



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
MODERN LETTERS

Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao

Newsletter – 9 February 2006

This is the 81st 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. Winning Words

A panel of US jurors is currently reading hard to decide who will receive the \$65,000 Prize in Modern Letters. The six shortlisted writers are Tusiata Avia, William Brandt, Kate Camp, Jo Randerson, Carl Shuker, and Louise Wareham. For the record, the US readers are novelist and poet Stephen Dobyns, Barbara Epler, an editor at the famed New Directions publishing house, and novelist and biographer Geoffrey Wolff. We do not envy them their difficult task.

The Prize will be presented on Saturday 18 March, during Writers and Readers Week. Immediately before the award ceremony, all six shortlisted writers will present their work at a scheduled session called 'Winning Words' – 5.15 at the Embassy Theatre. See <http://www.nzfestival.telecom.co.nz/writers-and-readers/winning-words.php>

2. Books on the Box

We hear that writer Emily Perkins will front a new books show currently in production for TVNZ. This will be the first such programme since the Gibson Group's late-lamented *Bookenz*, hosted by Kate De Goldi with Mark Crysell as field reporter. We understand that ex-Listener editor Finlay MacDonald is field reporter for the new show. We hope that the programme will have a bit more grunt than the disappointing books segment of TV3's *Campbell Live* or the worryingly many newspaper and magazine books pages which seem mainly to plug the latest best-selling titles from multinational publishers.

3. From seaman to signalman

Congratulations to Gerry Evans who is the third writer in residence at the Michael King Writers' Centre in the old signalman's house in Devonport. Gerry, who in an earlier incarnation was national secretary of the New Zealand Seamen's Union, was a member of the 2000 MA workshop at Victoria, which also included the writers Tim Corballis, Kate Duignan, Stephanie de Montalk, James McNaughton, and Vivienne Plumb. He will be researching and writing a biography of the novelist Noel Hilliard, whose work had a major impact on New Zealand society in the 1960's. It is intended that the Michael King Writers' Centre will eventually include shared areas for small public events and mentoring new writers, space to display literary memorabilia, a library, and accommodation for visiting writers.

4. My Secret Life

VUP Managing Editor Fergus Barrowman has a secret life. Anyone who tuned in to National Radio on Wednesday evening would have heard him picking and discussing his favourite jazz CDs from 2005. It turns out that Barrowman is what media people call great talent: he knows what he's talking about, and he talks very well. Apparently he'll be reviewing new jazz CDs at 8.45 p.m. every fourth Wednesday evening, in conversation with Brian Crump. We would be glad to hear of any other luminaries of the New Zealand book and publishing world who inhabit similar parallel universes.

5. Dead Poets' Society

Cath Vidler, co-editor of *Snorkel* and the IIML's notorious List Lady, has been turning her hand to literary condundrums. We hope to feature them occasionally. Here is the first. (There are no prizes – well, there never was any money in poetry – but the solution will be in our next newsletter.)

There are twelve poets buried in this cemetery. Crystals of frozen water powder the many tombstones. Above, from the stripped branches of a tree, a black bird demands a modest sum of money for the release of

one poor prisoner, a soul who spent the best part of his life in the military and whose epitaph, pathetically half-obsured, reads 'all said.' A holy man passes beneath the tree. Though he makes no payment, his prayers for the dead are verbal offerings of true value. And even in this deathly place, the miracle of life inspires amazement. Robust vegetation sprouts like fresh thought between the stones. And look! A young woman, travelling upon a sleek animal. Beware the weapon she wields!

Can you raise the poets? Their ghosts will respond, but only if called by their last names.

Hint: Poets are dead, white, and, save two, male.

6. A new poetry website

Chicago's Poetry Foundation has launched an impressive and comprehensive website, which will likely become a first port of call for anyone interested in keeping up with the full range of contemporary poetry practice. The place is big and busy, with lots going on, and will be especially useful to readers who find some kinds of contemporary poetry intimidating. The editor notes: 'This site is one of several efforts underway by the Poetry Foundation to strengthen the "reciprocal relation" between poetry and its audience. Poetry enacts the central paradox of what it means to be human: we exist singly as individuals puzzling about who we are, and yet we can only come to know our puzzling, prying, questioning selves by entering into a relationship with something, whether real or imagined, that reflects us back to ourselves.'

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

7. New on-line journals

The first issue of the New Zealand Electronic Poetry Centre's journal *Ka Mate Ka Ora: A New Zealand Journal of Poetry and Poetics*, edited by Murray Edmond, is now live. There are contributions by Pam Brown, Murray Edmond, Alison Hunt, John Newton, Suzanne Nola and an editorial by Robert Sullivan. Artwork is by Richard Killeen and design by Brian Flaherty.

<http://www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz/kmko/index.asp>

And an on-line journal for Antarctic writing, *IceTongue*, has just been announced and is calling for submissions. 'The magazine has been founded by a small but dedicated group of participants in the US Antarctic program based on the amount of quality material we've seen by Antarctic researchers and support staff alike, but we're interested in literary work in English from anyone who has a connection to Antarctica. We have an unabashed bias for writers who have travelled below the Antarctic Circle,

but that doesn't mean we won't consider any poems or works of fiction that have an evident Antarctic theme. We'll be considering work immediately for publication in the Feb and March season, and we anticipate a winter solstice issue in June as well. For more information, please visit us online at <http://www.icetongue.org/>

8. Thank you

Our thanks to Jenny Bornholdt, who has donated a handsome pair of Papergraphica lithographs by Bodo Korsig to Glenn Schaeffer House. Korsig is a German printmaker who has often worked on book projects incorporating the words of poets. There are nine lithographs in the Bodo Korsig suite. They include the poet's words, in her own handwriting, and the artist's images. See further: <http://www.papergraphica.co.nz/>

The Bornholdt/Korsig lithographs join other treasures in Schaeffer House, most notably of course the Landfall/Janet Frame Desk: <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/reading/desk.aspx>

9. Agents' corner

We're all familiar with literary agencies and actors' agencies. But one British agency has gone one whole exciting step further and developed a 'voice-over' section to its business activities. Are you looking for a corporate voice for your documentary, animated cartoon, or commercial? American? Dutch? Or perhaps 'Foreign?' Maybe Irish? Jamaican? What about dear old Derbyshire? Then why not go to: <http://www.curtisbrown.co.uk/voiceovers.cfm>

We feel a great list of our time coming on!

10. The expanding bookshelf

Congratulations to Barbara Strang, whose first book of poetry, *Duck Weather*, has just been published by Poet's Group in Christchurch. Barbara was a member of the 1998 MA workshop at Victoria. James Norcliffe writes of her work: 'Barbara Strang plots our position on the planet with particular care and precision. Her poems glitter with the mica of strange facts and odd connections, with sharp perceptions and closely observed detail. This is a rich and accomplished book marking the debut of a significant new voice in New Zealand poetry.'

11. Emerging voices

Congratulations to Lucy O'Brien, IIML graduate and last year's Embassy Trust winner, who is one of six emerging playwrights selected to meet individually with British playwright Simon Stephens and work on their scripts.

Playmarket is now taking applications from new and emerging playwrights for two-day courses with Stephens to be held in Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin. The course follows his acclaimed Royal Court tutorial model, covering such areas as dramatic action, character/dialogue, stagecraft, redrafting and narrative/structure. They include rigorous group discussion, the analysis of contemporary British texts and writing exercises.

Stephens is the author of eight stage plays, four of which premiered at the Royal Court.

More information at <http://www.britishcouncil.org/nz-arts-simonstephens.htm> or contact Katherine McRae or Mark Amery at Playmarket: (04) 382 8462 / kathy@playmarket.org.nz

12. Freelance Writers' Conference

The Freelance Marketplace - Connecting Writer and Editors is a conference for freelancers which will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Auckland on Thursday April 6.

During the day-long conference, editors will discuss what they want from freelancers, freelance writers will talk about how they work and there will be workshops on tools and techniques of the trade. In the final conference session, two freelancers will discuss rates and rights in the New Zealand marketplace with two senior magazine managers.

The conference, organised by a small group of freelancers, is possible thanks to the support of the JTO, APN Print, the Magazine Publishers' Association and the EPMU. Thanks to generous sponsorship, the fee for the conference is \$25.

To register and to see the full programme, please go to the JTO website (the seminars page):

<http://www.journalismtraining.co.nz/seminars.html>

Registrations close Monday March 27. For any queries about the conference, please contact Kim Griggs on kim@griggs.net.

13. Radio poetry

Australian radio seems to be light years ahead of radio in New Zealand when it comes to taking poetry seriously. 2002 Adam Award-winner, Cliff Fell's *The Adulterer's Bible*, has just been adapted and broadcast by ABC Radio's Poetica programme. You can hear a recording on the Poetica website. You'll also find there an introduction to contemporary Australian poetry by the show's editor, Mike Ladd. Earlier broadcasts include the British poet U.A. Fanthorpe; forthcoming is a session with US poet Rita Dove. <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/arts/poetica/>

14. Recent web reading

ARD Fairburn

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/arts/poetica/>

On acknowledgements

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/15/books/review/15alford.html>

Celebrating the short story

<http://film.guardian.co.uk/news/story/0,12589,1688984,00.html>

Seriously reading!

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/childrensfictionprize2005/story/0,,1698740,00.html>

100 best first sentences

<http://www.litline.org/ABR/100bestfirstlines.html>

In praise of Kenneth Koch

<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20060123/rehak>

Booksellers New Zealand have revamped their website

<http://www.booksellers.co.nz/>

A Buffy poem

<http://www.mcsweeneys.net/links/sestinas/2JasonSchneiderman.html>

The Master of Modernismo, Roberto González Echevarría

<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20060213/echevarria>

Looking for a nice place to write?

http://www.escapeartist.com/International_Real_Estate/Islands_For_Sale/Islands_For_Sale.html

Some Kapka Kassabova poems

<http://www.clivejames.com/library/section/media/?&LID=2&SID=16&MRN=55&IP=1>

Fantasy novel title generator
<http://nine.frenchboys.net/novel.php>

Dan Dactyl and the Mad Jungle Doctor
<http://johntranter.com/cartoons/dan1/01a.html>

Ngugi
<http://books.guardian.co.uk/review/story/0,,1695500,00.html>

Neglected books
<http://www.neglectedbooks.com/>

Poets of Princeton
<http://www.princeton.edu/paw/> (click 'features')

Witi Ihimaera's New Zealand dreams
<http://www.fulbright.org.nz/news/releases/051102-nzdreams.html>

15. Great lists of our time

Japanese Onomatopoeia

- bari bari
the sound of tearing (e.g., paper), also used to describe being very busy
- basa basa
unkempt hair
- bashi bashi
the sound of smacking someone on the head
- bera bera
chatting, rattling
- bichi bichi
flopping, smacking
- bishi
the sound of coming to attention, coming together, or getting into the proper order
- boin boin
a well-endowed woman
- boki boki
cracking a twig or one's knuckles
- bo bo
the sound of a fire burning
- boko boko
the sound of hitting something (someone) hard
- boro boro
the sound of a large object (like a barrel) rolling; also ragtag, or worn out
- bura bura
staggering around
- busu busu

the sound of stabbing
- butsu butsu
mumbling, whispering
- chika chika
flickering light (see pika pika) eyes tired from too much computer or TV
- chaku chaku
steadily
- choko choko
always moving around, toddling
- deko bako
bumpy
- doki doki
the sound of a heart beating fast from excitement (at one time Megumi Hayashibara had a radio program called 'Doki Doki Station')
- don don
building up of events, progression of events, little by little
- dosun
the sound of something falling with a thud
- dosun dosun
the sound of stomping
- fusa fusa
a full and attractive head of hair
- fuwa fuwa
fluffy, but also cozy, pleasant
- gaku gaku
knees shaking in fear
- gara gara
almost empty
- gari gari
the sound of grinding or scraping
- gasa gasa
dry, rough skin the sound of leaves or papers rustling
- gata gata
trembling with cold (humans) vibrations
- gatsu gatsu
hungrily, voraciously
- gaya gaya
crowded
- gera gera
loud laughter
- gero gero
'ribbit' --- the sound a frog makes (in Card Captor Sakura a pun on gero gero is applied to Kero-chan's name)
- giri giri
just barely, just in time, 'by the skin of one's teeth'
- gito gito
being oily
- gocha gocha
the state of disorder common to apartments nagging
- gohho

the sound of someone sneezing
- goro goro (boro boro/poro poro)
to laze about, the sound of an upset stomach, the loud rumble of lightning or an avalanche
- goshi goshi
the sound of washing clothes vigorously by hand
- gucha gucha
soft and wet, an awful mess
- guru guru
going around and around in circles
- guzu guzu
lazily, slowly
- guu guu
the sound of snoring; also the sound of stomach rumbles
- gyaa gyaa
the sound of a tantrum
- hara hara
heart going pit a-pat, nervousness (see doki doki). The sound made when one is swaying, about to faint
- hou bou
here and there (everywhere)
- iki iki
vividly
- ira ira
the state of being frustrated
- iro iro
this and that, variety, variously
- iyo iyo
more and more (at last)
- jime jime
clamminess
- jiku jiku
oozing
- jiro jiro
to stare
- kacha kacha/kata kata
the sound of small things clattering
- kan kan
very angry
- kara kara
very dry
- kari kari
the sound of someone scratching their head in puzzlement
- kera kera/keta keta
laughter
- kira kira
glitter and sparkle
- kokekokko
cock-a-doodle-doo
- kowa kowa

fom kowai, scared. An expression of being scared
- kusu kusu
giggling
- kuyo kuyo
worry about, mope, brood
- kyoro kyoro
looking around restlessly
- mago mago
confused
- masu masu
more or less, increasing
- mecha mecha
messed up, illogical, unreasonable
- meki meki
the state of making rapid progress
- mera mera
the sound/state of a fire blazing up
- meso meso
sobbing, sniffing
- miin miin
cicada
- mishi mishi
the sound of creaking
- mogu mogu
the sound of eating (perhaps the source of the name of the character
Mogglemoggle in Dokkoidar, or at least the source of one of the ways
his superior mis-remembers his name)
- mori mori
doing something willingly
- moto moto
originally, by nature, from the start
- mou mou
the sound a cow makes
- muka muka
a sound someone makes when they are disgusted
- niko niko
smiling
- nita nita
smirking
- niya niya
grinning
- nyao
the sound a cat makes
- pachi pachi
clapping hands
- paku paku
eat in big mouth fulls, take big bites
- pan pan
pounding (see pon pon); also, a full stomach
- pecha kucha

chattering
 - peko peko
 to be very hungry
 - pera pera
 fluent in a language (pera pera appears in a joke in Azumanga Daioh: a foreigner approaches Nyamo-sensei and Yukari-sensei and tries to talk to them. His speech consists solely of 'Pera pera' repeated over and over again)
 - pero pero
 licking (e.g., lollipops). Perhaps the origin of the name of the Miyazawa dog in Kare Kano?
 - pichi pichi
 the state of being young, fresh, vigorous
 - pii pii pii
 whining, puling (also used to describe bird-song)
 - pika pika
 glitter, twinkle (spic and span)
 - piku piku
 twitching
 - piyo piyo
 chirping of small birds
 - pocha pocha
 splash in water
 - poka poka
 the state of being nice and warm
 - pon pon
 the sound of drumming. The Takahata film "Pon Poko" is named after the sound that tanuki are said to make by drumming on their rotund stomachs
 - poro poro (goro goro/boro boro)
 the sound of small objects (pebbles, raindrops) rolling down. In the title of Takahata's film Omohide poro poro it is memories that roll down like raindrops
 - potsu potsu
 the state of small drops falling sporadically
 - pun pun
 a strong smell. Also an expression of anger, like saying "boo, hiss" (or, I suppose, 'This stinks!')
 - raku raku
 easily
 - riin
 the sound/state of someone staring
 saga saga
 - the state of being sarcastic
 shiku shiku
 - the sound one makes when crying
 tama tama
 - unexpectedly
 teka teka
 - greasy hair

ten ten
- like dots
ton ton (pon pon)
- the sound of someone knocking on the door
- tsuru tsuru
slippery, smoth
- tsuya tsuya
glossy
- uro uro
stumble
- wai wai
noisy exuberance
- wan wan
the sound a dog makes
- zuki zuki
a painful condition

Courtesy of the List Lady

found at <http://web.mit.edu/anime/www/onomatopoeia.html>