

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

news

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New Centre for Brain Research



At the opening of the Centre for Brain Research, left to right: Professor Alan Barber, Deputy Director of the CBR; Professor Iain Martin, Dean of Medical and Health Sciences; Professor Richard Faull, Director of the CBR; the Hon Dr Wayne Mapp, Minister of Research, Science and Technology; Roger France, Chancellor; and Professor Stuart McCutcheon, Vice-Chancellor.

"The dream becomes reality," beamed one very happy Professor Richard Faull at the official opening of the Centre for Brain Research on 6 November.

The new centre will harness the combined expertise of what Richard calls the three pillars of strength – the University's neuroscience researchers, Auckland hospitals' neurologists and neurosurgeons and, most importantly, communities – to ensure that the University's brain research is of the highest international standards.

"Those three pillars are at the very heart of what the centre is about," enthused Richard, the centre's Director. "That is the vision; that is the excitement; and that is the enormous challenge," he told more than 250 invited guests, including the Minister of Research, Science and Technology, the Hon Dr Wayne Mapp, who opened the centre.

Housed in the newly revamped \$16 million fifth floor of the Medical School at the Grafton Campus, the centre draws together more than 200 researchers from various faculties across the University. The ultimate hope is they will identify and develop new treatments for brain diseases – not only new drug therapies but also rehabilitation techniques and evidence-based clinical care regimes – which will improve the quality of life for people living with neurological conditions.

Brain disease of one kind or another will affect one in five New Zealanders during their lifetimes.

Multi-disciplinary teams of clinicians and neuroscientists will work closely together, sharing their ideas, expertise and study results in the quest to advance brain research. The greater the diversity of inputs into brain research, the better the outcomes, said Richard.

Other countries have brain centres focused on research. "But I don't believe there is another centre like this one, where the bonds between the community, the doctors and the scientists are so strong and built on such strong foundations."

The centre has effectively been operating since August. It has already drawn together all the major research groups studying the brain at the University – and not just those studying human cerebral matter. Some groups are looking at fish and avian brains, for example.

Two years ago, when the centre was still in its early development, Richard's team got quite a surprise when they discovered exactly how many University groups were researching brains. They identified 26 in all. "We thought that was pretty good. But as the interest and the excitement about the centre have grown, we've attracted more groups. We now have 40 groups and others in the wings."

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Key events

Universitas 21

The first in a series of sustainability workshops aimed at deciding how the University can best meet its teaching and research commitments under the U21 Statement on Sustainability takes place on Monday 30 November, between 1 and 5pm, in the Fale Pasifika. Dr Glen Lauder, of Commonground, will facilitate the workshops. Visit www.auckland.ac.nz/environment (select teaching and research)

Staff roadshow

All general staff and academic managers of general staff are encouraged to attend one of the roving roadshow sessions on the General Staff Performance and Development (GSP&D) project and the new performance and development programme, EVOLVE, due for introduction in January 2010. The sessions will take place between Monday 30 November and Friday 4 December at the City, Tamaki, Grafton and Epsom campuses. Specific session times and locations can be found on the staff intranet homepage under Notices.

Len Lye exhibition

In 1964 revolutionary artist Len Lye famously declared: "Kinetic art is the first new category of art since pre-history." Now *Art That Moves* is both the title of a new exhibition of Lye's work and a new book by his friend and biographer, Roger Horrocks (see Books on page 7). The exhibition features a number of sculptures which haven't been publicly displayed before. *Art That Moves* runs from 28 November to 6 February at the Gus Fisher Gallery. Visit www.gusfishergallery.auckland.ac.nz

Pacific conference

Pacific scholars, policy-makers and analysts convene at the University for the two-day Pacific Islands Political Studies Association (PIPSA) conference on 3-4 December. The theme, "Pacific democracy: What's happening?", will address issues ranging from human rights to constitutional change. For more information visit: <http://tinyurl.com/ybmyuwb>

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From the Vice-Chancellor

Earlier this year, I commented on the very damaging effect the recession was having on philanthropic support of universities in the United States and elsewhere. However, while the rate of giving has certainly slowed, I am pleased to say that this University continues to attract strong support from a variety of donors.

The annual Chancellor's Dinner, held on 13 November, highlighted this fact with a large number of past donors and supporters present, and a great deal of interest in the present state and future plans of the University. Two of our current music students, Christine Kim (flute) and Alexandra Ioan (voice), featured on the programme, and gave performances that illustrate very well why the support of top students is so very important.

Featured speaker Professor Bill Denny of the Auckland Cancer Society Research Centre reminded guests of the importance of philanthropy. The centre owes its very existence to the fact that a 1955 public appeal to raise funds for the purchase of New Zealand's first radiotherapy machine was oversubscribed and the Cancer Society decided to use some of the additional funding to set up a research laboratory with the then novel idea of searching for drugs that could fight cancer. Today, the centre is one of the world's top drug development laboratories with a number of first-in-class discoveries to its credit and the likely next blockbuster cancer drug currently completing phase three clinical trials.

Over the years, the Auckland Cancer Society has supported research with sums that now total tens of millions of dollars. This places it as one of the most significant donors to the University, along with the Auckland Medical Research Foundation, which has also given tens of millions to the University. That support has been critical in allowing our researchers the flexibility to explore new and innovative areas in their research – what Professor Richard Faull, Director of our newly opened Centre for Brain Research, aptly terms “dream money”.

As government policy continues to constrain our revenues, such funding becomes ever more critical. I am grateful for the support we continue to receive from the community and delighted with the Leading the Way Campaign total, which now stands at \$56 million. That is a testimony both to the generosity of our donors and to the quality of the staff and students they invest their support in.



Centre for Educational Leadership



Professor Viviane Robinson (Education) at the opening of the new Centre for Educational Leadership

“The closer educational leaders get to the core business of teaching and learning, the more likely they are to have a positive impact on students’ achievement and well-being.”

That’s “the big message” coming out of the Best Evidence Synthesis on educational leadership, says Professor Viviane Robinson (Education).

Educational leaders gathered for the official opening of the University’s Centre for Educational Leadership on 4 November. Based at the Faculty of Education in Epsom, the CEL aims to work closely with school and early childhood centre leaders around New Zealand to foster leadership excellence.

The latest in the series of Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) research, conducted for the Ministry of Education by Viviane and her co-authors and colleagues, Dr Margie Hohepa and Dr Claire Lloyd, was unveiled at the launch event.

The Minister of Education, Anne Tolley, told guests that the team’s research had “produced a taonga for the New Zealand education system” which was to be treasured and used. Emeritus Professor Michael Fullan (University of Toronto) praised the BES for its important contribution to education internationally.

The centre is led by Viviane and David Eddy, both known internationally for their work on leadership. Vice-Chancellor Professor Stuart McCutcheon said that in years to come the CEL would do much to improve the quality and impact of leaders throughout our education system.

Inspiring a hive of activity

Artist Agnes Wood and her family have supported Professor Richard Faull’s brain research programme for over five years, throughout Agnes’ daughter Elizabeth’s battle and subsequent loss to Alzheimer’s disease. On the day the Centre for Brain Research was launched, 88-year-old Agnes announced she would like to donate some art to the centre.

“Richard had come to see my paintings in the Remuera Gallery a few weeks ago, when I saw him looking at another picture and his face just lit up,” says Agnes. “It was one of a head and a brain, of course, and I knew he had to have it!”

The painting, titled “Archaic Greek Head”, is by Paul Radford, an Elam School of Fine Arts graduate. Worth more than \$5000, it was hung in the CBR in a special ceremony attended by Agnes, son Chris Wood and son-in-law Derek Smith.

The family believes the painting is a fitting tribute to Elizabeth, who died in 2007. Elizabeth gifted her brain to the Neurological Foundation of New Zealand Human Brain Bank, of which Richard is the Director, to further research into Alzheimer’s disease.

“This art is highly relevant to the centre, with all

the figures and work going on in the head,” says Derek. “It’s such a wonderful memorial to my wife.”

Agnes describes the painting as a “hive of activity”, and feels it has a special meaning for the centre. Its message hits home for Richard. “Agnes’ family have contributed to our research in very special ways. Now our next step is to make sure the centre lives up to their dream.”



“Archaic Greek Head” by Elam graduate Paul Radford, donated to the CBR by Agnes Wood and family.

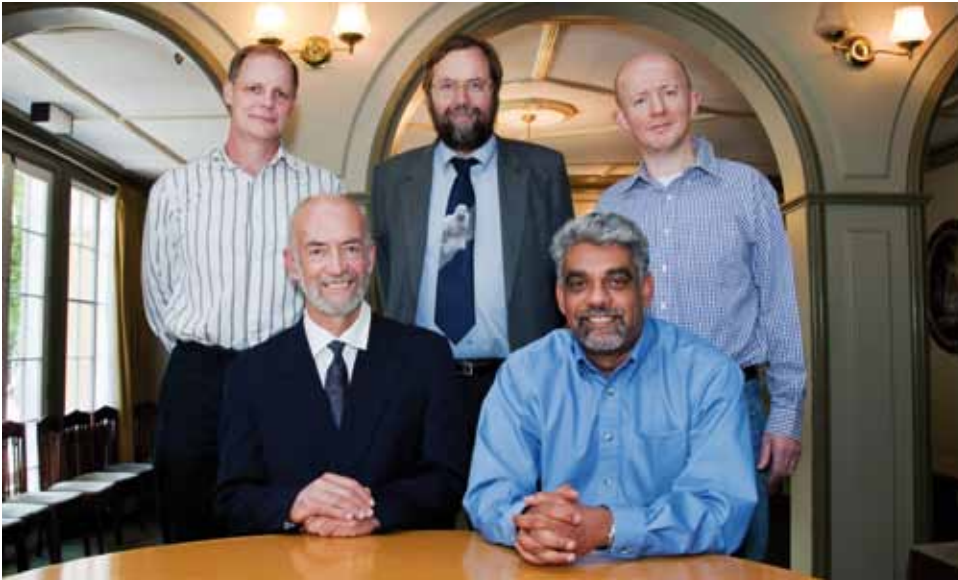
story continued from page 1

Commitment from Auckland district health boards’ clinicians has been vital in establishing the centre. Deputy Director of the Centre for Brain Research, Professor Alan Barber, is a practising neurologist at Auckland City Hospital and first holder of the Neurological Foundation of NZ Chair in Clinical Neurology. He has been charged with the task of expanding the linkages between the hospital and the CBR as a means of hooking clinicians into the centre’s research programmes. The centre’s modus operandi gives clinicians the opportunity to have

input into research projects from the outset “so that the questions our researchers ask are the ones we want answers to”, said Alan.

Establishing the centre represented an enormous team effort, said Richard. “We have been guided by the skills and expertise of our advisory board. But helping them along the way have been the hopes and enthusiasm of so many people. This place is all about people. He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.”

For they are jolly good Fellows



Back row from left: Professor Andrew Pullan, Professor Alistair Gunn, Professor Eamonn O'Brien. Front from left: Professor Ed Mitchell, Professor Allen Rodrigo.

It's a message practically imprinted on every new parent's brain: putting your baby down to sleep on his or her stomach increases the risk of "cot death" or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

But back in the 1980s, before Professor Ed Mitchell (Paediatrics) and his team of researchers isolated the risk factors for SIDS, parents didn't think to question the wisdom of laying newborn babies down on their stomachs.

Ed and his team's research changed parents' thinking forever, not only here in New Zealand, but right around the world.

Now he's one of the six newly elected Fellows of the Royal Society of New Zealand from The University of Auckland – each of whom is changing our world in their own separate ways.

New Fellow Professor Alistair Gunn (Physiology) was acknowledged for his research into the major causes of death and disability in early childhood and, in particular, for his contribution to the discovery that brain injury continues to evolve after a traumatic, oxygen-depriving birth event. "In fact, we discovered that most brain cell death occurs after clinicians have restored oxygen." Alistair's research was able to demonstrate that mildly cooling the baby's brain can substantially alleviate injury and improve long-term recovery. Brain-cooling is now widely accepted best practice.

New Fellow and leading bioengineer, Professor Andrew Pullan (Engineering), was honoured for his modelling of current flows in the torso. Whereas X-rays and MRI scans produce structural images of the heart, Andrew's work has focused on the quest to create detailed electrical images of the organ, which can give clinicians vastly better information than can a standard electrocardiography or ECG. More recently, Andrew has begun modelling the stomach and intestines as well. "We have this huge problem of people being admitted to hospital with non-specific gut pain and for a lot of them there's no way of knowing what's happening without opening them up."

New Fellow Professor Eamonn O'Brien (Mathematics), a leading international algebraist, was recognised for his work on computational

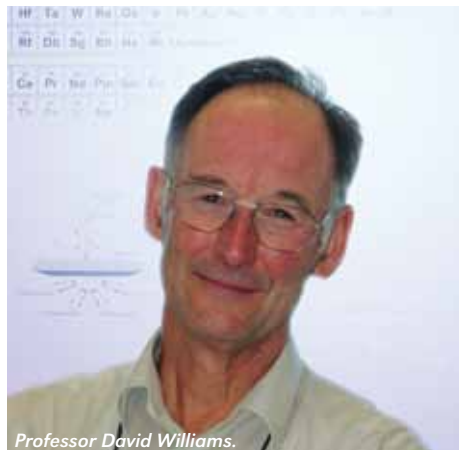
algebra and group theory. Meaning, in layman's terms, "how to persuade machines to answer mathematical questions", he explains. "I work on the design and development of good mathematical algorithms and the quality implementations of them. Then I apply them to answer challenging questions, some of long-standing interest."

New Fellow Professor Allen Rodrigo (Biological Sciences) received his honour for his work in bioinformatics. Allen's mathematical and computational methods have been deployed in the study of evolutionary patterns of fast-changing viruses including "swine 'flu", HIV and SARS, all viruses which have performed an increasingly common feat: crossing the species barrier.

New Fellow Professor David Williams (Chemistry) was recognised as a leading international figure in electrochemistry, having made notable contributions on the pitting corrosion of stainless steels and successful commercialisation of gas sensor devices.

"To be recognised by your peers is one of the nicest things that can happen to you," says David, echoing the sentiments of all the newly elected Fellows.

Professor Timothy Burstein, a specialist in electrochemistry and corrosion science and a graduate of the University now at the University of Cambridge, was named an Honorary Fellow of the Society.



Professor David Williams.

In brief ...

Performance science

Think of high-risk occupations and dancing and playing music don't usually spring to mind. But for many performing artists, the demands of their vocation can be physically, psychologically and emotionally challenging.

How to safeguard artists against sprains and strains and elevate performance will be top of mind at the International Symposium on Performance Science (ISPS) which the University is hosting from 15 to 18 December.

World-renowned science communicator, fertility expert and television personality, Professor Lord Robert Winston, will deliver a free, public lecture, "Performance, science and society", on Tuesday 15 December from 6.15-7.15pm in the Owen G Glenn Building.

Other keynote speakers include Deidre Anderson (Macquarie University) speaking on "A balanced approach to excellence: Life-skill intervention and elite performance"; and Professor K. Anders Ericsson (Florida State University) lecturing on "Discovering deliberate practice activities that overcome plateaus and limits on improvement of performance". For registration details visit www.performancescience.org Note that the early-bird discount has been extended to local delegates.

\$400,000 grant for Grafton redevelopment

The Auckland Medical Research Foundation (AMRF) has donated \$400,000 toward the redevelopment of the Grafton Campus.

The money will help support the major redevelopment of the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences' outdated and cramped facilities.

The AMRF is the first organisation to pledge support to the redevelopment programme. Professor Iain Martin (Dean, Medical and Health Sciences) paid tribute to the foundation's six decades of commitment to medical research. "Each year the AMRF funds as many as 25 to 30 individual research projects as well as travel grants, post-doctoral fellowships and PhD scholarships and in many ways the foundation has helped chart the direction of a significant proportion of medical research in the region." AMRF currently commits more than \$3 million annually to medical research and plans to increase that sum. For more information visit www.medicalresearch.co.nz

Friday 13th a lucky day for marine science



Architectural sketches of the interior of the new Interpretive Centre

They could have picked a less ominous-sounding date to turn over the first sod on the building site of the new Science and Interpretive centres at Leigh, but the Friday 13th event went ahead without any mishaps.

When completed in late 2010, the new Interpretive Centre is guaranteed to become a key attraction for the 350,000 visitors who make a beeline for the world-famous Goat Island Marine Reserve at Leigh every year.

The creation of the centre is part of the redevelopment of the University's Leigh Marine Laboratory and has been made possible by a generous gift of \$4.5 million from the Edith Winstone Blackwell Foundation Trust.

"Our goal is to create a centre which will give tourists, school children and locals an outstanding and memorable interactive experience, one where they can explore and learn about the oceans and the science that underpins their future," says Professor John Montgomery (Director, Leigh Marine Laboratory).

Besides promoting marine conservation, the centre undertakes the science and advanced teaching that hatches new economic opportunities and provides the capability to make best use of our marine estate, says John. The benefits will flow through into the surrounding region and the rest of New Zealand.

The new building work represents the second stage of the marine centre's redevelopment and follows on from the successful completion of the award-winning bunkhouse - which was built on time and on budget, says Peter Fehl (Property Services).

Biotechnology building going skyward



Professor Joerg Kistler (left) with the Hon Dr Wayne Mapp, the Minister of Research, Science and Technology, discussing the plans for the Institute for Innovation in Biotechnology's new building

The Institute for Innovation in Biotechnology's new building on the corner of Symonds Street and Waterloo Quadrant is "going skyward incredibly fast, like a giant Meccano set", quipped the biotechnology incubator's Director, Professor Joerg Kistler (Biological Sciences).

At an event attended by the Minister of Research, Science and Technology, the Hon Dr Wayne Mapp, on 6 November in Old Government House, Joerg furnished invited guests with a progress report on the institute - New Zealand's first dedicated bio-incubator.

He said IIB's new 10,000-square-metre

building, funded with government support through the Partnerships for Excellence scheme, would be finished in 12 months. It would house up to 500 people drawn from industry and academia. IIB aimed to have 60 research scientists and about 12 companies located within the new building once it reached full capacity.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Stuart McCutcheon said he hoped that large numbers of biotechnology companies would eventually cluster in and around the institute and remarked he was delighted to see the new building rising alongside the Thomas Building.

Dr Wayne Mapp spoke about the Government's Research, Science and Technology review, aimed primarily at establishing how to better prioritise its investment in the sector ahead of the 2010 budget. He said appointing Professor Sir Peter Gluckman (Liggins Institute) as the Government's Chief Science Adviser to the Prime Minister had "made a remarkable difference in terms of the tone and the setting and the expectations for change within the sector".

IIB currently has six companies co-located within its existing facilities. It provides these businesses with a full suite of facilities and services, such as laboratory and office space, in exchange for a simple flat fee. High profile Kiwi bioactives company, Comvita, joined the institute two months ago. "They are here because we have the science facilities they need," said Joerg. NZ Trade and Enterprise has recently opened an office at IIB too.

Dr Peter Lee (CEO, UniServices) noted that last year the University reached a milestone when its commercialisation of research generated a commercial income of \$100 million, half of it coming from the life sciences. "This year we are 15 percent ahead of last year. This speaks well for our knowledge economy and the contribution of research as a business to this economy.

"We've had 30 substantial start-ups. Some have failed, some are surviving, but most importantly a few are doing very well. The pace of developing new companies is picking up markedly. This year we have started three more biotechnology companies - and we have many more in the pipeline. As a portfolio, these companies already have a huge economic impact."

Staff survey creates positive change



From left: Nathalie Johnston (Organisational Development Manager, Human Resources) and Stephen Whiteside (Director, Information Technology Services)

When the Director of Information Technology Services, Stephen Whiteside, received his department's Staff Survey 2009 results, they largely validated much of what his team already knew about themselves.

"We had worked hard on our internal relationships and we scored significantly higher in the working relationships and collegiality section of the survey than the University overall," says Stephen.

The survey also suggested that staff in the ITS department – the University's largest user of power – generally had a stronger awareness of the University's environmental responsibility initiatives than other staff.

What's more, nine out of ten ITS staff felt the University actively supported diversity in the workplace.

"It's been encouraging for us to compare our results from the Staff Survey of two years ago and see where we've improved as well as look at the

areas we need to work on," says Stephen.

Two-thirds of ITS staff completed this year's survey – a relatively high participation rate, which has meant ITS could have confidence in the veracity of the results. "We're starting to see some encouraging trends," says Stephen.

Notwithstanding, this year's survey tossed up a few surprises. When, for example, ITS managers discovered a number of staff were dissatisfied with the reward and recognition area, they were puzzled. They already had their own staff Reward and Recognition Programme, so they had anticipated a high level of staff satisfaction with this area. Instead, the "could-do-better" response to the questions around performance reviews generated plenty of discussion among managers. "It highlighted the need for us to get in behind the University's improvement programme for performance review," says Stephen. "I think we had become a little bit complacent because we had our own recognition programme, whereas

the survey helped us think about the deeper, underlying issues surrounding the effectiveness of our staff reviews."

Even before the University's staff completed the survey in April, ITS staff had already begun working on a culture improvement project for their department with organisational development consultants Human Synergistics. Hence, managers were already focusing on identifying and strengthening ITS's mission, vision and values – the factors underpinning the three key areas arising out of the Staff Survey which the University's Senior Management Team has highlighted as requiring further improvement: Leadership; Innovation and empowerment; and Image and reputation.

The University's Staff Survey used a different methodology to the Human Synergistics' survey. "While the Staff Survey's findings were generally consistent with Human Synergistics' survey results, the Staff Survey enriched our perceptions in certain areas," says Stephen. The Staff Survey proved valuable on another score: "Having the survey as a separate exercise from our own culture improvement project gave us an opportunity to think about ourselves in the wider context of the University, rather than just thinking within the narrower context of ITS."

ITS is well down the track with its Staff Survey action planning arising out of the survey results. "We had the results just before we started working on our Annual Plan, so they helped us focus on what to build into it. And we were able to link our results into our mission, vision and values departmental workshop."

Stephen presented the ITS staff survey results and the department's subsequent action plans at a recent staff meeting. The survey has proved itself a valuable tool. "Not only can we compare our results with the last survey, this time around there is more willingness to discuss results across service divisions and faculties. And I think the third time around [in 2011] the survey will have become embedded in the University's ethos of continuous improvement."

Bridging the French and Anglophone worlds

Professor Raylene Ramsay (European Languages and Literatures) has recently been awarded the John Dunmore Medal for her contribution to research on the French presence in the Pacific.

The medal, presented to her by Alliances Françaises and the French Embassy, held special significance for her, Raylene told guests at the award ceremony at Old Government House earlier this month.

It was, she said, emblematic of her dual heritages – her Pacific journeys and her French adventures – and particularly significant because she spent seven years of her early career in the French Department at Massey University when John Dunmore was Professor.

John's tireless research on France in the Pacific became the inspiration for the John Dunmore Medal and has encouraged all those who have

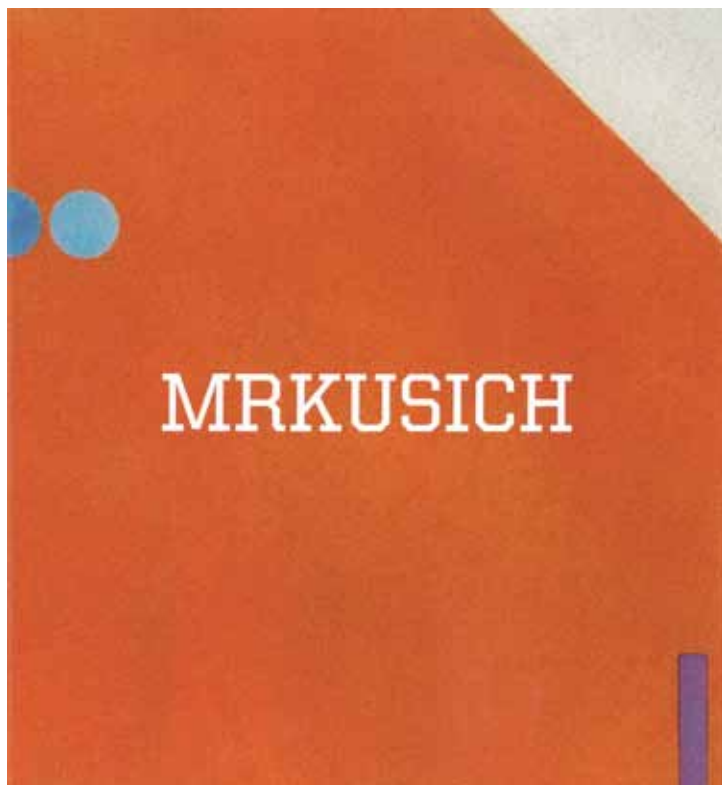
continued his work, said Raylene.

Raylene's own Pacific journey began in 1966 with a year spent teaching in the bush at Do-Néva, a mission school in New Caledonia. Reading the classics on her balcony in the evenings by the light of a kerosene lamp, surrounded by vegetation teeming with living "spirits" and sitting around school camp-fires listening to tales from the islands' oral tradition, proved formative experiences for her. "Now all these years later, Emma Sinclair Reynolds [University of New Caledonia] is completing a cotutelle PhD with me on the contemporary adaptations of these stories from oral tradition."

Professor Raylene Ramsay (European Languages and Literatures) pictured with her John Dunmore Medal for her contribution to research on the French presence in the Pacific.



Big year for AUP



Big ideas. New visions. Arguments that change your mind. Books that transform the world. At Auckland University Press, we started 2009 with some pretty ambitious publishing goals.

How did we do?

We've published big ideas, from Martin Edmond's account of the Antipodes in the Western imagination over 2000 years in *Zone of the Marvellous* to Francis Pound's questioning of the nationalist tradition in our art and literature in *The Invention of New Zealand*, out in December.

Our art and poetry titles have been full of new visions – the photographs of people and protests in Leonard Bell's *Marti Friedlander*; Sam Hunt's personal view of a mentor in *James K Baxter: Poems*; the wonders of colour and light in *Mrkusich*.

We've published arguments that have changed minds, most notably Linda Bryder's *A History of the 'Unfortunate Experiment' at National Women's Hospital*, which has led many readers

to reassess a key episode in the country's history.

Books that transform the world are a rare thing, but Manying Ip's account of Māori and Chinese, *The Dragon and the Taniwha*, and Cluny and La'avava MacPherson's assessment of globalisation and Samoa, *Warm Winds of Change*, fundamentally changed our understanding of the people around us.

In 2009, we also moved Auckland University Press into science and business – two strengths of the University where the Press aims to publish great books. Paul Callaghan's book on science and business, *Wool to Weta*, led to debates on government policy and David Irving, Darl Kolb, Deb Shepherd and Chris Woods' *Changing Gears: How to take your Kiwi business from the kitchen table to the board room* promises to energise a new generation of New Zealand entrepreneurs.

Auckland University Press's achievements

were recognised in 2009 when, for the second year running, we had more finalists at the Montana New Zealand Book Awards than any other publisher.

The Press could not flourish without our great authors and readers at The University of Auckland. As we look forward to 2010, it's no surprise that our key titles early in the year feature University staff: Paul Millar's biography of former professor of English Bill Pearson, *No Fretful Sleeper*, and Emeritus Professor Karl Stead's memoir, *South-West of Eden*.

To celebrate a big year in publishing and to thank staff of the University for their support, we would like to offer all staff 25 percent off our great 2009 art books for orders received by 11 December 2009.

Merry Christmas and happy holiday reading,
Sam Elworthy, PhD
Director, Auckland University Press

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL – 25 percent off these great art books for all staff!

Auckland University Press is offering staff 25 percent off the recommended retail price of these great art books, published in 2009. Shop at the Press in Building 810, 1-11 Short Street (Anzac Avenue entrance) or send the Press your order no later than 11 December 2009 (email aup@auckland.ac.nz; telephone (09) 373 7528; fax (09) 373 7465; or http://web.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/aup/order/order_home.cfm Postage

will be charged for mailed orders.)

Mrkusich: The Art of Transformation by Alan Wright and Edward Hanfling (hardback; illustrated) usually \$99.99; UoA Staff Christmas price: \$74.99

Bill Culbert: Making Light Work by Ian Wedde (hardback; illustrated) usually \$99.99; UoA Staff Christmas price: \$74.99

Marti Friedlander by Leonard Bell (hardback; illustrated) usually \$75; UoA Staff Christmas

price: \$56.25

Art That Moves: The Work of Len Lye by Roger Horrocks (paperback; illustrated) DVD; usually \$59.99; UoA Staff Christmas price: \$44.99 (see review on next page)

The Invention of New Zealand: Art & National Identity, 1930-1970 by Francis Pound (hardback; illustrated) usually \$75; UoA Staff Christmas price: \$56.25 (see review on next page)

From the collection



Richard Orjis (b.1979), *Flower Idol*, 2006
C-type photograph, 1450 x 1240mm
The University of Auckland Art Collection

After two years in New York, preceded by study at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Richard Orjis returned to New Zealand in 2004 and began a Master of Fine Arts at Elam School of Fine Arts. *Flower Idol* featured in his 2006 graduate exhibition but was already familiar, having appeared on the invitation card for that year's postgraduate information evenings. Purchased for The University of Auckland Art Collection in 2008, *Flower Idol*

continues its close association with the University, hanging prominently in the NICAI Student Centre.

Orjis' striking portraits and distinctive tableau perhaps owe much to his commercial work, photographing advertising and editorial shoots for magazines such as *Interview* or *Pavement*, and designers including Miss Crabb and Natalija Kucija. No surprise considering his teen obsession with glossies like *The Face* and *i-D*, which he acknowledges in a *New Zealand Herald* cover feature about a new generation of photographers emerging from Elam. He also acknowledges that the line between commerce and arts is not always clear with some of his fashion work later appearing in gallery shows.

Other important influences include the sweet-yet-disturbing work of American photographer Anthony Goicolea, whom he worked and lived with in the United States, and the erotically charged surreal images of celebrity photographer David LaChapelle, who took him on as an intern.

From photographing young men in American forests and agricultural environments an earthy interest arose, hinting at strange rituals and ancient rites that underpin working the soil. *Flower Idol* is from the series *My Empire of Dirt*, which also includes drawings on paper literally made from mud. Combined, they seem to capture the iconography and activities of a pagan cult. Characters are smeared in dirt and dressed

Art

with flowers, many of which suggest phallic forms. They are dark, organic and beautiful, much like the fecund ripeness of nature, invoking both fertility and decay.

In an artist's statement, Orjis says: "Nature here is beautiful and dark, a dangerous spectacle of devourers and devoured; yet still the starting point for religious experience." He describes the gothic activities of his fictive contemporary cult as trying to "make links with nature in a world that is increasingly destroying the natural [environment] it seeks to control".

The suggestive forms of orchids continue to feature in his latest work, a solo installation exhibited in the K' Road window spaces of Starkwhite, a dealer gallery that occupies a building once used as a brothel. Surprisingly deadpan after the lush colours of his earlier work, black-and-white photos of an indoor orchid farm demonstrate the elaborate processes of massed cultivation with flowers all trussed up and hydroponically drip-fed. These are juxtaposed with a white sculptural structure resembling both the formalist angles and shapes of De Stijl paintings and furniture, but also the narcissistic benches, bars and balls of gym equipment. The ever-present candle arrangements drip wax over the otherwise pristine surfaces. Another large circular form hanging on the wall and painted gold invokes the utopian explorations of the alchemists, an old chemistry obsessed with improvement.

Andrew Clifford

Art That Moves: The Work of Len Lye

by Roger Horrocks

One of New Zealand's most original artists, Len Lye had a big idea: movement could be the basis for an entirely new kind of art. In *Art That Moves: The Work of Len Lye*, by Emeritus Professor Roger Horrocks, Lye's art and ideas move once again, alert and alive. Roger's superbly illustrated book comes with a DVD of four of Lye's best films and some outstanding footage of his sculpture in action as well as a new short film about Lye's early life, which Roger directed.

The Invention of New Zealand: Art & National Identity, 1930-1970

by Francis Pound

From the 1930s onwards, New Zealand artists, writers and critics consciously deployed art, literature and theory in the construction of a national identity and a new New Zealand "high culture". *The Invention of New Zealand: Art &*

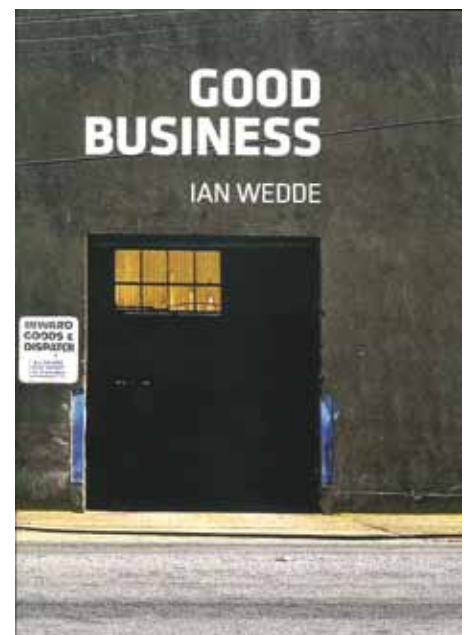
National Identity, 1930-1970, by Dr Francis Pound, brings to light both the profusion and cohesion of the Nationalist movement, which lasted for 40 years until a new generation of artists and critics rejected it in the 1970s. Francis, who taught art history at the University for a number of years, has created a monumental study of 20th-century nationalism in this seminal work.

Good Business

by Ian Wedde

At the heart of this superb new collection of poems by acclaimed poet and author Ian Wedde is the stunning title sequence, *Good Business*, at once an elegy for the poet's father and an ode to walking the side streets of Wellington. From the familiar businesses and institutions of the city, Wedde ventures into the flickering screens of dreams and out to the rivers of Bangladesh and to the south of France where "light bruises / the body of the earth". Wedde is the University's 2009 Creative New Zealand Michael King Writer in Residence.

Books



What's on

SATURDAY 28 NOVEMBER

Exhibition talk and tour

1pm Gus Fisher Gallery, Shortland St. Christchurch sculptor, Evan Webb, Director of the Len Lye Foundation, has a unique knowledge of Lye's sculptures. He has been largely responsible for maintaining them for many years. He has also been responsible for the reconstruction of works that were realised after Lye's death and ensuring they are true to the artist's vision. Evan will (literally) provide an inside view of what makes Lye's work tick. 2pm Tyler Cann, Len Lye Curator, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, introduces Len Lye and leads a tour of the exhibition Art that Moves. Tyler was co-curator of the recent large and very successful Lye exhibition in Melbourne.

TUESDAY 1 DECEMBER

Public speaking for researchers

9.30am-12.30pm CAD Seminar Room, Level 5, 76 Symonds Street. You know your research like the back of your hand, but how effective are you at communicating your work to students, colleagues and non-academics? This workshop will cover techniques for planning, rehearsing and delivering an engaging presentation - from conference paper to public lecture - on any academic topic. Please enrol (code PUBSR) through Peoplesoft HR or call CAD reception on ext 88140 for assistance.

WEDNESDAY 2 DECEMBER

First Aid refresher course

9am-4.30pm Room 336, Level 3, Building 810, 1-11 Short Street. Refresher course for First Aiders whose current First Aid certificate is nearing expiry. Bookings and queries to ext 85070 or je.wilson@auckland.ac.nz

THURSDAY 3 DECEMBER

Thursday 3 December

11th Pacific Islands Political Studies Association (PIPSA) Conference

Fale Pasifika. Until 4 December. *Pacific democracy: What's happening?* A timely and relevant theme, it captures the problems, dynamics, reconfiguration and reexamination of 'democracy' in contemporary Oceania. The conference provides a forum to openly and critically discuss and re-examine the problems and issues that continue to shape the dynamics, culture and institutions of political governance and democratic rule in the Pacific. For further information please contact Dr Steven Ratuva, s.ratuva@auckland.ac.nz For catering purposes please RSVP to Folole Asaua, f.asaua@auckland.ac.nz

FRIDAY 4 DECEMBER

2009 Australasian Conference on Obesity

School of Engineering, 20 Symonds St. A one-day conference aimed at medical and health professionals. It is designed to provide a comprehensive picture of obesity and a forum to challenge beliefs and methods of tackling this global epidemic. Specialists from Australia and NZ will discuss the impact of obesity

and ways of preventing, managing and treating the condition. Register by going to www.obesityconference2009.com

SATURDAY 5 DECEMBER

Exhibition talk

1pm Gus Fisher Gallery, Shortland St. Roger Horrocks, curator of Art that Moves and author of the just-published book of the same name, will discuss the main theme of the exhibition and why he feels that Lye made a unique contribution to art through his theory and practice of movement. Horrocks also wrote the best-selling 2001 Len Lye biography and worked as Lye's assistant in the last year of the artist's life.

TUESDAY 8 DECEMBER

Current Trends in Computer Vision Symposium

Tamaki Campus. Programme: 9.30am - opening in Room 731.201 by Winston Byblow, Associate Dean Science, Tamaki Campus. Session 1: *3D modelling at large scale* (9.35-11.55am). Session 2: *Shape and matching* (1-2.45pm). Session 3: *Three areas of applied computer vision* (3.15-5pm). 5pm, closing: Finger food and drinks, demos and posters. RSVP by 1 December to m.dijkgraaf@auckland.ac.nz Visit www.mi.auckland.ac.nz/events/trends09/

THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER

Film screening

6.30pm Gus Fisher Gallery, Shortland St. An evening screening of Len Lye's films not included in the exhibition, thanks to the NZ Film Archive. It is an opportunity to see a number of his films in their original celluloid form, including several titles less-well-known or recently rediscovered.

Classifieds

ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE

Apartments for rent. Call us for your rental requirements; we offer city apartments furnished/unfurnished all sizes and prices; great rental deals for long-term leases; call Chris or Mandy on 09 303 0601 at City Sales or email rentals@citysales.co.nz or log on to www.citysales.co.nz/rentals

Bright, quiet, fully furnished and equipped two-bedroom Central City apartment five mins from Campus. Beautifully renovated, all linen etc, electronic gear, appliances and facilities. Available from 9 December. Ideal for professional couple. \$350 pw. Inquiries to Kay (ext 86283, or 550 9782) or Peter (ext 88889) or email p.wills@auckland.ac.nz

Friends and family here for Christmas and not enough space?

Give them a special treat: book them into Scandinavian Light B&B in beautiful Titirangi/Laingholm, let them experience the West Coast and our stunning Waitakere Ranges and Manukau Harbour views. Your hosts: former Scandinavian lecturers Ingworn and Ivo Holmqvist. Inspections welcome! Website www.scandinavianlight.co.nz

Grey Lynn, two people wanted to share with one female who works in media, mature, must love dogs. Large beautiful villa minutes from shops, parks, bus stop. Garden, roof garden, two lounge areas. Both vacant bdms large and sunny, one is particularly lovely. \$200 and \$180 pw + expenses. Phone 027 482 6615.

Parnell warm sunny townhouse.

Four bdms. 15 minutes walk to University, three minutes to Link bus stop. Decks, carport + one park, study, new dishwasher, two showers, two toilets. \$650 pw. Could neg furnished/whiteware. Auckland Grammar, EGGs zone. Email bproofgarland@gmail.com or phone (021) 181 2115.

Royal Oak/Epsom: Furnished two-bdrm/one-bthrm, two-storey ex-State available from 12 Dec 2009 to 7 July 2010, includes washer/dryer, TV, DVD, CD, plates, pots and pans, linens. Also comes with two feline flatmates: Louie and Cleo. Backs up to One Tree Hill with direct private access to park from garden. Perfect for a couple or a single person. \$380 pw + all utilities, including water. Deposit required. Please phone Damian at (021) 354 324.

Wanted: House-sitter. Responsible, mature professional couple or individual required to house-sit Auckland Ponsonby villa from 1 to 16 January 2009. Very handy to shops and cafes. No kids, no pets, no smoking. Free in return for providing security and garden watering. References required. Phone (09) 378 8883 or (021) 637 887 or email suereidy@gmail.com

ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED

Visiting scientist would like to rent a three-bedroom apartment or house from 20 January to 31 March 2010 for his family (wife and two 13-year-old girls), preferably in the Parnell area, but all suggestions and offers will be welcome. Thanks! Please email Olivier Gascuel, gascuel@lirmm.fr

Wanted: Short-term rental from around 7 January to mid-May 2010 for visiting University of Virginia law professor, his wife and four children between 2 and 13 years. Require 3/4 bedroom house near good schools in Auckland Central, Eastern Suburbs or the North Shore. Please email s.shaw@auckland.ac.nz

MISCELLANEOUS

Da Vinci Machine Exhibition

Until 6 December 2009. This interactive exhibition presents 60 machines based on Da Vinci's designs and inventions using authentic materials of the time and covering such diverse fields as flight, hydraulics, war machines, mechanics, transport and civil engineering. Open 7 days a week, 10am to 5pm, 75 Customs St East. For more information visit www.davincinz.com

Donor needed for University staffer.

Can you help? We are a loving married couple who have been trying to have a baby for some years, both naturally and with assistance. Our only chance now to have the child we really want is through egg donation. Would you consider making that special gift? If you are a healthy n/s, aged 37 or younger, and have preferably completed your own

family, please contact Angela or Toni (in confidence) at Fertility Associates Shore on phone (09) 925 5962 or email them on fas@fertilityassociates.co.nz, quoting Beam of Joy.

Job vacancy. Residential Supervisor at Grafton Hall of Residence, commencing 1 February 2010. This is a live-in, part-time position in a privately-administered University hall for 203 students. The role has a high pastoral commitment, involving leadership of the residential assistant team. Rostered duties include regular evening and some weekend responsibilities. The position may particularly suit postgraduate students. Applications close Friday 11 December. Email office@graftonhall.co.nz for application and position details.

Kadimah College Scholarships.

Kadimah College, 108 Greys Ave, Auckland is offering a limited number of scholarship places in its intermediate school from 2010. This unique, independent school provides co-ed learning from New Entrants to Year 8. Kadimah offers a newly renovated heritage site together with high academic standards; small classes; NZ and Cambridge systems; and a values-based education founded on Jewish traditions. For more information, call Adina Halpern on 029 200 7440 or 378 7997.

Mother's help: professional woman with newborn seeking a pair of extra hands to help with baby, domestic chores in first few months of motherhood. Position starts end of February in central Auckland suburb. Hours, hourly rate negotiable; references required. Email aoctearose@gmail.com

Psychoanalysis. A range of problems may lead you to consider therapy, such as depression, anxiety, phobia, and trauma. As a psychoanalyst I work with adults and children. If you wish to discuss your situation and the possibility of therapy for yourself or your child, please contact Dr Lucille Holmes on 021 298 2951 or l.holmes@lacan.org.nz Student rates are negotiable.

Research Cooperative.

<http://cooperative.ning.com>, an international NPO and network for research students, researchers, science writers, technical communicators, illustrators, editors, proofreaders, translators, and publishers. Contact researchcooperative@gmail.com

Te Wahi Ora: A retreat for women at Piha. Do you need to break? For over a decade, women have been enjoying Te Wahi Ora's hospitality. We supply all bedding, linen, plus delicious breakfast, lunch and dinner. For more information visit www.tewahiora.co.nz

The Poetisophical Society is seeking curious misfits to share quotes, poems, prose, images, insights or ideas. Bring your own material or someone else's. Come for epiphanies, awe, admiration and silliness. Phone (021) 210 2325.

Travel. I have 12 years experience in booking all aspects of personal travel for university staff and lecturers. I pride myself in ensuring that your travel plans are sourced at the lowest possible costs and are tailor-made to your requirements. Contact Karen on Karen.embleton@mondotravel.co.nz or 940 0064 (wk) or (021) 188 7781.

For a full list of The University of Auckland events see: www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/home/events

Please email classified ads to m.playfair@auckland.ac.nz nine days before publication. Cost \$20 (incl GST).