Programme 2015

13 JULY
In the company of a master: Vincent O’Sullivan
We kick off our 2015 programme in grand style with one of New Zealand’s finest. Poet Laureate Vincent O’Sullivan’s impressive writing career includes poetry, biography, novels, plays and short stories. His recent publication Being Here is the first to survey the entire span of O’Sullivan’s poetry, from 1973’s Bearings to new poems first published in this volume. Join us as O’Sullivan and longtime publisher and friend Fergus Barrowman take a journey back through an illustrious writing career, discussing favourite themes and preoccupations, recent work, and the public role of poetry.

20 JULY
Beach, Bach and Beyond!: Three Poets
Come and hear the latest in poetry, in a reading and discussion chaired by poet Cliff Fell. David Beach’s fourth collection, Jerusalem Sonnets, Love, Wellington Zoo, tackles, amongst other things, the inescapable presence of James K. Baxter for any sonnet writer. Morgan Bach’s debut, Some of Us Eat the Seeds, welcomes a refreshing new voice that is in turns witty and sharp-edged. The international publication of Otherwise, John Dennison’s first collection, heralds a new, vivid and sensual voice in the New Zealand (and UK) poetry scene.

27 JULY
Gee and Me: Rachel Barrowman
Historian Rachel Barrowman’s biography Mason: the Life of R.A.K. Mason won the biography category of the 2004 Montana Book Awards and received a wealth of critical praise. Her new book takes on another key literary figure of New Zealand’s finest. Poet Laureate Vincent O’Sullivan’s impressive writing career includes poetry, biography, novels, plays and short stories. His recent publication Being Here is the first to survey the entire span of O’Sullivan’s poetry, from 1973’s Bearings to new poems first published in this volume. Join us as O’Sullivan and longtime publisher and friend Fergus Barrowman take a journey back through an illustrious writing career, discussing favourite themes and preoccupations, recent work, and the public role of poetry.

3 AUGUST
The Talking Cure or Chiming In: Anna Smaill & Tim Corballis
Victoria University of Wellington/Creative New Zealand 2015 Writer in Residence Tim Corballis shares the stage with fellow novelist Anna Smaill. Small’s debut novel The Chimes has been described as a ‘startlingly original work that combines beautiful, inventive prose with incredible imagination.’ Hot off the press, Corballis’s latest work is R.H.I., two novellas that make an inadvertent history of the European 20th Century, seen through the lenses of psychoanalysis and communism. Emily Perkins will chair what promises to be a lively and fascinating session.

10 AUGUST
Picture This: John Reynolds & Sarah Laing
Te Papa Press has an extensive catalogue of beautiful books on Aotearoa/New Zealand’s art, culture, and natural world. This session celebrates the illustrators who bring so much to the life of books. Sarah Laing is both a successful novelist and designer. She recently illustrated The Curioseum: Collected Stories of the Odd and Marvellous. Renowned visual artist John Reynolds is famous for his extraordinary work Cloud, consisting of over 7,000 word canvases. He provided the illustrations for the Book of New Zealand Words. This session will be chaired by poet and artist Gregory O’Brien.

17 AUGUST
Riding the Ruins: David Coventry & Hamish Clayton
Winner of the 2012 Best First Book for fiction, Hamish Clayton’s novel Wulf weaves a poetic narrative through a recasting of the story of Te Rauparaha’s 1831 raid, and was described as ‘packed with challenge and virtuosity.’ In this session we hear about Clayton’s new novel The Pale North, a meditation on love, history, creativity and loss, set in Wellington in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake. David Coventry’s first novel was released in June. The Invisible Mile is a powerful re-imagining of the 1928 Ravat-Wonder Team, the first English-speaking team to attempt the Tour de France. The writers will be in discussion with poet and editor Harry Ricketts.

24 AUGUST
Best New Zealand Poems 2014
Best New Zealand Poems is an annual online publication by Victoria University’s International Institute of Modern Letters. Get ready for National Poetry Day (on 28 August) by coming along to hear eight of these poets read the work chosen by the 2014 editor, Poet Laureate Vincent O’Sullivan. And be sure to visit http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/jim/bestnzpoems/index.html to view the full selection. The readers are: John Dennison, Dinah Hawken, Anna Jackson, Gregory O’Brien, Claire Orchard, Nina Powles, Helen Rickerby, Kerrin P Sharpe. Introduced by Damien Wilkins.

31 AUGUST
Writing Time: Witi Ihimaera
We’re delighted to present celebrated author Witi Ihimaera in conversation with rising novelist and short story writer Tina Makereti. Ihimaera is joint recipient of the Randell Cottage residency for 2015 (along with Owen Marshall), taking over from Makereti who held the residency last year. While at Randell Cottage Ihimaera will work on the second part of his three-volume memoir, Native Son. Ihimaera will discuss his current work in progress, writing imaginative history, and the impact and importance of writers’ residencies in this country.

7 SEPTEMBER
Questions of Travel: Michelle de Kretser
It is our great pleasure to announce the Wellington visit of eminent Australian novelist Michelle de Kretser, author of four acclaimed novels including The Lost Dog and most recently Questions of Travel, winner of the Miles Franklin Award and the Prime Minister’s Literary Award for fiction. This mesmerising literary novel enthrals and enchants the reader as it shines a searching gaze on national identity, restlessness, dispossession and home. Come and hear more from de Kretser’s questing imagination. Chaired by Emily Perkins. Michelle de Kretser’s visit is funded by Victoria University’s International Institute of Modern Letters.
14 SEPTEMBER
The Next Page 1
A wonderful opportunity to hear a fresh mix of poetry and prose by the current cohort of writers at the Masters in Creative Writing Programme at Victoria University’s International Institute of Modern Letters. Sarah Webster, Tom Nieuwland du Chatenier, Alexandra Hollis, Helen Crampton, Louise Wrightson, Meryl Richards, Simon Thomas, Whitney Cox, Alisha Tyson and Nick Bollinger are introduced by Emily Perkins.

14 SEPTEMBER 2
The Next Page 2 and Short Sharp Script 1
Part 2 of the popular Next Page sessions features readings from Catherine Robertson, Samantha Keenan, Justine Jungersen-Smith, Helen Hunter, Johnny McCaughan, Nina Powles, Redmer Yska, Libby Farris, Jane Arthur and Louise Compagnone. Introduced by Cliff Fell.

Followed by...
Short Sharp Script 1: Circa Theatre 1.30-2.30pm
Follow us across the road to Circa Theatre, where actors will perform dynamic new work by MA scriptwriting students from the IIML: Greg Bennett, David Brechin-Smith, Ali Burns and James Cain. Directed by Lori Leigh. This session takes place at the special time of 1.30pm.

21 SEPTEMBER
Writers on Mondays is presented with the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, National Poetry Day and Circa Theatre.

28 SEPTEMBER
Short Sharp Script 2: Circa Theatre 12.15-1.15pm
More exciting work in progress from the second group of IIML scriptwriters, at Circa at the usual time of 12.15pm. Rose Cann, Ryan Knighton, Matthew Loveranes, Niki Partsch and Finn Teppett. Directed by Lori Leigh.

Events run from 12.15-1.15pm, Te Papa Marae, Level 4, Te Papa
(with the exception of the two scriptwriting events to be held at Circa Theatre. See programme for details)

Please note that no food may be taken onto the Te Papa marae.

For more information contact the International Institute of Modern Letters or visit our website:
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Cover drawing of the Janet Frame Desk by Gregory O’Brien

International Institute of Modern Letters
Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o Te Ao

From July to September each year, the International Institute of Modern Letters, home of Victoria University’s prestigious Creative Writing programme, runs a series of events highlighting the very latest work of writers active in Wellington and further afield. All in all, a lively and stimulating way to begin the week – and it’s free!