in the Best Book and Best First Book of Poetry categories respectively, and the winners will be announced on Poetry Day. Our thanks to Montana for supporting the reading, and to Creative New Zealand for its support of *Best New Zealand Poems*.

After this Writers on Mondays takes a two-week break while the gallery is closed, but then the season continues its strong poetry emphasis with appearances by US poet Dora Malech (13 August), a full hour with Wellington poet and novelist Geoff Cochrane (20 August), and Italian translator and scholar Vincent Moleta discussing Michelangelo's poetic output (27 August). Paris-based New Zealand poet and journalist Andrew Johnston returns to the series on 3 September to discuss his major study of New Zealand poetry and read from his recent book *Sol*. For the complete Writers on Mondays programme (which runs through to 29 October), to peruse *Best New Zealand Poems 06*, or to find out about other Poetry Day events, visit:

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/activities/monday-writers.aspx>

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/bestnzpoems>

http://www.booksellers.co.nz/mpd_main.htm

3. But wait, there's more

The NZ Book Month website (<http://nzbookmonth.co.nz/>) is currently featuring blogs by poets Andrew Johnston, James Brown and Fiona Farrell in the run-up to Montana Poetry Day.

And Dora Malech, visiting convenor of the Institute of Modern Letters MA Creative Writing Programme, is the featured poet at the monthly meeting of the New Zealand Poetry Society in Wellington on Thursday 19 July at 7.30 pm. The venue is St John's

Church on the corner of Dixon and Willis Streets. An open mic segment precedes the guest reading.

4. Dr Dagg, we presume

John Clarke was recently awarded an honorary doctorate by Victoria University. His acceptance speech at the ceremony in Melbourne included an amusing summary of his years at Victoria University, during which he remarks that 'good talk is the first draft of a great many things'. Although many have tried, no one has succeeded in enticing John Clarke back across the Tasman for a public appearance in some years, but you can listen to his Hon Doc acceptance speech here:

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/alumni/News/Media/JC-HonDoc-Pt3.mp3?lc=2136.19>

5. Turbine needs you

Turbine is the online journal of fiction, poetry, essay and memoir published in December each year by the International Institute of Modern Letters. *Turbine* is now inviting submissions for this year's issue, and we are seeking exciting new work by writers from all over New Zealand. The deadline for submissions is 23 October, and submission guidelines can be found at <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/turbine/submissions.htm>

6. The expanding bookshelf

Louise Wareham Leonard's second novel, *Miss me a lot of* (Victoria University Press) was launched by *Dominion Post* Books Editor Guy Somerset at Unity Books in Wellington last Thursday, and has also received fulsome praise on Saturday's book pages. *Since you asked*, her first novel, was published by US publisher Akashic, and gained Wareham Leonard a shortlisting for the 2006 Prize in Modern Letters. VUP predicts this novel will make her much better known in New Zealand.

7. Shurely shome mishtake?

Speaking of VUP, we take this rather belated opportunity to correct an item that appeared in the *Sunday Star Times'* gossip column (17 June, 2007), which contains an alarming error:

"Which local novelist saw fit to get totally plastered at an Auckland Writers Festival party and drape herself all over a very sober (he doesn't drink) and very married, Richard E. Grant. A certain Victoria University Press publisher, who is also teetotal, charitably intervened and removed her from the person on Mr Grant, and the lady woke up next day with a ghastly headache."

The phrase "who is also teetotal" is presumably a mistake for "who is by no means teetotal".

8. Winter poetry workshop

Lynn Davidson is having a busy year: as well as teaching poetry and short fiction in the Whitireia Creative Writing Programme, she is completing an MA in Creative Writing at Victoria University, and on Sunday 29 July and Sunday 5 August, she'll be teaching the New Zealand Poetry Society's Winter Poetry Workshop. The workshops run from 1-5pm at the Museum of Wellington City and Sea. The fee is \$80; email the National Coordinator (info@poetrysociety.org.nz) to register, or write to The National Coordinator, PO Box 5283, Wellington 6145.

9. From the whiteboard

Barry Lopez's advice for young writers (from his essay collection *About this Life*):

"Once I was asked by a seatmate on a trans-Pacific flight, a man who took the liberty of glancing repeatedly at the correspondence in my lap, what instruction he should give his fifteen-year-old daughter, who wanted to be a writer. I didn't know how to answer him, but before I could think I heard myself saying, Tell your daughter three things. Tell her to read, I said. Tell her to read whatever interests her, and protect her if someone declares what she's reading to be trash. No one can fathom what happens between a human being and a written language. She may be paying attention to things in the words beyond anyone else's comprehension, things that feed her curiosity, her singular heart and mind. Tell her to read classics like *The Odyssey*. They've been around a long time because the patterns in them have proved endlessly useful.

Second, I said, tell your daughter that she can learn a great deal about writing by reading and by studying books about grammar and the organization of ideas, but that if she wishes to write well she will have to become someone. She will have to discover her beliefs, and then speak to us from within those beliefs. If her prose doesn't come out of her belief, whatever that proves to be, she will only be passing along information, of which we are in no great need. So help her discover what she means.

Finally, I said, tell your daughter to get out of town, and help her do that. I don't necessarily mean to travel to Kazakhstan, but to learn another language, to live with people other than her own, to separate herself from the familiar. Then, when she returns, she will be better able to understand why she loves the familiar, and will give us a fresh sense of how fortunate we are to share these things.

Read. Find out what you truly believe. Get away from the familiar. Every writer, I told him, will offer you thoughts about writing that are different, but these are three that I trust.

10. The expanding bookshelf (2)

There's also some publishing activity emerging from our undergraduate students. 2005 Poetry Workshop participants Bridie Laffey, Georgina Titheridge and Marnie Prickett are launching a book of their poems this Friday 13 July at Thistle Hall, Cuba Street. BYO, all welcome.

And recent Short Fiction workshop participant Lynne Jamneck is the editor of *Periphery* (Haworth Press), a newly published anthology of erotic science fiction which is reportedly gaining excellent reviews: 'A fine sampling of work from today's prominent writers of queer and speculative fiction...grab a copy before the fundies set them on fire.' (Fearless Books) 'A captivating and compelling reading experience....a genuine galactic jewel.' (The Crown)

11. Prize in Modern Letters

A reminder to writers and publishers that the deadline for nominations for the 2008 Prize in Modern Letters is 28 July. The \$65,000 Prize, administered by the IIIML, is open to New Zealand writers who have published no more than two books. For full eligibility and entry conditions, see:

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/activities/prize-in-modern-letters.aspx>

12. Lord Cottage welcomes biographers (and a playwright)

Four writers will take up residencies in the Robert Lord Writers Cottage in Dunedin in 2007 and 2008. Victoria University Professor Emeritus Vincent O'Sullivan will work on his biography of Ralph Hotere, Gerry Evans (who completed his MA in Creative Writing at the Institute in 2000) will work on a biography of the novelist Noel Hilliard, and Margaret Scott will prepare an edition of *Landfall* editor Charles Brasch's journals. The residency enables these writers to have ready access to the Hocken Library collections. In 2008, playwright and novelist Renée will arrive to start work on a new play.

13. A Scottish prize

Kirsty Gunn's novel *The Boy and the Sea* (Faber) has won the Scottish Arts Council's Book Award for Fiction, ahead of a shortlist that included books by Kate Atkinson, Jackie Kay, Bernard MacLaverty and James Robertson. Each category winner receives a cheque for £5000, and goes forward to be considered for an additional prize of £20,000 (an overall prize of £25,000) as the Sundial Scottish Arts Council Book of the Year, the largest award of its kind in Scotland. Kirsty Gunn, who studied creative writing at Victoria University, is perhaps best known for her novella *Rain*, made into

a film by Christine Jeffs. She now teaches creative writing at the University of Dundee.

14. An appeal for solidarity with Sir Salman

The International Literature Festival in Berlin is circulating an appeal against the recent renewal of hostilities towards Salman Rushdie. They write:

“Nothing has changed since 1989: every threat made against Salman Rushdie is a threat to all writers. As long as one tries to reduce Salman Rushdie to silence, every writer working in defence of human rights and literature, as well as of freedom as an indisputable value, must be personally concerned. Although no one can force us to like what is written, thought or spoken by others, it is nonetheless our duty to tolerate these things in the name of our own freedom. Our primary responsibility as writers is to support those whose freedom of expression is threatened, regardless of what cultural background or literary genre they belong to. For this reason, we condemn the official and nonofficial threats issued by Iran and Pakistan against Salman Rushdie following his knighthood conferred by the British authorities.”

If you want to sign the appeal, send your name, the country you come from and "Appeal Salman Rushdie" to: pen-germany@t-online.de

15. Recent web reading

The culture industry – or is it?

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/story/0,,2114661,00.html>

The vexed art of the book critic

http://www.notesandqueries.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=75&Itemid=48

The (other) Weinsteins shut up shop in Hollywood

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/05/books/05heri.html?_r=1&ref=arts&oref=slogin

How movies can help you succeed in business

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6260548.stm>

A film by Lindsay Rabbitt (broadband needed)

<http://www.lindsayrabbitt.com/index.php?StreamingVideo>

Australian Poetry Publishing

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,22010934-5001986,00.html>

A yachting poem

http://www.cscs.umich.edu/~crshalizi/Poetry/Williams/The_Yachts

Damien Wilkins

<http://www.95bfm.com/assets/sm/175988/3/timnealeanddamienwilkins2.mp3>

Chinese Whispers

http://netherlands.poetryinternationalweb.org/piw/cms/cms/cms_module/index.php?obj_id=9668

A publisher's rejection letter

http://www.snowbooks.com/weblog/2007/06/how_we_choose_what_to_publish.html#more

UK short story competitions

<http://www.theshortstory.org.uk/prizes/>

Flatland

<http://home.planet.nl/~akoele/Flatland.pdf>

The Warwick Review

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/writingprog/warwickreview/march2007/>

A creative writing course

http://blog.susan-hill.com/blog/_archives/2007/6/16/3026894.html

Blue books

<http://www.booktwo.org/notebook/the-bluebook/>

Free books

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/news/articles/0,,2107375,00.html>

Natasha Judd,s website

<http://natashajudd.com/>

Letter to an MFA

http://mjroseblog.typepad.com/buzz_balls_hype/2007/06/letter_to_an_mf_2.html

Best fiction to film

<http://www.bookforum.com/inprint/200703/257>

PoMo English Title Generator

<http://www.brysons.net/generator/textonly.cgi>

Live Antarctica

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvDJNg4-93A=>

16. Great lists of our time

An alphabetical list of poems that have a page about them in Wikipedia.

A

Absalom and Achitophel - John Dryden (1681, continuation attrib. to Nahum Tate)
Aeneid - Virgil (1st century BC)
The Age of Anxiety - W. H. Auden (1948)
The Rime of the Ancient Mariner - Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1797 -1798)
And did those feet in ancient time - William Blake
Aniara (Verse novel) - Harry Martinson (1956)
Anthem for Doomed Youth - Wilfred Owen (1917)
Argonautica - Apollonius of Rhodes (3rd century BC)

B

Battle of Maldon (10th century)
Bhagavad Gita (fifth century BC - second century BC, Upanishad, in Gayatri and Tristubh poetic meters)
La Belle Dame sans Merci: A Ballad - John Keats (1819)
Beowulf (10th century)
The Book of the Duchess - Geoffrey Chaucer

C

Cad Goddeu - attrib. Taliesin (6th century)
Casabianca - Felicia Hemans, early 19th century
Casey at the Bat - Ernest Thayer (1888)
The Castle of Indolence
Charge of the Light Brigade- Tennyson
The Changing Light at Sandover - James Merrill (1982)
Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came - Robert Browning (1855)
The Conqueror Worm - Edgar Allan Poe

D

Daddy - Sylvia Plath
Dies Irae (Hymn) - Tommaso da Celano (13th century)
The Divine Comedy - Dante Alighieri (1307-1321)
Don Juan - Lord Byron (1821)
Dover Beach - Matthew Arnold (1867)
Dream of the Rood

Dulce Et Decorum Est - Wilfred Owen (1917)

E

Endymion (1817) - John Keats

Eugene Onegin (Verse novel) - Alexander Pushkin

F

Fables and Parables - Ignacy Krasicki

The Faerie Queene - Edmund Spenser

Fata Morgana - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Fern Hill - Dylan Thomas

On First Looking into Chapman's Homer - John Keats

Flen flyys Anon. fifteenth century

G

Gayatrimantra (Verse from hymn)

Epic of Gilgamesh

Gododdin - Aneirin

The Golden Gate (Verse novel) - Vikram Seth

Grímnismál - Poetic Edda

Grógaldur - Poetic Edda

H

Hadda be Playin' on a Jukebox - Allen Ginsberg

Hávamál - Poetic Edda

High Flight - John Gillespie Magee, Junior

The House On The Hill - Edwin Arlington Robinson 1922

Howl - Allen Ginsberg (1955)

The Hunting of the Snark - Lewis Carroll

Hyperion - John Keats

Hymn to Proserpine - Algernon Swinburne (1866)

I

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud - William Wordsworth

Idylls of the King - Alfred, Lord Tennyson

If- - Rudyard Kipling (C.1895)

Iliad - attrib Homer (c. 850 BC)

In a Station of the Metro - Ezra Pound (1913)

In Flanders Fields - John McCrae

J

Jabberwocky - Lewis Carroll (1871)

Book of Job

John Gilpin - William Cowper

Judith - anon. Old English

K

Kaddish - Allen Ginsberg (1961)
Kalevala - Elias Lönnrot (19th century)
Kim Van Kieu - Nguyen-Du
The Kraken - Alfred, Lord Tennyson

L

Lady Lazarus - Sylvia Plath
The Last Rose of Summer - Thomas Moore (c.1807)
Leda and the Swan - William Butler Yeats (1929)
Lenore - Edgar Allan Poe (1841)
Lokasenna - Poetic Edda
Lost in Translation - James Merrill (1974)
Love's Philosophy - Percy Bysshe Shelley (1820)
The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock - T.S. Eliot (1917)
Lycidas - John Milton (1634)

M

Mahabharata
The Marriage of Heaven and Hell - William Blake (1790-1793)
Metamorphoses - Ovid (1)
Mirror - Sylvia Plath
The Munich Mannequins - Sylvia Plath

N

On the Nature of Things - Lucretius
The New Colossus - Emma Lazarus - 1883
Nibelungenlied - Anon (13th century)

O

Ode on a Grecian Urn - John Keats
Ode to a Nightingale - John Keats (1819)
Ode to the West Wind - Percy Bysshe Shelley (1819)
Odyssey - attrib Homer
The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel - Nikos Kazantzakis (1938)
Orlando furioso - Ludovico Ariosto (1516)
Orlando innamorato - Matteo Maria Boiardo (1486)
The Owl and the Nightingale - anon. (13th century)
The Owl and the Pussycat - Edward Lear
Ozymandias - Percy Bysshe Shelley (1818)

P

Pale Fire (Verse novel) - Vladimir Nabokov
Pange Lingua (Hymn) - Thomas Aquinas
The Parable of the old man and the young - Wilfred Owen (c.1917)
Paradise Lost - John Milton
Paradise Regained - John Milton
Parlement of Foules -Geoffrey Chaucer (14th century)
The Passionate Shepherd to His Love - Christopher Marlowe
Paterson - William Carlos Williams (1963)
Pearl
The Pied Piper of Hamelin - Robert Browning 1849
Piers Plowman - William Langland (versions 1360-1399)
Plutonian Ode - Allen Ginsberg
The Poem of the End - Marina Tsvetaeva 1924
Prayer before birth - Louis McNeice
The Prelude - William Wordsworth (posthumous publication in 1850)

R

Ramayana - Valmiki (c.250 BC)
The Rape of the Lock - Alexander Pope
The Raven - Edgar Allan Poe (1845)
The Revolution Will Not Be Televised - Gil Scott-Heron
Roman de la Rose - Guillaume de Lorris (c.1230), Jean de Meun (c.1275)

S

Samson Agonistes - John Milton (pub. 1671)
Seafarer
The Second Coming - W. B. Yeats
A Shropshire Lad - A. E. Housman
Skirnismál
The Song of Hiawatha - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1855)
Song of Myself - Walt Whitman - (1855)
The Song of Roland - Roland
Song of Solomon - Solomon
The Shahnameh - Ferdowsi (1000)
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
Sir Orfeo - anon. c.1300
Solomon and Saturn

T

Theogony - Hesiod
This Be The Verse - Philip Larkin
The Tyger - William Blake, c.1793
The Cuckoo Song Anonymous, c.1240
Tintern Abbey - William Wordsworth
To a Louse - Robert Burns
To Autumn - John Keats (1819)
To His Coy Mistress - Andrew Marvell

The Triumph of Time
Thrymskvitha - Poetic Edda
Tweedledum and Tweedledee - John Byrom

V

Vafthrúthnismáll - Poetic Edda
Völuspá - Poetic Edda

W

The Wanderings of Oisín - William Butler Yeats (1889)
The Waste Land - T. S. Eliot (1922)

<http://thelistserver.blogspot.com>