



## INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS

*Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao*

### Newsletter – 15 June 2009

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This is the 142<sup>nd</sup> 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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#### **1. Hello young writers – and their parents and teachers**

Today is the official deadline for both entries in the New Zealand Post National Schools Poetry Awards and applications to attend the National Schools Writing Festival (29-30 August) in Wellington. If you and your students (or children) are running late, however, don't despair – we're keeping the deadline open a little while longer for those who haven't quite put the final full-stop to their poetic masterpieces. Get those entries in fast, though.

Remember that the Poetry Awards, judged by former Poet Laureate Jenny Bornholdt, are open to year 11, 12 and 13 students. They stand to win cash prizes of up to \$500, a trip to New Zealand Post Writers and Readers Week in Wellington next March — or they may even have their poem set to music by Op-shop frontman and Apra Silver Scroll winner Jason Kerrison. Budding writers often need a bit of encouragement

from their parents or teachers to liberate their words – so if you fall into any of those three categories, the info on how to enter is [here](#).

## **2. National Schools Writing Festival back in August**

Year 12 and 13 teachers are also reminded to hurry along and nominate students to attend the New Zealand Post National Schools Writing Festival, run in association with the Poetry Awards on the weekend of 29-30 August at Victoria University. Students take part in workshops with some of New Zealand's best writers for page, stage and screen, and meet students from all around the country who share a passion for writing. Packs containing full information about the Awards and Festival were mailed to all English HODs in March, but if they've got buried under piles of marking, full details can be also be found [here](#). Students and their teachers who've attended previous Festivals report that they go home fired up to write, and of course there's the opportunity to add on [Study at Vic Day](#) (28 August) for those who are considering going on to tertiary study at Victoria.

## **3. From the whiteboard**

'All that we now call "literature" was once just writing, and all those writers we now call "great" were once just people trying to write.'

— Kate Grenville

## **4. The Montana seven**

Naturally we are excited to see a healthy number – seven, exactly – of Victoria's creative writing graduates featuring across a range of categories in the shortlist for this year's Montana New Zealand Book Awards. Bridget van der Zijpp, Eleanor Catton and Amy Brown appear in the Best First Book categories, while Elizabeth Knox features in the Biography category with her essay collection *The Love School*, and Jenny Bornholdt and Chris Orsman are shortlisted for the Poetry Award.

Eleanor Catton has achieved the relatively rare double of appearing in both the Best First Book and Best Book of Fiction categories, as well as making Montana history as the youngest ever author to be shortlisted. Her book *The Rehearsal* competes for the Deutz Medal with four other novels, including *Novel About My Wife*, written by yet another Victoria graduate, Emily Perkins. You can hear Kim Hill's Saturday interview with Eleanor Catton [here](#). We wish her all the best for the launch of the Granta edition of *The Rehearsal* in the UK in July, and for her appearance at the Edinburgh Book Festival in August.

Apart from *Novel About My Wife*, which is published by Bloomsbury, all the aforementioned titles are published by [Victoria University Press](#).

## 5. Changing the guard

The winners of the Montana New Zealand Book Awards will be announced at a ceremony in Auckland on 27 July, after which Montana will retire from sponsorship of the awards, to be replaced by literary sponsor *extraordinaire* New Zealand Post – what would New Zealand writers and their readers do without them? We congratulate Chief Executive John Allen for his long-term support for reading and literacy in this country, and feel sure he will take his legendary enthusiasm for New Zealand writing to the world in his new role as the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

## 6. Terry Sturm: 1941-2009

We were very sad to hear of the death of [Terry Sturm](#). He was one of the great fosterers of New Zealand writing, as well as a key figure in the field of New Zealand Literature Studies, both as a scholar and an enabler of other scholars. We understand that despite a long period of illness he had managed to complete a full draft of his literary biography of Allen Curnow. Terry made his mark on the other side of the Tasman, too. He was an influential teacher of the late Australian poet [John Forbes](#), Forbesy, as Terry used to call him, began a thesis on Frank O'Hara under Terry's tutelage at the University of Sydney.

## 7. Leggott's laureate launch

Michele Leggott's two-year term as New Zealand Poet Laureate is drawing to an end. It's been a busy old time, as the posts on her [laureate web page](#) attest. Her final fling in the position will be the launch of a new book of poems, *Mirabile Dictu* (AUP), and a CD of selected poems from all her six books, simply titled *Michele Leggott* (the third in the New Zealand Poets: Laureate Series, released by Jayrem/Braeburn). After a 'hometown celebration' at the Devonport Public Library from 6-7.30pm on 24 June, the book and CD will be officially launched in Wellington at the National Library of New Zealand, in an event celebrating the conclusion of Leggott's laureateship. The event runs from 5.30-7.00pm on 30 June in the National Library Foyer, with live music and poetry from Palindrome. A preview of some of poems in the new book can be found in [Trout 15](#).

## 8. A Martian poet lands in Wellington

Each year the IIML brings two or three international writers to Wellington to offer a masterclass to the current members of the MA workshop. This year we're pleased to be importing the award-winning British writer Christopher Reid. Reid is the author of 13 collections of poetry and a former editor at Faber & Faber, where he edited the *Letters of Ted Hughes* and worked with many major poets. He is often cited as co-founder, with Craig Raine, of the 'Martian School' of poetry, which employs exotic and humorous metaphors to defamiliarise everyday experiences and objects. In

addition to the masterclass, he will be talking with Bill Manhire about his career on 27 July in a Writers on Mondays event (see below), and present a seminar on 'Editing Ted' at Victoria University.

### **9. If this is winter, it must be Writers on Mondays**

After a warm-up event with biographer Ann Thwaite in May, the IIML's 2009 Writers on Mondays series proper will commence on 13 July in the new venue of the Marae in Te Papa, and in the new time slot of 12.15-1.15pm. Guests range from Victoria University Writer in Residence Paula Boock to the UK poet and editor Christopher Reid (see above), the angelic Elizabeth Knox and local screenwriting star Philippa Boyens. Watch our [website](#) for details, or pick up a programme brochure from a library or independent bookseller in the Wellington region around the beginning of July. Writers on Mondays events are presented by the International Institute of Modern Letters with the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and are free to the public.

### **10. Call for submissions: Best New Zealand Poems 09**

Publishers and poets who wish poems they have published in 2009 to be considered for the next edition of [Best New Zealand Poems](#) are reminded that these need to be sent to the IIML for forwarding to this year's hard-working editor, [Robyn Marsack](#).

Publishers are invited to send copies of books and magazines to BNZP 2009, International Institute of Modern Letters, Victoria University, PO Box 600, Wellington 6140. Poems published in international journals are also eligible, and poets who think their work may not be submitted by a publisher may send published poems (not manuscripts) to the same address. The deadline for submissions is 21 December 2009.

### **11. Publication in Germany?**

In the last week or two a few of our MA graduates have had approaches from the German publishing house LAP (Lambert Academic Publishing) expressing interest in publishing their MA theses. Our view – tempered by the knowledge that a lot of academic publishing in Germany is paid for by authors – is that LAP are an opportunistic vanity publisher. In other words, we recommend caution.

### **12. More writers on Mondays**

We see that the New Zealand Society of Authors has decided to take a leaf out of the IIML's book - the title page, to be specific. They're running a series of writer events on Mondays at the Auckland City Gallery. What's the series called? Why, Writers on Mondays, of course! There is no copyright on titles, and imitation is a form of

flattery. We hope, however, that this won't cause confusion for event listings websites and print guides, or for audience members in either city.

### **13. Recent web reading**

[Terry Sturm RIP](#)

[The quiet world project](#)

[Wordniks](#)

[Should creative writing be taught?](#)

[Dundee International Book Prize](#) (for unpublished first novels)

[Pimp my bookcart](#)

[New Zealand poet conquers Time](#)

[Philip Pullman interview](#)

[Sam Hunt interview](#)

[The Physics Engine](#)

[Playmarket is podcasting](#)

[Janet Frame reframed](#)

[A poetry chair](#)

[The Poetry Garden](#)

[Poetry and the Age](#)

[Copyright Law IN VERSE](#)

[An organised sampling of the world](#)

[Illegal bees](#)

[Arty bees](#)

[Kiwi bees](#)

[Newspaper bees](#)

[English Language about to turn a million](#)

[The language of lagormorphs](#)

[Dutch product](#)(wait for the page to open; make sure you have sound)

#### **14. Great lists of our time**

A selection of undersea features, from the “[GEBCO](#) (General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans) Gazetteer of Undersea Feature Names”.

Animal Basin  
Betty Guyot  
Black Hole  
Bulldog Bank  
Cap Ferret Canyon  
Coral Patch Bank  
Dreadnought Bank  
Earthwatch Seamount  
Fifteen-Twenty Fracture Zone  
Four Ladies Bank  
Golden Bo'sunbird Seamounts  
Hotspur Fracture Zone  
Ice Sphinx Hole  
Investigator Canyon  
Invisible Bank  
Karma Seamounts  
Little Bahama Bank  
Lousy Bank  
Mathematicians Seamounts  
Mount Error Guyot  
Mozart Seamount  
Musicians Seamounts  
Northern Holiday Seamount  
Popcorn ridge  
Porcupine Abyssal Plain  
Prunes Seamount  
Rat Island Canyon  
Researcher Ridge  
Rude Knoll  
Rumble III Seamount  
Shackleton Canyon  
Speakers Bank  
Stalemate Canyon  
Three Points Spur  
Tongue of the Ocean Trough  
Topgallant Canyon  
Unicorn Bank  
Wallaby Saddle  
Wildcat Canyon

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### **Supporting the IIML**

The International Institute of Modern Letters was established at Victoria University in 2001 to promote and foster contemporary imaginative writing. Our founder, philanthropist Glenn Schaeffer, continues to contribute to IIML activities in a range of ways.

While not everyone is able to match Glenn's level of support, we value all those who have helped us to foster the development of emerging writers – for example through scholarships, prizes, and grants. We would welcome the opportunity to talk with you about continuing your support for the IIML, for example through a gift in your will.

All gifts are managed by the Victoria University Foundation, a registered charitable trust established to raise funds in areas of strategic importance to the University, such as the IIML.

For further information on how you can provide philanthropic support to the IIML, please contact our Director, Bill Manhire, Ph: 04 463 6808, Email: [bill.manhire@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:bill.manhire@vuw.ac.nz), or Diana Meads, Fundraising Manager, Victoria University of Wellington Foundation Ph: 0800 VIC LEGACY (0800 842 534), Email: [diana.meads@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:diana.meads@vuw.ac.nz)