



**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
MODERN LETTERS**

*Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao*

**Newsletter – 14 November 2007**

This is the 117th 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. Candidates for Prize in Modern Letters announced**

Six emerging New Zealand writers have been short-listed for the \$65,000 Prize in Modern Letters, and the winner will be announced next March during the New Zealand Post Writers and Readers Week. The shortlisted writers are: Michele Amas, David Beach, Mary McCallum, Jo Randerson, Anna Sanderson and Louise Wareham Leonard. As Bill Manhire puts it, 'There are two novelists, two poets, a short story writer, and an essayist. And they're all writers who venture beyond familiar territory. To borrow Janet Frame's phrase, they're travelling "far from the road labelled Scenic Drive".'

The shortlisting judges were Dominion Post Books Editor Guy Somerset, broadcaster, editor and writer Elizabeth Alley, and novelist Damien Wilkins. New York literary editor Brigid Hughes (The Paris Review, A Public Space) will judge the winner. One of the world's wealthiest literary awards, the biennial Prize in Modern Letters is sponsored by United States business leader and arts philanthropist Glenn Schaeffer.

More information about the Prize can be read at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/modernletters/activities/prize-in-modern-letters.aspx>

## **2. More winning stories**

Congratulations to 2007 MA (Page) student Ellie Catton, whose story ‘Necropolis’ won the Sunday Star-Times Short Story Award last week ahead of over 1000 other entrants. She also won the Random House prize for best unpublished writer. Second place went to Samara McDowell, who completed the Victoria MA in 2002. Readers may recall that this year’s BNZ Katherine Mansfield Award for novice (unpublished) writer went to 2006 MA (Page) graduate Craig Cliff. We hear that his fellow workshop member Sue Orr, whose ‘The Stories of Frank Sargeson’, published recently in the Listener, was runner up in the open category of the same award last year, has just had a story collection accepted for publication by Random House. All three writers’ stories can be read online:

[www.stuff.co.nz/sundaystartimes/4269063a6619.html](http://www.stuff.co.nz/sundaystartimes/4269063a6619.html)

[www.bnz.co.nz/binaries/KMNovice.pdf](http://www.bnz.co.nz/binaries/KMNovice.pdf)

[www.listener.co.nz/issue/3520/artsbooks/9864/printable/the\\_stories\\_of\\_frank\\_sargeson.html](http://www.listener.co.nz/issue/3520/artsbooks/9864/printable/the_stories_of_frank_sargeson.html)

## **3. Four out of three ain’t bad**

Ken Duncum’s 2007 MA scriptwriters have also been extremely well represented in Radio New Zealand’s 15-minute script competition. The students attended a one-day workshop at the beginning of the year, which Radio NZ repeated with various scriptwriting courses round the country. Attendees were asked to submit a 15-minute script from which three would be selected for production and ultimately broadcast. The three recently selected are by Sarah Boddy, Catherine Bisley and Tusi Tamasese - all 2007 workshop members, as is Kate Morris, who got a Special Runner Up Award and will also have her script recorded. So that's 4 out of 3 for the scriptwriting course - a 133% success rate.

## **4. Your work here?**

The Lumière Reader ([www.lumiere.net.nz/reader](http://www.lumiere.net.nz/reader)) is currently seeking submissions of previously unpublished short fiction and poetry – of all styles and subject matter – for a regular creative writing feature. Fiction submissions should be no longer than 2000 words, and poetry submissions no more than five poems. The Lumière Reader’s books section is edited by 2006 MA graduate Amy Brown, who also co-edited Turbine 06 and was a major contributor to Salient’s book review pages last year. Email [amycbrown@myfastmail.com](mailto:amycbrown@myfastmail.com) with any questions or submissions.

## **5. The longest longlist for the biggest prize**

Five New Zealand novelists are on the 2008 IMPAC Dublin award longlist, which is made up of books nominated by public libraries around the world. Lloyd Jones is there, and so are Stephanie Johnson, C.K. Stead, Damien Wilkins and Paul Shannon. There are 132 other titles on the longlist, though, so the prospect of making the shortlist will be a longshot for most: among the best-known contenders are Margaret Atwood, Paul Auster, Peter Carey, Cormac McCarthy and Thomas Pynchon. The IMPAC is the world's richest literary prize at €100,000 (nearly £70,000) - another good reason, if it's needed, for novelists to be nice to their local librarians.

## **6. Three days in Florence**

The NZ Studies Association is holding its next conference in Florence from 2-4 July 2008 together with the Centre for New Zealand Studies, Birkbeck, University of London. Its theme is 'New Zealand and the Mediterranean', and keynote speakers confirmed include Claudia Bell, Roger Collins, Caroline Daley, James George, Patricia Grace, Jan Kemp, Michele Leggott, Karen Nero, Vincent O'Sullivan, and Christopher Pugsley. The conference takes place in 'a 16th century palace just 300 yards from the Uffizi Gallery, 200 yards from the Ponte Vecchio, and 100 yards from the Palazzo Pitti and the Boboli Gardens', say the organisers, who also promise excursions and a poetry reading from Jan Kemp, Michele Leggott and Vincent O'Sullivan. The deadline for proposals (for 20 minute papers) was 9 November, but we hear there may be a few slots left if you're quick. Abstracts need to be 250-300 words and accompanied by a bio sketch of 100-150 words. A decision on proposals received will be made by 3 December. Send proposals to either Dr Ian Conrich, Chair of NZSA & Director of CNZS ([ian@ianconrich.co.uk](mailto:ian@ianconrich.co.uk)) or Dr Dominic Alessio, Vice-Chair of NZSA ([alessid@Richmond.ac.uk](mailto:alessid@Richmond.ac.uk)).

## **7. London calling**

Homesick Kiwis who can't make it to Florence might instead consider joining the New Reading Group at the Centre for New Zealand Studies. The group will meet on the last Wednesday of every month (except December, July and August) from 6.45 pm to 8.30 pm in the Resource Room of the Centre for New Zealand Studies, Rm 330, Senate House, Malet Street, London. Books to be discussed 'will range widely from recent releases to classics, from novels to biographies and short stories, the only remit being that all books chosen will be by or about New Zealand writers.' The gatherings will be informal affairs with wine and nibbles, for which a modest charge will be made. The first session on 28 November will discuss C. K. Stead's novel *My Name Was Judas*, and the 30 January meeting will focus on Janet Frame's *The Lagoon*. Anyone wishing to attend should contact the Reading Group co-ordinator, Gerri Kimber ([gerri@thekimbers.co.uk](mailto:gerri@thekimbers.co.uk)).

## **8. Islands of residencies**

Kapiti Island will host New Zealand's first ever Maori writer's residency during Matariki, 2008. The 'Tau mai e Kapiti' Maori Writer's Residency, funded by Te Waka Toi / Creative New Zealand and hosted by Kaitiaki o Kapiti Trust, will allow a Maori writer to live and work on the northern end of Kapiti Island during June and July. The writer will also be paid a stipend of \$4,800. The residency is a one-off, but organisers say it may be offered annually 'if there's enough support and enthusiasm.' For information email Mei Hill, Project Manager (taumaiekapiti@pl.net).

A little further across the water, applications for Tasmania's 2008 Island of Residencies programme remain open until 30 November. Published writers from Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere are eligible: further information and application forms are on the website.

[www.thebigidea.co.nz/article.php?sid=5109&mode=thread&order=0](http://www.thebigidea.co.nz/article.php?sid=5109&mode=thread&order=0)  
[www.tasmanianwriters.org/island\\_of\\_residencies.htm](http://www.tasmanianwriters.org/island_of_residencies.htm)

## **9. From the whiteboard**

Contrary to what most people assume, one's politics as a novelist have nothing to do with the societies, parties and groups to which one might belong, or even dedication to any political cause. A novelist's politics arise from his imagination – his ability to imagine himself as someone else...[This] makes him a spokesperson for those who cannot speak for themselves, whose anger is never heard and whose words are suppressed.

— Orhan Pamuk

## **10. Poets international**

Zoland Poetry is an annual of contemporary English-language poetry, work in translation and featured interviews. They are currently reading for the third book in the series, and invite submissions. Guidelines and other information are at [www.zolandpoetry.com](http://www.zolandpoetry.com)

## **11. It's showtime**

Barbara Else is looking for submissions for Showtime!, her latest anthology of writing for children in the series published by Random House. She is looking for 'stories that focus on putting on a show – an idea to be interpreted as widely as possible. The subject matter might range from weddings and parties to concerts, parades, firework spectacles, to training pet mice (just for instance), about New Zealand kids taking part in theatrical, cultural, religious or private performances and ceremonies.' Stories can range in treatment from conventional realism to fantasy, and should be from 400 to 1000 words in length. Showtime is aimed at the 7-10 age group. For detailed submission requirements email [barbara@elseware.co.nz](mailto:barbara@elseware.co.nz); stories should be sent to Barbara Else, PO Box 46-031 Park Avenue Lower Hutt 5044 by 31 January 2008.

## 12. Recent web reading

Pamuk goes to Washington

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/10/29/AR2007102902295.html>

A Vincent O'Sullivan Festschrift

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/vup/recent%20titles/stillshines.htm>

Art in the next century

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601088&sid=aLNnz1mfWT40&refer=muse>

What we should have read

<http://insidehighered.com/views/2007/10/31/mclemee>  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/11/books/review/McInerney-t.html?em&ex=1194843600&en=2528bcd47f4100b&ei=5087%0A>  
<http://www.slate.com/id/2176907/pagenum/all/>

Dead rich

[http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20071030.widlicherich1030/BNStory/Entertainment/home?cid=al\\_gam\\_mostview](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20071030.widlicherich1030/BNStory/Entertainment/home?cid=al_gam_mostview)

The new publisher

<http://www.wired.com/techbiz/startups/news/2007/10/dzancbooks>

The new reader

[http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/11/05/071105fa\\_fact\\_grafton](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/11/05/071105fa_fact_grafton)

Michael Shepherd motors

<http://www.artagent.co.nz/currentexhibition.htm>

The difference between boys and girls

[http://www.boston.com/news/globe/ideas/articles/2007/10/28/the\\_difference\\_myth/](http://www.boston.com/news/globe/ideas/articles/2007/10/28/the_difference_myth/)

Lewis Lapham's new journal

[http://www.boston.com/news/globe/ideas/articles/2007/11/04/qa\\_with\\_lewis\\_lapham/](http://www.boston.com/news/globe/ideas/articles/2007/11/04/qa_with_lewis_lapham/)

The madness of Werner Herzog

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/arts/main.jhtml?xml=/arts/2007/11/03/sm\\_wernerherzog.xml](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/arts/main.jhtml?xml=/arts/2007/11/03/sm_wernerherzog.xml)

A minor history of giant spheres...

<http://cabinetmagazine.org/issues/27/foer.php>

No cussing club

[www.nocussing.com](http://www.nocussing.com)

Theatre poetry

[http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/theatre/2007/11/why\\_dont\\_poetry\\_and\\_theatre\\_mix.html](http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/theatre/2007/11/why_dont_poetry_and_theatre_mix.html)

Art theatre

<http://observer.guardian.co.uk/review/story/0,,2208869,00.html>

Last Supper loaf music

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7088600.stm>

Flattery will get you nowhere

<http://stuff.co.nz/sundaystartimes/4260697a6619.html>

Why we should read novels

<http://www.fundacionprincipedeasturias.org/ing/04/premiados/discursos/discurso819.html>

Cormac McCarthy meets the Coen brothers

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1673269,00.html>

Boris the poet

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/poetry/features/0,,2208217,00.html>

Kahlil Gibran

[http://firstthings.com:80/article.php3?id\\_article=6068](http://firstthings.com:80/article.php3?id_article=6068)

Geoff Cochrane interviewed by Damien Wilkins

<http://lumiere.net.nz/reader/arts.php/item/1393>

Elizabeth Knox interview

<http://gwendabond.typepad.com/bondgirl/2007/11/wbbt-stop-eliza.html>

Poetry readings in Edinburgh

<http://robmack.blogspot.com/2007/07/in-performance.html>

Lyrical terrorism

[http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/books/2007/11/terrible\\_poet\\_laughable\\_terror.html](http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/books/2007/11/terrible_poet_laughable_terror.html)

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

A short but intriguing list of some exhibits on display at the Museum of Lost Interaction (at the University of Dundee): a museum of "audio recording machines, wireless morse communicators, portable video to the precursor behind iTunes... guaranteed never to have been found, documented or exhibited ever before":

the richophone (1900)

the prat sampler (1918)

the acoustograph (1920)

the social communicator (1932)  
the case communicator (1936)  
the chordmaster (1950)  
the zenith radio hat (1952)  
pester (1970)  
the video case (1979)

<http://www.idl.dundee.ac.uk/moli/exhibits.html>