



**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
MODERN LETTERS**

Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao

Newsletter – 26 July 2007

This is the 111th 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. Ten talented teenage poets on New Zealand Post shortlist	1
2. Creative responses to climate change wanted.....	2
3. Shortlisted writers read on Montana Poetry Day	2
4. Writers on Mondays takes a break.....	3
5. Metaphor corner.....	3
6. Iowa workshops 08: novels and nature.....	4
7. Film finalist.....	4
8. Part of Me	4
9. From the whiteboard.....	5
10. Wet Ink wants your words	5
11. The expanding bookshelf.....	5
12. Illustrating children's books with Fifi Colston	5
13. Recent web reading	5
14. Great lists of our time.....	7

1. Ten talented teenage poets on New Zealand Post shortlist

Ernest Hemingway, fish, Taipei, musical scales and kayaks are a taste of the themes preoccupying the ten finalists in this year's New Zealand Post Poetry Awards. The ten finalists, a tiny proportion of hundreds of entrants from around New Zealand, are competing for a grand prize of cash and the chance for one poem to be turned into a song. Winners will be announced on August 17 at a ceremony in Wellington.

Judge Andrew Johnston (2007 J D Stout Research Fellow at Victoria University) says he was astonished by the range of tones and voices that came across in the ten very different poems. 'In every case their energy and curiosity leapt out at me, and sometimes their imperfections make them much more interesting than poems that are polished but predictable. I'm confident the authors have what it takes to write even better poems, and it's exciting to imagine what they might go on to do.'

This is the first time the competition has offered the prize for a shortlisted poem to be recorded by Black Seeds performer Barnaby Weir. The song will be performed, distributed to radio stations and made available for free download on iTunes and Digirama. The overall competition winner will take away a \$500 cash prize and a \$500 grant to their school library. All ten finalists will have their expenses paid to attend a poetry masterclass at Victoria University in Wellington, and receive a package of book tokens and literary subscriptions from the New Zealand Book Council, Booksellers New Zealand, the New Zealand Society of Authors, and *Sport and Landfall*.

And the finalists are:

Zoe Newman, Year 13, Dargaville High School
Laura Lincoln, Year 12, Karamu High School, Hastings
Michaela Ball, Year 13, Cashmere High School, Christchurch
Chloë Nannestad, Year 12, Epsom Girls Grammar, Auckland
Alisha Vara, Year 13, Rangi Ruru Girls School, Christchurch
Sam Wells, Year 12, Wellington College
Sue Mun Huang, Year 12, Karamu High School, Hastings
Michael Trigg, Year 13, Wellington College
Sarah Zydervelt, Year 12, Nayland College, Nelson
Shannyn Boyd, Year 12, Hutt Valley High School, Lower Hutt

2. Creative responses to climate change wanted

Writers are reminded that they have the chance to win \$2500 by entering a new creative science writing competition that focuses on our response to one of the hottest scientific issues of the day - climate change. The Royal Society of New Zealand's inaugural Manhire Prize for Creative Science Writing offers awards for both fiction and non-fiction works, and will focus on a different topic each year. The organisers say that 'Entries will be judged on their literary merits, and the extent to which they are likely to engage the reader.' Winning entries will be published in the New Zealand *Listener*

Entries close on 16 August: entry forms and guidelines are available at:
<http://www.rsnz.org/events/creativesciencewriting/index.php>

3. Shortlisted writers read on Montana Poetry Day

2005 MA graduate Airini Beautrais, whose book *Secret Heart* is shortlisted for the NZSA Best First Book of Poetry, will be reading her poems along with IIML MA Workshop convenor Dora Malech and local poet Isobel Mackinnon from 5.30pm to 7pm at Hedleys Bookshop in Masterton on Poetry Day, Friday 27 July 2007. Alison Wong, whose book *Cup* is also shortlisted in this category, reads in Auckland that day

from 12 noon at the Gus Fisher Gallery, 74 Shortland Street, Auckland. The three Poetry Award finalists are also in action. James Brown is among 'The Exhibitionists', Te Papa staff writers reading their (out-of-work-hours) writing at 12.10 pm on the marae. Dinah Hawken reads at Unity Books in Wellington from 1.15-1.45. And the third finalist (as editor of Janet Frame's poems) Bill Manhire is the featured guest at the Palmerston North City Library from 7-8 pm. For further events being held around the country on Poetry Day, visit www.montanapoetryday.co.nz

Last but not least, we wish the eight IIML graduates and staff who are shortlisted for the 2007 Montana New Zealand Book Awards the best of luck. Poetry Award winners are announced this Friday, and the rest will learn their fate at the awards dinner in Auckland on Monday.

4. Writers on Mondays takes a break

We're also grateful to Montana Poetry Day for its support of our advance-guard event, the highly successful *Best New Zealand Poems* reading which drew a full (and overflowing) house at City Gallery Wellington earlier this week. Our Writers on Mondays series will now take a two-week break while City Gallery is closed to hang a new exhibition – but the season resumes with more poetry when US writer Dora Malech appears on Monday 13 August at 1 pm.

5. Metaphor corner

There have been more dropped balls in the All Blacks this season than you would see over the course of a year in the Vienna Boys' Choir.

That's been reflected in the very few high notes our boys have hit in the past two performances - the loss to the Wallabies in Melbourne and late flurry to beat the Springboks in Christchurch.

The warblings of discontent among the faithful have gone from a comfortable sounding high-pitch to an uncontrollable fever pitch this week as nerves start to fray.

Surely, after the silver service dished up by the New Zealand Rugby Union to Messrs Henry, Hansen and Smith these past few years they would be able to have the men in black singing consistently from the same song sheet by now?

Ah, consistently. Therein perhaps lies the problem.

With personnel changes de rigueur under the current coaching structure it's no wonder the lines of communication have been disrupted and a temporary balls-up has, um, dropped into our laps.

--Jamie Douglas in the *Dominion Post*, 21 July 2007

6. Iowa workshops 08: novels and nature

Every year the IIML offers one or two special workshops taught by outstanding creative writing graduates from the University of Iowa. This summer (from 7 January – 24 February 2008) two graduates of the Iowa Writers' Workshop will convene separate poetry and fiction workshops. The application deadline is 9 November.

The fiction workshop, offered by Monica Bergers, will focus on starting and building a novel, particularly for those whose previous writing experience is with short fiction. Special attention will be given to developing the novel's fictional reality, using point of view, characterisation, plotting, and dramatization to give complexity and momentum to the work. Students will produce between 50-100 pages, as well as an outline for the rest of the novel.

The poetry workshop is convened by Sam Reed, who writes:

'Flowers are pretty. And? What lies beyond the limits of received truth about Nature? Does a nature poem have to be nice? What is the difference between calling something "pretty" and creating the sensation of blooming and dying on the page? We will look for answer to these and other questions, in readings and in our own work, by focussing on practical issues of craft: diction and syntax, rhythm and meter, tone and rhetoric, etc. "Non-nature" poets are encouraged to enrol as well; students should feel free to write about anything. Ultimately our concern will be less with a specific sub-genre than with universal principles of good art.'

For application forms and further details, tel 463 6854 or visit our undergraduate courses webpage at: <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/creative-writing/undergrad.aspx>

7. Film finalist

Another IIML graduate has arrived on an award shortlist in recent weeks. Leonie Reynolds, who completed her MA (Script) in 2005, is a finalist in the best short film script (English) category of the Pihuhia Awards for Maori writers, judged by Barry Barclay. The announcement of the 2007 winners will take place at the Pihuhia Awards ceremony at Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in September. The awards ceremony will be the finale of the *Festival of Māori Writers 2007* which celebrates Māori literature and will take place in the Wellington region from 10 - 15 September. The awards are managed by Huia Publishers.

8. Part of Me

MA Scriptwriting graduate Kelly Kilgour has a new play premiering at BATS from July 26-August 11. He describes *Part of Me* as 'a coming of age story... second time around. A bittersweet and funny look at modern courtship & friendships,' or 'like a cross between *The Odd Couple* and Patrick Marber's *Closer*, a sharp funny exposé of

modern relationships'. *Part of Me* is Kelly's follow-up work to *It's a Whanau Thing*, and is directed by Danny Mulheron. Showtime is 8.30 pm, tickets \$16 / \$13, bookings tel 802 4175 or book@bats.co.nz (see also www.partofme.co.nz).

9. From the whiteboard

Style should be like a transparent varnish . . . it should spread completely over the colours, make them brighter, but not alter them.
— Stendhal

10. Wet Ink wants your words

The editors of the Adelaide-based magazine of new writing *Wet Ink* are keen to receive submissions from postgraduate creative writing students at the IIML. They welcome new contributors of both writing and images, and publish fiction (including genre fiction), poetry, memoir, essays and opinion pieces. *Wet Ink* appears quarterly, and full submission guidelines can be found on their website, <http://www.wetink.com.au>

11. The expanding bookshelf

Damien Wilkins will launch 2005 MA (Page) graduate Mary McCallum's first novel *The Blue* (Penguin) in Eastbourne next week. The novel is set in an isolated whaling community in the 1930s, and rumour has it that the launch is to feature food appropriate to the period, although we assume the author's quest for veracity won't stretch as far as offering whale meat amongst the hors d'oeuvres. Mary McCallum discusses (and previews) the novel in her New Zealand Book Month blog http://nzbookmonth.co.nz/blogs/mary_mccallum/default.aspx

12. Illustrating children's books with Fifi Colston

Fifi Colston is a children's book writer and illustrator with over 28 titles to her name (as well as an MA in Creative Writing from the IIML). She is offering a weekend workshop on illustrating children's books that will look at character development, what makes a picture book great and examine illustration from a child's point of view. The workshop takes place in a central city (Wellington) location on the weekend of 18 -19 August, from 10am- 4.30pm. The cost of \$250 includes all art materials, tea and coffee. All levels of ability are welcome, bookings essential (tel 021 448884 / email fific@paradise.net.nz).

13. Recent web reading

Guy Somerset's Shelf Life

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/blogs/shelflife>

Forward shortlist

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/forward2007/story/0,,2127820,00.html>

Crowdsourcing: an experiment in citizen journalism

<http://www.wired.com/techbiz/media/news/2007/03/72970>

Orc sues producer

http://www.backstage.com/bsa/news_reviews/film/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003607757

The latest on JT LeRoy

<http://arts.independent.co.uk/books/features/article2780614.ece>

Cooking the books

http://nymag.com/daily/entertainment/2007/07/cooking_the_books.html

Criminal proceedings

<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/>

Emerging from absence: an archive of Japan in English-language verse

<http://themargins.net/archive.html>

Early New Zealand books

<http://www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz/>

Ghost story writers

<http://www.jb.man.ac.uk/~agg/ghosts/>

Hell

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/6283950.stm>

Robert Hass reads

http://webcast.berkeley.edu/event_details.php?webcastid=9880

Imaginary bands

(NZ suggestions very welcome!)

<http://papercuts.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/07/10/land-of-the-imaginary-bands/#more-62>

All consuming books

<http://allconsuming.net/ticker/book>

Lovely books

<http://www.lovelybooks.com/>

Hospital laureate

http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/health/322429_poet05.html

How not to read a book

<http://tls.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,25341-2647599,00.html>

Creative writing programs

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200707u/writing-programs>

My poet

http://www.poems.com/special_features/prose/essay_murr.php

Dodgy pens

http://www.core77.com/bullitts/2007/07/Cleto-Munari-Five-Pens.asp?current_bullitt_id=547

Atwood's first play

http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/stage/theatre/article2073185.ece

In defence of commas

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/07/17/AR2007071701489.html?referrer=email>

Hemingway's homes – and polydactyl cats

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/news/articles/0,,2128102,00.html>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/usa/story/0,,2122103,00.html>

14. Great lists of our time

Names of (some of) the cats at the Hemingway Home and Museum:

http://www.hemingwayhome.com/HTML/our_cats.htm

Pauline (Mama)

Ivan & Frances

Cat Nap

Emily Dickinson

Amadea

Simone de Beauvoir

Ragamuffin

Nikki Adams

Rooster (photo of a rooster?)

Spencer Tracy

Audrey Hepburn

Pablo Picasso

Audrey Hepburn

Joan Crawford

Trevor Howard

Sofia Loren

Amadea

Charley Chaplin

and don't forget Hemingway home weddings:
<http://www.hemingwayhomeweddings.com/>

<http://thelistserver.blogspot.com>