



UniNews

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Standing up for
the environment

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BREAKING BARRIERS

Designing instruments for
musicians with disabilities

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A selection of Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland staff and student expert commentary in the media recently. Email: uninews@auckland.ac.nz



Nick Rattenbury

SATURN'S SHRINKING RINGS

Dr Nick Rattenbury (Department of Physics) talked to *RNZ* about research suggesting Saturn's rings, made up of tiny ice particles, are younger than previously thought. While the planet is 4 billion years old, the ring system was formed perhaps 400 million years ago and is now gradually disappearing through erosion.

Link: tinyurl.com/rnz-rattenbury



Andy Allan

TIME TO CHANGE GMO RULES?

Professor Andy Allan told *The Post* that allowing genetic modification need not harm New Zealand's export image. Genetically modified food accounted for 15 percent of world agricultural value and Australia's role as fine wine exporter was unharmed by gene editing in that country, he said.

Link: tinyurl.com/the-post-allan



Annie Goldson

MUST-SEE DOCUMENTARIES

As an official ambassador or 'superhero' of the Doc Edge Film Festival, Professor Annie Goldson (Faculty of Arts) spoke to *RNZ Nights* from the opening night of the festival and discussed her own 30-year career as an award-winning documentary filmmaker based in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Link: tinyurl.com/rnz-goldson



Clare Wall

THE SECRET TO GOOD SLEEP

Kūmara is thought to have prebiotic properties, boosting beneficial bugs in babies' guts that help them sleep better and ward off germs, Professor Clare Wall (Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences) told the *NZ Herald*. "What babies first eat and what they're subjected to within their environment, really impacts on the way they grow and develop."

Link: tinyurl.com/nz-herald-wall



June-Chiew Han, right, with Claire Concannon

MYSTERIES OF THE HEART

Dr June-Chiew Han from the Auckland Bioengineering Institute discussed the mysteries of the heart muscle and serenaded presenter Claire Concannon as she delved into deeptech research at ABI's birthday celebration on *RNZ's Our Changing World*.

Link: tinyurl.com/rnz-jc-han



Ruhi Bajaj

SMARTWATCH POTENTIAL

Professional teaching fellow and doctoral candidate Ruhi Bajaj (Faculty of Business and Economics) shared her research exploring how smartwatch data might be integrated into clinical practice on *95bFM*. "For successful digital transformation, there needs to be changes in terms of attitudes, roles, and legal and financial frameworks."

Link: tinyurl.com/bFM-bajaj

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CARRIE RUDZINSKI: EDINBURGH BOUND

Carrie Rudzinski, the student and programme adviser for the Business School's MBA, has a lot going on both in and out of the office. Next month, the powerhouse poet and author will perform at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, supported by a \$50,000 Creative New Zealand grant.

You're originally from Illinois in the US. What inspired you to move to Aotearoa New Zealand?

I love travelling, have been to almost every US State and 18 countries, and lived in many different places. I backpacked in New Zealand for the first time in 2011 and completely fell in love with the country, the nature and the people. I later travelled here for a poetry tour with my partner, who is also a poet, and afterwards we knew we wanted to move here. We loved the artistic community, the accessibility to nature and the size of the country – we just loved it.

How have you found working in the creative arts here?

The performance poetry scene has really exploded since I moved here! It's amazing to see the calibre of talent New Zealand artists have and the drive they need to make exhibitions, performances and tours happen in this country. It's been an incredible and exciting place to be part of the creative arts but the sector is underfunded and extremely competitive – essentially most artists are applying for the same money from the same pool. Unfortunately, the arts feel under threat due to budget cuts and a lack of funding, when in fact the sector needs to receive more resource and support, especially after Covid and lockdowns. Life without art and artists isn't a life any of us want to experience.

What do you do in your role with the Business School, and what aspects of the position do you find most interesting or rewarding?

I support current and prospective MBA students from application all the way through graduation. The Master of Business Administration is our flagship programme in GSM, and our students are incredibly intelligent and driven to not only improve themselves but their impact on the businesses and people they lead. I'm really inspired by their passion and am most rewarded by supporting students. Undertaking this degree is a huge step in many of my students' lives. It feels great to be someone they can rely on while they're studying.

How do you balance your role at the Business School and your vibrant life as a talented poet, performance artist, filmmaker and teacher?

Balance doesn't always feel possible, to be honest. It depends on what's happening in my creative life! Currently, because I have so much on my creative plate, I just work two full-time jobs. I'm at the Business School during work hours and then immediately go to rehearsal and production meetings, often working from 5pm to midnight and most weekends. But I have always prioritised creative work in my life because it's what fuels me, so even though it's hard work, it's also incredibly rewarding.

Do you recall the first poem you wrote as a child? When did you know poetry was going to be a huge part of your life?

I started writing stories when I was very little. The first poem I wrote was when I was 11 years old at a Girl Scout meeting. My troop leader said, 'We're going to write poems today' and it was so effortless for me. I loved it instantly and went on to write poems privately for many years. It wasn't until I went to university that I shared my work out loud with others. I signed up for a class called 'Poetry as Performance' and that course dramatically impacted me as a writer, performer and person. It introduced me to an open mic and poetry slam in Boston called The Cantab Lounge that I proceeded to go to every Wednesday night for six years. Many years later, my first tertiary teaching role was for a very similar class at California State University Northridge.

What does writing and performing poetry mean to you?

It's hard to describe how much my life encompasses poetry. My best friends and community are all poets or creatives, my partner is a poet, and I essentially live, eat and breathe poetry now. Writing has always been such an amazing way to express myself and stretch my imagination, but I also genuinely love the craft. Performing poetry is cathartic in a whole different way. I love channelling emotion on stage, connecting and impacting other people, and really diving into the delivery and performance. They are so intrinsically linked for me and so important to how I experience and process this life.

You and your partner-in-poetry Olivia Hall will be performing your show *Hysterical* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. What does it encompass?

Hysterical is a poetry theatre show that uses poetry to challenge the myth that women are too emotional by confronting body politics, systemic sexism and weeping uncontrollably in the supermarket. It's a show about bodies, emotions and the love we have for the people in our lives. We bring the dynamic, interactive element of performance poetry into the theatre space by breaking the fourth wall and inviting the audience to experience feelings with us – to laugh and cry and be present. We won Best New Aotearoa Play at the Wellington Theatre Awards last year and that recognition was huge for us. To be accepted in a theatre space and acknowledged for the massive amount of work that went into creating and touring the show was awesome.

Do you ever get stage fright from performing in front of hundreds of people?

I still get nervous when performing in front of large audiences, and I always tell my performance students that nerves are a good thing. It means you still care about what you're doing. But you need to wield those nerves like they're your superpower and use them for good. I think nerves make me feel more present and alive in front of an audience, and it emotionally connects me to words I've sometimes said thousands of times before.

■ Sophie Boladeras



"Life without art and artists isn't a life any of us want to experience," says Carrie Rudzinski. Photo: Andi Crown



ARCHITECT'S VISION COMES TO LIFE

Lama Tone

A new fale at Glen Eden Primary School was designed by Lama Tone from the School of Architecture and Planning.

The fale is for all Pacific and non-Pacific cultures of the community of West Auckland, built with the blessing from mana whenua, Te Kawerau ā Maki.

Traditionally, a fale is a centre point for meetings or gatherings in Samoa and Tonga, particularly for matai (chiefs) or matapule, but they are also used for sleeping quarters as well.

Lama is a lecturer at the School of Architecture and Planning and spent much of his childhood growing up in Sāmoa. His niche lies in transforming Pacific architectural concepts, old and new, into contemporary structures and spaces.

“Working with Te Kawerau ā Maki was especially important. I refused to do it without their blessing,” he says.

“The fale is to be used by the local community as a learning tool to understand that Captain James Cook was not the only navigator and that Polynesians have voyaged for thousands of years before.”

■ Te Rina Triponel



The fale at Glen Eden Primary School

SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS

The University of Auckland has maintained a top place (12th) in the Global Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2023.

The ranking is perhaps the best-known measure that evaluates universities' contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It assesses commitment to sustainability across four broad areas: research, stewardship, outreach and teaching covering all 17 of the SDGs.

The number of participating universities increased by some 20 percent from last year and are up nearly 400 percent from its inaugural year in 2019.

With the top global spot in the first two years of the ranking, the University of Auckland has maintained a strong position

given the increased focus across the globe on sustainability and the role universities can and should play, believes the University's former strategic planning manager, Dr Jingwen Mu.

“We are rightly proud of our ranking which takes into account that we have 13 SDGs in the world's top ten percent and all of our SDGs in the world's top 25 percent,” she says.

“Our outstanding performance reflects our commitment to our Sustainability Strategy and Net Zero Carbon Strategy under the University's strategic plan *Taumata Teitei*.”

Initiatives such as the gender pay-gap investigation and the development of the 6 Green Star ranked Social Sciences building, global partnerships with universities across the world, plus research such as the work being carried out in conjunction with local iwi to explore the unprecedented warm water temperature in the Hauraki Gulf, contribute to the scores.

Full story: auckland.ac.nz/sustainability-rankings

UNIVERSITY

EXCELS IN WORLD RANKINGS



Waipapa Taumata Rau has risen to 68th in the world in the latest QS World University Rankings.

The ranking is an enormous success for the University and a clear indicator of the excellence and global reputation of the university sector in Aotearoa New Zealand.

It's the highest position the University has held since 2010. The University moves up to 68th place from 87th last year, a significant jump at a time of increased competition internationally in higher education.

All eight New Zealand universities improved their global ranking.

Vice-Chancellor Dawn Freshwater said that this was very positive news providing balance to the financial challenges New Zealand universities are facing.

“I think we can pause for a moment and celebrate the fact that, despite the challenges, universities in this country remain truly world-class.”

“This is important not only for the quality of the education and research provided here but for the country's international reputation. It reflects on the quality and capability of our workforce, the global standing of our research and ultimately our organisations and companies.”

Professor Freshwater says the new ranking is a testament to the high quality of teaching, learning and research across the University.

“This was the result of extraordinary accomplishments right across the University; we can all be rightly proud.”

MAKE A NOMINATION

Do you know a University alumna or alumnus who's achieving amazing things?

The 2024 Distinguished Alumni Awards, presented by the University of Auckland and the University of Auckland Society, recognise alumni who have made remarkable contributions to their professions, communities and the world. Up to five awards are given each year, along with a special Young Alumnus/Alumna of the Year Award for outstanding achievers under 35.

You can nominate people excelling in any field, from social and cultural impact to sports, environment and economics.

See auckland.ac.nz/nominate-alumni for more details.



Dame Teuila Percival

FIRST SĀMOAN
PAEDIATRICIAN
CELEBRATED

Associate Professor Teuila Percival (Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences) was made a Dame Companion of the 2023 New Zealand Order of Merit in recognition of her services to health and the Pacific community in the King’s Birthday Honours.

Dame Teuila was the first Sāmoan paediatrician in Aotearoa New Zealand. She is a researcher and part-time lecturer in the Department of Paediatrics and has been a tireless advocate for Pacific children’s health for 30 years.

She began her healthcare career at the University’s medical school where she trained in paediatrics. But she credits her influence to her parents who were both radiographers, immersing Dame Teuila in the hospital environment.

Dame Teuila spent her early childhood years in Sāmoa, and after graduating from medical school, she returned to Sāmoa to work at the National Hospital in Motootua, Apia.

It’s not the first time Dame Teuila has appeared in the Honours list. In 2010, she

became a companion of the Queen’s Service Order for her services to the Pacific community, following her role as a leading clinician in the 2009 Sāmoa tsunami disaster response.

Her commitment to serve and provide paediatric support continued in following disasters, Vanuatu’s Cyclone Pam in 2015 and the 2019 measles outbreak in Sāmoa.

South Auckland is the primary focus point of her work, where she has been stationed since 1995.

“I’ve been involved in community and Pacific health from the early ‘90s. It is difficult to be a paediatrician without getting involved outside of medicine, as much of what determines children’s health sits outside clinical medicine,” she said.

“Pacific health and Pacific children’s health are important because of the continuing inequity and injustice.”

■ Te Rina Triponek

See auckland.ac.nz/kings-honours for the full list of staff who were honoured.

TALKING
CONSENT

University of Auckland students Jasmine Gray, Laura Porteous, and recent graduate Genna Hawkins-Boulton travelled to Milan last month to share their mahi around consent education and compete in the inaugural Sustainability Impact Forum, hosted by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

The trio are the founders of Let’s Talk Consent, a social enterprise designed to catalyse change in the area of sexual harm.

With rape and sexual violence regularly in New Zealand news headlines, the value of consent education cannot be underestimated, they say.

In New Zealand, some schools have comprehensive education programmes on consent and preventing sexual harm, says Genna. However, other schools have absolutely nothing.

“Unlike Australia, we don’t have a mandatory requirement for schools to teach consent. We’re working to change this while bringing attention to Aotearoa’s epidemic of sexual harm.”

Genna started a campaign a year ago to make consent education in schools compulsory. As part of her efforts, Genna, a survivor of sexual assault, collected approximately 300 anonymous testimonies from young people around the country concerning their experiences of sexual harm and education.

“From those testimonies, and the advocacy work I was doing, I realised there was a gap in the market for an organisation that connects and brings awareness to youth, policymakers, teachers and politicians, and that’s how the idea for Let’s Talk Consent came about.”

“Some people might think this kind of education is inappropriate or that it’s solely the job of the family, but many families won’t have these conversations with their young people,

whether it’s because they don’t want to, don’t know how, or have never been taught consent themselves,” says Jasmine.

“We want to equip people with resources and knowledge so that they feel comfortable having those conversations with their children. If we’re not taught these things when we’re young, there’s a lack of knowledge that could lead to harm.”

■ Sophie Boladeras

Full story: auckland.ac.nz/lets-talk-consent



University of Auckland students Jasmine Gray, Laura Porteous, and recent graduate Genna Hawkins-Boulton



Associate Professor Dan Hikuroa's love of nature has led to a career as an earth systems scientist. Photo: Elise Manahan

DAN HIKUROA:

IN TUNE WITH THE NATURAL WORLD

Associate Professor Dan Hikuroa is working to overcome our biggest environmental challenges by weaving science with Indigenous knowledge.

As Matariki rises this month, you'll likely find Associate Professor Dan Hikuroa up before the sun, welcoming her and her whānau to our skies.

It's a special time for Māori that not only symbolises new beginnings but is also a time for reflection, to farewell those who passed in the last year, and for vocalising aspirations.

"Matariki, or the star Puanga for some, is important as it signals that the shortest day has passed and serves as a way to recalibrate the māramataka (Māori lunar calendar)," says Dan (Ngāti Maniapoto, Waikato-Tainui, Ngāti Whanaunga, Pākehā).

This astrological event, in which the Matariki cluster of stars reappears in our night skies, plays an integral role in how he plans for the year ahead.

Dan, whose PhD is in geology, is an earth systems scientist in Māori Studies in the Faculty of Arts, who uses a kaupapa Māori approach in much of his research. Mātauranga Māori and science are woven into his teaching and research every step of the way.

"It's a way I can engage with my tūpuna (ancestors) and their understanding of the world. It's also a way to engage with my uri (descendants), including those who are yet to come," he says.

An expert on climate change, Dan is the Culture Commissioner on the UNESCO New Zealand National Commission.

He is best known for his research into the state of Aotearoa's rivers and is working on a Marsden Project 'Let the River Speak', with students and others from the University including Distinguished Professor Dame Anne Salmond, Professor Gary Brierley from the School of Environment and Dr Billie Lythberg from the Business School.

He says it's time to pay urgent attention to our rivers, catchments and river catchment communities.

“If not now, then when? Cyclone Gabrielle showed us the deleterious impacts of land use and river management decisions based on flawed understandings of how earth systems operate.

“Our decisions have led to the drowning, erosion or burial of homes, marae, bridges and urupa, with sediment suffocating and slash smashing our rivers, estuaries and beaches,” he says.

“We still have 19th-century thinking where the idea that ‘the solution to pollution is dilution’ still underpins some approaches.

“Our rivers are at a breaking point. The best thing we can do to save them is to hear their voice and listen to them. They have been yelling at us for a while now, but particularly loudly in January and February.”

Dan is enthusiastic about the University’s strategy *Taumata Teitei* and the way the University is headed.

“It recognises the value of mātauranga in a place of high learning, genuinely grounded in place,” he says.

His work demonstrates how mātauranga and tikanga can contribute too.

“A responsible approach to tackling the many challenges we face is to draw from all available knowledge and practice,” he says.

“We should be exploring both the differences and similarities between the two schools of thought and celebrating that. Innovation lies right at the interface.”

One example is the māramataka which has long been embraced by Māori and Pākehā alike as being an accurate guide to the best times to fish.

But Dan says māramataka can do much more than that. It is an Indigenous system of attuning with the environment and in te ao Māori has a significant role in modern health and well-being.

He says colonial views, embedded in the current ways of thinking, reflect an extractive relationship with the natural environment, seeing it as a resource to be exploited.

In a recent study, he collaborated with Dr Tara McAllister (Te Herenga Waka) and Associate Professor Cate Macinnis-Ng (Biological Sciences) to explore the differences between the concepts of kaitiakitanga (te ao Māori) and Western conservation philosophies and practices.

In *Connecting Science to Indigenous Knowledge: Kaitiakitanga, Conservation and Resource Management*, Dan says Western conservationists seek to manage nature whereas, using kaitiakitanga, Māori manage their relationship with the environment.

He writes: “One of the major dichotomies between values and concepts from te ao Māori, like kaitiakitanga, and the Western conservation ethic stems from Māori being part of the environment, whereas from a conservation perspective there is a different connection between people and land. Rather than

descending from the land and being an intrinsic part of it as Māori are, a Western approach to conservation works to remedy the effects of commodifying the land.

“The intimately bound relationship between Māori and the environment is exemplified through kupu Māori (Māori words) with dual meanings. For example, whenua is a common name for the earth or land, but it also means placenta.”

He says the impacts of natural disasters related to the severe flooding this year show us that the land is in urgent need of kaitiakitanga.

“Growing up, the societal cues I picked up were that being Māori meant something not so good. We were expected to be thieves, naughty, or to be great at sport. I didn’t fit those stereotypes.”

- Associate Professor Dan Hikuroa, Māori Studies, Faculty of Arts

But Dan realises many people, even Māori, might not have had the opportunity to be connected te ao Māori and tikanga. He only explored these Indigenous concepts himself as an adult and says he still has much to learn.

He was raised in Glenfield on the North Shore where he says he grew up “effectively Pākehā”.

“I didn’t know any mātauranga. Although I knew I was Māori, I wasn’t immersed in te ao Māori,” he says.

“Growing up, the societal cues I picked up were that being Māori meant something not so good. We were expected to be thieves, naughty, or to be great at sport. I didn’t fit those stereotypes. On reflection, it was a very confusing time.”

But he did notice his love for the natural world and a desire to know it from an early age. When his whānau went to the beach together, he

was most interested in exploring rock pools or snorkelling, or filling his pockets with driftwood, shells, or rocks.

“I’d go to the beach with whānau and we’d do regular stuff like throwing the ball, but the curiosity to observe the world around me intrigued me more.

“Learning became my love, especially the environmental side. That curiosity has always been in me, and science was a tool to make sense of that.

He is a father of two daughters and says things are different for them with te reo Māori and Aotearoa New Zealand history being part of their schooling.

“It’s important that my girls know who they are and where they come from. It’s been special to see them grow into that in their individual ways.”

Dan says while doing his PhD he was “quite Pākehā” in his approach.

“I was a scientist who happened to be Māori.”

Then, in 2003 while undertaking his doctoral research, he was offered a role at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi in Whakatāne to teach a geology course, which he did for three years.

“It was unique because they asked me to weave mātauranga Māori into it, and I wasn’t quite clear as to what that meant or what it could even look like.

“I had some very generous leaders and a lot of tautoko (support) from kaumātua Wiremu Tāwhai, Brett Stephenson [Auckland alumnus and marine biologist] and Professor Graham Smith.”

After completing his PhD, Dan took a position at the Institute of Earth Science and Engineering, where he worked with Māori communities to help realise dreams and solve challenges.

Although capable of delivering a whaikorero and performing karakia, Dan describes his reo as “intermediate at best”. But he says he is on his journey to improve and has learnt te reo Māori by placing himself in situations where it was required. One of those roles was teaching in Whakatāne, and another was as research director of Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga from 2011-2016.

And when Dan isn’t researching the health of our waterways or teaching, he is always drawn to the water. He developed a passion for surfing and boogie-boarding when he was on an exchange in Tahiti.

“I’m hoping to return to Tahiti this year to learn from the Teahupo’o community, Tahiti’s most popular surfing spot. They are partners in the ‘Let the River Speak’ research project, and we will explore the current rāhui (restriction on fishing) on Teahupo’o.

“I love paddle-boarding and surfing. I most frequently surf at Orewa, but one of the best spots for me is Ocean Beach in Whāngarei. I’d love to be able to surf in Indonesia some day.”

■ Te Rina Triponele



KLAUS BOSSELMANN:

AN ACTIVIST FOR EARTH AND ITS INHABITANTS

Professor Klaus Bosselmann has been teaching environmental law at the University for almost 35 years.

After losing his appointment as a judge in Germany, Professor Klaus Bosselmann turned to teaching environmental law. This year he's assisting the UN Secretary-General with preparations for the Summit of the Future in 2024.

Professor Klaus Bosselmann's life blooms with many stories.

The German-born activist and academic, who joined the Faculty of Law in 1988, was recognised this year for his world leadership in research and scholarship when he was named a Royal Society Te Apārangi fellow.

The impact of his work on ecological legal theory, rights of nature, environmental integrity, eco-constitutionalism, the Earth Charter and legal developments internationally and in New Zealand is widely acknowledged.

Over almost 35 years with Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland his research has explored environmental law and governance, with

a particular interest in sustainability ethics relating to climate change, biodiversity, justice, human rights and international law. He teaches global environmental law at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Interestingly, Klaus's entry into academia stemmed from the day he was forced to resign as a judge. But let's start from the beginning.

Growing up in Northern Germany's countryside on a property named Birdsong, surrounded by Brothers Grimm-esque forests and woken daily to a resounding dawn chorus, you'd imagine Klaus's drive to protect the Earth came early. But those formative years were more about developing a sense of connectedness to his surroundings.

"Growing up in the forest, surrounded by wildlife, shaped a sense that this is our world, this is my world," he says.

His realisation that the popular way of thinking of human life as being above and separate from nature and animals, and the impact that was having, came later and was inspired by several influential people, including philosophers Ernst Bloch and Hans Jonas and Nobel Peace Prize winner Albert Schweitzer.

"One of Schweitzer's essays that shaped me was the one in which he said, 'The ethics of reverence for life makes no distinction between higher and lower, more precious and less precious lives,'" says Klaus. "His work highlighted a very clear concept,

and his ethical plea was the very simple sentence: 'I am life that wants to live, in the midst of life that wants to live.'"

After leaving high school, Klaus studied at the University of Tübingen and then the Free University of Berlin. His studies began in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, and his generation was at the forefront of the anti-nuclear movement.

In the 1960s and '70s, Klaus says he didn't see nature in decline or notice the impacts of climate change as we do now, but much of the literature he consumed during his studies gave him insight into what was slowly taking place. He took papers in environmental science, sociology, political theory, political philosophy and law, and eventually specialised in law. His doctorate explored the constitutional history of Germany, and he sought to understand why the German nation was less influenced by French revolutionary ideas than other European countries.

Aged 27, soon after completing his second legal state examination, Klaus was appointed as a judge.

"It was a very different process to what we have here; it consisted of five years of university studies, then two years of practice," he says.

He was immediately seconded to the Federal Administrative Court of Germany, where he worked as an assistant judge and came to the realisation that ethically, he opposed certain aspects of the system.

"I was writing legal opinions and analysis for court cases, and my specialty was nuclear law. Being anti-nuclear, I wanted to persuade the highest court that a far more thorough analysis was needed in terms of the risks involved in nuclear power.

"I learned through internal communications with these judges that I shouldn't be too ambitious. And I will never forget being told, 'We are not here as judges to correct the mistakes the federal government has made.'"

Klaus considered this viewpoint fundamentally wrong. He wrote an article in a leading journal *Kritische Justiz (Critical Justice)*, blaming Germany's highest judges for being biased and unaware of the full damage nuclear power could cause.

"I was sort of attacking them, not ad personam, but making my argument clear: this violates the fundamental principles of the rule of law if they just take the view that we're not there to correct those kinds of [federal government] mistakes. This article was the end of my career as a judge because the president of the Federal Court called me into his office and told me I had a choice: either he instigates disciplinary measures against me or I volunteer to resign, which I did."

And so came Klaus's entry into academia. It was one action amid many over the years that demonstrated his determination to stand up for the protection of the Earth and its inhabitants.

"Entering academia, I realised this is an area where I can freely express my views. It was liberating, and I have thoroughly enjoyed this job ever since. I'm still somewhat embarrassed to get paid for doing something I enjoy doing – learning and expressing my views on things, in this case, environmental issues."

Klaus doesn't always have positive views about academic institutions, however. He believes teaching and research have been affected by the transition of many universities into a business style of operating.

"Wilhelm von Humboldt, the founder of the University of Berlin, shaped the modern idea of universities. The Humboldt philosophy of the university is the unity of research and teaching, and it's about teaching in areas in which you are an absolute expert."

"Entering academia, I realised this is an area where I can freely express my views. It was liberating, and I have thoroughly enjoyed this job ever since."

- Professor Klaus Bosselmann, Faculty of Law

To Klaus, this philosophy epitomises ultimate academic freedom in that you're not being told what to teach, but instead defining your own scholarship.

"At many universities, including Auckland, academics are required to teach courses they're not experts in. There's this compulsory element that we are all expected to teach some papers and accept it. There has also been this incremental build-up of bureaucracy and administration and a top-down approach. I argue that universities are failing if we are expected to do more and more for less and less."

Klaus first visited New Zealand in 1981 and returned in 1985 for a visiting lectureship in the University's Faculty of Law.

When he was back living in Germany in 1988, a colleague from Auckland's Law faculty called and asked Klaus if he would consider applying for a position in environmental law.

"I got the job initially thinking I would just stay here for a few years. I had just been made a full professor in Berlin and had my career mapped out, but it wasn't to be."

Klaus moved to Waiheke, an island famed for its activists, artists and environmentalists, where he had, on a whim, bought a little bach for \$80,000 during one of his earlier trips to New Zealand.

In 1990, he met his partner Prue Taylor at a conference in Wellington where he was giving a talk on ecology, ethics and law. Prue was working on her masters degree in the same area and approached him after his talk. She said she felt like he had stepped inside her head because their research and concepts were so similar. She also criticised Klaus for buttering up to women.

"I was part of the Green movement in Germany, and I was also part of the feminist movement, and for me, there was never a difference between green thinking and feminism," he says. "So that was part of why my talk at Victoria University had praise for women. Prue didn't like it or understand where I was coming from at the time, but we became good friends."

Klaus and Prue moved in together, and Prue started working at the University of Auckland's School of Architecture and Planning, where she also teaches environmental law. The two travel often and have raised two children together on Waiheke Island.

At 72, Klaus has led a life that has had a positive impact on people and the planet, and he's not slowing down.

This year he's assisting the UN Secretary-General and the UN General Assembly with preparations for the Summit of the Future in September 2024 and is advising the German government on ways to include ecological human rights in the constitution. He also coordinates a German-New Zealand academic exchange programme comparing the rights of nature. Above all, Klaus advocates Earth trusteeship as a fundamental obligation of states and citizens.

"Individually, we all have the right to flourish. We should enjoy our lives, but we're not alone; the future is not abstract," he says. "What we experience in the future is being decided on a daily basis today."

■ Sophie Boladeras



Klaus Bosselmann and Prue Taylor



A pair of Sam Mitchell's paintings, Frances Hodgkins and Olivia Spencer Bower, are part of the University's Art Collection.

SAM MITCHELL'S INSIDE-OUT PORTRAITS

There is no mistaking a Sam Mitchell painting. Each is bold, electrifyingly vibrant and incorporates a distinctive iconology that is recognisable to art enthusiasts and consumers of culture alike.

A keen eye might also recognise some of the historic figures that are represented in her portraits; from celebrated artists and novelists like Octavia Butler, to historic figures like Catherine the Great. However, Sam's paintings are a far cry from the traditional oil portraits that spring to mind when one thinks of the portraiture genre. Her unique works are layered, in more ways than one.

Sam Mitchell (b. 1971) is an alumnus of Elam School of Fine Arts, having graduated in 2000 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. Since then, she has exhibited widely across Aotearoa New Zealand and the United States. Throughout her career she has experimented with acrylic and watercolour painting, ink drawing, collage and ceramics. She has particularly refined her technique of painting with acrylic onto perspex; a medium that has become characteristic of her practice.

Painting on perspex is a painstaking method, as the subject must be painted both backwards and in reverse. This means that the smallest details (such as the subjects' eyelashes and the fine outlines of smaller objects) are painted first, with multiple layers added on top and the background colours (creating skin, or hair) being applied last. Sam describes these paintings as "portraits from the inside out," emulating the ancient reverse glass painting technique that flourished in cities across Asia and Europe from as early as the 13th century.

Understanding the complexity of this method is vital to appreciating the fine detail and exceptional control in Sam's works. She typically uses a perspex box with an open back as her 'canvas', meaning that the resulting paintings have a three-dimensional quality and are contained underneath their glossy front veneer.

A pair of Sam's paintings done in this manner are part of the University of Auckland Art Collection. *Frances Hodgkins* (2019) and *Olivia Spencer Bower* (2019) were acquired in early-2020, following the artist's solo exhibition *Endlings* (Bartley and Company Art, 2019).

Sam often chooses the subjects of her paintings using a feminist lens, through which she highlights female creativity and achievement. The *Endlings* series depicted a group of celebrated women artists and writers from around the world, including the likes of Margaret Mahy and Alice Neel. Both *Frances Hodgkins* and *Olivia Spencer Bower*

were created in an extension of this series. The paintings represent their titled subjects; two renowned female painters from local art history in Aotearoa New Zealand.

However, Sam's portraits aren't literal. The subjects are identifiable mostly through the symbolic imagery that she overlays on their faces and torsos, not dissimilar to tattoos on their distinctive blue skin. Olivia Spencer Bower was a celebrated watercolour painter who was a member of The Group; an influential collective of artists, including Rita Angus and Louise Henderson, that formed in reaction to the conservatism of national art institutions around the 1930s. In *Olivia Spencer Bower*, Sam has incorporated a rendering of Spencer Bower's own *Self-portrait* (1950) that is held in the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū collection.

Similarly, in *Frances Hodgkins*, Sam places a reproduction of notable artist Frances Hodgkins' painting *Bridesmaids* (1930) on the figure's neck. Hodgkins is widely regarded as one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most important expatriate painters and was the subject of major retrospective *Frances Hodgkins: European Journeys*, held at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki in 2019. By including depictions of such distinctive works from each artists' oeuvre, Sam visually signals their identities.

Notably, in this body of work, Sam incorporates a cassette tape in each portrait. As explained in the exhibition text accompanying *Endlings*, "each cassette tape provides an historical positioning on the women's lives in the 20th century pre-digital era, and a deliberate playing with ideas about the recording of history."

In both paintings, the incorporated cassette tapes are inscribed with something of a brief biography for the titled subject. For example, the cassette in *Olivia Spencer Bower* includes the line "1940 Elam School of Fine Art," signifying the five years that Spencer Bower taught at Elam.

Casting a technical eye over both portraits, one notes that the tiny cassette tape texts would have been the very first layer of what would become striking portraits. Through her method, it seems that Sam refocuses our attention on the lives and achievements of the women she depicts, intentionally inside-out.

The University of Auckland Art Collection comprises close to 2,000 artworks and is well regarded for including work by many of New Zealand's best-known and most-loved artists. The collection is a valuable cultural asset shared across campuses and luckily for us, it's permanently on display.

■ Madeleine Gifford, Art Collection Advisor, Te Humu Herenga, Libraries and Learning Services



Drew McMillan is exploring how to design instruments for musicians with disabilities.

BREAKING DOWN

BARRIERS

Instruments are out of tune with the needs of disabled musicians. PhD candidate Drew McMillan wants that to change.

A life-changing accident in 2004 left Drew McMillan paralysed with tetraplegia from the chest down, dramatically affecting his music career.

He was attempting to perform a trick on his bike at a friend's place, as he had done numerous times before, when he landed the wrong way.

"I slowly opened my eyes knowing that what had just happened was definitely not good. There, in front of me, were a pair of feet. I recognised them as mine, but I could not feel them as mine. They had my shoes, my jeans, but felt detached, as if they were someone else's.

"I slowly came to realise, this was what having spinal shock was."

Before the accident, the talented musician was part way through an honours degree in composition. He regularly performed gigs and was an accomplished saxophone, flute, clarinet and piano player – as well as an electronic musician and composer.

Drew has gone on to achieve a great deal of success. He returned to the University of Auckland to finish his degree and went on to complete his masters in composition and interactive technologies.

Now in the second year of his PhD at the School of Music, Drew is using his own experience to explore how to design bespoke instruments for musicians with disabilities.

In collaboration with his supervisors at the School of Music, Fabio Morreale and John Coulter, Drew's research is focused on addressing the relationship between disabled musicians and their instruments, and how this experience can be incorporated into the design process.

"I am hoping to discover a way to construct an instrument that enhances my musician-

instrument relationship in a way that is similar to what it was before my accident. The nuances, and the connection with instruments that I'm currently using, doesn't give me a satisfactory musician-instrument relationship to be as creative as I would like, either on my own or when collaborating," says Drew.

A lot of the designing of instruments for people with disabilities is done by able-bodied people working on participatory design methods. These frameworks work reasonably well and are based on the idea of assessing what the musician wants to do and what their goals are, says Drew.

"However, because I have a relationship with my instruments from before the accident as well as after it, I feel like there is a gap in the framework. I wanted to find a way of diving deeper into assessing the relationship that people want with their instrument."

The idea for Drew's research came a few years after his accident when he started to look into ways he could perform and compose music again.

In early performances, he used a laptop, webcam and microphone to make and control sounds.

In 2019, he started playing the guitar by placing it on a custom-made case that converts into a stand that sits horizontally across his lap. He processed the guitar signal through a distortion pedal and a volume pedal, which enabled him to perform in an ensemble with a bass player and a drummer, playing rock-influenced free improvisations.

While playing, he uses two splints attached to his hands. One for picking and strumming, and the other for placing a slide on the strings, which enables him to produce a range of different sounds.

"Playing again has helped me to establish a relationship with music that is pushing me towards discovering more rewarding ways to create and collaborate," says Drew.

"But playing is still a challenge that provides a series of complex problems that I need solve through my research. Hopefully by doing that, I can discover that connection again."

■ Hussein Moses

BOOKS

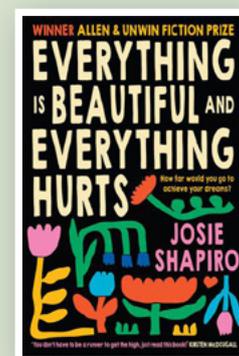


Hiwa: Contemporary Māori Short Stories

Edited by Associate Professor Paula Morris from the Faculty of Arts, *Hiwa* is a vibrant, essential collection of

contemporary Māori short stories, featuring twenty-seven writers working in English or te reo Māori.

Edited by Paula Morris, Auckland University Press, \$45



Everything is Beautiful and Everything Hurts

Alumna Josie Shapiro was named the winner of the Allen & Unwin Commercial Fiction Prize. Her debut novel follows Mickey

Bloom, whose new-found talent makes her realise she's everything she thought she wasn't. The book is about change, family and grit, and what it takes to achieve your dreams.

Josie Shapiro, Allen & Unwin, \$37



New Dawning: The Edge of Light Trilogy Book 1

New Dawning is the first book from a new trilogy for young adults by alumna A.M. Dixon. In it, we meet Merel, a girl living on a futuristic island

in the middle of a sea that we come to realise might be New Zealand.

A.M. Dixon, OneTree House, \$24

STAFF DISCOUNT ON BOOKS

University staff can now get ten percent off everything in store at Ubiq bookshop, Level 1, 2 Alfred Street. See in store for details.

SEEING THE FOREST FOR THE TREES

Investment and innovation are crucial to revitalising New Zealand’s wood processing sector, writes Professor Anthony Hōete.

In my recent inaugural lecture, I referred to a \$57 million boost in Government funding to support more onshore wood processing. I applaud this move, but what took the Government so long?

It was back in the 1920s when a forestry stocktake forecast an impending timber shortage, and the planting of fast-growing radiata pine forests commenced. By the 1950s, Kaingaroa was one of the world’s most extensive man-made forests, which led to the construction of one of our greatest industrial achievements: the Tasman Pulp and Paper Mill in Kawerau.

I grew up in Kawerau’s ‘halcyon days’ of the ‘80s when its population peaked. Each university vacation, I returned home to work for ‘Uncle Tas’.

When it opened, Tasman had a paper machine with the largest capacity in the world. But the rise of digital publishing, and an increasing focus on exporting rather than processing logs, saw a massive decline in the number of paper and sawmills. Large-scale mechanisation replaced small-scale milling. Essentially, the supermarket pushed out the dairy.

These days, the problem isn’t that we have a shortage of logs. It’s that we’re not turning them into lumber.

Lumber is a log with the added value from primary processing, while logs are a raw product with no added value. By March 2022, 61 percent of our logs (22 million m³) left Aotearoa New Zealand. We are now the world’s biggest log exporter, supplying 20 percent of the global market. Eighty percent of our logs are bound for China, where state intervention subsidises transport.

Why can China offer higher prices for New Zealand logs than local companies? In two words: wood processing.

The Chinese wood industry consists of 100,000 individual companies, most of them small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). China adds value to New Zealand logs by processing the wood into plywood, which is then turned into furniture and exported back around the Pacific.

Since 2000, forest harvest volume in New Zealand has doubled from 17 million to 36 million m³, while processing has remained constant at 13 million m³. Value-added wood products comprise just 15 percent of our



“Processing more timber onshore will impact the housing supply while creating new jobs to support regional communities and would reinforce our commitment to a net-zero carbon future.”

*Professor Anthony Hōete.
Photo: Chris Loufte*

forestry export volumes yet generate over 40 percent of export revenue.

Change is slowly coming. In 2022, Te Uru Rākau (NZ Forest Service) launched a ‘Forestry and Wood Processing Industry Transformation.’ It plans to create a higher value and resilient forestry and wood processing sector to underpin our low emissions future.

But instead of selling grain, we need to be baking and earning bread.

Aotearoa New Zealand has a small population, and we need to think more strategically, so that economic growth is driven by productivity rather than hours worked.

Innovation is critical to lifting productivity. Small Advanced Economies (SAEs) like Singapore and Sweden invest ten times more than New Zealand does in innovation to overcome the barriers of size and distance. In 2021, the NZ Productivity Commission found that “Māori authorities were demonstrating higher rates of innovation”. The design course on papakāinga, which I teach at the School of Architecture and Planning, strives for innovation through models such as the collectively owned, build-to-rent, flood-plain elevated, 30-bedroom house.

Housing doesn’t need to be a smorgasbord of materiality as it currently often is; it could be timber-centric instead. We could build not with ‘sticks’ (stud work) but with solid timber panels fabricated off-site using digital computer numerically controlled (CNC) techniques.

At WHAT_architecture, we developed, designed and constructed a build-to-rent papakāinga block of houses in London that was manufactured from cross-laminated timber panels, which is like supersized plywood with 100mm thick solid walls and solid floors of 230mm. It won the 2021 NZ Institute of Architects International Award.

Creative entrepreneurs can lead the delivery of sustainable housing here in Aotearoa too. My

research at the University considers the supply chain to be a circular economy, from whenua (land), wao (forest), wheketere (factory), whaihangā (fabrication), whare (housing) and whānau (family). Whenua whānau.

My background in architectural practice also means I’m constantly designing, dreaming and scheming. How, for instance, to spend \$57 million?

Why not use the money to partner with forest-owning iwi, such as Ngāti Awa, and build a wood processing factory near Kawerau or Whakatāne? The forests there have excellent rail connections to the nation’s largest port, Tauranga.

Historically, the Government played a crucial role in establishing and growing the forestry and wood processing sector. As all wood processing in New Zealand today is privately owned, why not have a state-owned enterprise? Processing more timber onshore will impact the housing supply while creating jobs to support regional communities and would reinforce our commitment to a net-zero carbon future.

The perceived risk with new forms of construction gaining traction with local consenting and housebuilders could be offset by the immediate export gains of processed wood products. There are 64 CLT manufacturers in the Northern Hemisphere, but only two in the Southern. To supply the South-East Asian and Latin American markets is an economic opportunity waiting to be grasped by Government investment and alignment with the wood processing sector.

■ Anthony Hōete (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Rānana) is a professor in the School of Architecture and Planning. His inaugural lecture was dedicated to Dr Jeremy Treadwell.

The views in this article are personal opinion and are not necessarily those of the University of Auckland.