



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
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Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao

Newsletter – 30 October 2007

This is the 116th 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](mailto:modernletters@vuw.ac.nz)

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**Outside the frame**

We see that submissions are now being called in for the 2008 Montana New Zealand Book Awards – with a \$100 entry fee. This year living poets faced stiff competition from Janet Frame’s posthumous collection *The Goose Bath*, which eventually took the Poetry Award. This led some novelists to speculate gloomily about their chances of prevailing against Frame’s posthumous novel, *Towards Another Summer*, in the tussle for the 2008 Deutz Fiction Medal. It seems the novelists can now relax (a little): the official word on the 2008 awards is that ‘deceased authors are no longer eligible’.

## **MA applications close this Thursday**

In 2007 our MA (Page) students enjoyed the great privilege of masterclasses with major international writers - the US novelist Richard Ford and essayist Eliot Weinberger, and UK poet Lavinia Greenlaw. MA (Script) students and graduates had the chance to take part in a two-week intensive programme taught by US scriptwriting guru Linda Vorhees in the middle of the year. Other visitors to the workshops have included Irish playwright Ursula Rani Sarma and New Zealanders Elizabeth Knox, Andrew Johnston, Jenny Bornholdt, Jane Parkin and Fergus Barrowman. Although details are as yet unconfirmed, we expect to be able to offer another set of masterclasses by leading international writers in 2008.

This is our last call for applications to the 2008 MA in Creative Writing programme at the IIML. There are 20 places in two MA (Page) streams, and 10 places in the MA (Script) stream on offer. But you'll have to be quick: the deadline for applications is 1 November. Information and downloadable application forms are on the website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/modernletters/creative-writing/postgraduate.aspx>

## **Undergraduate workshops**

If that's too much of a scramble, then applications for the Iowa workshops in poetry and fiction (offered in January and February) remain open until 8 November, and the first trimester writing workshops for 2008 are open until 1 December (Susan Pearce's short fiction workshop) and 29 January (Dinah Hawken's Writing the Landscape workshop) respectively.

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/modernletters/creative-writing/undergrad.aspx>

## **From the whiteboard**

You have all these terrible thresholds of pain you have to cross as a young writer. Most of them have to do with your lack of excellence. [So you have to] invent strategies that will take you back to your work in some less than excruciating ways.  
— Richard Ford (IIML masterclass 2007)

## **The expanding bookshelf (1)**

We're catching up on our reading, with several quite different volumes having recently arrived on the shelf of books produced by Victoria Creative Writing graduates. Johanna Aitchison's first collection of poems, *A Long Girl Ago* (Victoria University Press) was launched by Dora Malech (who taught Johanna in the 2006 Iowa Workshop) at the end of September. It features in James Brown's Top Ten (and then some) list of favourite NZ poetry collections (see Recent Web Reading, below).

Poet Kate Camp published the book based on her conversations with Kim Hill, *Kate's Classics* (Penguin), at the beginning of October. And next week sees the launch of *Acts of Love*, the first novel by the IIML's Short Fiction Workshop convenor, Susan Pearce.

### **The expanding repertoire**

MA Script student Kate Morris was one of three winners of the PlayRight competition for one-act plays this year. Her play, *Daddy's Dollar*, was performed at Auckland's Herald Theatre this month. It seems the 'short play' season has become quite a phenomenon in British theatre as a means of appealing to the 'youth' market – but the phenomenon may prove to be shortlived (see Recent Web Reading).

### **Fiona Wright, barrister**

Many of the writers who've passed through the IIML's doors have had cause to be thankful to our former administrator Fiona Wright – so we thought you'd like to know that Fiona will be formally admitted to the bar this week. Congratulations, Fiona!

### **No more Mondays (until 2008)**

Our Writers on Mondays series wrapped up for the year with a fascinating hour with the US writer James Galvin yesterday. Thanks to all the New Zealand and international writers who have appeared in the series since it began in July, to City Gallery for making their auditorium available, and to Mary McCallum for putting so many of the events on record at LeafSalon (<http://www.leafsalon.co.nz>). The series will return in July next year. Those who missed yesterday's session can listen to Lynn Freeman's radio interview with James Galvin here: <http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/artsonSunday>

### **Best New Zealand Poems 07**

Auckland poet Paula Green is still busy reading every poem she can find in order to make her selection of the best New Zealand poems published in 2007. While every effort is made to ensure that no poetical treasure remains undiscovered, it's always possible that there are books or individual poems that haven't found their way to Paula. If you're not sure whether your publisher has supplied a copy of your book, you could check with them. But if there are poems you've published in a magazine or online journal you'd like to be sure of having considered, please send copies to Best New Zealand Poems, c/- IIML, Victoria University, PO Box 600 Wellington, for forwarding to the editor.

## Words for Jam

Jam Radio is community arts radio on the web. Based in Auckland, within the Depot Artspace, it provides 'a facility for the arts community of New Zealand to make programmes that need to be heard!' Programmes created for the radio are uploaded to the website every fortnight, and remain there indefinitely for on-demand webcasting. The literary element of Jam has, they tell us, grown rapidly since their beginnings in June this year, with a Writers of the North Shore series, and the Pounamu poetry show. Jam encourages writers to become involved in the station, and welcomes expressions of interest, work to be read, radio plays, poetry and anything else from the literary world. For more information contact the radio coordinator Louise Evans ([louise.evans@depotartspace.co.nz](mailto:louise.evans@depotartspace.co.nz)).  
[www.jamradio.co.nz](http://www.jamradio.co.nz)

## The expanding bookshelf (2): doctor-poets

Two doctor-poets who studied creative writing at Victoria have published first books with Victoria University Press in recent weeks. While different in many respects, Rae Varcoe's *Tributary* and Angela Andrews' *Echolocation* are both informed by their authors' professional experience. *Listener* readers can find an article about the two on this week's health pages (available online in late November).  
[http://www.listener.co.nz/issue/3521/columnists/9914/poet\\_heal\\_thy\\_patient.html](http://www.listener.co.nz/issue/3521/columnists/9914/poet_heal_thy_patient.html)

## More Snorkel

*Snorkel* 6, featuring writing from New Zealand, Australia and beyond, is due for launch tomorrow, 31 October. Contributors to the mix include Pam Brown, Chris Price, David Prater, Kerrin P. Sharpe, Mary Cresswell, Changming Yuan and Todd Swift. *Snorkel* is currently accepting submissions. For guidelines, visit <http://snorkel.org.au>

## Ka mate

The New Zealand Electronic Poetry Centre published the fourth issue of *Ka Mate Ka Ora: A New Zealand Journal of Poetry and Poetics* back in September. It includes contributions from recently retired Auckland University Press editor Elizabeth Caffin on the selection, editing and economics of the Press's poetry list; Alan Brunton's notebooks and notes on Red Mole from both Martin and Murray Edmond, and other pieces from Ken Bolton and Michele Leggott. *KMKO* is edited by Murray Edmond, Michele Leggott and Hilary Chung: they welcome contributions from poets, academics, essayists, teachers and students from within New Zealand and overseas. Submission guidelines and further information are at [www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz/kmko](http://www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz/kmko)

### **Some money towards your next trip?**

One of the annual Cathay Pacific Travel Writing Awards on offer is designed to encourage writers who have never had a travel article published. Entries in the *AA Directions* Award for New Travel Writer of the Year are judged anonymously by a well-known New Zealand writer, editor or publisher who will present the award at a Gala Dinner held at the Grand Tearoom at the Heritage Auckland on Tuesday, 8 April 2008. The winner of the New Travel Writer of the Year award receives a guaranteed assignment for *AA Directions* as well as a cash prize of \$1000. The entry deadline for the 2008 Awards is 22 February. For entry forms and further information see [www.travelcommunicators.co.nz](http://www.travelcommunicators.co.nz), or email Helen Davies ([helen.davies@clear.net.nz](mailto:helen.davies@clear.net.nz)).

### **Fieldstone Review**

The *Fieldstone Review* is an online literary journal based at the University of Saskatchewan and published annually. It is reading submissions of original, unpublished poetry, short stories, and creative non-fiction/personal essay until 15 January. They are open to 'work that experiments with e-textuality' or that uses technology suited to the online environment, as well as to more traditional work. Detailed submission guidelines are at [www.fieldstonereview.usask.ca/submissions.php](http://www.fieldstonereview.usask.ca/submissions.php)

### **Southeast Asian anthology extends deadline**

The Southeast Asian Literature project is producing an anthology that will attempt to present 'the shades of contemporary Southeast Asian experiences of cultural/sexual identity, globalization, immigrant/expatriate experience, third culture phenomena, and new technologies, among others.' The call for submissions is open to Southeast Asian writers and translators under 40 years old. The anthology will focus on works dealing with contemporary themes, or employing new forms in poetry; prose (fiction, travelogues, essays, blogs, text, etc); drama (one-act plays, short screen/teleplays); graphic arts and comics (under 30 pages long); and everything in between—literary experiments as well as genre works (horror, sci-fi, fantasy, etc, or combinations thereof). Works must be limited to 8,000 words and must be in English (translations must be accompanied by the original text). Previously published works are also welcome. Southeast Asian writers based in New Zealand may send submissions (as Word attachments) to [sealitbook@gmail.com](mailto:sealitbook@gmail.com) by the recently extended deadline of 8 November. The editors also request a short bio note, email address, photo, web links and contact information, as well as the copyright notice for previously published and soon-to-be published work.

### **Recent web reading**

James Brown's Top 10 NZ poetry collections

[http://www.leafsalon.co.nz/archives/001158james\\_browns\\_top\\_ten\\_poetry\\_books.html](http://www.leafsalon.co.nz/archives/001158james_browns_top_ten_poetry_books.html)

Poetry wars

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/poetry/features/0,,2183564,00.html>

Literary idol

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/10/01/DDGTSGEUA.DTL>

Batman onomatopoeia

[http://www.batmania.com.ar/paginas/serie\\_onomatopeyas.htm](http://www.batmania.com.ar/paginas/serie_onomatopeyas.htm)

Giraffes

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

Books by the foot

<http://www.strandbooks.com/app/www/p/bbtfoot/>

Word evolution

[http://dsc.discovery.com/news/2007/10/11/words\\_hum.html?category=human&guid=20071011100000&dcitc=w19-502-ak-0000](http://dsc.discovery.com/news/2007/10/11/words_hum.html?category=human&guid=20071011100000&dcitc=w19-502-ak-0000)

Funny women

[http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/this\\_britain/article3063806.ece](http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/this_britain/article3063806.ece)

Orhan Pamuk reads the Paris Review interviews

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,2199895,00.html>

Short plays in the UK

[http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/theatre/2007/10/the\\_rise\\_and\\_possible\\_fall\\_of.html](http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/theatre/2007/10/the_rise_and_possible_fall_of.html)

Where optimism lives

<http://www.dailyindia.com/show/185623.php/Cradle-of-optimism-pinpointed-in-the-brain>

Creative writing research

<http://www.textjournal.com.au/>

Online journals

[http://poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2007/10/in\\_praise\\_of\\_online\\_journals.html#comments](http://poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2007/10/in_praise_of_online_journals.html#comments)

Mother tongues

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~iwp/91st/fall07/mothertongue.html>

Waterlog

<http://www.waterlog.fvu.co.uk/>

Node

<http://node.tumblr.com/>

Interviews with NZ children's authors

<http://library.christchurch.org.nz/Kids/ChildrensAuthors/list.asp>

Database of mid-Victorian illustration

<http://www.dmvi.cf.ac.uk/>

Paula Morris on reviewing in NZ

<http://lumiere.net.nz/reader/arts.php/item/1360>

Reviewing in the UK

<http://arts.independent.co.uk/books/features/article3073461.ece>

Wonder bread

<http://www.theamericanscholar.org/au07/wonder-bukiet.html>

Rae Varcoe reviewed

<http://lumiere.net.nz/reader/arts.php/item/1361>

Agency life

[http://www.economist.com/world/britain/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=9991400](http://www.economist.com/world/britain/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9991400)

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/news/articles/0,,2190553,00.html>

Lazy Library

<http://lazylibrary.com/>

Sue Orr: The Stories of Frank Sargeson

[http://nzlistener.co.nz/issue/3520/artsbooks/9864/the\\_stories\\_of\\_frank\\_sargeson.html:jsessionid=7919FE87CFF59E47516AC73053F7E9F8](http://nzlistener.co.nz/issue/3520/artsbooks/9864/the_stories_of_frank_sargeson.html:jsessionid=7919FE87CFF59E47516AC73053F7E9F8)

On the Road

[http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2007/10/01/071001crat\\_atlarge\\_menan\\_d?printable=true](http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2007/10/01/071001crat_atlarge_menan_d?printable=true)

Uncarving Carver

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/departments/generalfiction/story/0,,2196751,00.html>

The book quiz

<http://bluepyramid.org/ia/bquiz.htm>

Rachael King's blog

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

How to talk about books

<http://www.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&expire=&urlID=24536316&fb=Y&url=http%3A%2F%2Fnymag.com%2Farts%2Fbooks%2Freviews%2F39578%2F&partnerID=73272>

War poets

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

Two screenwriters

<http://www.thebigidea.co.nz/article.php?sid=5042&mode=thread&order=0>

A publishing song

<http://charkinblog.macmillan.com/PermaLink,guid,4389cd86-9c2c-4425-be6e-f1900529d597.aspx>

The Klingon Hamlet

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Klingon\\_Hamlet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Klingon_Hamlet)

Albatross watch (for ancient mariners)

<http://www.albatross.org.nz/toroa.html>

### **Great lists of our time**

A piece of electioneering poetry from the recent local body elections. We aren't entirely surprised that poetry was not the winner on the day.

City Fantasy

written by John McGrath

There is a city fantasy  
that someday Wellington residents should see

A someday fantasy where council problems end  
And our amalgamated councils are all great friends

Over inflated rates cease  
The mortgage is paid and it's a pay increase

We all retire at 51  
Reading the Dom in the Island Bay sun.

But then denied our weekend wish?  
No longer a latte at the Chocolate Fish?

And let's have tourist attractions about which we can boast  
Do we really need fish in glass boxes on our beautiful south coast?

Wellington developers should not be bought  
The District Plan needs a lot more thought

We need to change the infill house  
And stop building shoeboxes that are always grouse

And what about wasted administration on resource consent,  
Couldn't that money and time be better spent?



Wellington civic happiness is not the station from which we alight  
But a constant journey into the night

There has to be more to council life  
Than this endless senseless strife

This is not a scrimmage or some practice game,  
There should be more to a Mayor than status or fame

To some it might seem a doddle,  
But integrity is essential when you're a role model

So let the Mayor no longer our reputation sully,  
Its time to speed up Transmission Gully

This council's progress to date so far  
Is moving slower than the cable car

It is time to cut council red tape,  
Bring back business and restore pride in the cape

Give Wellington a waterfront in which we all care  
Something that looks as good as civic square

We need to give this city a major clean  
And pride ourselves in being 100% green

We need a council with a plan  
So we are known for more than just Blanket Man

A better Wellington is my campaign mission,  
Wellington needs a Mayor with a longer term vision.

Let's have an open council, no castle no moat  
All you have to do is VOTE

Don't think about anywhere but here  
And vote John McGrath for your Mayor

*Authorised by John McGrath*  
<http://www.johnmcgrath4mayor.co.nz/>