

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS

Te Pūtahi Tuhi Auaha o te Ao

Newsletter – 21 December 2010

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This is the 164th 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 <u>modernletters</u>.

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1. Adam Prize goes to post-apartheid tale

An intense coming-of-age story set in post-apartheid South Africa has taken out the prestigious Adam Foundation Prize in Creative Writing for 2010. This year's winner is Rayne Cockburn for her novel *Someplace for Boys*. Set in a beach community in the Transkei in 1995, it explores a crucial period of social change in South Africa. Concentrating on two white adolescent boys, the book explores race, identity and friendship. Rayne is originally from South Africa, coming to Wellington two years ago to complete her Bachelor of Science in Psychology with a second major in English Literature. Prior to her Master's she had no experience as a fiction writer and has not been published. Award-winning author and TV presenter Emily Perkins was external examiner for *Someplace for Boys*. She praised the novel's beautifully drawn characterisations, the unpredictably unfolding story, the poise of its language and called it "a superb achievement".

You can hear an interview with Rayne on National Radio's <u>Arts on Sunday</u> programme. Previous Adam Foundation Prize recipients include acclaimed authors Catherine Chidgey, Paula Morris, William Brandt and Eleanor Catton.

2. Tale of Jersey under the jackboot wins scriptwriting prize

A feature film script set in a German-occupied Jersey Island during World War Two, has won Maya Hammarsal the annual <u>David Carson-Parker Embassy Prize</u>. Her script *Abandoned Islands* follows a doctor on Jersey, the largest of the Channel Islands, who could leave with his English wife before the Germans arrive, but chooses to stay and help the islanders through the many perils of occupation. The \$2000 prize is awarded annually to the best script written during the IIML's Master's course. Maya emigrated from Jersey to New Zealand last year. Scriptwriting Programme Director David Geary was highly impressed with the script's detailed evocation of a time and place that creates an original and compelling historical drama that most of the world knows nothing of. 'It's a rich world we're taken into, populated with striking characters, who go through hell and sweep us along with them. By incorporating the native Jèrriais language, the script also serves to help preserve a culture that is under threat even now. Maya is from the island, this story is in her blood. It's about her family and her people, told with passion, and that comes across on every page.'

3. Biggs prize awarded to Serbian poet

Completing our internationalist trio of winners for 2010, Aleksandra Lane is the recipient of the 2010 Biggs Prize of \$3000, which is awarded annually to recognise the potential of a poet graduating from the MA (Page) programme. Aleksandra grew up in Serbia, but emigrated at age 19, and has since lived in both Australia and New Zealand. Her collection *Birds of Clay* reflects the social and linguistic disruption of war and exile, but also contains poems that are both tender and playful. External examiner Rachel Bush described as 'a remarkable folio' with 'a very distinct voice that is at once controlled and intense and agile'. Aleks returned to New Zealand from Melbourne to do the MA.

4. Project scholarships

Alongside the Adam, Carson-Parker and Biggs prize-winners, six further promising MA students have been awarded IIML project scholarships that will allow them to spend some time revising and polishing their folios before submitting them to publishers or production houses. The lucky - and deserving - six are Amy Head, Simone Kaho, Sarah McCallum, Sylvie Thomson, April Phillips and Sam Burt.

5. A decade of Turbine

A rich chorus of new and established literary voices can be found in the tenth issue of literary journal <u>Turbine</u>, with motherhood, earthquakes, and snow emerging as themes in this year's quietly apocalyptic selection. Sixteen of this year's IIML Masters students have work on display, including Adam Foundation Prize winner, Rayne Cockburn, with an excerpt from her reading journal offering an insight into how reading great literature feeds the creative process, and Biggs Prize winner Aleksandra Lane, with a witty prose poem on 'The Affairs of Grammar and Style'.

The issue also includes two new poems by, and an interview with, 2010 Victoria University Writer in Residence Jenny Bornholdt, who talks about the poetic quality of children's writing, and what is meant by the term 'school of poetry'. Two new storm-buffeted but enchanting poems appear from Bernadette Hall, who will be taking up a teaching fellowship at the IIML next year to stand in for senior lecturer Chris Price, who will be spending much of the year in Menton, France as recipient of the 2011 Mansfield Prize.

The 2010 edition of Turbine is full of award-winning writers, with a startling piece of fiction set in a futuristic theme park from two-time Macmillan Brown Prize winner Cate Palmer, and poetry by no fewer than three previous Adam Prize recipients—Cliff Fell, Lynn Jenner, and Ashleigh Young. We congratulate the editors, Hannah Newport Watson and Sylvie Thomson.

6. A short story reminder...

You have until Christmas Eve to enter the <u>Long and the Short of It</u> competition being run by Unity Books in conjunction with *Sport*. Winners will be announced at the Auckland Writers and Readers Festival 2011.

7. Generation next (1) – script to stage

On 3 December Eli Kent was awarded one of New Zealand's most significant national theatre awards, the Bruce Mason Playwriting Award. The recipient is decided by a panel of leading directors and play developers throughout New Zealand from nominations provided by leading New Zealand playwrights. The award of \$10,000 recognises Eli's dedication as a playwright and the quality of his work. Previous winners include many of this country's most celebrated writers, including Toa Fraser, Hone Kouka and Jo Randerson. Eli was a member of the 2010 MA (Script) workshop at the IIML, and his play *The Intricate Art of Actually Caring* is currently touring nationally to much acclaim.

In 2008 Eli won the Peter Harcourt Award for Outstanding New Playwright of the Year in the Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards with his first full length play, *Rubber Turkey*. This year Lucy O'Brien won the same award with *Katydid*, the script she worked on during her MA year at the IIML, when it won the Embassy Trust Award. Both *Katydid* and *The Intricate Art of Actually Caring* were produced by multi-award winning Wellington based theatre company The PlayGround Collective.

Another of our graduates did extremely well at the Chapman Tripps this month. The award for Outstanding Performance of the Year went to 2009 MA (Script) graduate, Christopher Brougham, for his role in *Me and Robert McKee*. We can't help thinking his year at the IIML must have been the perfect preparation for that performance! Christopher also took out the award for Supporting Actor of the Year for his role in *Dead Man's Cellphone*.

8. April winner

It's been a good year for 2010 MA (Script) workshop member April Thomson too. As well as giving birth to her first baby after years of trying (see the December 13 issue of the *NZ Woman's Weekly* for the full story!), April won first prize in the PANZ (Playwrights Association of New Zealand) One Act Play Competition with her play 'Bonking James Bond', written during her 2010 MA workshop and showcased in Writers on Mondays at Circa back in September.

9. Generation next (2)

2008 Adam Prize winner Eleanor Catton was one of five New Generation Award recipients announced by the Arts Foundation last week. She receives \$25,000 and a \$1000 voucher to purchase Apple gear. Eleanor Catton has been praised in international reviews for her novel *The Rehearsal*. Britain's *Daily Mail* called her the 'golden girl of fiction', while the London *Times* described her as 'a starburst of talent'. She has already received a number of awards, and been short-listed for the Guardian First Book Award and the Dylan Thomas Prize, and long-listed for the 2010 Orange Prize. She has signed major contracts with prestigious international publishers and the list of foreign language publications for *The Rehearsal* is now up to 12. Eleanor is working on a second literary novel, titled *The Luminaries*, which takes place in Hokitika, in 1866, and on a quartet of fantasy novels set during the English Civil War. She currently holds a position as Adjunct Professor of Creative Writing at

the University of Iowa, where she teaches Creative Writing and Popular Culture. You can read the <u>Dominion Post's story here</u>, and hear an <u>interview with Kathryn Ryan</u> here .

The New Generation Awards are funded by Freemasons New Zealand and are available to artists in the early stage of career with significant achievements and an exciting future ahead. The recipients are selected, without knowing they are under consideration, by a Curator appointed by the Arts Foundation. This year's Curator was Lynn Freeman from National Radio's *Arts on Sunday* programme.

10. A literary job in Wellington

We hear that the Writers and Readers Week Programme Manager's position with the New Zealand International Arts Festival is still vacant. This isn't a job for recent graduates, though: the Festival only wants applications from people with the right background and experience. Because we care about the continued success of Writers and Readers Week, we reproduce an abbreviated version of the job ad here – if you know someone who might fit the bill, pass it on:

'The Festival is looking for an experienced manager and creative thinker with a passion for and knowledge of the literary world to take overall responsibility for the planning and delivery of the 2012 New Zealand International Arts Festival Writers and Readers Week programme. Working closely with the Artistic Director and the Advisory Group on developing the programme this position forms part of the Producing team at the Festival.... Strong management, negotiation and communication skills will be required for this role. Responsibilities include negotiation of writers' contracts, event management, programme research, planning and financial management, relationship management, liaison with Advisory Group, artists and agents, and Festival personnel, and securing of foreign government funding support.... High level capabilities for the role include extensive knowledge of literature and the literary community, strong event management experience and industry wide contacts as well as financial and staff management experience. This is a part time then full time fixed term contract position until 13th April 2012. For a position description please contact Wah Yu or 04 473 0149. Only applicants with appropriate background experience and literary knowledge need apply. Please email a cover letter with curriculum vitae to Wah Yu or send to PO Box 10-113, Wellington 6143.'

11. Landfall sails on

Change is also afoot at another New Zealand literary institution. After a long period of editorial pass-the parcel, the editorship of *Landfall* is to be handed over to critic, poet and non-fiction writer David Eggleton. David will also preside over the development of *The Landfall Review Online*, which brings an expanded review section to the internet from early in 2011.

Winner of this year's *Landfall* Essay Competition, judged by Poet Laureate Cilla McQueen, was Ian Wedde's 'The Grass-Catcher', an examination of 'the twin

within'. Runners-up were John Newton, writing about the impact of European refugees on our culture, and Tim Corballis, on our changing cities. An essay on nursing by IIML PhD student Stephanie de Montalk was highly commended. The winner of the 2010 Kathleen Grattan Award for Poetry was *This City* by Jennifer Compton, a long-time resident in Australia, who still writes as a New Zealander. Collections by Ian Wedde and Victoria Broome were runners-up in the award, which was judged by Vincent O'Sullivan.

Ian Wedde's and John Newton's essays are published in *Landfall* 220, along with new work by several writers who have passed through the IIML's MA programme and other courses, including Pip Adam, Francis Cooke, Rhian Gallagher, Brent Kininmont, Lynn Davidson, Keith Westwater and Hannah Newport Watson.

12. From the whiteboard

The most essential gift for a good writer is a built-in, shock-proof shit detector. This is the writer's radar and all great writers have had it.

— Ernest Hemingway

13. Randell cottage resident

Expatriate author Peter Walker is the next New Zealand Writer in Residence at Wellington's Randell Cottage www.randellcottage.co.nz for 2011. Peter Walker works as a journalist in London, and is the author of the historical memoir *The Fox Boy* (Bloomsbury 2001) set in Taranaki, and a novel, *The Courier's Tale* (Bloomsbury 2010), set in the court of King Henry VIII. He began work on the *Dominion* in 1976 before leaving Wellington to work in Australia, then moved to the UK in 1986 to work for newspapers that included the *Independent* and *Independent on Sunday*, where he was Foreign Editor. He has also written for the *Financial Times* and *Granta*. Peter Walker will use his six months in Randell Cottage to work on completing a novel provisionally entitled *The Watcher's Diving*, which is set in NZ, the US, India and Lebanon. He will take up his position in April next year.

14. The expanding bookshelf

Jo Thorpe's new book of poems <u>in/let</u> (Steele Roberts) was launched last week with an accompanying dance performance at Toi Whakaari / The New Zealand School of Dance and Drama, where she lectures in Dance History. Jo did the MA (Page) back in 2001, and published her first book, *Len and other poems* in 2003. Here she is with a recent <u>Tuesday Poem</u>.

15. Found in translation

By all accounts the New Zealand Centre for Literary Translation's recent conference, 'Writing Past Each Other?' was a big success. Among the scintillating keynote addresses from translator Paulo Britto, theorist Lawrence Venuti and cultural studies superstar Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and papers ranging from the esoteric to the pragmatic, a group of translators had a firsthand encounter with four New Zealand poets and their work. Anne French, Hinemoana Baker, Gregory O'Brien and Jenny Bornholdt had two hours of intense conversation with translators who had rendered a selection of their poems into Chinese, Filipino, Flemish, French, German, Japanese and Plate River Spanish, in a workshop that was as energising for those of us who could only read the English as it clearly was for the multi-lingual translators. The conference is over, but you can still hear National Radio's interviews with Paulo Britto and Lawrence Venuti.

16. Low budget film funding

2004 MA (Script) Matthew Saville's *Hitchhike* was one of 16 low budget short films selected in the NZ Film Commission's inaugural Fresh Shorts scheme, which has offered eight grants of \$10,000 and eight grants of \$30,000 to shoot and complete low budget short films with durations between 4-25 minutes. Now the NZFC is calling for low budget feature film applications for Escalator 2011. Twelve successful teams will be selected to take part in a low-budget boot camp. Four of these teams will be green lit and offered funding of up to NZ\$250,000. Guidelines and application forms are downloadable from the <u>Escalator page of the NZFC website</u>. The deadline for applications is Monday 28 February 2011, 5pm. Applications and any queries should be sent via email to the Development Coordinator <u>Faith Dennis</u>. To find out more about Escalator 2010 visit the official <u>website</u> and join the <u>Facebook page</u>.

In other script news, 2007 MA (Script) graduate Kate Morris was selected for the NZFC's Alan Sharp summer mentorship programme.

17. Home and Away – both sides now

The New Zealand Electronic Poetry Centre has completed its <u>trans-Tasman digital</u> <u>bridge project</u> linking the poetry communities in Australia and New Zealand after poetry symposia held in Auckland and Sydney in March and September 2010. The updated bridge includes 110 creative contributions, audio talks and photos, video readings and texts of papers and commentary. We particularly enjoyed <u>this account</u> of the 2004 Writers and Readers Week in Wellington from Australian poet Adam Aitken.

18. Best New Zealand Poems 2010

The deadline for submitting books, journals and individual poems published by New Zealand writers during 2010 is today. Contact the <u>IIML</u> if you're in doubt about whether we've received your book or published poem to consider for the annual edition. (Poems posted on blogs are not considered eligible.)

19. Trout 16 online

We're guessing that <u>Trout 16</u>, launched last night at, is most likely the final literary journal to appear in New Zealand this year. It includes some familiar names and some newcomers from both here and Hawaii.

20. New travel writer competition

The Travcom AA Directions New Travel Writer Competition is calling for entries. The winner receives \$1000 and will be sent on an assignment to write a story that will be published in AA Directions magazine. A wide range of creative writing, travel writing and travel students typically enter this award. The deadline is Friday 11 February 2011: entry forms and information here or email.

21. 2011 Bristol Short Story Prize

This prize is open to all writers, UK and non-UK based, over 16 years of age. Stories can be on any theme or subject and entry can be made online via the website or by post. Entries must be previously unpublished with a maximum length of 3,000 words. The entry fee is £7 per story, and winners receive cash prizes (1st £1000, 2nd £700, 3rd £400) plus Waterstone's gift cards that can be used online from anywhere in the world. 17 further prizes of £100 will be presented to the writers whose stories appear on the shortlist. Full details here.

22. Writing in the Landscape

Applications are now sought for the 2011 Auckland regional parks artist in residence. This residency provides a selected artist with a home in a regional park and space to work for up to eight weeks. Accommodation is free and a weekly artist's fee is paid to support the making of new work inspired by park living. The 2011 resident artist will live in either Tawharanui Regional Park or Mahurangi Regional Park. Applications close 18 February 2011. For more information <u>click here</u> or phone 09 426 1200.

23. Thanks and Happy Christmas!

And so, as we reach the end of another busy and productive year at the IIML, we want to finish with a big Thank You to:

All the people who visited the 2010 MA workshop, taught masterclasses, supervised MA students: Ian Wedde, Kate De Goldi, Jenny Bornholdt, Gregory O'Brien, Christopher Vogler, Neil Cross, Glyn Maxwell, Lee Gutkind, David Vann, Tommy Honey, Briar Grace-Smith, Eirlys Hunter, Kate Duignan, Heidi Thomson, Kathryn Walls, Peter Whiteford, and Jane Parkin

To Jude Turner and her team at Te Papa, who made Writers on Mondays not only possible, but easy and pleasant to run

To Circa Theatre, which provided a professional platform for our Short Sharp Script performances, and the New Zealand College of Performing arts, for providing the actors

To Hannah Newport-Watson and Sylvie Thomson, who managed to edit *Turbine* 10 and get it ready for publication between the folio hand-in deadline and the Adam Prize announcement last Wednesday

To Max Sullivan at the Victoria University Library, who made *Turbine* 10's online incarnation possible

To Katie Hardwick-Smith for her exceptional support for students and staff in the absence of Clare Moleta, and to Clare for coming back from maternity leave to give Katie a rest on Fridays (if only Katie could stay away...)

To Victoria University Writer in Residence Jenny Bornholdt, for making good coffee and providing even better company

To David Geary, who ran a marvellous Breakfast Club as well as a great Scriptwriting workshop (David decamps for Canada in early January, and we will miss his energy, enthusiasm and humour – but we're glad to welcome Ken Duncum back from his stint as Mansfield Fellow – bonjour Ken!)

And finally to all 30 MA students, who made it a great year for us.

And now we're off to Christmas lunch! The IIML will be closed from midday on Tuesday 21 December until Thursday 6 January.

24. Last-minute Christmas presents

If you're desperate for that quality-assured bookish Christmas present, here's a quick reminder of some recent publications by Modern Letters staff and graduates:

Pip Adam: <u>Everything We Hoped For</u> Hinemoana Baker: Koiwi Koiwi

Craig Cliff: A Man Melting

Laurence Fearnley: The Hut Builder

Ingrid Horrocks: Mapping the Distance (currently available as eBook only)

Lynn Jenner: <u>Dear Sweet Harry</u>

Anna Livesey: The Moonmen

Bill Manhire/Norman Meehan: Buddhist Rain http://bit.ly/d5edBz

Bill Manhire: The Victims of Lightning

Tina Makereti: Once Upon a Time in Aotearoa

Chris Price: The Blind Singer

Anna Taylor: Relief

Jo Thorpe: <u>in/let</u>

Pat White: <u>How the Land Lies</u>

Damien Wilkins: Somebody Loves Us All

25. Recent web reading

NB: For more immediate updates (rather than a month's worth of web reading in one go), don't forget that you can follow us on <u>Twitter</u>.

A useful page of writer profiles & interviews

A good deal: Arts Foundation Laureates on Rattle

A song for free: Norman Meehan & Hannah Griffin with Pacific Raft (look bottom

left)

Literary luvvies come over all aTwitter about tweeting

Western Spaghetti (via guardian.co.uk)

Guided tours of the Poetry Archive - this one by NZ poet/chef Rachel Smith

Poetry mash – and the winner is....

David Geary on Maori movies

The literary magazine and short story are back

<u>Downloading the lonely voice</u> - short stories in the digital age

A Trans-Tasman reading group

Poetry warning

The real-time London Tube Map is back

<u>Dunedin's Robert Burns Poetry Competition</u> (winners' prizes seem a bit fuzzy)

Margaret Drabble on Mansfield's The Doll's House

A nice page of Lorine Niedecker poems

Paula Green's top poetry picks of 2010

Sam Hunt loves Lynn Jenner (about 4.20 mins in)

REDGroup - ie Whitcoulls and Borders - in some trouble?

On Xmas & Christmas

Dave Eggers on the writing life

Tweeting Ginsberg's Howl

Teaching science through poetry - ovi-style

NZ's first overseas writing fellowship

Len Lye goes to Birmingham

"Read poetry. Poetry gives time back, but most people don't know it."

Blue Smoke: The Blog

Craig Cliff's 2010 top ten

Pat White interviewed

The digested classic: <u>Trainspotting by Irvine Welsh</u>

There's only so much time you can spend in New York before you wake up and think 'Take me to Invercargill'.

John Lanchester on the future of newspapers

<u>Paul Murray's book of 2010</u>: The Rehearsal by "preternaturally gifted NZ author Eleanor Catton"

Bravo Ann Mallinson!

Learn more about poetry publishers

Nice website for poets

New-look Dictionary of New Zealand Biography

Book Dominoes

Novel writing as deliberate dreaming – Jonathan Franzen

The New Yorker's favourite books of the year

Anyone else signed up to this manifesto?

Writers' houses (so far - USA 36, Ireland 1, restofworld zero)

Marie Osmond explains Hugo Ball
MP3 of her reciting Ball's Karawane [MP3 link]

A Jenny Bornholdt fan

Dora Malech's poems get some strange new readings

The most-read man in the world

Dennis Hopper performs Kipling's If

Bill Manhire runs a Poetry Masterclass

"Eli Kent is so cool you almost don't want to like him"

Giles Foden on creative writing at UEA & elsewhere

Life, Love, and Literature at the Iowa Writers' Workshop

The Largehearted Boy list of every "best books of 2010" list

Has Amis-Barnes-McEwan-Rushdie boys' club frozen out a generation of writers?

This Is Where We Live

New Zealand's culinary epicentre

The Tunnock's Snowball scandal.

"Do not covet your ideas"

Guardian Best Books of the Year – including Harry Ricketts's Strange Meetings

Laura Kroetsch interviewed

"Lit-lovers who used to become editors and agents will direct MFA programs instead"

Miners and mourning and music

26. Great lists of our time

A list of notable novelty and fad dances

- Algorithm March
- Batusi
- Bomba
- The Bump
- Bunny Hop
- The Cabbage Patch
- Carioca
- The Carlton Dance
- Cha-Cha Slide
- Chicken Dance
- The Chicken Walk
- "Chicken Noodle Soup"
- "Crank That (Soulja Boy)"
- Cupid Shuffle
- "Do the Bartman"
- Electric Slide
- The Freddy
- The Frug
- The Grizzly Bear
- The Hammer
- Hitch hike
- Hokey Pokey, also known as Hokey-cokey, Okey-cokey
- Hully Gully
- The Humpty Dance
- The Hunch
- Hustle
- Jerk
- Jerkin'
- Jump On It
- The Ketchup Song
- "Laffy Taffy"
- Lambada
- Lean wit it, Rock wit it (Snap Dance)
- Letkajenkka (also known as Letkajenka, Letkiss, Letka-Enka)
- Limbo
- The Loco-Motion
- Macarena
- Mashed Potato
- Madison
- The Meatstick
- Monkey

- The Moonwalk
- Muscle
- "Peanut Butter Jelly Time"
- Pee-wee Herman dance
- Pony
- The Roger Rabbit
- The Robot
- The Running Man
- Safety Dance
- Shimmy
- Shoulder Lean
- "Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)"
- The Smurf
- Stanky Leg
- Suzie Q
- Thizzle Dance
- Thunder Clap
- "Time Warp"
- The Twist
- The Urkel
- Voguing
- Watusi
- "YMCA"

* * *

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