

SPRING 2019

Arts Insider

Inspiring stories from Faculty of Arts staff, students and alumni



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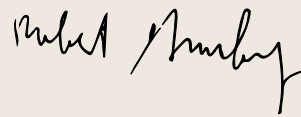
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During this campaign we have established over 40 scholarships, prizes and awards in the faculty, which will support over 400 students now and in the future.

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Thank you to every one of our donors. The impact of your support for the For All Our Futures philanthropic campaign will continue to resonate throughout the Faculty of Arts and into our community and nation.



Professor Robert Greenberg
Dean, Faculty of Arts



KIA ORA

We're proud to bring you our third edition of *Arts Insider* – a diverse collection of stories from staff, students and alumni to challenge and inspire you.

Our Arts whānau are exploring some of the big issues of our time, including digital overload and the rich archaeological heritage right on our doorstep.

We hear from students on their experiences in India, and stretching beyond their majors in the Arts Scholars programme. We also look at how the faculty is embedding Māori worldviews into teaching and learning.

We hope you will enjoy reading these stories, and welcome your feedback. Please send your comments and questions to Donna Geraghty, Communications and Marketing Manager: d.geraghty@auckland.ac.nz

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Above: A crucifixion scene performed as part of the York mystery plays.

Right: Arts Scholars student Toshi Frederiksens.

Left: Painting school in Udaipur, Rajasthan.

Cover image: Professor Simon Holdaway and Anthropology graduate Sian Canton, on Ahuahu Great Mercury Island.

Stories by Jonathan Burgess and Roanne Ward.

Embedding Māori and Pacific worldviews in the classroom

You don't have to spend much time in the company of Dr Hirini Kaa before he mentions Wai 262.

In 2017 Hirini came on board as Kaiārahi in the Faculty of Arts, to advise and assist in Māori and Pacific matters. Since then he has been joined in this work by Sharon Televave as Kaitui and Kesaia Tapueluelu as Kaitakawaenga. They have been the driving force behind recent efforts to incorporate Māori and Pacific worldviews, knowledge and ways of knowing into the faculty.

Wai 262 is a major claim brought to the Waitangi Tribunal by six iwi in 1991, encompassing everything from intellectual property rights to management of indigenous fauna. *Ko Aotearoa Tēnei – This is New Zealand*, the Waitangi Tribunal's 2011 report on the claim, recommended wide-ranging reforms to laws and policies affecting Māori culture and identity and called for the Crown-Māori relationship to move beyond grievance to a new era based on partnership.

Importantly, it was the first Tribunal report to consider what the Treaty of Waitangi relationship might become after historical grievances are settled.

"This report concerns one of the most complex and far-reaching claims ever to come before the Waitangi Tribunal," the report states. "Wai 262, as it is prosaically called, is most often referred to as the indigenous flora and fauna claim, or the Māori cultural intellectual property claim. It is both of those things, but it is also much more ... the Wai 262 claim is really a claim about mātauranga Māori – that is, the unique Māori way of viewing the world, encompassing both traditional knowledge and culture. The claimants, in other words, are seeking to preserve their culture and identity, and the relationships that culture and identity derive from."

In recent years, Arts staff have sought to centre mātauranga Māori in what they

do. Their approaches have ranged from embedding Māori values in teaching and learning environments, to employing Vision Mātauranga (a government policy to unlock the potential of Māori knowledge) in research projects, as well as normalising waiata in meetings.

Further exploration of the values that underpin this work, and the possibilities for weaving those values into the fabric of the faculty, provides an opportunity for the faculty to take a lead in creating a future that turns on – as the Waitangi Tribunal puts it – "a genuine infusion of the core motivating principles of mātauranga Māori".

One of the central thrusts of the faculty's recent approach has been the Ako Arts programme. Led by Sharon Televave, the Ako Arts team work with academic staff to ensure mātauranga Māori and Pacific knowledges are embedded and delivered in courses with integrity and authority.

"I think as a faculty we've long had a willingness to do this kind of change," says Hirini. "We just haven't really had the drivers in terms of the external push we're getting now. Ako Arts is a great example. Evidence has shown that we need to do some work in teaching and learning, quite urgently, and as a faculty we've been doing just that."

Ako Arts was first piloted in a 2018 History course, and extended to four courses in Semester One 2019. Each course coordinator was paired with a Kaiako, an embedded mentor who supported them in strengthening values including ako (reciprocal learning), whanaungatanga (cohort building), manaakitanga

(generosity and hospitality), and tauhi vā (the space in between) in their teaching and assessment.

This year the course coordinators were given some firsthand experience in Pacific culture. "We took three of the course coordinators involved in Ako Arts to Polyfest so they could have an immersive experience of the vibrancy and passion of Pacific life," says Hirini. "Because it's not only a whiteboard exercise, it's a heart exercise. It was a really positive experience for them, and something we couldn't achieve in a classroom."

One of these course coordinators was Dr Maxine Lewis, who says that she came to Aotearoa New Zealand from Australia "woefully ignorant about Māori and Pacific history and culture". Maxine teaches the CLASSICS 110 course, a study of the mythology of ancient Greece and Rome. This course is often a student's first taste of studying Classics.

She had been searching for ways to improve her teaching of Māori and Pacific students, and had a "lightbulb moment" when she heard about the possibility of running a course with the Ako Arts programme.

"On the surface Classics mainly features material from Europe and is often taught around the world in a Eurocentric way. This can subtly (often accidentally) exclude students from a non-Western background. However, the ancient material actually extended far beyond Europe, given the spread in antiquity of both Greek and Roman culture, language, and people themselves. It can have wide appeal, if taught in an inclusive way. Given all this, I had been looking for a framework to make my own teaching more inclusive.

“It made sense to me that Māori and Pacific students would respond well to a pedagogy that came from their own cultural backgrounds, and I decided that I wanted to embrace that pedagogy. I thought that getting involved with Ako would be a perfect opportunity to change my teaching practices, learn more myself, and hopefully better serve my students.”

Hirini considers Maxine’s course one of the great examples of the success of the Ako Arts programme. “The challenge was to work with Maxine on rethinking the foundation of the course, and the concept of turangawaewae. What’s the place that the course stands on and speaks from? How do we do Classics in Aotearoa New Zealand in the Pacific in 2019?”

Initially this raised more questions than answers. “Whose knowledge gets privileged?” asks Hirini. “How do we engage? How can Greek and Roman mythology be read through Māori and Pacific lenses? How can that be displayed through assessment? And how can Māori and Pacific feel that their knowledge and their communities are valued in the classroom?”

“One of the outcomes of this reframing was Pākehā and Asian students saying ‘hey, this is a really interesting way of thinking about Greeks and Romans in Aotearoa in the Pacific in 2019.’”

Some of the activities that Dr Kirsten Zemke and her Kaiako introduced to



Dr Hirini Kaa joined the Faculty of Arts as Kaiarahi in 2017 and has been working to implement Māori and Pacific worldviews in our teaching, research and day-to-day work.

ANTHRO 106 – her survey of popular music styles, artists, culture and issues – were pepeha (personal introductions) and karakia (prayer). She also invited a guest speaker to give a Pasifika perspective on a course-related topic. She had weekly meetings with the Kaitui and Kaiako throughout the semester to reflect on which Ako Arts values were being manifested in her and the tutors’ teaching that week.

“To be frank,” Kirsten says, “some of the exercises and strategies were a bit uncomfortable for myself, the tutors and some students. This put me in the position of hopefully better empathising with non-white students who are in a situation at this university of everything constantly being in a Western framework.”

“This is about the faculty making an effort to decolonise some of our approaches in order to better reflect the land we are standing on. These tweaks offer a completely different way to look at the ways we impart knowledge, and why.”

Another coordinator who took on the Ako Arts challenge was Dr Emma Willis, who coordinates DRAMA 100, a course that teaches performance and presentation skills to 225 students from right across the University.

Just like Maxine, Emma jumped at the chance to be involved with Ako Arts. “If you go to the section of the library where the public speaking books are, they’re pretty much all written by business people, pretty much all written by white people, and if you search for public speaking images it brings up mostly guys in suits – and Steve Jobs. So rather than treating public speaking as a kind of activity that’s neutral I wanted to question where we come from when we speak.”

“In revisioning the course, I thought about teaching public speaking not so much in terms of a set of specific rhetorical skills, but by helping students develop a strong and solid sense of their own values, their own identity, and their specific and unique perspectives in order to empower them as speakers.”

It was a subtle shift in a way, but I think it was effective.”

“The way I understand it there are two things going on with Ako Arts: course content and the learning environment. I updated the content of the course to approach public speaking as a set of skills defined by certain cultural expectations, and included examples of great Pasifika and Māori speakers. For the learning environment, I thought about how we present ourselves as teachers, what we share - reciprocating knowledge, teachers and students learning together.”

In ASIAN 100, the introductory course for Asian Studies students, Dr Ellen Nakamura and her Kaiako, Nick Jones, noticed a change in the tone of tutorials because of Ellen’s efforts to embed the values of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and ako. “Students feel a lot more relaxed,” Nick says. “They feel a lot more comfortable coming up to the lecturers or tutors now.

“When you first approach students in an Ako Arts course and tell them what’s going to go on, they start rolling their eyes and are a bit ho-hum about it. But you find the second or third time you do it they just get on with it, and it becomes second nature to them. It’s an exciting way for lecturers and students to re-evaluate their disciplines and approaches.”

“It’s very early days,” Nick reflects. “As Hirini often says, when you come to this university it’s very hard to see where your culture belongs. What we are doing with Ako Arts is just one element of saying ‘you belong here too’.”

“It’s a real challenge for us to do this well, to maintain the integrity of this knowledge as we go,” says Hirini.

“Cheap cultural decoration is easy but it doesn’t work and it doesn’t last. We’re trying for something a lot more ambitious than that.



Kesaia Tapueluelo, the faculty's Kaitakawaenga.

“The leadership of the faculty is genuinely on board with this, and their support is an important factor in its success. There is a partnership-type of relationship in that I can bring a Māori voice and it gets listened to.

“The other bit worth explaining is the Pasifika component. Mātauranga Māori came from the Pacific over a 5000-year journey; it is a product of the Pacific. All those ancestors down in the whareniui at Waipapa Marae are Pacific ancestors. We have a lot in common, we share a lot of values, and our engagement with the Pacific deepens mātauranga Māori rather than challenges it.

“When I started this job, Te Tiriti was part of the wording of the role. One of the challenges in 2019 is thinking about our understanding of Te Tiriti as society, as Māoridom, as everyone constantly evolves. Although the wording doesn’t change, its context changes – how we use it, what we need it for. It’s a living document.”

“Here in Auckland there are 19 mana whenua iwi. Many of them have settled now, and they are very different entities from what they were 30 years ago. Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei were broken post-Bastion Point, but 30 years later they’re the biggest landlords in Auckland. That’s a massive change that both allows us and requires us as an institution to rethink our

relationship to mana whenua and to the whenua. Now we’ve got to think about our proper engagement with iwi, with this land, with our context. Which is a very positive challenge.

“New Zealand society has moved on greatly. There’s a generation of young people coming through this university who are very different from the generation before. They come from schools where the Māori world, Māori worldview, Māori knowledge, has a place now – an important place. They come here and they look at us and they think ‘hey, where is that here?’”

Hirini has big plans for addressing that question, in our teaching, research and day-to-day work. “This isn’t the replacement of one body of knowledge with another. This is true partnership, this is the reinsertion of mātauranga Māori, that Māori worldview, alongside a global body of knowledge.”

“You see some of our top non-Māori researchers get really excited at the possibilities, the prospects, the potential of this in their work. The brilliant part for Māori here is it only works if it works in partnership. Pākehā don’t have the capacity to do it on their own. This has got its risks and it’s got its downsides, but man it’s got advantages. And that’s worth pursuing as a faculty and as an institution.”

Embracing the silent treatment in an over-connected world

Talking with Dr Ethan Plaut is like catching up with an old friend. He's relaxed, full of fascinating anecdotes, and happy to chat for longer, but there are students waiting to see him – something he pays special attention to.

“Well, you’ll notice that my office is half a place of scholarship and half a kind of grown-up playground” he says. “I have the requisite shelves of books but also an electric guitar, video games, chess sets, all manner of curiosities, and of course chocolate. I enjoy those things, of course, but really that’s here because I want my office to be a place of fun for students.”

In 2018, Ethan and his family moved from Silicon Valley to Auckland where he took up a position in the Faculty’s new major in Communication. Since being here,

he’s noticed a difference between students in the two countries.

“Courses of the size and popularity that I’m teaching would’ve had a line of students out the door during office hours in America. Students here are often not as comfortable approaching their lecturers, so I’m working to explicitly invite them. Sort of saying – bring a sandwich, bring a friend, bring your dog, just come say hi! So yeah, my office may be a little peculiar, but it’s partly for those reasons.”

When we meet, he has just finished a 10-day silent Vipassanā retreat about an

hour north of Auckland. Part of the reason for this was to practise what he teaches – going ‘offline’ in a hyper-connected world. This is something Ethan knows a lot about, having done his doctoral research on it and now teaching a postgraduate course on ‘Communication Excess and Avoidance’.

“In that particular course, we look at ways in which communication can be too much and also the ways in which people carve out silences for themselves, and not just from digital media. I put it in a deeper historical context around everything from



Dr Ethan Plaut

monks who took a vow of silence to lovers giving each other the silent treatment to people who abstain from voting and other forms of political participation.

“There are lots of ways in which we cut ourselves off for better and worse.”

“I am an over-connected person. I am someone with an exhausting email inbox. So when we come to a break between semesters I might just disappear for 10 days into the woods. It’s not the only way to do it. Some people take a weekly digital Sabbath whether they’re Jewish or not. There are lots of ways of carving out times and spaces for oneself to have quiet, such as no screens in the bedroom, but for me 10 days off the grid felt like a pretty good idea.”

Ethan is not new to meditation, but he says that this silent retreat was one of the more challenging ‘offline’ experiences he’s had.

“I’ve done shorter silent retreats of three or four days in different religious traditions – one at a Tibetan Buddhist nunnery at the edge of the Kathmandu Valley and another one on the California coast at a Christian monastery. In both cases, they were self-directed. Vipassanā is a highly structured, rigorous course and it was lovely and challenging in different ways.

“I hadn’t anticipated the amount of physical pain that would be involved. I knew that sitting on the floor for hours at a time motionless would be uncomfortable but I had gone in thinking that distraction would be incidental. Instead, it’s actually core to the work that you’re doing – to work through, transcend that suffering, and be equanimous in the face of all sensations. So that was challenging but it also was just a beautiful time in the woods. There were lovely unexpected little turns over the course of 10 days of silence that are hard to articulate.

“Halfway through, I hit a moment of desperation that is interesting for a scholar of communication technologies!

“I think many people going into a situation like this would be bothered

about being digitally disconnected. I was perfectly fine not to have Twitter or my phone, but when I wanted to write something down, the technology for which I felt truly desperate was a pen. So I had to go and sit on the floor before my teacher with an audience of people around and try to argue with him that an exception should be made and I needed to be given a pen and paper. And I was in fact denied this request quite publicly.

“So yeah, there was something that happened in the middle there that I’ll continue to think about and how it relates to my work.”

In August, Ethan spoke at the University’s Raising the Bar event on ‘The Business of Digital Surveillance and Propaganda’. Media ethics, digital journalism and propaganda are areas of research that Ethan is particularly interested in, although he acknowledges that they are constantly shifting targets.

“The ethics class I’m teaching right now has guest lecturers from the Māori Data Sovereignty Network, a recent doctoral graduate from engineering, someone from politics, and someone from philosophy. There’s a whole crew of people coming in on that course because there’s no one person who can do a really good job of teaching a course about technology and ethics – it’s just too big an idea.

“In some sense, it’s a mark of a good undergraduate course in that it’s impossible to teach well, right? I mean you want the idea for the course to be ambitious, but a course about ethics and technology in this moment feels overwhelming, and not just in its scope but because it’s just such a fast-moving target.

“With this class, I feel like I may have to just reinvent it every year as humanity invents new ways to misuse technology.”

Over the past two years, investigative journalists have exposed Cambridge Analytica’s extraction and misuse of Facebook’s personal data. While these

kinds of areas sit in Ethan’s wheelhouse, he also thinks the story is longer and more complicated than the public understands.

“That’s obviously a popular story, that the likes of Cambridge Analytica collected all this information and were able to target individuals, manipulating their quirks of psychology at a very granular level. But the evidence is ambiguous at best on whether that ‘microtargeting’ was actually effective. What we do know is that, at any given moment you are online, your presence can be monetised twice over – both as information about you is collected and as information is pushed at you by the attention economy.

“Exploring this story with students is an important thing. All this data that’s being collected on one level is very useful. But on another level it is very unsettling for a number of reasons. So trying to kind of pull that curtain back a little bit and teach them what’s going on, I think that’s important.”

Ethan sees that social media has its uses but wonders what it is replacing, which he doesn’t believe we have a good answer to yet.

“It has just become like infrastructure. So it gets to a point where any individual can refuse to use social media, but it’s a bit like boycotting the public transportation system or the water system or something like that. You can do it, but if you want to do your dishes, it’s going to be hard. And so it just becomes a kind of de facto requirement in the sense that if you’re not online, it’s just harder to move through the world.

“We really need to look at the upsides and downsides of a given technology or situation in order to give a meaningful evaluation of whether it’s helping us to make a better life for ourselves.

“We have a diverse student body, which is wonderful. I love that. We have international students as well as diverse New Zealanders in the classroom. That means that one has to really be aware of different kinds of cultural considerations all the time. People come to my ethics class with different base assumptions about what a good life might look like and how we should get there. If you look at a lot of ethics courses in general, especially technology ethics, they have tended to come from a pretty Western perspective. So I’m working

really hard in this course to decentre the Western tradition.”

Ethan developed a number of communication courses at Stanford University during his time there, one of which he has particularly fond memories of.

“I used to teach an undergraduate course about silence, which included a number of guest lecturers. I used to – and I feel like this is one of my greatest coups as a teacher – have a guest lecture from a mime. In the beginning it’s just someone miming, and the students were of course a little freaked out about it, but they always came around by the end, they were all moving around, throwing imaginary balls, learning about gestural communication. That was a really, really fun one.

“Actually my silence course was a public speaking class, because I’m the guy who thinks that’s funny. I’m like, I’m going to get the mime as a guest speaker for my public speaking course!”

On the topic of silence, we venture back to his 10-day silent Vipassanā experience. I ask Ethan what he feels he learned from it.

“I came away thinking that I could be more kind and there are some specific people to whom I maybe could be more kind that I thought about more than others.

I thought a lot about the women in my life. I thought about my students and just different ways of trying to always receive people as they are. Just being patient and accepting of them in all their complexities, of which I could never be aware.”

Dr Ethan Plaut is a lecturer in Media and Communication at the University of Auckland specialising in computational media, disconnection and communication avoidance, digital journalism and propaganda, and media ethics. He previously held postdoctoral fellowships in both Computer Science and Rhetoric at Stanford University and is also a former journalist, which included spending three years at an independent newspaper in Cambodia.

BOOK GIVEAWAY

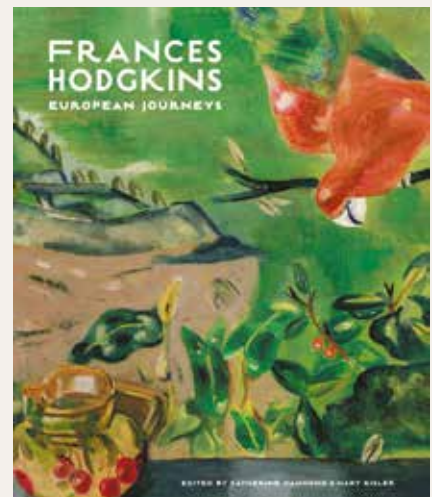
We are giving away three copies of *Frances Hodgkins: European Journeys* edited by Catherine Hammond and Mary Kisler.

This is a vivid and revealing book published alongside a landmark exhibition focused on one of New Zealand’s most internationally recognised artists.

New Zealand-born Frances Hodgkins (1869–1947) arrived in London in 1901 and, by the 1920s, had become a leading British modernist, exhibiting frequently with avant-garde artists such as Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore. Published to coincide with a touring exhibition of her work initiated by Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, this book explores Hodgkins as a traveller across cultures and landscapes – teaching and discovering the cubists in Paris, absorbing the landscape and light of Ibiza and Morocco, and exhibiting with the progressive Seven & Five Society in London.

Complete with a rich visual chronology of the artist’s encounters abroad, alongside over 100 of Hodgkins’ key paintings and drawings, the book is an illuminating journey that moves us from place to place through the writings of a number of distinguished national and international art historians, curators and critics.

Catherine Hammond is the research library manager at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki and managing editor of *Reading Room: A Journal of Art and Culture*. Mary Kisler is the senior curator of the Mackelvie Collection, International Art at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, responsible for a collection ranging from the thirteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries.



To be in the draw to win, fill in the online entry form at www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/giveaway by noon on Friday 13 December.

The ‘present past’: discovering archaeology on Ahuahu Great Mercury Island

Oral histories hold that the white cliffs of Ahuahu Great Mercury Island, 7km off the east coast of the Coromandel Peninsula, reflected the sunlight and acted as a beacon that drew the first waka to Aotearoa New Zealand. These same cliffs now draw young people to an island that either makes or breaks their desire for a career in archaeology.

The University of Auckland has been running an archaeological investigation on Ahuahu in partnership with the Auckland War Memorial Museum and in conjunction with the Fay and Richwhite families and Ngāti Hei since 2011. The island has a rich and diverse archaeological landscape, and its gardens are among some of the earliest known of in New Zealand.

More than 100 students have visited the island as part of field schools. Many of them have gone on to get archaeological jobs in important institutions around the country and the city, so by that measure co-director Dr Rebecca Phillipps considers it a very successful field school.

The project has run eight field schools since 2012, hosting 12 to 18 students each time. The logistics of running a field school on an island are daunting: archaeology is an equipment-heavy discipline, and feeding that many hungry students for a fortnight is a challenge in itself.

Field schools have been part of archaeology training at the University for a long time. “There was always this idea of trying to create a big project that multiple archaeologists could be involved in, and that would train up the next generation of archaeologists in New Zealand,” says Rebecca.

In 2008 Sir Michael Fay, one of the owners of the island, contacted Dr Louise Furey – Curator of Archaeology at the Auckland War Memorial Museum and another co-director of the project – to assess the damage to archaeological material after a storm on the island. Louise had been involved in archaeology on the island since the 1980s, and completed one of the original archaeological surveys

there. In 2011 Dr Alex Jorgensen, a primary researcher on the project, met with Sir Michael, and facilitated the development of the project and its field schools.

“We went out in 2011 just to have a look around the island and consider its potential,” says Rebecca. “And obviously it had this really fantastic archaeological landscape. But, importantly, it also had this infrastructure support that would allow us to run a field school out there.”

The island is a working farm, and its shearers’ quarters – featuring indoor accommodation, a kitchen, a fireplace and hot water – make it the perfect location to run a field school. “Having done one field school in a full camping set up, through two cyclones, I can’t stress how important this is,” laughs Rebecca.

Dr Joshua Emmitt looks after data management for the project in a position that has been philanthropically supported by Michael Fay and David Richwhite since 2013.

“During the field school you definitely get a mix of students who are just trying archaeology and find that it’s not their cup of tea, and the ones that really enjoy it. We get those ones coming back year after year.

“It’s a lot of fun to see them grow over the two weeks. You see them come in completely nervous – for some of them it’s their first time away from home. Then over the two weeks

they really get into it. Those students that keep coming back develop their skills and can help teach the next year’s field school. It’s really nice seeing those students grow as individuals and as scholars.”

Rebecca says that there is often an instant camaraderie in field work. “Maybe it takes a couple of days for it to develop, but you really do develop firm friends and often they’re life-long friends. I am still friends with people that I worked in the field with many, many years ago.

“When students come back in subsequent years it’s almost like a homecoming. You can tell they identify with the place and it’s been a make or break moment for them. They will tell stories to the new students about ‘last year we did this, or the year before we did this, you guys don’t know what it was like, we had it so hard, it was raining, it was scorching hot’. So I think there is this sense of fondness – and probably rose tinted lenses.”

Two of the returning students at this year’s field school were the inaugural recipients of a new scholarship for archaeology students funded by Sir Roderick and Lady Gillian Deane, the Natalie Blair Memorial Summer Scholarship in Archaeology. Carissa Madden and Stacey Middleton both received a tax-free stipend of \$6,000 to complete a ten-week archaeological research project, including the field school on the island.

Carissa is currently completing her Master of Arts. She has a background in 3D design, and spent her summer

using data from the island to recreate its archaeological features in 3D visualisations. “We were able to recreate layer by layer the sediment that we dug up and also the things that we found there,” she explains. “This is important because by its nature archaeology is destructive – you can’t put things back in the ground.”

Carissa’s first trip to the island was for the 2017 field school. “There’s sort of this running joke that you don’t really realise how intensive it is until you get there,” she says. “So it’s a make or break moment for whether you really want to do archaeology, and if you do that field school and manage to stay pumped through the whole thing, then that’s what you want to do.”

She managed to stay pumped, and returned to the island with a small team in the winter of 2018 and again as a student adviser for the 2019 field school. She remembers finding a “huge hand-sized” chunk of obsidian on her first field school. “Being able to scrape it away and

reveal more and more and more of it, I was like ‘I’m actually on an archaeological excavation, I found something that’s hundreds of years old!’ That hyped me up.”

Being in charge of the artefacts at the most recent field school revealed to Carissa just how much work goes into it.

“When you’re a student you’re focused on the day-to-day. You get up in the morning, go and do the excavation, come back and have a shower and then just do your own stuff.

“This year I had to be on the ball seeing what was coming in and making sure stuff was getting written down properly.” After the day’s excavation (and a brief swim) Carissa would head to the artefact tent for

the evening to make sure that all the day’s finds were catalogued properly, and that all the data was entered correctly. “People can be working from 7.30am to 11pm at night. We’re all really into it, we love what we’re doing, but you understand better just how much is involved in making sure that it’s done right. Archaeology is a finite resource and context is everything. We might have a nice shiny stone but it’s just a nice shiny stone if we don’t know where it’s come from and the associations around it, so context is key and doing it right is key.”

Stacey Middleton has just finished her Bachelor of Arts (Honours), and is planning to continue into a Master of Arts next year. She says that she threw herself in the deep end with the field school in the third year of her Bachelor of Arts, and loved it. “I think that just cemented my choice that archaeology was the way to go.

“On the island I learned a bit of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), which is basically taking these points in



L-R Abby Donaldson, Sian Canton, Simon Holdaway, Doug Gaylard, Rose Young.

space to be able to see the position of each object and also where the site is as well. And I was also digging, supervising – standard archaeology stuff.

“Not to romanticise field work too much, but there’s a moment where you’re digging, it’s raining but you don’t really notice, and you’re just having fun, just getting into it, you’re a little bit dirty but it’s still fun.”

These results are just what Sir Roderick and Lady Gillian Deane hoped to achieve with the Natalie Blair Memorial Summer Scholarship in Archaeology. Lady Gillian says that they wanted to “provide an opportunity to outstanding students to work on a defined project under excellent mentors. Students are often wondering what subjects they should choose for further study, and this sort of experience helps them to choose future pathways. Mentoring, specific goals and working in a focused group are all useful skills for their future.”

Lady Gillian has family connections to Ahuahu and read about the project in the *New Zealand Herald*. “I received such a positive response when I wrote asking questions, and it has been a joy to understand the nature of their research and the meticulous recording of their finds. Their enthusiasm, intelligence and meticulous research is infectious.

“The scholarship is named after my late cousin Natalie Blair, who researched our whakapapa and discovered our great grandmother Elizabeth Hill lived on Ahuahu. Natalie was a diligent historian, keeping the family up to date with her discoveries. I spent many hours in Archives New Zealand and the Alexander Turnbull Library with Natalie researching our family origins and Ahuahu. We thought the association with passionate scholars studying the treasures at Ahuahu was a fitting tribute to her life’s work.”

Top right: Lady Gillian Deane (R) with her cousin Natalie Blair.

Right: Students at work on Ahuahu.



“I think there’s this myth that there is no archaeology in New Zealand because we don’t have a long history, or it’s not perceived as being a long history in comparison to Egypt or Europe. And that’s just not true at all.”

Dr Rebecca Phillipps estimates that 80,000 artefacts have been collected and recorded by the project. As well as being physically stored and analysed in the archaeology laboratory, this material has been digitally recorded and studied. Keeping these data under control is one of the major challenges of the project, and Dr Joshua Emmitt looks after this data on an ongoing basis.

“We call it ‘archaeology big data’, which is big but it’s not CERN,” Josh jokes.

“This year I co-taught the field school with Dr Alex Jorgensen, but historically I’ve run the survey, which means the recording of where the artefacts and deposits are – the data management. Rebecca was initially doing this but quickly got too busy teaching the field school to keep doing it, and I took it over. I’ve trained up a few people to help me with it, because the job – as we’ve

collected different types of data and managed it differently – has become more complicated than it once was. So we’ve now got three people working on that every night.”

Josh first worked with co-director Professor Simon Holdaway on a Marsden-funded project in the Fayum in Egypt. Because of his survey and data management experience there, Josh was brought in to help with that side of things for the first field school on Ahuahu, and never left.

During the 2015 field school the project dug through a sand dune to an eroding midden and uncovered a hangi feature that included moa and seal bones, likely to be over 600 years old. They have also found kumara pits, hearths, gardening features such as stone rows and terraces, and remains of houses. Some of these remains date back to the fifteenth century – soon after Māori arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand – going right up to the nineteenth century.

“We take this view that every artefact is equal. They each have different potential and tell you about different processes. Personally, because I do the survey, I don’t find things. The excavators find adzes and things whereas I just record them all.”

This focus on data management is one of the most salient features of the project for Rebecca. “I think to have a handle on the material in the way that we do is pretty cool,” she says. “It’s quite different

to how projects have been run in the past, and what it means is that we've got this huge assemblage for students to work on for years to come. So even if we were to stop doing fieldwork on the island, we would have ten years of analysis just based on what we have in the lab. That's an exciting prospect, and it's definitely been very good in that sense – having such a long, full project and generating so much information."

Visualisations such as the ones that Carissa worked on for her summer scholarship mean that archaeologists can study Ahuahu from anywhere in the world, and it makes conveying information a lot easier. Digitisation is currently a big discussion in archaeological circles, and the project has been grappling with how to go about organising data, and how to categorise data in a way that is both intuitive and also repeatable. "Archaeology right now is all about digitisation," explains Carissa. "You have the data aspect and you have the 3D aspect, which also allows us to connect with the community at large through things like VR headsets."

Josh has been busy making 3D models of artefacts and sites from his work publicly available on Sketchfab, including two sites from Ahuahu. You can view these at sketchfab.com/ArtsAucklandUni.

"I think there's this myth that there is no archaeology in New Zealand because we don't have a long history, or it's not perceived as being a long history in say comparison to Egypt or Europe," says Rebecca. "And that's just not true at all. We're surrounded by our history, whether it's Pākehā or Māori. That's something that I think about all of the time. In one of my courses I use the term the 'present past' because the past does exist in the present, and is very much alive – and made alive by people in the present. I think that's a really important thing to keep in mind because it makes us who we are."

Carissa Madden agrees, saying that "the thing with archaeology in New Zealand is that nobody really knows about it. When you think of archaeology, you think of European stuff, mainly, then

maybe you think about Mesoamerican stuff. But there's so much here and there's so much that needs to be done, that we're wanting more archaeology students. To effectively protect something – especially archaeology – you have to have an interest in it, people have to care. And that really starts with what we do as professionals and being able to have professionals out there and doing this work."

For Stacey Middleton, "archaeology is a really interesting and challenging subject, it really forces you to change your perspective on the world, and who we are as people."

"We can't do it without the generosity of our supporters," says Rebecca. "That

includes the Fay and Richwhite families, Sir Roderick and Lady Gillian Deane, and the fantastic people from Ngāti Hei and other associated iwi who have been so enthusiastic about our work out there. We've really enjoyed working with them, and hope to keep working with them in the future."

For Josh, the most important thing is being able to continue to offer students the ability to get involved. "We try and keep giving the students opportunities to further their study on the island if they'd like, and we've always had research projects that may benefit them, but it's really just giving them the means to stay involved. The more opportunities we can give students the better – just to keep them working out there, so we can keep digging and finding out more."



Mystery plays still speak today

After several centuries lying dormant, the fourteenth-century York mystery plays enjoyed a revival in the mid-twentieth century that continues into the present.

Eleanor Bloomfield is tracing the reception of these latter-day revivals for her PhD in English. Her thesis questions why and how these plays have survived, the reasons people still come to watch them, their relationship with the modern-day city of York, and what the plays have to offer modern audiences.

The York mystery plays are a cycle of 47 plays or pageants covering sacred history from the Creation to the Last Judgment. They were traditionally presented on the feast day of Corpus Christi and were performed in the city of York from the mid-fourteenth century.

Eleanor explains that during the Reformation the plays were “tinkered with and toned down” and then suppressed. They were then “practically lost for three to four hundred years” before being experimented with again in the nineteenth century and eventually revived at the 1951 York Festival with their first public performance since 1569.

This restaging led to an international revival of interest in the plays, with performances in Ghana in 1962 and New Zealand in 1965, and the first post-medieval performance of the entire cycle in 1977 in

Toronto. They have been performed semi-regularly in York since the late 1990s.

Eleanor travelled to York in 2016 to experience the plays first-hand in the Minster, one of the great pilgrimage cathedrals of the Middle Ages. She returned in 2018 and was lucky enough to play a part in presenting the Waggon Plays as a front of house manager.

Her 2018 visit to York was part of a seven-month research trip across the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States. In Toronto she met Alexandra Johnson, who was responsible for the 1977 production.

GETTING TO KNOW SOPHIA POWERS

Originally from Amherst, Massachusetts, Dr Sophia Powers joined the Faculty of Arts this year as the inaugural recipient of the Marti Friedlander Lectureship in Photographic Practices and History.

Was New Zealand always on your radar, or was it this job opportunity that brought it to your attention?

New Zealand was not a place on my radar at all, but when I saw the job ad I looked up Marti Friedlander and started coming back to the fantasy of moving to New Zealand again and again. There was a bit of added romance because *The Piano* was one of my favourite movies when I was 12 or 13.

What have you been teaching this year?

I have been teaching a new course that explores the history of photography as it evolved across the globe, with an emphasis on the unique geographical diversity of photographic practice. As part of the

assessment for this course, students get to submit an original photography project.

What has surprised you about living and working in Auckland?

The number of flowers all year round in Auckland is astounding, and the sculptural beauty of the trees have brought me tremendous delight.

What do you enjoy most about your research and teaching here?

My experience in the Faculty of Arts has been absolutely fantastic on account of my colleagues and students – people really make the place, and I couldn’t have felt more welcomed here.



Dr Sophia Powers

As well as observing the plays and talking with people involved, a major focus of the trip was archival work. Eleanor found interesting and thought-provoking material in archives from London to Lancaster — ranging from fan letters from people who had seen the plays through to transcripts of interviews with people who had worked on them.

Eleanor received the Hauser-Raspe Scholarship, which fully funded her doctoral research. This one-off scholarship was funded by alumna Pamela Raspe and her husband Hermann Hauser as part of the University's For All Our Futures campaign. She says "I remain extremely grateful for the support of the Hauser-Raspe scholarship, without which my doctoral study would not have been possible.

"Apart from developing my academic career, the scholarship has indirectly contributed to my own personal growth; many opportunities have arisen during my PhD studies which otherwise simply would not have come my way."

Eleanor first encountered her doctoral supervisor Professor Tom Bishop in undergraduate English courses. She began her masters research under his supervision, using the mystery plays to explore the links between piety and its public exhibition in medieval York.

The mystery plays captured Eleanor's imagination because they are "rich, unusual and vivid", and it was a natural progression to move from looking at their medieval performance and reception to the present day.

"I really like the language, and the way they sound. They're really alive. Although they're hundreds of years old, they still speak today."

She is full of praise for working with Tom as a supervisor. "Tom is very good at picking out all the holes, putting his finger



on exactly what is wrong, and helping me out to fix it. He's very easy to work with; he gives me a lot of freedom, but knows exactly when to rein me in. He's good at pushing me and challenging me to go beyond what I think I'm capable of, and my thesis is much richer as a result."

The respect is mutual, with Tom describing Eleanor as "one of the most talented and hard-working PhD students I have come across in 30 years of supervision. She has continued to impress me with her commitment to her work, her originality in pursuing new avenues of research and her fluent and elegant writing."

Theatre and drama are an important part of being human, and Eleanor passionately argues that medieval drama is just as important as Shakespeare.

"The plays have a lot to offer. It's easy for people to think that they're scary and use 'funny language', but they're really not — they're a lot of fun."

Eleanor has been working in front of house for the Pop-up Globe during her doctoral studies, and is interested in working in dramaturgy or behind-the-scenes research and development in the theatre after she submits her thesis. She is also on the lookout for a post-doctoral position in the United Kingdom.

Her doctoral experiences have set her up well for this future, and she is "incredibly grateful for the experience, for the extraordinary kindness and generosity I have met with wherever I went, and for the connections and friendships formed."

Above: Eleanor visits Shakespeare's Globe in London.

An agile approach to learning

After finishing her MA in Anthropology overseas, Arts alumna Samantha (Sam) Lagos came home to Auckland and found herself teaching Arts students the value of humour.

Sam originally wanted to be a high school teacher, so when a position came up in the Faculty of Arts to lead a cohort of highly-motivated, passionate students through a three year, multi-disciplinary programme, she seized the opportunity.

Launched in 2018, the Arts Scholars programme is co-designed and led by students. Each year has a different theme – last year was food, this year laughter and in 2020 the students will look at conflict. In their final year, students complete a research project where they get to delve deep into their interests. As well as being both intellectually and emotionally challenging, the ambition is to create a supportive and social community.

As a recent alumna, Sam has a real sense of what students are looking for.

“At the start I think it was intimidating for some of the students because they were kids coming from schools where they were at the top of their game. Then they come into this space and they’re with kids who are similar, and what we saw was a lot of them feeling intimidated all of a sudden. Because of our agile approach, we were able to adapt the course by developing an online discussion forum. If they didn’t want to talk in class they had the ability to write something – so we’re really trying to cater to everyone and their different learning styles.”

As students learn, feedback is gathered every six weeks to see what’s hitting the mark and what isn’t. This dynamic approach to teaching and learning is one that is having positive impacts for the students, for Sam, and for the lecturers involved.



Top right: Arts Scholars programme coordinator Sam Lagos.

Right: Arts Scholars students at their Auckland Art Gallery session.

“Something that became clear in one of the early feedback sessions from students was that they really enjoyed learning just for learning’s sake.”

“Because there are no exams involved in the programme, a lot of anxiety is removed and there isn’t the pressure in class to take notes or memorise certain things. They are able to let ideas really marinate in the lectures and play around with the concepts they’re hearing. It’s really cool to see them relax in that space.

“We also introduced a blog, so now students write assessed blog posts that reflect on what they’ve heard in class. It’s a great practice of personal reflection, critical engagement and public communication. They’re taking these complex, specialist academic ideas and translating them into their own words.”

Within the theme of laughter, students were tasked with creating and delivering an original joke, which raised anxiety levels for a lot of them.

“They were freaking out,” says Sam. “You know, you’re standing in front of 50 people, who are pretty new to you, so that alone can be quite intimidating. We got some hilarious maths jokes, one girl made a joke about how anxious she was, one of our music students wrote a song about social anxiety, recorded it and played it back instead of playing it live, one girl live-streamed her breakup on Instagram and used that as her performance piece – they were all so creative and thoughtful.”

While this may seem light-hearted and fun on the surface, these kinds of assessments have significant impact.

Sam explains “that particular exercise was to get them engaged in the creative process and learn that not everything lands the first time. It’s about trial and error, learning how to fail and learning resilience. Maybe no one really laughs at your joke? That’s useful to take on board, and think about what’s happening and how you experienced the whole process.”

Going on field trips is another important part of the programme. One of these trips was to Auckland Art Gallery where the students had a talk with Pacific artist Siliga David Setoga. Siliga uses humour in his art to provoke questions of identity, politics, religion and the social issues that Pacific people face. A small group of students curated and led the entire session, which included a workshop to create a brand using an uncomplementary list of food ingredients. Having created their signature food concept, students then pitched the idea to the rest of the group, who voted on which was the most innovative and creative.

For Java Grant, one of the students involved in the Auckland Art Gallery visit and pitch idea, Arts Scholars has been immensely rewarding.

Java says “having our own space has really helped me make friendships in the University. I don’t know where I would have met so many diverse and open people otherwise. It’s really great to be surrounded by people who like to think about complicated issues and discuss important topics – even outside of the curriculum.

“This year our study of food has revealed how multi-dimensional even the simplest topics are. The course has revealed to me that nothing exists without context and this helps me tremendously in other subjects.”

Toshiko Frederiksens, who is studying Art History and Anthropology, was drawn to the programme because it sounded a bit different to her other courses. She saw it as an opportunity to explore ideas that connected across the whole range of Arts disciplines.

“I saw some flyers at the University’s Open Day asking questions like: ‘What is the role of humour in politics?’ It was questions like these that got me interested. The way in which we are slowly building towards a large research project in our third year is really exciting and it’s nice to be taking it at a relaxed pace.

“I’ve also found the support system in Arts Scholars to be one of the most valuable things I have taken from my time at University so far.

Being part of a programme that pushes me and gives me the freedom to create a project that I am passionate about, and to structure it in a way that resonates with me, has made me feel so driven.”

Along with field trips, the students also have talks with different academics and guest speakers on wide-ranging subjects.

Dr Ethan Plaut (featured on page 7) gave a session about his research on data, communication, accessibility and the rights to data privacy. Sam says that Ethan’s talk “created a discussion on Indigenous Data Sovereignty. How are data collected? Does the data belong to someone else even though it’s derived from communities? How does that play out in terms of distribution or accessibility of data? How do communities protect and store data? These are all potential issues in research to develop in second semester.”

Sam says that the academic talks are “trying to bring what might seem like high-level academic research into something that’s more personal and accessible. After the presentation, we say to the students ‘what research questions can you pick out of that? This is one person’s work but what other things can you pull?’”

Not shying away from challenging topics, next year’s theme ‘conflict’ will ask questions like: Can we quantify peace across modern nations? What happens when Hollywood goes to war? How do we support the health and well-being of current and former service personnel? At the end of that year the first intake of Arts Scholars students will graduate. Sam is excited to take these driven young people through to the finish line and on to an inspiring future.

Shame, hope and gratitude in India

The Prime Minister's Scholarship for Asia took Arts student Elise Dalrymple-Keast into Mumbai and out of her comfort zone. This is both her story and the stories of the extraordinary women she came to know.



INDIA BOUND

“Everything happened really quickly. I had an interview with the Academic Internship Council in Mumbai and talked about how I was passionate about using digital platforms and creativity to tell stories and convey messages. The next thing you know I was leaving in a month.

“They told me about an NGO I could work with called Aastha Parivaar, who work to educate and empower sex workers and people with HIV. They do everything from education on HIV prevention, free condom distribution, health camps and check-ups, alternative livelihood courses, financial literacy and more. Their mission is to help people become independent enough so they can maintain their affairs by themselves.

“The reality is that in India Mumbai is seen as the place to go if you want to earn money, so a lot of women come from their rural villages to work and send money back to their family. Many of these women are illiterate, and when you have no education or training sex work is one way you can earn decent money. Usually these women don't want to become sex workers, but not all of them want to leave it either.

“Once I got there, I knew I wanted to get more case studies for their website, talk to women and hopefully take some photos. In my second week, I headed to one of Aastha Parivaar's community-based organisations that works with brothel-based sex workers.

“It was down a dark alleyway and the office itself was about 3m long and 2m wide. I'm 167cm and I could only just stand up in there. The office was at the bottom of a seven-storey apartment building and every floor above that, in rooms the same size, were 12 built-in cabins, where the sex workers operated seven days a week, from 6pm to about 5am.

REALITY HITS

“The community-based organisation had been going through a lot at that time. There was a woman who had been at the brothel since she was about 20 and when she was 38 she was diagnosed as HIV positive but went into denial.

“The organisation have peer-navigators who are sex workers or former sex workers, are respected in the community and help take women to hospital appointments. They would go to the brothel to take her to the hospital, but the problem is the appointments are only from 9am to noon, which is usually when sex workers sleep. The sex workers also don't like peer-navigators going into their rooms because people, including the brothel owners, might catch on that they have HIV.

“This particular woman had a son who she'd been sending money home to, but she'd never seen a penny of her earnings. The peer-navigators tried to help her with her finances, so she could start keeping her own money, and help her to leave sex work, but she still cut all contact with them. She ended up getting so sick that she couldn't walk anymore. When the brothel owner found out, he sent her back to her village. Less than a week later, her son dropped her back at a street near the brothel and she had to crawl back to the brothel door.

“None of the girls wanted to share a room with her because they believed that they would catch HIV, and the brothel owner wouldn't let her in.”

“So Aastha Parivaar stepped in along with the community-based organisation and took her to a treatment facility.

“The organisation then took her to hospital, used their own funds and crowdfunded from other sex workers to pay for her hospital fees, food and clothing. A week before I arrived in India she died. They really had done everything they could and it had taken 90,000 rupees of the organisation's money to provide that kind of care.

“Another sex worker told me she really wanted to change profession but only if she could find one that paid her the same amount. She could be a maid but she needed some help to look for a new job.

“When Aastha Parivaar place women into maid jobs it's risky. They can't tell their employers they used to be sex workers because they could get manipulated and

taken advantage of. Also, if they stop doing sex work they have to move out of the brothel and Mumbai rent is so expensive – it's dollar-for-dollar the same as Auckland.

“They don't want to move away because it's what they know. Their support systems are there and it's quite tricky to go from earning well to a lesser paying maid job.

“I also visited a community-based organisation that looks after bar-based sex workers. They have higher paying clientele so they often have a lot better quality of life. Because of that, they tend to want to stay in their jobs. However, a lot of them have false misconceptions. They think that because they're seeing higher paying clients there isn't any risk of getting HIV. So often these women are diagnosed HIV positive but are confused as to how it's happened and they go into denial.

FROM SHAME TO CONFIDENCE

“The organisation has really cool resources. Because a lot of the women are illiterate or speak other languages, they have picture-based education showing the different choices that can lead to getting HIV, how to avoid it, how to live a healthy life and more.

“The innovative ways they're teaching these women so that they can understand – making education fun and not condemning and judgmental – is amazing.

“One bar-based sex worker I spoke to said she used to be so ashamed that she couldn't look people in the eye. Through word-of-mouth, she heard about Aastha Parivaar and became a peer-navigator, then a peer-educator, and now she's a community-based outreach worker and gets paid. She's been able to leave sex work and it's changed her life. She's so confident, can look people in the eye and can speak to anyone.

“Another woman I met left her home in Assam in the north east of India when she was about 16. She needed to find work and some women told her they would find her a nice job in Mumbai. She travelled all the way there and they introduced her to bar-based sex work. She didn't want to do it, but couldn't speak Hindi or Marathi, had no money, and no idea how to get back home. After a while, she became HIV

positive and had to stop work. She met her husband, who also has HIV, and they've been married for the past nine years.

"She now works at Aastha Parivaar and also had another government job. Her husband's family didn't know they both had HIV, and had been pressuring them to have children, but they couldn't tell their family anything because of the stigma, and it was getting really hard. About four months before I was there, the doctor told them that they had both been on treatment long enough that they couldn't transmit HIV. When I met her she was three months pregnant! She goes home to Assam around once a year, so it'll be even more special once the baby has arrived.

"There are a lot of strong, inspirational women out there who are getting educated and using their education. Knowing how hard they've had to fight to get there – it's just incredible.

OPPORTUNITY AND GRATITUDE

"It makes me so appreciative of the opportunities I've had. It's made me even more driven because even waking up here in New Zealand is an opportunity. The opportunity of having a room to myself, a place that's safe, turning on the tap and

having clean water, knowing that if I get sick, I can go to the doctor. I always knew that I was very blessed but this trip really drove it home.

"The last day I was walking around by myself and I slowed down to really take it all in. The women in the slum area where I walked every day, were waving at me from their houses and calling out 'hello didi' which means 'hello sister'. It's a really nice greeting and I was so emotional and really wasn't ready to leave. I knew it was going to take retrospective thinking to take it all in.

"Despite the privilege gap, it didn't seem that people were feeling sorry for themselves. People were just so happy with the simplest things and their family systems, support networks, and their cultural beliefs. It's just about having a few simple things and being happy with them.

"We went into Dharavi, Asia's largest slum, and one of the most population-dense places on earth. It has about one million people living in 1.6 square kilometres. Seeing some of the conditions were horrendous but they have communities and people just going about their day, working, kids playing, and they're not saying, 'oh we live in Asia's largest slum, poor us'; they're proud

of their community. They've got better relationships with their neighbours and community than I have. I realised people didn't want my sympathy, and when I realised that I really used the time as best I could to make a difference.

"Six weeks isn't a lot of time to achieve anything drastic. But I figured if I could grow some awareness on social media, on their website, help grow some understanding of what HIV is, of what sex work is, and share the work that Aastha Parivaar does, then I feel like I've done something good.

"The Prime Minister's Scholarship for Asia is such an amazing opportunity. We were just so privileged with the support we had over there and got to do amazing cultural trips as well. It was a fantastic opportunity to do something I never would have done on my own, and to get pushed beyond my comfort zone. I really needed it and I'd thoroughly recommend it!"

Elise is studying for a double major in Communication and Politics and International Relations. She went to Mumbai on a Prime Minister's Scholarship for Asia. You can read more about Aastha Parivaar and the incredible work they do at: <http://aasthaparivaar.org/>



Elise (second from left) at the first community-based organisation she visited with Aastha Parivaar. This tiny basement was where they conducted all the outreach for their community.



Image-based resources to help educate sex workers.

Lost and found in translation

An interview with Associate Professor Minako O'Hagan.

How did you become a translation researcher in New Zealand?

I grew up in Fukuoka, Japan. As an undergraduate literature student, I developed an interest in Katherine Mansfield, so I came to New Zealand for a year in preparation for writing my graduation thesis on her. After finishing my degree in Japan, I came back to New Zealand where I married a Kiwi and acquired an Irish surname, which subsequently came in handy.

In the early eighties, as New Zealand's export drive to Japan was intensifying, I got my first job as a Japanese translator in the Translation Service at the Department of Internal Affairs. It was a time when there were no word processors, no computers, no internet, and certainly no smartphones. On my first day at work, I was presented with a solid green metal device, which turned out to be a manual Japanese typewriter. Operating this machine required identifying the relevant character on a metal plate containing over two thousand characters and pressing a lever to commit it to paper with a heavy thud. This had to be repeated for each character in the document. I made the loudest noise in the office and was the slowest, especially as any error meant a complete re-do of the whole sheet of typing.

So it became my mission to look for technology that would reduce the need for such effort. That's what got me interested in researching the emerging technologies in both word processing and Machine Translation (MT). Internal Affairs supported me to attend the first MT Summit, held in Hakone in 1987, where I learnt more about the technologisation of translation. This led me to pursue postgraduate studies at Victoria University of Wellington. When I finished my PhD, I landed a position at Dublin City University (DCU) in Ireland

where I worked for 14 years, 'commuting' back and forth between Wellington and Dublin until I took up my current position at the University of Auckland in 2016.

Tell us about the recent research you've been working on.

For the past two years, I've been involved in an international research project, the International Network in Crisis Translation (INTERACT). The project, which is coordinated at DCU, seeks to contribute to the body of research on crisis translation, including developing research-informed training for translators in times of crisis. When INTERACT looked at international policies covering crisis situations, there were few that provided for the right to translated information; there was a big gap in terms of how to convey critical messages accurately and in a timely manner in different languages during a crisis.

Several events in New Zealand's recent history, namely the Canterbury and Kaikoura earthquakes and the Christchurch mosque shooting, have reinforced the relevance of crisis translation to our local context.

I am involved in a particular area within INTERACT to develop training for 'citizen translators' who represent Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. It is not always practical to involve professional translators in crisis scenarios across all CALD communities. Taking a community engagement approach and involving citizen translators also

recognises the particular importance of trust in crisis scenarios.

During 2017, INTERACT was able to help train citizen translators on a community translation project launched by the Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO) in partnership with the New Zealand Red Cross. The project involved WREMO's newly published *Earthquake Preparedness Guide* being translated into Wellington's 15 main community languages by community volunteers acting as translators. Since then, INTERACT has delivered training sessions in Auckland, Wellington and Palmerston North.

How do you train people to translate crisis-related documents?

Our introductory lesson involves setting up citizen translation teams consisting of three clearly defined roles: translator, reviewer and community liaison. The team is asked to first identify 'rich points' in the text – these are words, expressions or concepts that may be challenging to translate into their specific language, including New Zealand-specific terms. Accuracy is important in all kinds of translation, but in the context of crisis communication, mistranslation can be life threatening. For example, water might become drinkable only after boiling it or a particular type of tablet might be required to purify it. A mistranslation of the chemical contained in the tablet could have serious adverse impacts.

Translators also need to understand the importance of consistency in translation. Particular terms need to be translated the same way every time to avoid confusion. For consistency and for future re-use of translation resources, the creation of a glossary in consultation with other community

members is recommended as an early step. Specialised software tools used by professional translators to manage terminology and translation may be out of reach, but citizen translators may find value in using equivalent technologies that are freely available as open source software. These applications can help recycle previous translations, speeding up the process while maintaining quality.

There are a number of thorny issues in citizen translator training, including differing levels of linguistic competency or even literacy and hierarchies within the community (which can lead to a lack of consensus on certain translations). In addition to these complexities, a crisis can entail having to work under pressure with limited access to resources, such as computers or the internet. Our approach is unique in that we are aiming to develop sustainable citizen translator training which respects, rather than sabotages, the professional translation eco-system. Citizen translation is an early step on the continuum of translator skill development. To support this approach, we invited the President of the New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters (NZSTI) and a senior translation professional to monitor our training sessions and provide feedback.

There is obviously a huge need for citizen translators. How else is New Zealand addressing this?

Following the Christchurch earthquake, there have been several positive developments relating to crisis communication. The Community Language Information Network Group (CLING) was formed in Christchurch to ensure critical messages are delivered to communities of non-English speakers and has published Best Practice Guidelines for working with CALD communities.

Another welcome effect has been the increased visibility of sign language interpreting, raising awareness of information access for the Deaf community especially in times of emergency. At the University of Auckland we introduced a



new Postgraduate Certificate in Translation with a specialisation in Community Translation partly to address the need in this area. Our goal is that CALD community members who wish to work as citizen translators might also be interested in receiving specialised and formal training. This is well aligned with the ongoing government initiative Language Assistance Services, led by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), to maintain a consistent level of quality in public service interpreting and translation by making sure that suitably qualified practitioners are engaged.

As part of our effort to raise awareness of the important role played by translators and interpreters, we're starting a new undergraduate course called Translation for Global Citizens, which any student can take with or without knowledge of another language. The course will introduce students to what translators and interpreters do and what skills are needed so that they can become informed users of translation and interpreting and maybe start their own journey into career paths or research in the field.

Starting with an understanding of the key role played by translation in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and New Zealand's rich bi-cultural origin, we cover a broad range of work modes, including the use of technology. Given the country's multicultural reality today, the more capacity we have as a 'translation-aware' nation that goes beyond Google Translate, either under crisis or in everyday communication, the better prepared we will be in times of crisis.

Minako O'Hagan is an Associate Professor in the School of Cultures, Languages and Linguistics. Her technology-related research interests include fan translation, game localization, translation crowdsourcing and accessibility captioning in Augmented Reality (AR). Her current work also includes ethical and legal issues in non-professional translation in digital environments. *INTERACT* is an EU-funded research project managed and coordinated by Dublin City University, in collaboration with University College London, the University of Auckland and Arizona State University.



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Jeanette Crossley was a PhD alumna of the University of Auckland who cared deeply about human happiness.

Jeanette's gift was to support research into understanding the causes and solutions for loneliness and social isolation, particularly for those of us living with complex medical conditions.

Through the gift from Jeanette Crossley's will, the Faculty of Arts Centre of Methods and Policy Application in the Social Sciences (COMPASS) research team are better able to understand loneliness and to design interventions which will improve individual lives and the lives of our communities.

The Director of COMPASS, Dr Barry Milne, said "The bequest from Jeanette had a very positive impact as it has helped us to research loneliness across the life-course. We are very grateful to her for enabling us to advance this important work."

Incorporating a charitable gift in a will is a simple process and, regardless of the value, will make a real difference to students, teaching and research in the Faculty of Arts.

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