



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS

Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao

Newsletter – 1 March 2012

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This is the 179th 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.

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1. The tyranny of distance

Bill Manhire is leaving the IIML at the end of this year, and his job has just been [advertised](#).

In an interview for the US journal [Shenandoah](#), poet and Fulbright Scholar [Lesley Wheeler](#) <http://thecavethehive.wordpress.com/asked> him for his thoughts about the future of the IIML.

“LW: One last question about the IIML. You have announced that you’re retiring at the end of 2012. What qualities would you like to see in the next director? What

challenges and opportunities do you foresee for the Institute in its second decade?
BM: I guess the person needs to be a first-rate writer, with maybe some ability to move across genres. Someone who is very well read in contemporary literature, and doesn't just "get up" a knowledge of New Zealand writers for a job application. Someone who can talk well about fiction and poetry and theater and film but isn't lost to bombast. Someone who likes the fact that the code for all our courses is CREW. I've always attributed my apparent success as a teacher to my early training as bartender. Maybe that should also be a prerequisite for the job.

As for the Institute, I hope it can remain small and fairly independent—part of the university, but not lost inside some larger academic entity.

Perhaps more partnerships—or just friendships—with similar programs in the USA, the UK and Australia would be good, too. No one likes to say so, but the tyranny of distance is still fairly tyrannical.”

2. Not the Spanish Inquisition, but you never know

Recently Bill read his way through about 250 submitted poems in order to choose three for the Writers and Readers Festival masterclass. Three writers will have their poems workshopped on the Embassy stage before a paying audience. The writers are Dunedin's [Alastair Galbraith](#), Christchurch's Vida Zelenka, and Jo Morris from Hawkes Bay. We assume they are happy and terrified. If you want to join the audience, there's more information [here](#). Please note that there's a special student rate.

3. Our Star Trek moment

Recently we found ourselves reading this [New Zealand Herald](#) article about mentions of New Zealand in the movies, and suddenly remembered the phone call we got over a decade ago to tell us that we had just been name-checked on *Star Trek*. Apparently Jake Sisko, somewhere out in Cardassian space, receives a message to say that he's been accepted for a creative writing programme in Wellington, New Zealand, and has inner agonies as to whether he should take up the position or continue with his father, Benjamin Sisko, on their current mission. We know one or two MA students who have suffered these very agonies.

Anyway, it turned out to be a complicated in-house joke, which those who care to can work out by looking at [this web page](#).

For those who really, really care, the full script for the particular episode of *Deep Space Nine* can be read [here](#).

4. Writers and Readers

We're about to welcome our new MA and PhD students, some of whom will be working as volunteers and gophers during Writers and Readers Week. Several of the international guests, including Ron Rash and Michael Hulse, will be leading

masterclasses for our students in and around the week. The full programme for the week itself is [here](#).

Also: a reminder that student tickets are available at \$10 each for the Embassy & Downstage sessions – these tickets have to be purchased in person with student ID from the Michael Fowler Centre and St James Theatre Ticketek outlets: they can be purchased now. During Writers & Readers Week student tickets can also be purchased at the Embassy Theatre Ticketek outlet.

5. Sport begins at 40

It's a big one, as Allen Curnow might have said. 300 pages of fiction, poetry and essays. But that's not all. To mark New Zealand's year as country of honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair, *Sport 40* also features 133 pages of contemporary German writing in translation. You can check out the contributor list [here](#). The magazine itself will be launched during Writers and Readers Week at the [VUP publisher's party](#).

6. New Zealand Book Month

New Zealand Book Month begins today. You can get information about events nationwide [here](#). And below are a few events that particularly interest us.

Later today Hamish Clayton, Bill Manhire and Harry Ricketts read from their work and talk about how they write at the [Victoria University Library](#).

Date: Thursday, 1 March 2012

Time: 4.30-6.30pm

Venue: Te Taratara a Kae, Level 2, Library

Address: Library, Rankine Brown Building, Kelburn Campus

Marilyn Duckworth is giving the Janet Frame Memorial Lecture this evening, 6.00-7.00pm at Te Papa's marae. More details [here](#).

Damien Wilkins is talking at the [Fulbright Reflections event](#), Te Papa, Sunday 4 March. Damien's Fulbright award dates back to 1990, when he studied for his MFA with Stanley Elkin and William Gass.

Poet Laureate Ian Wedde and friends will be reading in [Hawkes Bay](#) on March 10.

Laurence Fearnley will be talking about her work at the Oamaru Public Library (62 Thames Street) on March 15th at 6pm.

7. The expanding bookshelf

It's very nice to see David Beach's new book, [Scenery and Agriculture](#), out in the world, as we had a hand in it. Back in 2008 David won the \$65,000 [Prize in Modern Letters](#). We appreciated the note printed in the front of *Scenery and Agriculture*: "The 2008 Prize in Modern Letters paid the bills while this book was written. I'm very

grateful to the American entrepreneur Glenn Schaeffer for funding the prize, and to the International Institute of Modern Letters at Victoria University for administering it."

[Harry Ricketts](#), who has been starring on the Wellington stage recently, also has a [new book of poems](#) coming from VUP. It launches during Writers and Readers Week.

8. Premiere Shorts

Big-screen congratulations to Matthew Saville and Catherine Bisley, MA scriptwriting graduates, whose projects have each been awarded \$90,000 greenlight funding from the NZ Film Commission. More details [here](#).

9. A farewell

We're sad to be saying goodbye to our two Iowa Workshop leaders, Susan Hazen-Hammond and Dan Poppick, who have been here through the summer. We've enjoyed the energy and wisdom and sheer information they've brought with them to 16 Waiteata Road. They've left just in time, too. Earthquake strengthening is about to begin on our neighbour, 14 Waiteata Road, and we may need to requisition earmuffs.

10. From the whiteboard

"A story is not like a road to follow ... it's more like a house. You go inside and stay there for a while, wandering back and forth and settling where you like and discovering how the room and corridors relate to each other, how the world outside is altered by being viewed from these windows. And you, the visitor, the reader, are altered as well by being in this enclosed space, whether it is ample and easy or full of crooked turns, or sparsely or opulently furnished. You can go back again and again, and the house, the story, always contains more than you saw the last time. It also has a sturdy sense of itself of being built out of its own necessity, not just to shelter or beguile you." - Alice Munro

"You are entitled to steal anything you are strong enough to carry out." - Saul Bellow

11. Call for submissions: *JAAM* 30

JAAM literary journal is delighted to announce that issue 30, 2012, will be guest edited by poet and academic [Anna Jackson](#), assisted by a small editorial team.

Anna's most recent collection of poetry was [Thicket](#), published in July by Auckland University Press. She lectures in English literature at Victoria University of

Wellington. As well as poetry, she also writes fiction from time to time, and her story "When We were Bread" was recently highly commended in The Long and the Short of It competition, in the long (over 10,000 words) category.

JAAM considers poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, essays, photography and other artwork. There is no set theme for *JAAM* 30

JAAM prefers emailed submissions. [Send submissions](#), using 'JAAM submission' (or similar) in your subject line, so we know it's not spam. Include your submission(s) in the body of your email. If you have particular formatting, you can also include your submissions in an attachment (.doc, .rtf, .pdf or any image file type is ok for images). If you don't have email, you can post submissions to:

JAAM
PO Box 25239
Panama Street
Wellington 6146
New Zealand

Make sure you include a stamped self-addressed envelope for reply.

The deadline for submissions is 31 March 2012, and *JAAM* 30 will be published around September 2012.

12. Recent web reading

[Translucent Landscapes](#)

[Writing in Paradise](#)

[The hawk just wants to hover](#)

[A very nice review](#)

[How to say "I love you" in precisely 100 different ways](#)

[Raymond Chandler goes to the Oscars](#)

[Getting Personal with Harry Ricketts](#)

[Rex Libris](#)

[Who's publishing Australian poetry at the moment](#)

["How do you decide which words to use and how many?" "That is the poetry part."](#)

[The best and worst things about being a writer](#)

[Maya Angelou – Prankster!](#)

[Alice goes to Antarctica](#)

[Astonishing book surgery](#)

["A wasted opportunity" - that *Waste Land* app](#)

[Where Allen Curnow worked out](#)

13. Great lists of our time

Poetic horses (courtesy of Cath Vidler)

Ain't No Poet

Anna's Poet

Apache Poet

Aztec Poet

Barefoot Poet

Bay of Poets

Bay Poet

Bijou Poet

Blue Poet

Blushing Poet

Bold Poet

Bonapoet

Boneo Poet

Brilliant Poet

Budding Poet

Bush Poet

Charming Poet

Cheyenne's Poet

Chinese Poet

Crafty Poet

Creek Poet

Dapper Poet

Dusty Poet

English Poet

Fille de Poete

French Poet

Gifted Poet

Go the Poet

Gold Poet

Golden Poet

Grand Poet

Heroic Poetess

How Poetic

Ideal Poet

I'm Your Poet

Indian Poet

Ipoetic

Irish Poet
It's Poetic
Just a Poet
Just Poetry
Kentucky Poet
King's Poet
La Belle Poetica
La Poet
Lady Poetess
Lake Poet
Latin Poet
Lazy Poet
Leica Poet
Little Poet
Lone Poet
Lyric Poetry
Magic Poet
Maid the Poet
Maid's Poet
Majestic Poet
Merely Poet
Mia's Poetry
Ming Poet
Miss Poet
More Poetry
Mountain Poet
Mr Poet
Nat's Poet
Navajo Poet
Noble Poet
North East Poet
Northern Poet
Not Poetic
Notable Poet
Opera Poet
Our Class Poet
Our Poet
Our Poetic Dream
Our Poetic Justice
Our Poetic Lady
Our Poetic Lass
Our Poetic Prince
Our Poetic Star
Our Poetic Princess
Our Princely Poet
Overly Poetic
Pannikin Poet
Pas de Poet
Pay the Poet
Peggy Poet

Perfect Poet
Pharoah's Poet
Pimpala Poet
Pirate 'n' Poet
Play the Poet
Pocket Poet
Poet
Poet And Motion
Poet Drive
Poet in Motion
Poet Laureate
Poet of Peace
Poetalee
Poetdale
Poetess
Poetess Ben
Poetess Simon
Poetic Action
Poetic Amber
Poetic Art
Poetic Baron
Poetic Barroness
Poetic Bay
Poetic Belle
Poetic Blur
Poetic Bond
Poetic Charm
Poetic Counsel
Poetic Crown
Poetic Dance
Poetic Dancer
Poetic Dawn
Poetic Deception
Poetic Decoy
Poetic Delight
Poetic Diamond
Poetic Dive
Poetic Dream
Poetic Duke
Poetic Earl
Poetic Edition
Poetic Evidence
Poetic Eyes
Poetic Faith
Poetic Fantasy
Poetic Field
Poetic Fire
Poetic Flair
Poetic Force
Poetic Fortune

Poetic Frenzy
Poetic Gamble
Poetic Garden
Poetic Gem
Poetic Genius
Poetic Gift
Poetic Girl
Poetic Glance
Poetic Glory
Poetic Grace
Poetic Guest
Poetic Habit
Poetic Heights
Poetic Hunter
Poetic Interlude
Poetic Ivy
Poetic Jewel
Poetic Joker
Poetic Justice
Poetic King
Poetic Lady
Poetic Lass
Poetic Launch
Poetic License
Poetic Lines
Poetic Lord
Poetic Magic
Poetic Man
Poetic Maude
Poetic Miss
Poetic Mist
Poetic Mistress
Poetic Module
Poetic Moon
Poetic Motion
Poetic Nijinsky
Poetic Oak
Poetic Odyssey
Poetic Opera
Poetic Owl
Poetic Papal
Poetic Path
Poetic Pause
Poetic Peter
Poetic Piper
Poetic Plea
Poetic Pleasure
Poetic Plum
Poetic Po
Poetic Point

Poetic Power
Poetic Pride
Poetic Prince
Poetic Princess
Poetic Principle
Poetic Prose
Poetic Pursuit
Poetic Pyramul
Poetic Queen
Poetic Racer
Poetic Rae
Poetic Red
Poetic Reign
Poetic Return
Poetic Reward
Poetic Rhthym
Poetic Rose
Poetic Saint
Poetic Scholar
Poetic Scoop
Poetic Secret
Poetic Sheikh
Poetic Show
Poetic Star
Poetic Step
Poetic Strike
Poetic Style
Poetic Sunset
Poetic Symbol
Poetic Taipan
Poetic Tales
Poetic Tango
Poetic Tempo
Poetic Tess
Poetic Troubador
Poetic Tryst
Poetic Tuppence
Poetic Vale
Poetic Verse
Poetic Victory
Poetic Vision
Poetic Walk
Poetic Waters
Poetic Way
Poetic Zephyr
Poetical

* * *

Supporting the IIML

The International Institute of Modern Letters was established at Victoria University in 2001 to promote and foster contemporary imaginative writing.

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, or Diana Meads, Development Manager-Planned Giving, Victoria University of Wellington Foundation Ph: 0800 VIC LEGACY (0800 842 534), Email: diana.meads@vuw.ac.nz