



## INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS

*Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao*

### Newsletter – 6 April 2011

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This is the 167<sup>th</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](mailto:modernletters).

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#### 1. Chew and depth

*Best New Zealand Poems 2010* is live! Edited by Chris Price, it contains 25 poems from the previous twelve months - ones which Chris felt offered “enough chew and depth to make them worth repeated tasting.” You’ll need to go [here](#) to check out the contents of the new issue, but as usual the poems are accompanied by authors’ notes and a range of useful links. Just as a taster, here is Fleur Adcock’s note to her poem:

“The following extract is from my journal, 20 November 2009: “I sat up in bed in the early hours of this morning and wrote an instant stream-of-consciousness poem called “Having Sex with the Dead”. When I had finished the first 15 lines, I got up and went downstairs for a slice of toast and some hot milk, over which I wrote three lines more. (I was well aware that if I’d interrupted the flow of nocturnal dictation by getting up earlier it would have vanished). And that’s it, more or less: I can’t think of anything apart from the odd word that I want to change. It’s such an odd production in any case that it would be difficult to judge it in the reasonable light of day.” That afternoon I added: “But now, thinking about it, I realise that it has a lot in common with my other middle-of-the-night poem, ‘Over the Edge’, which really was based on a dream, not just surfacing thoughts from the deeps. However, as they were both sent from the subconscious I suppose it’s not surprising that both feature water and dead people. I guess that’s what we have down there.””

Footnote: Those dreams are widely separated: Fleur Adcock’s “Over the Edge” first appeared in the [TLS in 1973](#).

## **2. Best of the Best**

And after a decade of *Best New Zealand Poems* online, and 250 poems all told, now there’s the book. It’s been edited by Damien Wilkins and Bill Manhire (with a terrific introduction from Damien) and gives a glimpse of New Zealand poetry in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *The Best of Best New Zealand Poems* will enter the world at the Auckland Writers’ Festival, accompanied by an event at which Tusiata Avia, Paula Green, Cilla McQueen, Bill Manhire, Emma Neale, Vincent O’Sullivan, Elizabeth Smither and Robert Sullivan will read with VUP publisher Fergus Barrowman as MC.

## **3. But wait, there’s more!**

We’re currently adding audio files to a range of poems in *BNZP 2010* - and in earlier years, too. We’ll advise in the newsletter and on [Twitter](#) when these go live.

## **4. Standing ovations**

We hear that Kate De Goldi got a standing ovation last Saturday for her inspiring lecture at the Storylines Margaret Mahy Day. Among the awards also announced at Storylines, we were very pleased to hear about the following successes:

[Kathy Taylor](#) (CREW 255, 2006) was announced as the winner of the Tom Fitzgibbon Award (for a junior novel from a previously unpublished writer). Her novel *Iris's Ukelele* will be published next year by Scholastic.

Sabrina Malcolm (also 2006) was short-listed for the Joy Cowley Picture Book Award for a previously unpublished writer.

The inaugural winner of the Tessa Duder Award for a YA manuscript from a previously unpublished writer was Hugh Brown, a student of Kate De Goldi's YA masterclass here at the IIML.

And 2007 CREW 255 student Jo Thapa 's picture book *Magpie Mischief* with June Peka (pub 2010) was selected as a Storylines notable book.

Applications for this year's [Children's Writing Workshop](#) with Eirlys Hunter close on June 5.

## **5. Wreckers or custodians?**

The 15 April deadline is approaching for New Zealand creative artists to submit their entries to [WWF-New Zealand's Ocean:Views competition](#). Ocean:Views calls for people to submit creative works in any of four categories - music, creative writing, short film, and visual art (including, but not limited to, photography, illustration, graphic design and multimedia) - celebrating New Zealand's oceans and reflecting on New Zealanders' unique connection to them. Collectively, the entries will form a unique expression of New Zealanders' view of the waters that surround our islands.

Entry is free and you can submit [online](#). The grand prize is a trip for two to the Pacific Islands to witness ocean wildlife from whales to seabirds and turtles that travel through New Zealand's vast oceans on their epic migrations.

Some of New Zealand's most creative people have lent their support to the WWF cause, by expressing what the ocean means to them. One member of the Ocean:Views judging panel, award-winning author Lloyd Jones, recalls spending much of his childhood exploring New Zealand's abundant and beautiful shorelines. In his story to inspire people to enter Ocean:Views, he writes: "As a child, I remember crouching above a rock pool crammed with layers of life - a tiny fish worked its way into a finger groove of rock, a crab sank into the mud and waited - while I pondered whether I would be a wrecker or custodian of that world. Whenever we look for a metaphor that speaks of the soul we turn to the sea. We marvel at it. We play in it. We eat from it. As much as it sustains us, we need to sustain it."

## **6. BNZ Literary Awards are back**

The BNZ Literary Awards are back, with Owen Marshall judging the \$10,000 Katherine Mansfield short story category, Rachael King judging the Novice Award, and Penelope Todd judging the Young Writer section. There's also a Twitterish-sounding challenge – but happening via Facebook - for stories that don't exceed 150 words. Entries close on 31 May. As Rachael King says on her Twitter page, "Get writin'!"

## 7. The long and the short of it

The winners of this Unity Books/*Sport* competition are being announced at the [Auckland Writers' Festival](#). They'll also be interviewed by Emily Perkins in a special session – plus “wine and other drinks that can be had long or short”.

Winners from the two categories will appear in the new issue of *Sport*, also to be launched at the Festival; and Unity will publish a special limited edition book containing the top six entries.

## 8. Skin

And while we're on the subject of short stories, we came upon this description of Shelley Jackson's living and (mostly) breathing short story recently in the [Telegraph](#).

“Meanwhile, in Los Angeles, Shelley Jackson has created a new version of her short story, *Skin*, a single different word of which was tattooed on to 2,000 volunteers in 2003. Two hundred of them have now been videoed speaking their individual word allowing Ms Jackson to edit them into a new 895-word story (she reuses many of them). One of the original participants has already died. ‘Injuries to the tattooed text, such as dermabrasion, laser surgery, cover work or the loss of body parts, will not be considered to alter the work,’ the ever so-serious-minded author/artist told the LA Times. ‘Only the death of words effaces them from the text. As words die the story will change; when the last word dies the story will also have died.’

## 9. Making Baby Float

Norman Meehan and Bill Manhire and Hannah Griffin and Colin Hemmingsen and a bunch of other musicians and vocalists are back with a concert that takes off from the success of last year's [Buddhist Rain](#) event.

The show takes place on April 14<sup>th</sup> in Victoria University's Hunter Council Chamber. The event is being recorded for DVD and CD release, so it might be wise to book. More [here](#).

Meantime blog supremo Stephen Stratford has uncovered an arcane link between [Bill Manhire and Dr Feelgood](#).

## 10. From the whiteboard

“I can describe depravity without being depraved” – James Ellroy

## 11. The expanding bookshelf

Emma Neale's new YA novel *Fosterling* has been getting lots of good press. You can listen to her Arts on Sunday interview [here](#). She'll also be a guest at the Auckland Writers' Festival.

Dinah Hawken has a new book, *The Leaf Ride*, about to enter the world as does Airini Beautrais, whose new collection *Western Line* is being launched at 2.00 pm on Saturday 9 April at the Thistle Hall in Wellington's Upper Cuba Street.

## 12. Broadcast drama

If you missed last weekend's short plays (with impressive casts) by IIML graduates Maya Hammarsal and Nathan Crocker, you should be able to catch the audio postings [here](#). Next Sunday, new plays by April Phillips and Sam Burt will be aired.

Meantime Desirée Gezentsvey's *Nuclear Family* has had a strong response at the Adelaide Fringe festival. The play, says the *Fringe Theatre Review's* reviewer, "feels personal and raw, emotional and also very, very well written."

## 13. 4 Poets and Dave at the Adam

Poetry and fiction from the Iowa Writers' Workshop, but via the IIML at Victoria. On April 13<sup>th</sup> at 7.00 pm, Bill Manhire introduces a [reading in the Adam Gallery](#) celebrating the Iowa Workshop's connection with the IIML. (You may need a Facebook account to open the link above.) All five writers - two New Zealanders and three Americans - have the double Iowa/Victoria connection: Alan Felsenthal, Dave Fleming, Therese Lloyd, Alice Miller and Lee Posna. Come along and make sure Dave isn't lonely.

Free!

## 14. The cave, the hive

Fulbright Senior Scholar [Lesley Wheeler](#) has started a [blog](#) as part of her "'Poetry and Community in the 21st Century" project, which she is working on while here at Victoria. It looks like it will be both a commentary on the project, and potentially a part of it, especially if the comments get going. "This virtual space makes a pretty flimsy whare, but I hope it will be big enough to house some thinking about poetry and community in and beyond Wellington - why writers forge or join groups and institutions, how those networks interact with other groups, and the inclusions and exclusions implied by poems themselves."

Lesley is a poet, too, and recently read at [Raumati's Lembas Café](#).

## 15. CLL/NZSA Research Grants

The CLL/NZSA Research Grants are now open for applications.

One of the grants, for either fiction or non-fiction, will be for a fellowship at the Stout Centre in Wellington. This grant will offer a study at the Stout Research Centre for up to three months, access to VUW facilities (internet, printers, library, secretarial services, photocopying - and the kitchen!), as well as the \$3,500 award.

The other research grant, also for \$3,500 and for either fiction or non-fiction, is open. It will be awarded to a project-based application where the applicant specifies where the research is to take place.

In 2010 Bradford Haami received the open grant for his project on whale traditions of the Maori. Rebecca Priestley was the recipient of the Stout grant for research towards *The Awa Book of Antarctic Science*.

Closing date is 1<sup>st</sup> July. For an application form please contact [NZSA National Office](#).

## 16. Graveside poems

Poetry has a way of turning up at funerals, and the late Elizabeth Taylor's was no exception. Apparently graveside poems were read by her son and daughter and grandson, while actor Colin Farrell read [Gerard Manley Hopkins'](#) "The Leaden Echo and The Golden Echo." A great poem, but one more likely to trip up the tongue than trip off it.

## 17. Recent web reading

[The Dom Post's Kimberley Rothwell on ten years of the IIML](#)

[Best Scottish Poems 2010](#), edited by Jen Hadfield

[NZ Online Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies has started a poetry section](#)

[Jolisa Gracewood ponders NZ fiction](#)

[Ageing poet seeks happiness advice](#)

[Auckland Writers & Readers Festival 11-15 May](#) – full programme now downloadable

[The perils of self publishing](#) (they include a 300 plus comments thread)

[Journalism and poetry and Seamus Heaney](#)

[David Vann plays favourites – and the congas](#)

[The wonderful world of copyright](#)

[Uh Oh. Jesus Wept. Kate Camp goes into the postcard business](#)

[How to write a manifesto](#)

[100 top April Fools](#)

[Poetry bloodlines](#)

[The Tuesday poets celebrate their first birthday](#)

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

The world's winds . . .

- Abroholos
- Alizé
- Amihan
- Bayamo
- Bora
- Calima
- Cape Doctor
- Chinook
- Diablo
- Etesian
- Elephanta
- Föhn
- Fremantle Doctor
- Gilavar
- Gregale
- Habagat
- Harmattan
- Halny
- Helm Wind
- Karaburan
- Khamsin
- Khazri
- Kona
- Košava
- Viento de Levante
- Les Suêtes
- Libeccio
- Lodos
- Loo

- Maestro
- Marin
- Meltemi
- Minuano
- Mistral
- Monsoon
- Nor'easter
- Nor'wester
- Ostro
- Pampero
- Papagayo
- Passat
- Plough Wind
- Puelche
- Rashabar
- Santa Ana winds
- Shamal
- Simoom
- Sirocco
- Southerly Buster
- Sou'wester
- Squamish
- Sudestada
- Sundowner
- Tehuano
- Tramontane
- Vendavel
- Zonda wind

From [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_local\\_winds](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_local_winds)

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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)