



## INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS

*Te Pūtake Tuhi Auaha o te Ao*

### Newsletter – 8 July 2009

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This is the 143<sup>rd</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. Writers on Mondays — back next week

Writers on Mondays is back with some regular food for thought to get you through the winter months. Our first guest in the popular series, which commences next Monday, 13 July, is Creative New Zealand/Victoria University Writer-in-Residence Paula Boock, who'll speak with Kate De Goldi about her work as a scriptwriter and young adult novelist, and offer a sneak preview of the project she's working on during her year at Victoria, a novel for adults set in Dunedin between 1929 and 1932.

Monday 20 July sees the return of the annual reading by poets selected for [Best New Zealand Poems](#). This is followed on 27 July by UK poet and former Faber Poetry Editor [Christopher Reid](#), who appears in conversation with Bill Manhire.

All Writers on Mondays events take place from 12.15-1.15 pm at Te Papa, Level 4 Marae – regulars please note the new venue and time slot. Admission is free, all welcome – but please note that no food may be taken onto the Marae. The full programme, which runs through to the end of September, is available [here](#).

## 2. Fact-checking

The New Zealand Film Festival [www.nzff.co.nz](http://www.nzff.co.nz) will be screening the Nick Hornby-initiated film of Lynn Barber's memoir, *An Education*. We're not sure how much territory the film covers, but writers will feel for Lynn Barber in her encounter with the fact-checking machine from Vanity Fair magazine:

'The weirdest example came when I was writing a profile of P. D. James and said something about her spending the weekend in Salisbury. Back came the fact-checkers. Where was this place Sall-is-burry? Well, it's a cathedral city in Wiltshire, about 100 miles west of London. What was my source for saying that? Well, as a matter of fact, my parents live near there. That, it turned out, was not a source. I had to find an "accredited" guidebook that said where Salisbury was. Of course it wasn't difficult, but what was infuriating was that they then put a great chunk from the guidebook into my article so that P. D. James spent the weekend in "Salisbury, a city founded in medieval times in the county of Wiltshire and famous for having the highest cathedral spire – 404 feet – in England." It was madness but it happened again and again – huge wedges of irrelevant fact would suddenly appear in the middle of my paragraph, completely ruining the flow.'

## 3. From rehearsal to opening

Granta have been putting considerable promotional energy into the UK release of Eleanor Catton's *The Rehearsal*, which is their first e-book title. They have teamed up with 'cultural hub' Flavorpill to create [The Rehearsal Project](#), a competition to produce digital film or animation shorts that explore the notion of 'life as performance'.

The buzz around the novel is beginning to gather momentum in the 'real' world too. In June the book won a Betty Trask Award, a prize for first novels written by authors under the age of 35 'in a romantic or traditional, but not experimental, style'. The prize money must be used for foreign travel. Previous winners include Sarah Waters, Hari Kunzru, Sarah Hall, John Lanchester, Nadeem Aslam and New Zealander Catherine Chidgey.

There have also been three 'astral' reviews in UK broadsheets [The Times](#), the [Telegraph](#) and the [Scotsman](#). 'Astral' is the word used by *Scotsman* reviewer Tom Adair, who also compares Catton's debut to that of François Sagan.

#### 4. Gatsby on stage

On 25 July a stage adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel of love and loss among wealthy Jazz Age New Yorkers, opens at the Court Theatre in Christchurch. The novel has been adapted by Ken Duncum, Hirschfeld Director of Scriptwriting at the IIML, and it's a project, he says, that he's long wanted to realise. When asked, in a recent [interview](#) with Natasha Hay, why he wanted to do it now, Duncum comments:

'It's always been a good time to do this play. There's always been a cycle of boom then recession and of course it reminds us of the Roaring 20s. Also career-wise I'd felt I'd reached a point where I needed a real challenge. I wanted something where I could really flex my theatrical muscles, and what better than on someone else's great work.... It's like going to the artists' gym. There is a readymade work in another medium, and you can take someone else's story and blaze your own trail. The thing people love about *Great Gatsby* is the incredible language and I'm very interested in going back to a theatre that has beautiful language. There has to be a balance between lyricism, slang and story-telling.'

*The Great Gatsby* is directed by Ross Gumbley. For bookings tel 03 963 0870 or visit the Court's [website](#).

#### 5. From the whiteboard

'All good writing is swimming under water and holding your breath.'  
— F. Scott Fitzgerald

#### 6. Meet Guillermo

Today from 6pm Wellington fans will have a chance to meet *Hobbit* director Guillermo del Toro as he signs copies of his newly released vampire novel *The Strain* at Unity Books. *The Strain* is the first volume in a trilogy of books, co-written with thriller writer Chuck Hogan, about a vampiric virus that invades New York. Unity recommends people come as close to 6pm as possible, as the time for the event and their stock of del Toro's work is limited.

#### 7. The expanding bookshelf (1): fiction

Alison Wong's long-awaited first novel *As the Earth Turns Silver* was launched by Dame Fiona Kidman in front of a large crowd at Unity Books in Wellington on Monday night. *As the Earth Turns Silver* (Penguin) is a historical novel set in New Zealand and China, and overseas editions have already been sold in the UK, Australia, France and some parts of Asia by her agent Toby Eady. Publisher Geoff Walker read a message from Eady in which he said "When the manuscript for *As The Earth Turns Silver* first came in to my office, I knew I had to go to New Zealand and meet its

author.' Alison's poetry collection *Cup* was shortlisted for the Best First Book of Poetry Award in the 2007 Montanas, but this is her first book of fiction. She did the Original Composition course at Victoria with Damien Wilkins in 1995, when her classmates included Catherine Chidgey and Kate Camp. At the launch, Alison credited Kate with giving her the Chinese proverb from which the book takes its title.

## **8. Short story – big prize**

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Sunday Star-Times* Short Story Awards, and the organisers are encouraging students from tertiary institutes to get involved. There's a \$5000 first prize in the Open Division, judged by Elizabeth Smither – and previously unpublished writers should enter that division, as the Best Unpublished Writer will be selected from among the Open Division entries. For the purposes of this award, unpublished means writers who have 'not had a fiction work appear in a trade book format'.

The winner of that award gets the opportunity to meet Random House staff including fiction publisher Harriet Allan, as well as a \$200 selection of books from the company. This year the Open Division is judged by Elizabeth Smither. There's also a People's Choice Award, selected by online vote, and a Secondary School Division (judged by Fleur Beale) with a first prize of \$1000, plus a day of work experience at Random House and books for the winner's school library. Full details are available [here](#).

## **9. New Zealand Post National Schools Poetry Awards**

Entries have now closed for the [Schools Poetry Awards](#), and judges Jenny Bornholdt and Jason Kerrison have been busy reading hundreds of entries for the two prize categories. Watch out for the shortlist announcement on 20 July to find out who's in the running for the Awards this year.

## **10. The expanding bookshelf (2): poetry x 3**

Bernadette Hall's *The Lustre Jug* is released this month by VUP. In 2007 Hall spent six months in Ireland, not far from Blarney, on the Rathcoola Fellowship, and the poems in this collection arise from that experience

Mary Cresswell's book *Nearest & Dearest* has just appeared from Steele Roberts. Mary did Victoria's poetry workshop with Greg O'Brien some years ago, and her poetry subsequently appeared in *Millionaire's Shortbread* (along with work by Mary-Jane Duffy, Mary Macpherson and Kerry Hines). The poems in *Nearest & Dearest* show her in her light verse mood: parody and satire, and a sharp interest in the liveliness of words. There's a sample [here](#).

Bill Manhire's recent book of poems *Lifted* has just been published in an

Italian translation by Victoria University senior lecturer [Marco Sonzogni](#). Sonzogni has previously translated Seamus Heaney, Salvatore Quasimodo and Eugenio Montale, as well as New Zealand writers including Katherine Mansfield, Patricia Grace, and Vincent O'Sullivan. He is currently working on a new English translation of Primo Levi's *Collected Poems* with American poet and translator Harry Thomas.

## 11. Life at the edge

'I live at the edge of the universe, like everybody else.'  
--Bill Manhire

The 2009 Royal Society of New Zealand Manhire Prize for Creative Science Writing celebrates the International Year of Astronomy. 'Ever since Galileo first aimed his telescope at Jupiter's moons,' they write, 'technology has been enlarging our knowledge of the universe. We now know our own insignificance and isolation and yet we have immense power to communicate as never before. The race of humans is isolated in space and time and yet where, as individuals, do we go to be alone?'

The competition brief is to write 2-3,000 words about the place - past or present or future - of human beings in the universe. There are two categories, fiction and non-fiction. For the purposes of the competition, the fiction category covers science fiction as well as the realistic short story. The non-fiction category covers a wide range of genres from personal essays to profiles to travel writing, but entries must have substantial scientific content. Entries will be judged on their literary merits and the extent to which they engage a non-scientific audience and are accessible to the general public. A cash prize of \$2500 will be awarded to the winner of each category. The closing date for entries is Tuesday 22 September 2009.

For more information, terms and conditions and entry forms visit the Royal Society's [website](#) or contact Danae Staples-Moon, tel 04 470 5770, email [danae@royalsociety.org.nz](mailto:danae@royalsociety.org.nz).

## 12. The expanding bookshelf (3): non-fiction

Pip Desmond's memoir of the period in the 70s when she lived and worked with women affiliated with gang members is published later this month by Random House. *Trust: A True Story of Women and Gangs* will be launched by Tariana Turia at a function at Te Puni Kokiri in Wellington. Pip completed the MA (Page) at the IIML in 2006.

## 13. Dr Hugh Price

Victoria University has announced it will present Australasian publisher Hugh Price (MNZM) will be presented with an honorary [Doctorate of Literature](#) for his achievements in the world of publishing, and his contribution to New Zealand literature. In partnership with another Victoria graduate Jim Milburn, Hugh Price

founded Price Milburn Publishers Limited (PM) in 1957. Among its first successes were the PM Story Books for fledgling readers, written by Hugh's wife Beverley Randell, which now have worldwide sales in excess of 200 million. In the 1960s Price was foundation manager of Sydney University Press, and on his return to New Zealand, he helped establish Victoria University Press (VUP). He has also been active in politics, campaigning for the abolition of the death penalty and against apartheid in South Africa, and in music publishing. In the 1990s the Price family bought and restored a settlers' cottage in St Mary Street, Thorndon. The Randell Cottage Writers Trust now makes it available for both New Zealand and French writers.

#### **14. How to live by the sea**

The New Zealand Poetry Society's July guest is Lynn Davidson, Kapiti poet, teacher and author of three poetry collections and a novel. Her new collection, *How to live by the sea* (VUP) was completed for her 2007 MA in Creative Writing. She reads on Monday 20 July at the Thistle Inn, 3 Mulgrave St, Wellington. The meeting begins at 7.30pm with an open mic, and ends with a Q&A session, after Lynn's reading.

#### **15. Your work here?**

*Brief* invites writers to submit poetry, fiction, critical and creative non-fiction, reviews, art and/or less classifiable work for its next issue. *Brief* is a New Zealand print-based journal, and is newly under the general editorship of Michael Arnold. *Brief* 38 will be guest edited by Jen Crawford. The magazine remains a home for work that takes aesthetic and conceptual risks. They say they are 'particularly interested in writing that is linguistically and visually curious, that inhabits international and multimedia forms and identities, and that is emotionally and philosophically inventive.' They aim to open up the contributor list and the readership, and to welcome in new people and thoughts. You'll need to hurry though: submissions must be sent to [jencrawford@gmail.com](mailto:jencrawford@gmail.com) by 15 July.

#### **16. Recent web reading**

[Curtis Sittenfeld interview](#)

[Michael Cunningham interview](#)

[Rita Dove interview](#)

[David Lodge interview](#)

[Charles Causley website](#)

[Eleanor Catton interview](#)

[Dunedin writers](#)

[Poems on the BBC](#)

[Kathy McVey \(MA 08\) is workshopped in the \*Guardian\*](#)

[Iran, storytelling, and contemporary theatre](#)

[The National Theatre \(UK\) distributes itself](#)

[Grumpy author](#)

[What's happening to History](#)

[Is the future free?](#)

[Clockwork](#)

[Twitterature](#)

[Twittering dangers](#)

[Underground wisdom](#)

[The world's biggest crossword puzzle](#)

[Extreme shepherding](#)

[Cookie Monster in the Library](#)

[1930s fashion predictions](#)

[Paul Muldoon takes tea](#)

[My hovercraft is full of eels](#)

[Invisible books](#)

[Lost time capsules](#)

[Sci-fi cities](#)

[Book Army](#)

[The TLS poem of the week](#)

[Introducing the book](#)

[Short films about type](#)

[Typeradio interviews Sarah Maxey](#)

[Imaginary books](#)

[Michael Jackson face morph](#)

[Early New Zealand poets](#)

[Matariki, and a poem by Keri Hulme](#)

[The power of creative writing programmes](#)

[Sijo](#)

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

A list of bookbinding styles/types, from the [British Library Database of Bookbindings](#).

Abstract  
All over design  
Acorn  
Armorial  
Azured or hatched motifs  
Allegorical panel  
Allegorical  
Apollo and Pegasus  
Architectural  
Art nouveau  
Bird motif  
Biblical scene  
Backless  
Basketwork  
Bird roll motif  
Bird's head  
Bee hive  
Boat  
Bat wing motif  
Butterfly  
Bee motif  
Centrepiece  
Centre and cornerpiece made of small tools  
Crown motif  
Cambridge small motifs  
Cherubs head  
Circle  
Cornerpiece made of small tools  
Centrepiece made of small tools  
Centre and cornerpiece  
Classical  
Cornerpiece



Cortina or curtain  
Cottage roof  
Crown and sceptre motif  
Cartonnage, publishers binding usually blocked paper  
Cathedral  
Christs head motif  
Cupid  
Cosway  
Cottonian binding, Southey & Wordsworth  
Cubist  
Col tempo  
Crescent  
Curl, floral  
Curl, ornamental  
Columns  
Cypher  
Castle  
Cherubs  
Drawer handle motif  
Diaper  
Dated  
Dolphin motif  
Dentelle  
Dogale commission  
Dos a dos, double book  
Deer motif  
Dog motif  
Dutch gilt  
Diced  
Dragon  
Emblematic motifs for Hollis  
Etruscan border  
Floral  
Frame  
Fan  
Fanfare  
Fleur de lis  
Fox  
Fake or forgery  
Fishscale  
Fortuna  
Flames or rays  
Fanfare, empty  
Fanfare semi (without foliage)  
Feathers  
Greek style  
Golden Fleece motif  
Gril de St Laurent, vertical strips of repeated motifs in blind  
Griffin  
Goddess roll

Grape  
 Heart motif  
 Hand motif  
 Heads in medallions  
 Holy Roman Emperor Charles V portrait  
 Holy Roman Empire arms  
 Hunting scene  
 Harleian, centrepiece and border of small tools  
 Harleian, centrepiece & border of small tools  
 Herringbone, Scottish  
 Harp  
 Heraldic motifs  
 Head in profile  
 Insect motifs  
 Interlacing ribbon/strapwork  
 Knotwork/ropework  
 Lozenge or diamond  
 Lettered cover, eg initials, titles  
 Lucrece panel  
 Leaf  
 Lyre  
 Lion, crowned  
 Lion  
 Mottoes  
 Medallion or plaque  
 Masonic  
 Mudejar, Moorish inspired geometric  
 Medallions or plaquettes  
 Macabre, funerary motifs  
 Music notation  
 Man, seated  
 Oval motif  
 Owl  
 Panel design  
 Presentation  
 Pointille (comprising dots)  
 Pot of flowers motif  
 Pictorial  
 Protestant reformers  
 Portrait. Charles V Holy Roman Emperor  
 Prize  
 Peasant, floral, coloured vellum  
 Plain covers with doublures gold tooled.  
 Plain  
 Publishers binding  
 Portrait. John Frederick, Duke of Saxony  
 Plateresque, with small, ornate motifs  
 Pocket book  
 Pot casse  
 Pyramid

Palmette  
Pear motif  
Plain covers tooled spine  
Plant  
Repeated motifs  
Religious, IHS initials  
Retrospective, imitations of earlier styles  
Rococo  
Religious miscellaneous  
Rocaille, curved shapes comprising frame  
Rocaille, curved shapes comprising frame, usually French  
Romanesque  
Rose, crowned  
Semis, background of small tools  
Shield, empty  
Single tools design  
Sombre, blind tooled on black  
Sheild, empty  
Spes  
Shell motif  
Star  
Swag  
Strawberry  
Sun  
Scroll  
Striped  
Skull  
Snake  
Stag  
Spaniel  
Tree calf  
Trade binding  
Tipos populares  
Treasure binding  
Tulip  
Thistle  
Urn  
Wreath  
Wheel, Scottish  
Worm

\* \* \*

### **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)