



ALICE IN VENICE

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BOOST FOR STUDY ABROAD

The University has signed on as an official Commitment Partner to the US Generation Study Abroad movement, which aims to double the number of US students undertaking an experience of studying abroad as they work towards their degrees. The University of Auckland joins more than 630 institutions, organisations and governments across the US and around the world that have signed on to the movement. The aim is to increase the flow of students in both directions.

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SEELYE FELLOWSHIPS

Members of the academic staff are encouraged to apply for these fellowships, which are each valued at up to \$20,000. The Ralph and Eve Seelye Charitable Trust Fund was established in 2006 to help the University to attract distinguished persons who are leaders in their field and to host internationally recognised experts for guest lectures and seminars. The Trust provides one or more Visiting Fellowships/Lectureships across all faculties.

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A BAN ON A BOOK

An interim restriction order was placed on 3 September on a book for young adults called *Into the River*, by Ted Dawes. This restriction order, placed by Don Mathieson, President of the Film and Literature Board of Review, meant the book could not be provided to anyone or displayed or exhibited in or within view of a public place. Dr Paula Morris from English, Drama and Writing Studies gives her opinion on the banning of books.

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DANCE IN ACTION

“Action” showcases the choreographic works and performances of undergraduate and postgraduate Dance Studies students. It also features final performances of third year students completing a Bachelor of Dance Studies. Through diverse creative processes students are taking “action” to ask questions and make statements about their perspectives on the world. 30-31 October, 7pm, Maidment Theatre. Book at www.maidment.auckland.ac.nz Queries to creative@auckland.ac.nz



CLIVIA IN BLOOM

Now's the time to take a walk in the University Gardens and enjoy the sight of the Clivia now in bloom in sector 100, which covers the area from the University Library and Old Choral Hall to Old Government House and the Thomas Building. The Clivia are herbaceous evergreen plants with bell-shaped flowers on stalks above the foliage with colours ranging from yellow through orange to red. The photo is by University photographer, Godfrey Boehnke. The Clivia are in flower for about a month each year.



SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO

Staff in the University's Christmas Choir are singing their hearts out twice a week, practising for the Christmas performance that has now become an enjoyable annual tradition. The conductor (pictured right) is Michelle Wong, Academic Services Co-ordinator from Creative Arts and Industries and a graduate of the Music School with a Bachelor of Music (Hons) in Musicality. Others who have been very involved in the event over the years are Glenda Haines, Darren Woodward and Michelle Staff. The performance is in the ClockTower, 15 December.



DANCING THE BLUES

This year's University Blues Award winners were Hazel Wilks (Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences) for the Most Outstanding Contribution in Services and Leadership; Eliza McCartney (Science), Sportswoman of the Year; George Muir (Law, Business) Sportsman of the Year; Michael Brake (Engineering), Māori Sportsman of the Year; Rosin Giles (Law, Science), Most Meritorious Performance (Sport); and Joshua Cesan (NICAI) - seen at the centre of the group on the right - for Most Meritorious Performance (Arts).



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COVER PHOTO: The Renaissance Library, the Biblioteca Marciana Nazionale in Venice, which has used the work of Simon Denny, representing New Zealand at the Venice Biennale.

Photo by Alice Tyler

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BOOST FOR OVERSEAS STUDY

The University's goal to see one in four students graduating with overseas experience by 2020 has been advanced through a new partnership to boost the number of students from the United States.

The University has this month signed on as an official Commitment Partner to the US Generation Study Abroad movement, an initiative started by the US Institute of International Education (IIE) to double the number of US students undertaking a studying abroad experience as they work toward their degree.

Director International Brett Berquist says the partnership offers 100 scholarships worth NZ \$1,275 each for students coming from the University's partner institutions; travel discounts through US travel agency Student Universe and Air New Zealand; and more short-term opportunities for international students. These will include short courses run over the northern hemisphere summer break, research opportunities and internships.

The University of Auckland joins more than 630 institutions, organisations and governments across the United States and around the world that have signed on to the movement. Education New Zealand was the first organisation outside the US to join.



Vice-Chancellor Professor Stuart McCutcheon says innovation and creativity are vital to New Zealand's future.

"We encourage our students to learn from other cultures through the diversity of students on campus as well as by learning abroad during their degree," he says.

"This helps to develop their ability to see issues from different angles and work collaboratively across cultures. International understanding is important to our students' career development and will strengthen our

country's ability to compete in the global marketplace of ideas."

The University aims to increase the flow of students in both directions.

"The US is an important market for New Zealand, and its demands for shorter, highly experiential opportunities reflects what our own students are seeking," says Brett. "In addition to top-rate teaching, today's students want hands-on, intensive experiences that make a difference outside the classroom."

ARRESTING STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

The top prize for the University's photography competition for World Habitat Day went to Adrian Lo, PhD Candidate at the School of Architecture and Planning, for his striking image "Queen Elizabeth II Square" (shown in the background as he receives his prize from Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity), Trudie McNaughton).

The theme for World Habitat Day 2015, "Public spaces for all", inspired some arresting street photography. Also seen on this page is a "Highly commended" entry by Emma Glucina.

Since 2014, UNHabitat has designated the entire month of October as Urban October, starting with the celebration of World Habitat Day on the first Monday of October and finishing with World Cities Day on 31 October. The theme for World Habitat Day this year "Public Spaces for All" was well-encapsulated by Lo's image, shot in Auckland during the 2014 Hong Kong pro-democracy protests.

UNHabitat is the United Nations Programme formed to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities throughout the world, focusing on the "three pillars of sustainability" - equity, ecology, and economy.



The University of Auckland became a member of the UNHabitat partner university group 'UNiHabitat' in 2009 and is committed to supporting UNHabitat's mandate of promoting sustainable urban development, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

For further information relating to UNiHabitat, please contact Professor Dory Reeves (Architecture and Planning) d.reeves@auckland.ac.nz or Dr Yvonne Underhill-Sem (Centre for Development Studies) y.underhill-sem@auckland.ac.nz



SEELYE FELLOWSHIPS

The University is calling for applications for Seelye Fellowships which are available to bring leading international visitors to the University. This round of applications closes on 15 November 2015 and visits may take place in late 2015 or 2016. Members of the academic staff are encouraged to apply for these awards, which are each valued at up to \$20,000. The Ralph and Eve Seelye Charitable Trust Fund was established in 2006 to help the University to attract distinguished persons who are leaders in their field and to host internationally recognised experts for guest lectures and seminars. The Trust provides one or more Visiting Fellowships/Lectureships across all Faculties. Details are available on <http://www.uoafoundation.org.nz/seelye.html> (All Applications will need to be submitted electronically through the Research Funding Module (RFM). For information, user guides and access to the RFM, see the Staff Intranet under How the University works>Research. For further information contact Pramilla DaSilva on extension 88113 or pc.dasilva@auckland.ac.nz

HIGH COURT JUDGEMENT

Professor Jane Kelsey (Law) has been a prominent feature of recent news, in the lead-up to and following, the Wellington High Court judgment that Trade Minister Tim Groser had no lawful basis on which to withhold information about the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. Jane Kelsey had requested the information under the Official Information Act. Justice David Collins quashed Tim Groser's decision on six of the seven categories of documents requested by Professor Kelsey and directed the Minister to reconsider her request

NEW RESOURCE FOR LGBTI

Inside Out, a video-based teaching resource created in a partnership between Dr John Fenaughty (Faculty of Education and Social Work) Curative, and RainbowYOUTH, was launched at Parliament in Wellington on 13 October. This free classroom resource is being used by teachers in Year 7 to 13 classrooms nationwide to help increase understanding and support for students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. John, Director of the project, was moved to create the resource to improve young people's understanding of sexual diversity.

WHAT'S NEW

RICH HISTORY, BRIGHT FUTURE

The Department of Sport and Exercise Science celebrated its 21st birthday with an evening that brought together alumni, students, and past and present staff.

Kaiarahi for the Faculty of Science, Michael Steedman, spoke fondly about his time as one of the first students in 1994. Head of Department, Associate-Professor Greg Anson, acknowledged former HoDs, managers and guests, including Emeritus Professor Ray Meyer, former Dean of Engineering who, along with former Vice-Chancellor Sir Colin Maiden, "engineered the idea of a department of sport science at the

University." Professor Bob Marshall, founding HoD, spoke about how the curriculum was "put together" and how they recruited the original staff, including Professor Winston Byblow and Associate Professor Heather Smith.

A highlight for the department came this year with international accreditation of the clinical exercise physiology programme by the (US) Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs – the first programme outside the US to receive this accreditation. The department will be renamed the "Department of Exercise Sciences" from 1 January.



Current and past HoDs for Sport and Exercise Science. From left to right are Alan Lee, Greg Anson, Bob Marshall, Shona Thompson, Winston Byblow and Heather Smith.

SIMON DENNY AT SERPENTINE

Simon Denny, renowned artist and University of Auckland Young Alumnus of the Year for 2013 (see story opposite) has been invited to exhibit at London's prestigious Serpentine Gallery.

Simon, who graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Elam School of Fine Arts, is currently representing New Zealand at the 2015 Venice Biennale with his exhibition entitled *Secret Power*.

The artist has developed an international reputation for his diverse practice, which employs a variety of mediums including sculpture, photography and video and often investigates the production, distribution and consumption of media in an age of rapid technological change.

His exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery will open on 25 November 2015, just three days after *Secret Power* closes in Venice. It will be the first survey of Simon's work in the United Kingdom.

The Serpentine Gallery offers only two shows per season, and is renowned for presenting world class exhibitions across all disciplines of contemporary art, architecture and design.

Examples of Simon's work are held in major collections nationally and internationally and he exhibits widely. As well as representing New

Zealand at the 2015 Venice Biennale he recently showed *The Innovator's Dilemma* at MoMA PS1 in New York to critical acclaim.

His upcoming exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery will feature two large-scale installations, exploring technological organisational models in both hacker circles and commercial companies.

"We at Elam are thrilled by Simon's continuing success internationally. His work at Venice this year was a fascinating amalgam of objects and information, cogently installed and with both wit and sly critique. It was a vigorous and expansive work to experience in Venice's Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana where it carefully recontextualised the human ideal of a repository of knowledge in the aftermath of Edward Snowden's courageous revelations," says Associate Professor Peter Shand, Head of School, Elam School of Fine Arts.

The Serpentine Gallery attracts up to 1.2 million visitors a year. Some 100,000 people are expected to visit the free Simon Denny exhibition which will run from 25 November 2015 until 14 February 2016.

NOTE: Simon Denny's work also features in "From the collection" on page 10 of this issue of *Uninews*.

UNIVERSITY PRESENCE AT VENICE BIENNALE

Alice Tyler, Assistant Curator at the Gus Fisher Gallery, was selected from among 200 applicants to be one of seven attendants for the exhibition chosen to represent New Zealand at the Venice Biennale: *Secret Power*, by Simon Denny, the University's Young Alumnus of the Year for 2013. Here, Alice (seen in Venice, right) gives an insider's view of what it's like to work at the Venice Biennale.

WHAT WERE YOUR TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

Looking after the exhibition: cleaning morning, midday and night, ensuring the glass was sparkling all day long. Acting as an ambassador for Creative New Zealand, for the arts in New Zealand, for New Zealand generally, and for la Biennale de Venezia.

A big part of my job was giving tours of the exhibition. Sometimes I had large, pre-organised groups, sometimes these were just couples or families who came through and wanted to know more. The biggest group I had was 50 art donors from Australia.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE HIGHLIGHTS AND LOWLIGHTS FOR YOU?

A highlight was watching people interact with the exhibition and seeing their ideas about it shift the more they understood the project. At first glance Simon Denny's work can be opaque and confronting, so an important part of my role was helping to unpack and translate the ideas contained in it. An artwork means something different to every viewer, so providing a few keys to engagement and then conversing with them about their initial reactions was very rewarding. Also, living in Venice was a dream come true! I studied Italian as part of my BA at the University of Auckland and am an active member in the Dante Alighieri Society, attending Italian language classes once per week.

I was finally able to put all this study into practice by living amongst the Venetians and using my Italian every day. It's true what people say: learning a language is so much easier when you're forced to speak it! Memorising words for things like cereal, adaptor and supermarket suddenly became vital to survival rather than being merely a tedious chore.

Having said that, language barriers were also a huge challenge and a reminder of New Zealand's far-flung location. Conversational German and French would have been a huge benefit in my role and I occasionally had to rely on Europeans, who could communicate easily in two or three languages, to provide translations for my English tours.



WHAT REACTIONS AND RESPONSES HAVE YOU SEEN IN THE VISITORS?

Secret Power was a polarising exhibition: people either loved or hated it. I saw it as a challenge to try and turn those who hated it!

The venue is the Renaissance library, the Biblioteca Marciana Nazionale, at the end of the Museo Correr in Venice's San Marco square. The building was commissioned by the Venetian Republic in 1537 and is filled with paintings by Venetian artists including Titian and Tintoretto. On the other hand, Simon Denny's work was mounted in metal server cabinet, with fluorescent lighting and glass front panels. The reactions of people who came to see the painted decorations of the library ranged from mystified to irate that "all this modern stuff" was blocking their view. They generally preferred the "real art" by Tintoretto. Others thought New Zealand was courageous for exhibiting work which was highly politically charged. The Renaissance paintings essentially act as an allegory of the accrual of knowledge and power at a time when Venice was a world leader. Simon's exploration into the imagery and iconography of current geopolitical power, housed within an example of historical, obsolete geopolitical power, was absolutely a work of genius, and many visitors appreciated this and the conflation of modern and historic in the library.

HOW DID YOU RESPOND TO THE WORK?

When we first had training in March we saw mock-ups of the work in the Marciana Library. It was a huge thrill to see it live, in situ, and I thought it was utterly beautiful. The more I talked about it to people the more interesting

I found it. The exhibition is full of puzzles and ideas and I literally saw something different or some new connection every single day I spent with it.

HOW HAVE YOU ENJOYED VENICE?

This wasn't my first visit. I was there two years ago to see the 55th biennale, but going to a foreign city to work as part of such a significant event was very different to doing an OE or being a tourist. The biennale takes over Venice for nearly eight months every other year, attracting millions of tourist dollars and some of the best contemporary art in the world. Every Venetian has an opinion about it. I was immediately welcomed into a biennale family of volunteers who, like myself, were working at national pavilions, and they quickly became friends and colleagues. It was nice to feel like we were contributing not only to our own, individual exhibitions; but also to a bigger project which was making the city one of the top tourist attractions in Europe.

Creative New Zealand hired an apartment that all the exhibition attendants stayed in. It was lovely and big and centrally located in the San Marco area, meaning everything was about a 20-minute walk away and work was a four-minute commute. It also happened to be around the corner from the best bakery in Venice.

Alice studied Art History at the University of Auckland, at both graduate and undergraduate levels. She volunteered at the Gus Fisher Gallery while completing her masters and was an administrative assistant for three years before being promoted to her present position.

MY STORY

STAFF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



TE KORORIA NETANA-RAKETE

Te Kororia Netana-Rakete is Executive Assistant to Jim Peters, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori). She began working at the University 13 years ago as a desktop publisher in the Centre for Professional Development; then became Executive Assistant to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equal Opportunities) before moving on to her current role.

WHERE WERE YOU BORN AND WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?

I was born in Kaikohe in the Bay of Islands. I spent my early years in Whananaki where my older twin sisters and I lived with our paternal grandparents while our parents lived and worked in Kaikohe. When my older twin sisters were ready for kindergarten we, along with our grandparents, shifted back to Kaikohe to live with our parents.

WHAT DID YOU LOVE DOING WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD?

I was definitely a tomboy. I did everything with my father. I loved being outside and getting dirty. I would love watching my uncle and my father tinkering with cars or building things. I was also quite strong so I got to help a lot.

WHAT DID YOU ENJOY LEARNING ABOUT AS A CHILD?

Art and making things. I was always doing something. Cutting things up, sticking them together, building things. I was slightly obsessed

with doll's houses, not so much with dolls. It was the interiors, fabrics and furniture. My Dad was an artist and he too liked designing and building things, so he was a big influence.

WHO WAS YOUR BEST TEACHER AND WHY?

Mr Munro, my intermediate art teacher at Kaikohe Intermediate. He was brilliant and allowed my classmates and me to do really interesting art with glass and blow torches. There were very few boundaries. All of my favourite teachers have been art teachers. I had two brilliant teachers in college. My third form art teacher was John Gatti. I'm sure he knew I would get on detention on purpose to stay longer in his classes. I had Liz Wihongi for sixth form art and she really made me think about what I wanted to say in my work.

HOW AND WHY DID YOU DECIDE WHAT YOUR CAREER WOULD BE?

Quite early on I knew I wanted and needed to do something creative. All I wanted to do was paint, live in Paris, drink way too much coffee and speak French but that was not that straight forward back then. Things were very limited and it didn't take me long to realise it was not something that was achievable.

There was a period though when I ran away to paint and ended up doing a one-year internship with contemporary Māori artist, the late Buck Nin in Hamilton. It was a great year and I certainly learnt a lot, especially about the technical side of painting practice.

The dream had evolved to include Italy. It's quite funny now that I think about it. I wanted to restore the Medici Frescoes and study Italian. I did study Italian in my undergraduate degree.

IN JUST ONE SENTENCE DESCRIBE THE PURPOSE OF YOUR PRESENT POSITION?

I provide administration support to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Māori), Jim Peters.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT THE JOB?

The people I get to work with.

IS THERE SOMETHING YOU'VE ACHIEVED THAT YOU FELT PARTICULARLY PROUD OF?

My son, Lucas, started university this year. I'm proud that we (my husband and I) have raised a successful and clever young man. I think my commitment to my university studies has played a part in influencing his decision to study as well. Choosing to study and work mostly full-time has been very hard and it's taken its toll on my health but I have been very lucky to be well supported.

I completed a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Museums and Cultural Heritage, graduating in 2011. It had taken me a while to complete and, following my final exams, I suffered a TIA (mini stroke). That was quite scary but it didn't stop me continuing to study. Subsequently, in 2013, I was awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Arts with Merit majoring in Museums and Cultural Heritage. I'll be forever grateful to my two supervisors, Associate Professor Harry Allen and Dr Ngarino Ellis, who were really supportive and encouraging.

Now I'm completing my masters, which is entitled "Ngā Whakamāramatanga: A study of authenticity, digitisation, and Ratana flags". It's hard work but I love it. I'm working with Māori prophet flags specifically Ratana flags, which is such satisfying work. There is literally nothing written about them outside of the Church and Movement. I've had some interesting conversations and there is a lot of interest, which is great.

Recently, I've been offered the opportunity to be mentored and trained by Māori Textiles Conservator, Te Rangituatahi Te Kanawa. The opportunity came because of my topic and I keep pinching myself when I think about that but the masters comes first for now.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING WHEN YOU ARE NOT WORKING?

Not much has changed since I was young actually. I'm still cutting things up, sticking them together, building things. I've moved into digital but I still spend a lot of time with raw materials and, of late, cloth. I enjoy running and swimming. Oh and still dreaming.



DID YOU KNOW

... that red carpets were once regularly rolled out along Princes Street as Auckland society arrived in their carriages to attend dances at Wickford House (now called Alfred Nathan House)?

The Hosts Nathan Alfred Nathan and his wife Emily were renowned for their dances and sumptuous suppers in the early 1900s - these were held in their opulent purpose-built house with its ornate fireplaces, carved mantelpieces, large drawing room and all attended by a team of servants: footmen, butlers, coachmen, cooks and maids.

Today Alfred Nathan House, listed with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, is one of the jewels in the University's collection of heritage buildings and is currently undergoing comprehensive seismic strengthening, extension at the eastern end and renewal of the top floor.

Alfred Nathan was one of two sons of David who came to Auckland and built a store in Shortland Crescent in 1841. David was President of the Auckland Hebrew Congregation for more than 20 years and laid the foundation stone in 1884 for the new synagogue, now housing the University's External Relations

In 1850 Nathan Alfred Nathan was born above the old store. In 1853 the family moved to their new home in Waterloo Quadrant called Bella Visita, now Newman Hall and David established his sons Laurence and Alfred in the business partnership L.D. Nathan and Co.

Alfred eventually married Emily Clayton, a niece of Lady Vogel and Wickford (now Alfred Nathan House) was built for them in 1883. They had four daughters and one son.

Alfred, who served as a director of L.D.



Nathan and Co for 60 years, was known for his friendliness and was much loved by his staff and their families. He always invited his own extended family, especially the children, to gatherings at Wickford to celebrate the Jewish festivals.

The Nathans were artistic and musical, and Wickford was a blaze of lights when dances were held there. Emily was described in a letter written by Auckland architect George Cole to Winifred Macdonald, editor of the Historical Journal, as "a most outstanding hostess". She was gracious, with a "vital personality", and the suppers for the guests were "sumptuous sit-down affairs".

Nathan Alfred Nathan died in 1931 at the age of 81, and the house became first a hospital, Mt Pleasant, and then the University Registry

in 1959. An extra floor was added in 1967 and the University later made further additions and alterations.



WHAT'S ON CAMPUS

DANCE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

5 NOVEMBER, 9.30-4pm. TAPAC, Western Springs College, 100 Motions Rd
Dance Studies is hosting a symposium to bring together leading international scholars in dance and social justice. With a focus on pedagogy and practice, the symposium aims to connect the dance community, generate idea sharing, networking opportunities and present topical issues in these fields. Keynote speakers are Fulbright Specialist Scholar Professor Sherry Shapiro (Meredith College, North Carolina) and Professor Eeva Antilla (University of the Arts Helsinki). RSVP is essential. Email k.dustin@auckland.ac.nz

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

10 NOVEMBER, 3.30-4.30pm
Maidment Theatre
Invited guests have the chance to hear Professor Margaret Wilson, 2015 Women in Leadership Guest Speaker, as she discusses her own career path and issues affecting leadership. Margaret studied and taught at the University of Auckland Law School and was founding Dean of the Waikato Law School. She has had a high profile in New Zealand politics, with many positions including Attorney-General, Minister of Labour, Minister responsible for Treaty negotiations, Associate Minister of Justice and Speaker of the House.

PETTMAN ACADEMY SERIES

20 NOVEMBER, 7-9pm
Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds Street
The Pettman National Junior Academy of Music is a unique programme in New Zealand offering talented young musicians opportunities to work with inspirational teachers and develop their skills in a supportive environment. In the PNJA concert series you will hear the best of young New Zealand talent ranging from the younger students who are developing their skills to the senior students who are already playing at an exceptional level. Contact: info@pnja.co.nz

RESEARCH

IN FOCUS

UNDER-REPORTING WHAT YOU EAT

Among the Spring graduates from the University was Dr Luke Gemming, lecturer in Nutrition from the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, who completed a PhD at the National Institute for Health Innovation (NIHI).

Luke's doctoral research into wearable "food-cams" has already gained national attention. His study into why people in New Zealand's Adult Nutrition Survey were gaining weight despite eating fewer calories proved it was due to under-reporting by participants.

A dietitian before he embarked on his PhD, Luke is investigating the potential of

wearable cameras, smartphone apps and sensor technologies to improve the accuracy of assessing diets in nutrition studies.

"It's a serious problem," he says. "Dietary assessment surveys inform the overall health of the nation and guide health and nutrition policies, clinical decisions, and funding allocations, and therefore must be reliable and accurate."

Luke's early PhD studies were completed at the University of Oxford during a three month exchange funded by the Royal Society of NZ. His doctoral research at Auckland was supported by a Health Research Council programme grant awarded to his supervisor, Professor Cliona Ni Mhurchu.



ROOM WITH A VIEW

Dr Leila Mirza, who graduated in Spring from the School of Architecture and Planning, wrote a doctoral thesis entitled "Windowscapes: A study of landscape preferences in an urban situation".

Leila's love of windowscapes began in Iran, where, as a child, she was inspired by the vista from her bedroom out to a cherry tree in her small backyard. "I can still remember sitting

behind my desk and gazing at the dance of the tree leaves in the breeze. There was a tall, ugly brick wall barely visible behind the tree. But I liked that brick wall because I could watch the neighbour's cat climbing it, there was mystery behind it, and it gave me privacy."

When rapid population growth forced Leila's family to move into an apartment, her cherry tree vista was replaced by a blocked view of other apartments. Although her room was almost as

big as the previous one, it seemed much smaller, since, for privacy, she often needed to keep the curtains closed. These experiences led her later to realise the importance of windowscapes in urban settings.

When Leila arrived in New Zealand to undertake postgraduate research, she recognised the growing emphasis on urban living and started to investigate urban landscape preferences. For her doctoral study, Leila developed an innovative method called Active Perception Technique (APT) for measuring the visual quality of everyday urban scenes, allowing identification of the most and least visually preferred features of urban windowscapes. These preferences are important, she says, because they reflect how given environments support well-being. APT has many advantages. It is inexpensive, quick to complete, and can be used anywhere. It is also empowering for individuals, enabling them to identify the personal factors that influence their preferences.

Leila's research has important implications for planners and policy-makers and demonstrates the potential of APT as a tool to enhance the visual quality of our built environment. In particular, her findings are relevant to Auckland: "As cities intensify one of the big challenges is knowing what aspects of the landscape we should conserve. APT is a tool that can help urban communities decide this and ultimately provide the public with more likeable and liveable cities," she says.

Photo: Leila with her mother, Fuzieh Takall (who came from Iran to celebrate with her), her cousin Mazdak Radjainia (over from Melbourne) and her husband Siamak Moradi. Mazdak graduated from Auckland with a PhD in Biological Sciences five years ago. Siamak is soon to complete his PhD in Computer Science.

FAMILY CELEBRATION

Among the students who graduated in record numbers during Spring Graduation was one of particular significance to two members of staff. Liam Kearns (front left in the photo) is seen with his parents – Professor Robin Kearns from the School of Environment in the Faculty of Science and Dr Pat Neuwelt, a lecturer in Health Systems in the School of Population Health. With them is Liam's sister Caitlin Neuwelt.

Liam graduated with a BA in Geography and an LLB.



WHAT MAKES A HAPPY CHILD?



Dr Sarah Berry with her daughter Emily, left, and Eva Winn from the Growing Up in New Zealand project

I love working with Growing Up in New Zealand because, with the help of 7000 New Zealand families, we are learning what makes a childhood happy and healthy, as well as what makes one difficult, unfair, or complicated. This information will tell us what changes to make so that every child gets a better life.

The children in our cohort are turning six and we have been talking to their families since before birth. We collect information on their health and wellbeing, their psychosocial and cognitive development and education, and their culture and identity within the context of their family and whānau, and the wider societies within which they live.

One awesome thing about Growing Up in New Zealand is the diversity of the children and their families. There is a huge range of ethnicities and socio-economic environments. Over 40 percent of the children identify with multiple ethnicities; 40 percent understand two or more languages. Our cohort reflects all of the children being born in New Zealand today and so our research is relevant for contemporary and future policy development and research.

An embarrassing statistic: New Zealand's atrocious rate of childhood infectious disease – much higher than other developed countries, and getting worse. In the last 25 years, hospitalisation rates for serious skin infections have increased over fourfold. Even more alarming is the distribution of this burden: rates are higher for Māori and Pacific children, and for children living in the most deprived households.

These communities also have unacceptable rates of acute rheumatic fever with life-long health consequences.

We will find causes for this excessive, increasing and inequitable burden of diseases. *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Streptococcus pyogenes* are the most common disease-causing bacteria but most of the time they are carried around harmlessly. Microbes, environment and a child's individual characteristics interact to cause disease somehow. We see that cold, damp housing can play a part, but we need more understanding to find solutions. What causes children to be carriers at one time and to develop infection at another?

Our study has taken swabs from 5500 pre-schoolers, looking for these bacteria in nostrils, throats and arm crooks. The results are currently being aligned with details about health, family and living environments. Data from a 150-child pilot indicate that many pre-schoolers are carriers. Worryingly, 10 percent of the *Staphylococcus* showed resistance to some common antibiotics.

The comprehensive social and biological information collected from the 7000 Growing Up in New Zealand families provides a unique, precious opportunity for new knowledge, and a scientific basis for improving health and wellbeing in our country.

Dr Sarah Berry, Senior Research Fellow, Growing Up in New Zealand

UNINews highlights some of the University research milestones that have hit the headlines in the past month.

SALES GLITCH

Dr Rick Starr (Marketing) attracted a great deal of media coverage for his views on the Harvey Norman sales glitch that saw the company sell furniture at a fraction of the price after it was wrongly advertised. Dr said this would not have ramifications for the brand but would be beneficial for other retailers who would look carefully at their own websites.

COALMINE CANARIES

Three School of Biological Sciences scientists gave their picks for species which may potentially act as “canaries in the coalmine” in relation to climate change for a *NZ Herald* feature this week. Lecturers Brendon Dunphy and Cate Mcinnis-Ng and senior lecturer Rochelle Constantine named the sooty shearwater, the kauri and the humpback whale respectively.

OBESITY AND SUGAR

Both Professor Boyd Swinburn and Dr Gerhard Sundborn (Epidemiology and Biostatistics) continue to have widespread national coverage of their initiatives to reduce obesity in children and adults and to reduce access to sugary drinks in both print, television and online media.

STAR POWER

A visit to the Business School by Hollywood star Sidharth Malhotra caused excitement among some students. Thirty-five students from the Business School shared tidbits about Sidharth's journey in film, his love for rugby, and some wisdom on life. Coverage included *PINKVILLA* (news website), *IndiaGlitz*, *iFreePress*, *Indo-Asian News Service (NDTV)*, *India Express*, *FirstPost*, *The Weather Space*, *SurfPaducah*, *LidTim*. and *Steelers Lounge*.

SCIENCE IN THE MOVIES

A new hit movie about a human left behind on Mars has been “scienced” by Professor Richard Easter, Head of the Department of Physics. After writing on his blog about whether the science in *The Martian* movie stacked up, the story was picked up by the *NZ Herald* and *The Listener*.

FROM THE COLLECTION

ART COLLECTION



ARTWORK: Simon Denny, (born 1982). *Blank video aquarium 2*, 2009, Perforated stainless steel frame, Perspex, ink, pine, plaster cast, aquarium background, 750 x 1000 x 200mm

Made for the artist's exhibition at the Galerie Daniel Buchholz in Cologne in 2009, this work marks the moment when the consumer commodity of the tube television went extinct and was replaced by the ubiquitous flat screen. At the same time, entertainment and information have become personalised so that the square box in the living room is no longer the centre of attention for a family. Commentators have remarked how 2009 was also a turning point for network television broadcasts themselves in

New Zealand. On-demand viewing, or watching content online or bit torrenting (torrents are files that allow the download of materials stored elsewhere) was killing off the audience for broadcast television itself. DVD boxed sets of television series had become the way that people watched TV, rather than the appointment viewing of the past.

Despite a recent study that proposed that TV viewing was an efficient remedy for chronic bursts of despair, "an afternoon snack that alleviates personal crisis by substituting actual human contact with 'para social relationships'", it appears that television is on the way out. Auckland-based media reporter Simon Pound

has observed that in the future it will not be TV networks that are curating our content. Services will develop to map our viewing tastes and cross reference choices against other users of the platform to recommend new content. You liked *The Sopranos*, would you like to download *The Wire*? Information gleaned from social media will drive content delivery as it does currently with YouTube.

Back in 1985, Martha Rosler teased out two tendencies amongst artists who were appropriating the language of video and television. The first bunch were concerned with information, social change and a collective political dimension, while the others wanted to align it with aesthetic pleasure, self-reflexivity and the valourisation of the private – for example, the Korean video artist Nam June Paik, who has mutilated, defiled and fetishized the TV set. Simon Denny maps the dematerialisation of the video screen from the cathode ray tube to the LED monitor, noting how a style of video art presentation is now also being surpassed by the computer screen. Along with this switching of hardware, there are also changes to the distribution systems that allow the accelerated flow of information through the shallows of the internet.

As all New Zealanders are aware, prominent file-sharing sites such as MegaUpload operated by Kim Dotcom work by having many portions of the whole file for the movie spread over many users, with a protocol attached that knows how to find and assemble the whole file from the different sources. Over a third of all internet traffic is data being sent all over to serve torrents. Such file-sharing sites have been prosecuted by those that own the intellectual

WHAT'S COMING OUT

TENDER GIRL

Lisa Samuels, Associate Professor of English, Drama, and Writing Studies, has authored her thirteenth book and first novel, *Tender Girl*. The novel's premise derives from a nineteenth-century book by the Comte de Lautréamont, *Les Chants de Maldoror*, whose hero – among other outrageous acts – copulates with a shark in the wild seas of a shipwreck. *Tender Girl* invents a daughter as the offspring of that coupling, and Girl comes out from ocean and crosses a body of land, learning speech, sex, law, violence, and art. Professor Réda Bensmaïa (Brown University) writes "We must be able to walk, to run, to sing while reading this incandescent text

where language rediscovers the broken condition of the origins of all languages," and Professor Carol Watts (Birkbeck College, University of London) calls *Tender Girl* "a classic for our time . . . Lisa Samuels biomorphs the novel and her epic Girl into something new. . . I love this book. But just you come and see."



SHAGGY MAGPIE SONGS

This volume, published by Auckland University Press, is a celebration of poetry's potential for drama and comedy, narrative and nonsense. Presented in four parts – Praise, Nonsense, Blues and Pop – the poems are at times jazzy and rollicking, at other times crooningly melancholic. Author Associate Professor Murray Edmond (Humanities) is a poet of lyricism and wit, reference and pastiche, thought and memory, all of which he brings in abundance to this collection. "Songs are poems that are incomplete without their music," he writes, "so I think of these poems as all wanting to get off the page and start singing and dancing. The magpies of

property which is in the TV shows and movies or computer games being shared on the sites because they are missing out on revenue.

Simon Denny famously made the exhibition *The Personal Effects of Kim Dotcom* for his solo show at the MUMOK in Vienna in 2013, replicating the items seized in the raid of the internet entrepreneur's Coatesville mansion. In *Blank video aquarium 2* he is beginning his investigation of the implications of the end of TV, building a box which is a reminder of Vito Acconci's writing on television, furniture and sculpture as "The Room with the American View" in 1984: "We know that the screen is only the façade of the box...there still has to be room for the TV tube. The TV box still has to have depth, which remains the largest dimension of the box." The idea of depth, both physical and metaphorical, is also alluded to in the aquarium background affixed to the rear of the box in this sculpture. Television stores traditionally use DVDs of highly coloured tropical fish swimming underwater, at depth, to market their wares: "Need to relax? Love fish? Then the Ultimate Video Aquarium DVD is for you. The Ambient Water video aquarium includes over 3 hours of gorgeous and vibrant fish captured in high definition for the best picture quality and clarity." Denny seems to be indicating that while the box may be deep, the content is shallow.

Simon Denny's *Secret Power* is on exhibition in the Marciana Library and Marco Polo airport as part of the Venice Biennale until 22 November 2015.

■ · Linda Tyler

Aotearoa are silly (and slightly dangerous) birds who have given rise to the most profound line in the New Zealand poetry canon: Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle . . . I like to think the poems are the kind of songs that magpies might sing if they were into making up words: a little bubbly, a little bitter, a little absurd, and echoing with the sound of laughter: songs with shaggy tales to tell.'



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BANNING BOOKS

When I was asked to write this column, I couldn't buy a copy of Ted Dawe's young adults' novel *Into the River*. I couldn't borrow it from the library. Although it wasn't illegal to own a copy, the interim restriction order placed on the book on 3 September by Don Mathieson, President of the Film and Literature Board of Review, meant it could not be "provided to anyone, or displayed or exhibited in or within view of a public place". Any sort of "supply or distribution" was illegal, so someone passing on a copy to a friend, say, could be perceived as a supplier.

The catalyst for all this was a legal challenge by Family First, objecting to the Classification Office's decision to make the book unrestricted rather than R14. Its complaint: the novel featured offensive language, underage sex, marijuana use, violence, bullying, and racism, and could be "injurious to the public good".

On 14 October, the Board met again, and by majority verdict re-classified the book as unrestricted. Auckland Public Library added my name to a waiting list of 30. Unity Books told me they were taking orders and the novel would be back in stock soon.

Ted Dawe, who says he writes "for the guys who don't like reading," had to self-publish the novel in 2012, but after it won big at the 2013 New Zealand Post Children's Book Awards, *Into The River* has sold well. Now, after the international

attention it's received as a "banned book", Dawe is talking to publishers and film companies overseas. There's a much vaster audience for the novel because people want to know what the fuss was about – or because they want to protest the attempt to ban a novel, or because it's one of the few books that's in the news, or because they think all that sex and bad language sounds appealing. (This is almost certainly why my father and his friends bought a copy of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* on board the Orsova in 1959, when that novel was banned in Australia and the UK.)

Unlike the case made for *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the anti-ban arguments for *Into the River* haven't focused on literary merit. In re-classifying the book as unrestricted, the Board noted its "moral lessons". Some readers complain of its plodding prose, and describe it as a heavy-handed morality tale. "I hope you have learned something from your experiences," the main character is told. Life, he's advised, is "just a series of choices between right and wrong".

This tell-don't-show reflex is unfortunate, and I don't buy the "realism" defence of the excess of swearing in *Into the River*. It's an easy go-to for YA writers seeking to connect with readers, and there's far too much casual use of the "c" word, for example, in New Zealand YA fiction. Yes, some teens use this word a lot. They also defecate every day, but that's rarely mentioned

in a YA novel. Girls have to deal with the mess and stress of ovulation and periods every month, but that's also rarely dealt with in an explicit or "realistic" way. Novels aren't real life; they're life-like, or dramatic approximations of the real. When rendering speech on the page – accent, idiom, intonation – less is more.

I don't believe in banning books, though sometimes, when I was teaching creative writing in the US, I would have been happy for all copies of *Fight Club* to disappear: I had to read too many bad student imitations, complete with gimmicky point-of-view violations. Once I begged someone not to buy *Eat, Pray, Love*. I've also tried to dissuade many friends from buying 50 *Shades of Grey* when they could just access pornography free on the Internet and use their precious reading time for something that doesn't insult their intelligence.

Reading, as the interim restriction order suggested, is still important, despite the challenges to literacy in our mind-dulling era of playing, chatting and browsing. It's still perceived as the key to knowledge – including dangerous knowledge. I'd rather a teenage boy read *Into the River* than play Grand Theft Auto, for example, or read no book at all.

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