



a fine line

January 2007

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NEW ZEALAND POETRY
SOCIETY *Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa*

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The New Zealand Poetry
Society Inc.
PO Box 5283
Lambton Quay
Wellington 6145

Patrons

Dame Fiona Kidman
Vincent O'Sullivan

President

James Norcliffe

Email

info@poetrysociety.org.nz
www.poetrysociety.org.nz

FEBRUARY MEETING

James Norcliffe

preceded by a brief Special General Meeting,
and a members-only mic.

Thursday 15th February

7.30 pm

Turnbull House, Bowen St, Wellington

Beyond Words: Poetry and Dance

Anne Tucker

Dance is regularly described as "poetry in motion", and this isn't the only parallel drawn between the two art forms. John Dryden said "Dancing is the poetry of the foot" and more excitingly, or perhaps alarmingly, the poet Adrian Mitchell in his introduction to Paul McCartney's *Blackbird Singing: Poems and Lyrics* describes poetry as "the art of dancing naked".

But why do these two art forms get compared to each other when one is the art of solely using words while the other is usually that of not using words. One is still; the other is movement. They seem to be opposites on some scale of the cerebral and the visceral. As Karlien van den Beukel, writing about the dance critic and poet Edwin Denby, says:

... the poem is not a dance. You can read it here, now (or later). You can put it in your pocket. You can show the entire thing to others. You can read it again.

There is a historical connection between poetry and dance via song, and perhaps a more ancient one in religious ritual – but that doesn't seem to be what people are thinking of when they make the comparison.

The most obvious point of connection is rhythm. In the Oxford Dictionary, dance is defined as moving rhythmically and a poem is defined as a metrical composition. Edwin Denby in *Dance Writings* (p. 491) draws a close comparison when he describes dance movement in the following terms:

Again to borrow an image from poetry – which is not unlike dancing, after all – certain words will sound different depending on their use. They sound one way on the written page when you first encounter them, then sound another way when used in a sentence. You can change their weight completely by putting words together with other words.

When Alexander Pope gracefully connects both writing and dance in *An Essay on Criticism*, you physically feel the rhythm of the words and where they stress as if you were indeed part of a dance:

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.

Both forms deal with feeling or imaginative description, whether by words or movement. In particular, to the lay onlooker both forms seem to exemplify freedom of expression of the individual's inner life. Both art forms are used in moments of heightened emotion for the non-practitioner. Even non-dancers might "dance for joy" and people who don't usually write or read poetry will do so in moments of heightened emotion or at least regard it as suitable for such occasions as weddings and funerals.

Some of this perceived freedom of expression may be because in the Western tradition the Romantic Movement left its mark on both ballet and poetry with the Byronic view of the poet and the white tutu ethereality of the ballerina. But that they are purely an expression of innermost human emotion is a myth.

The best practitioners of both experience angst about technique in what are highly demanding and disciplined art forms. Auden is quoted by Paul Fussell in *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form* (p.3) as saying:

all my life . . . I have been more interested in poetic technique than anything else . . .

and

[e]very poet has his dream reader: mine keeps a look out for curious prosodic fauna like bacchics and choriambes.

The rigours of dance training in many cultures are well known, and every balletomane is a technique spotter too.

Yet, both poetry and dance use as their building blocks the quotidian: words and movement respectively. Each of these is taken and turned into an abstraction, a symbol, an emotion, a pattern. A word isn't just a word in a poem, as a movement isn't just a movement in a dance. Even if choreographer Merce Cunningham, interviewed in the *Guardian*, says:

I don't think of dance as being abstract, I think of dance as being movement. Any kind of movement.

Suzanne K Langer in *What is Dance?* (p.33) makes a distinction between how words and movement differ in their nature when she says:

An expressive word is one that formulates an idea clearly and aptly, but a highly expressive gesture is usually taken to be one that reveals feeling or emotion.

But words used in poetry may fill quite a different purpose to that of formulating an idea clearly and aptly.

Kenneth Quinn in *How Literature Works* (p. 154) says:

... there are two things verse can still do, and do them exceedingly well: one is to express feeling too heavily charged to be expressed effectively in prose; the other is to express thought too complex to be dealt with effectively by the more analytic techniques of prose.

Quinn goes on:

By 'too complex' I mean that which seems beyond words: either because, as we say, 'words fail us'; or because saying what we mean clearly, in, as we say, 'as many words', means too many words . . .

So, although poetry is an art form that solely uses words, it doesn't use them in the way they are used in the everyday. It is an art form that tries to express

something beyond words. And this of course is exactly what dance does as well.

Anne Tucker is a Wellington writer and editor.

From the National Coordinator

Laurice Gilbert

Greetings, and Happy New Year. As you can see, the magazine is back to the old format. Our Special General Meeting in early December did not attract a quorum, and we were unable to change the Constitution in a way that would have allowed the purchase of new software. Thank you, all those who emailed their support, and especially those who came to the meeting. The consequences of not changing the Society rules go beyond foregoing the convenience of software that produces a magazine in half the time. Without the required changes in the Constitution, we will be unable to retain tax-exempt status when the law changes later this year. We have to register with the Charities Commission in order to remain tax-free, and under our existing rules we can't. The committee has therefore decided to hold another (brief) SGM at the beginning of the February meeting. You will find the required formal notice of the meeting later in this issue of *a fine line*.

One glaring anomaly that arose in the course of this exercise was that the many who made the effort to offer proxy votes were disenfranchised. Their votes didn't count because of insufficient people at the meeting. This seems absurd to me, and we will try and change that when we get a chance to review the Constitution more thoroughly – another of those tasks that the committee has had on the back-burner for ages.

It's been a busy couple of months, poetry-wise, and any thoughts I might have had about slowing down towards Christmas became a fond memory. With fellow committee member Gillian Cameron I enjoyed a taste of Polish poetry at the home of the Ambassador for Poland early in November, followed a week later by a meeting with Seattle poet Elizabeth Austin, holidaying in NZ with her husband, Eric. She took the opportunity to make some contacts while she was here, and was interviewed by Lynn Freeman for *The Arts on Sunday* – there may be an audio archive on:

www.radionz.co.nz/nr/programmes/artsonSunday,

Lynne suggested the interview would be on early in January, and at the time of publication, the interview has not yet gone to air.

As well as writing poetry, Elizabeth has a weekly spot on a Seattle radio station, reporting on poetry events in the area. There are so many she can't get to all of them!

The next (and most important) item on the agenda was, of course, the launch of the 2006 anthology, *tiny gaps*. I won't reprint my report on this, as it is available on the news page of the website. However, I will say it was not launched without significant drama. Owing to some major technical difficulties, the books were printed at the last possible minute, and delivered to the launch venue an hour before the event was due to begin. Regrettably, the hiccup resulted in the omission of fifteen author names from the Table of Contents, Haiku section. We apologise profusely for this unfortunate state of affairs, while accepting that an apology is no real compensation for not seeing your name in the list of contributors.

After the launch I had the major job of filling the anthology orders, requiring many visits to the Post Shop. I am grateful to **Anne Faulkner** for her help. There are still copies available, and the order form is accessible from the news page of the website.

At the beginning of December I attended Howltearua and was treated to an attenuated reprise of Craig Ireson's *Karaoke Poetry* (Best of Fringe, 2005).

Finally, I attended the launch of *All Patients Report Here*, a collection of poems by Rachel Bush, written during her CNZ-funded NZPS Poets-in-the-Workplace residency at Wellington Hospital. Published by Wai-te-ata Press, this beautiful book is enhanced by Alan Knowles's photography. Alan has illustrated the covers of several of our past anthologies.

Letters to the Editor

Man or Mouse?

I was delighted to read Anne Tucker's discussion of Robert Burns' *To a Mouse* (November, Talk Poem). However I feel I must take issue with some of her comments. Burns does not imply foresight to the mouse, as the last verse clearly shows; nor is it simply a case of his projecting his own feelings on to the mouse. Rather, the power of the poem lies in the poet's bringing himself – and by implication all humans – down to the level of the mouse, a 'fellow mortal'. Note how this phrase jolts us out of our common understanding/misunderstanding of the words/world. This seems to me to be a quite radical notion for 1785 Britain, the beginning of the industrial age, where 'man' was very much seen as the measure of all things, and 'creation' at 'his' service. Instead Burns adroitly turns this view of 'man's dominion' upside down. And how's this for power, the poem continues to challenge us today – as we humans feed on species of fish at the brink of collapse and harvest rainforests to extinction, yet still believe that it is our right to live at the expense of all other living things.

Gillian Cameron (Wellington)

Website Resources - the Expanding Universe

Gillian Cameron

I am developing online resources relating to contact and submission information for: (1) NZ book publishers of poetry; (2) NZ literary journals publishing poetry; (3) NZ and Australian E-zines publishing poetry; (4) other general print magazines/newspapers that consistently include a poem, eg The Press 'The Poetry Column', Dominion Post on Thursday and The NZ Listener; (5) broadcast media, eg Radio NZ's Kim Hill Show and Arts on Sunday; (6) Literary Agents; (7) Manuscript Assessors.

As you can see, the emphasis is on poetry rather than a global list of publications/media contacts etc. We are planning to have this information viewable on the Members section of the website by February.

I think (cross fingers) I have (1), (2), and (3) pretty well covered, but would appreciate more information on (4) and (5) in particular. If you know of other magazines or local newspapers that consistently include poetry, please send me details by email at: g.cameron@xtra.co.nz or by snail mail to: NZPS, PO Box 5283, Wellington. Ditto for names and contact info of arts editors with local newspapers which regularly run items on literature, including poetry reviews, events and interviews.

This is part of a grand plan to provide added value to our members. I hope you will find the resources useful, and I'd really welcome any feedback.

Gillian Cameron is a Wellington poet, long-standing committee member and past president of the NZPS

A Warm Welcome to:

Rosemary Adler, Waiheke Island
Lesley Ayres, Palmerston North
Diane Brown, Dunedin
Nick Dye, Wellington
Judith Gunn, Palmerston North
John Irvine, Coromandel
Maureen Irvine, Coromandel
Anthony Judd, Christchurch
Claire Knight, UK
Amanda Ledger, Nelson
Katherine McVey, Gisborne
Deidre Morgan, Hastings
Anne Perera, Palmerston North
Nancy Rudkin, Christchurch
Matt Rutherford, Invercargill
Sue Vaassen, Waiheke Island
Alan Wells, Wellington

Noticeboard

For a complete rundown of regional events, and to find the poetry meeting in your town, please go to our website: www.poetrysociety.org.nz. You can e-mail updates, amendments & additions to Laurice Gilbert at: info@poetrysociety.org.nz

PURCHASE DETAILS

Jenny Clay's book, *Take a Leap*, was reviewed in the November issue of *a fine line*. The collection is available directly from Jenny Clay, 890 West Coast Rd, Waiatarua, Auckland, for \$12.00. Posted within NZ the p&p is \$2 for 1 - 3 copies. You can also read two of Jenny's poems in the October issue (# 41) of Southern Ocean Review.

MORE THAN LOOKING - Waikato

More Than Looking, by Glen Heenan, is New Zealand's first exhibition created for a blind and sight-impaired audience. Poetry is embossed in Braille to accompany the images. Waikato Museum (1 Grantham St, Hamilton) features the touring exhibition from October 14 - February 11, 10am - 4.30pm daily. This exhibition offers visually-impaired people the chance to enjoy both art and poetry in a museum setting. It also offers the public an opportunity to understand how Braille is created. Free admission.

WAIHI SUMMER FESTIVAL

The 36th Waihi Summer Festival runs at the Waihi Memorial Hall, Seddon St, Waihi, and other venues, from 11/1/07 to 15/1/07 and includes poetry readings. \$4 entry (children free).

HAMILTON GARDENS SUMMER FESTIVAL

Friday 23rd February, 6pm: *Lifted by Lines* - poetry from Bill Manhire and Kate Camp in the English Flower Garden (or in the Pavilion if it rains).

Publications

Lyric Road Helen Jacobs (Steele Roberts)

"This is the fifth collection of poetry for Helen Jacobs, the pen-name of **Elaine Jacobsson**: one-time teacher, environmentalist, local body politician, member of the Planning Tribunal, inveterate committee member, gardener, volunteer in almost everything and now, in retirement, a 'merely adequate but devoted' croquet player."

blackmail press 17 (e-zine)

Contains new work from NZPS member (and past committee member) **Harvey Molloy**. See: www.blackmailpress.com/Index17

Bravado 8 is out now and showcases all the prizewinning poems from the 3rd Bravado International Poetry Competition 2006, judged by Tony Beyer. Several NZPS members are listed amongst the winners. The cover artist for November is Leonard Lambert, a well-known poet and artist from the Bay of Plenty, interviewed for *Bravado 8* by prose editor Christine Cloughley. Available from Bravado PO Box 13 533 Grey Street Tauranga, or subscribe at bravado.info@xtra.co.nz See: www.bravado.co.nz

Workshops

VICTORIA CONTINUING EDUCATION SUMMER WRITING SCHOOL

- Poetry, with James Brown. **Date:** Saturday 20 - Tuesday 23 January (NB. Monday 22 January is Wellington Anniversary Day) **Time:** 9am - 5pm. For further information or to enrol, visit the [website](#). There is a direct link to the VUW website from the NZPS website.

Scholarships

THE KINGI MCKINNON SCHOLARSHIP

FOR EMERGING WRITERS has been established in honour of Kingi McKinnon, a widely respected author and tutor on the Waiariki Creative Writing programme, who passed away suddenly in September 2006. This scholarship is open to unpublished writers who wish to develop their creative writing skills with a view to achieving publication, and will pay the fees of the Waiariki Certificate in Creative Writing for one year. The Certificate course begins 26th February 2007 and ends 9th December 2007. Contact Janet Huff, email: Janet.Huff@waiariki.ac.nz Waiariki Institute of Technology, or call 0800 Waiariki

THE CREATIVE NEW ZEALAND MICHAEL KING WRITERS' FELLOWSHIP

is the largest writing fellowship in New Zealand and supports writers wishing to work on a major project over two or more years. It is open to established writers who have published a significant body of work. **Applications close** on Friday 23 March 2007.

Residencies

VISITING WRITER - Poetry, Fiction or Creative Non Fiction (Travel/Life Writing): Massey University, in conjunction with the Palmerston North City Council and Creative Arts Council, invites applications to join the School of English & Media Studies as Visiting Writer for the 12 week period 23 April to 13 July 2007. The successful candidate will set aside much of this time to

develop his or her own work, will assist in creative writing courses, and give at least one public reading. For an application pack, please contact: Carol Seelye at; c.a.seelye@massey.ac.nz School of English & Media Studies, Massey University, Palmerston North. Telephone: (06) 356 9099 Ext 2730 Applications close Friday, 26 January 2007

THE BERLIN WRITERS' RESIDENCY

from Creative New Zealand, is available to a writer to work on an approved project between August 2007 and July 2008. It covers the rental cost of an apartment situated in the heart of Berlin, a monthly stipend of \$3000 and a travel allowance. Applications close on Friday 9 February 2007. See: www.creativenz.govt.nz

THE INTERNATIONAL WRITING PROGRAM, UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

has a three-month residency available to a New Zealand writer between August and November 2007. The residency includes travel costs and accommodation in Iowa House on the university campus. Creative New Zealand supports the residency with a \$10,000 grant through the Arts Board. Applications close on Friday 23 February 2007. See: www.creativenz.govt.nz

Competitions

SIX PACK '07: THE SEARCH FOR NEW ZEALAND'S NEXT LITERARY STARS

New Zealand Book Month is on the hunt for literary talent – all writers are asked to submit their best piece of new writing to the Six Pack Competition 2007. As with last year, the categories are: adult fiction, adult non-fiction and poetry. The length of the pieces must be between 5,000 and 10,000 words (or 10-15 poems), and the competition is open to all New Zealanders. The deadline for submissions is 07 March 2007.

All entries should be sent to: The Six Pack Competition 2007, NZ Book Month, PO Box 52 016, Kingsland Auckland 1352. To download entry forms and criteria visit www.nzbookmonth.co.nz

Quotation of the Month

Genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood.

T. S. Eliot

Congratulations

- to **Julie Ryan**, Auckland, who won first prize in the poetry section of the NZSA Auckland Branch literary competition for *A la Tante*
- to **Helen Lowe**, Christchurch, who received honourable merit in the short story section of the same competition, for *The Spit*
- to **J. Dell Panny**, Ashurst, who received a writers' award from Copyright Licensing Ltd to write a biography of C.K.Stead.
- to **Nola Borrell**, Lower Hutt, for achieving third place in the U3A (NSW) short story competition, for *Elizabeth*.
- several members of the society have been highly successful in the recent Takahe Poetry Competition, but as the official results have not yet been made public, I can't tell you who they are! Well done, you folk, and I'll make sure you get a mention in the next issue.

Regional Reports

WHANGAREI

Poetry readings are beginning to have a place in Whangarei. From an audience of five when I came here ten years ago we now average about fifty. This year the District Library took responsibility for Montana Poetry Day, but unfortunately the date followed close on the heels of the opening of the new library, which meant that the staff was too busy to give the occasion much thought. However, at their invitation, Joyce Mowbray/ Irving and Rosalie Carey presented a programme of 'Classic Favourites' to a full house at 3pm, and from 5 – 6pm a slightly smaller audience enjoyed a session of snacks and open mike, convened by the Friends of the Library.

As a project for the year of the Veteran, Rosalie Carey's book of verse written while she was serving with the RNZAF during World War II was republished by the Year of the Veteran Community Projects Fund. On October 18 a launch was held in the new library, featuring wartime refreshments such as home-made ginger beer, lemonade, home brew, plain cracker biscuits with cheddar cheese, salmon and shrimp paste and spam!

A U3A poetry reading group, the Deaf Poets, convened by Tony Clemow, is gaining momentum. Poetry Prose Tea and Talk, hosted by Rosalie Carey, will change to the first Sunday of the month, in the New Year, to avoid the clashing of dates with other writers' groups.

Contributed by Rosalie Carey

WINDRIFT, WELLINGTON

The October 06 meeting was dominated by our loss of Jeanette Stace, whose funeral in Karori was attended by many of the group. The meeting could obviously no longer be held at her Cecil Road home in Wadestown, but was at another member's house, almost within distant sight of it until a curtain of rain came down for the remainder of the afternoon.

We lingered over her obituary in the *Dominion Post*. The obituary talked of her being the hub of many circles, and she certainly was of ours. We missed her usual contribution in haiku, her comments and her hospitality. Our haiku tended to reflect this:

last rites
no sign of the twinkle
in her eye
Ernest Berry

poetry reading
"can you hear me at the back?"
silence
Karen Peterson Butterworth

And, remarkably, an almost identical contribution from two members:

crematorium
'Emergency Exit' sign
points behind coffin
Neil Whitehead / Bevan Greenslade

Another haiku, of many considered:

pigeons in mall
just keeping inches
away from feet
Veronica Kelly-Reynolds

And then -

off 2 war
she checks my underwear
4 whiteness
Ernest Berry

Is the form becoming so condensed it is now using texting elements?! It is hard to believe even superb texting will be the style.

Contributed by Neil Whitehead & Bevan Greenslade.

Members are invited to submit reports on local events as they occur. Post to: NZPS, PO Box 5283, Wellington 6145, or e-mail to: info@poetrysociety.org.nz

Reviews

Self-titled, Tony Chad, HeadworX, 2006. 64pp, \$24.95.
Bernard Gadd

This is **Tony Chad's** third poetry collection and billed as the best of his work for the past eight years. It's a very readable collection. Chad has an eye for the everyday and an ear for ordinary speech. He's a singer and song writer, using in a variety of ways language, form and topics of contemporary pop or country songs, advertising, and conversation, including their repetitions. He can take a cliché like "toeing the line" and by the end of the poem

... the line
circles
me
binds me
tighter
&
tighter (the line)

Some of the poems are particularly effective because of their low-key language and approach, like 'Absence' in which

Every day
I talk to people
about you

this is your world
although you've
never been here

Chad is a well known haiku poet and he includes a couple of pages of strong haiku that are sometimes wry: in the phone box / my girlfriend calls / her lover.

One poem that particularly struck me was 'The Journey'

I plan to do things
the Heritage trail
the bush walks
the tourist bit ...
I watch the ocean.

I felt that the last section went on rather too long. But this is another well produced HeadworX book worth looking into.

Bernard Gadd is an Auckland poet, playwright and fiction writer.

The Unbelievable Lightness of Eggs, by Tony Beyer, Bernard Gadd, Frankie McMillan, John O'Connor, Joanna Preston, Barbara Strang. Published by Hallard Press. ISBN 0-86477-054-5, RRP \$18.95.
Heidi North

This collection of light verse and poems from six Christchurch authors is a strong engaging collection, ranging from the nonsensical to the tender, while under the froth and satire are comments on the things that matter.

The publisher notes that this 'is not striving for belly laughs', but rather a wry smile, and of course strong writing. There has to be craft involved, and these poets are well aware of this, playing with language, at times rhythmical and rhyming, at times more pared back and modern, but never taking itself too seriously. As Barbara Strang says, and I think it is true of all the authors in this collection, "I aimed at writing poems that were like clouds, defying gravity."

It is a nice touch to have brief autobiographical notes before each section, helping us to get to know the author before we dive into their work. From the vast amount of experience and accolades between them, these are clearly established poets.

Tony Beyer's poems pick up details, exploring the bizarreness of our everyday world. 'View from mountain road' will bring a smile to fellow poets' faces.

Poets are all right if unemployed or dead...
But not too close among us
Where they might want us to read the stuff.

My favourite of the second poet, **Bernard Gadd**, is a series entitled 'Verse to the life', little tongue-in-cheek ditties satirizing some well known New Zealand poets:

'Guess who?'
I'm Kiwiland's literary Tsar
You're in if I choose that you are.

Frankie McMillan brings her talent as a short story writer to her image-based poems. Less rollicking than some of the others, they move towards the dreamlike, the fantastical. They are at times moving, with a quiet humour. In 'My dad had many wives':

A dad is a stranger who blows up balloons
at your birthday.

Joanna Preston also verges on the surreal. Her poems really stand out as strong and fresh. With a sharp wit, juxtaposing images startle and delight, these poems see the world as slightly skewed and great fun.

One minute a man
on an empty beach
then pow,
pillar of salt! I mean
what did I do? (Pow!)

John O'Connor's main subject is satirizing New Zealand poetry, using a character - Simon Slim - who writes poems on 'serious subjects.' O'Connor also pushes his poetry into the realm of total absurdity:

...you take this as a utensil or that as a
utensil, whereas in reality neither may be a utensil but the
yellow
teeth of a horse no one wants anymore. (Utensils)

Barbara Strang writes lively, rhythmic poems, the words flying off the page; they have a real sense of spirit about them.

It's the rumble-de-roar
of a monstrous digger!
It's the dumpily-thump
of a ditch-filler-inner! (The Shake-up)

This is a wonderful collection to dip into, each poet offering a little taster to their other works. Though not something I would usually pick up, I enjoyed it.
Light, lively, summer reading.

Heidi North is a Wellington actor and writer.

A whistling woman, a crowing hen, Pat Bellaney, Earl of Seacliffe Art Workshop, 2006, 56pp, no price; *The word went round*, David Howard, Otago University Press, 2006, 64pp, no price;
Bernard Gadd

The strength of the poems in *A whistling woman, a crowing hen* is their brevity, which will enable readers to enjoy them even when their ideas, feelings and language are commonplace and a line's cadence or flow can stumble. Many of the poems have a religious tinge. Topics range from Irish bees to family to seasons and aging. Every now and then all the elements of the poem come together very well, as in

the desire for
reincarnation may
be spiritual bigamy ..

coveting, perhaps,
one wife too many ? (Fun poem for Brian M.)

The word went round centres on poems to do with New Zealand history, family and friends. The title comes from

the major sequence of poems which Howard terms “a pair of dramatic monologues” of a Catholic tenant farming migrating on the ‘Asia’ in 1874. A portfolio of striking paintings by Gary Currin literally centres this collection. These sequences are impressive works. The first section’s poems zigzag down each page as if crackling with energy. The reading sometimes requires close attention as the man’s thoughts shift from Ireland to the vessel to New Zealand. The images are often blunt, uncompromising, entirely apt:

As I spot paradise
ducks above matagouri
my workboots point forward
like a bullock-dray.

The Part 2 poems again are shaped, but this time look more like conventional stanzas, each poem forming a modernistic sonnet. Again there’s nothing of the pastoral idyll or of romanticising in these poems:

Stockholm tar saves the snagged lamb
but bluebottle flies blow anything
almost: socks and shoes, blankets
the halo of St Mary in the hall

Here too the narrator’s mind follows many thoughts, finds a variety of quotes and allusions. Each sonnet ends with a quote from George Chapman’s “Odyssey”, an interesting idea, though how germane all the quotes are may be debated. These two sequences make an important contribution to the body of kiwi poetry that looks with clear sight at our past and its people.

Interesting and strong is the small monologue of ‘Te Kooti’. ‘Reiko Kunimatsu’s Play house’ is a slighter set of poems, but is a warm tribute to a young woman who died aged 24, and this is perhaps a quote from her or apt for her

‘Oh this habit of always
existing in places where I don’t
live or in a time which is past or is

yet to come”

The collection ends with a sequence in tribute to Reginald William Howard 1928-2005, ‘The Held Air’, again not as impressive as the first sequences, but as with the Reiko poems, consists of well made, strong poems. I particularly liked

Your carpenter’s tape extended
the length of my childhood. Read, then
retracted it wore out the pocket of your jacket

Much of the other poetry is in the manner of the “Wellington Academy”, using aspects of modernist, postmodernist and even language poetry: quirky punctuation, truncated or distorted grammar and sentence flow, allusions, quotes, statements that appear to aim at some sort of philosophic or gnomic portentousness (“The utter of the / unoccupied ... try for / ultraviolet: the utter of”), a fondness for shapes and for oddball or would-be striking metaphor (“crazy gates/ weathered like a poeticism”), providing sometimes a sense of playfulness ... except that the devices are so apparent. Nonetheless, this book as a whole is another collection of well wrought and mature poetry from David Howard, another which libraries should have. A final page or two of notes are provided for the reader.

Bernard Gadd is still an Auckland poet, playwright and fiction write, and a regular contributor.

After the dance, Michelle Amas, published by Victoria University Press, ISBN 0 86476 5421, RRP \$24.95.
Heidi North

After the dance is an exquisite first collection of poems by **Michelle Amas**. 26 interwoven poems spun of images and myth, tenderly and wittily dealing with modern life.

There is an inherent elegance to Amas’s use of language, a feeling of incantation.

Everywhere bells
sing, lips unwrap
first kisses
ting.
ting.
ting.

Her style is pared down, slim lines, a modern use of punctuation. While some of the poems take more of a prose poem form, they are still carefully placed. These are almost tactile poems; the images are like reading Braille in the dark. Amas is a dark edged modernist, but the poems are tinged with dreams and transformation. In the poem ‘After the dance’

In a box
of milk teeth
she places
a feather.’

Amas honestly explores the knotty landscape between mother and daughter.

In ‘steeple chase’:

Get off my back
daughter
this is not dancing

While these poems are at times deeply personal, they never feel invasive. They are honest and quirky. All daughters and mothers will identify with 'Blame'

It is my fault
her toenails
her thighs
the hideous
hair on her arms.

Loss haunts this collection: loss of childhood, the speaker's own and her daughter's, failed relationships, death. In 'tidy your room':

She throws out fourteen days of Christmas... On my knees the way/ I delivered her/ I scavenge through/ baby breath/the childhood/she hands me back.

As Amas explores the results of this loss and the shifting perspective that it brings, everything falls away, to be rediscovered. There is a sense of revelation, something magical with a power to save. In 'Snapshot'

These are the rules. There is no summer and summer
And summer
...these days are borrowed and must be returned

Amas also keeps an excellent balance with dry humour. In 'Disclosure':

Before we live together I should tell you I have been looking for omens. A boy came off his skateboard. He yelled fuck life to no one in particular, then he looked at me.

A running thread throughout the collection is 'The Caversham project', a series of poems mixing Amas's childhood memories in Caversham, and Edna and Charlie's lives. They are wonderfully drawn portraits of both people and a place, warmly underscored with questions of gender and the lives of women in rural New Zealand. In 'Sites of gender':

While Charlie sleeps, Edna reads historical romances in the bath.

The staggering of this series throughout the book results in our coming to them like an old-fashioned serial, allowing Edna and Charlie to become old friends, and giving shape to the whole collection.

As an actor and director, Amas brings her talent for drawing characters and mood into her poetry. The strength of this collection is in the images; every poem is spot on, yet apparently effortless. It is no surprise to me that after completing her MA in creative writing at Victoria University in 2005, Amas won the Adam prize for best folio.

These poems linger long after the book is closed. It is a highly polished first collection, and I recommend it fully.

Heidi contributes regularly to a fine line.

Big Man Catching A Small Wave: Haiku, John Knight, Post Pressed (Queensland), 2006, ISBN: 1 876682 95 7 No price.

John O'Connor

Big Man Catching A Small Wave is a selection of John Knight's haiku and senryu. It has an appreciative 'Foreword' by Jan Bostok (the first Australian to gain international haiku recognition), the haiku themselves being chosen and arranged by Jeffrey Harpeng (the third Australian to achieve similar status, in his case by winning the haiku section of the NZPS International Poetry Competition in 1993).

Knight himself was the first Australian to win the NZPS International Poetry Competition, Haiku Section, in 1991, with:

mackerel sky and
now the wild geese are calling
into the sunset

The competition judge was US haiku pioneer and then editor of *Frogpond*, Elizabeth Searle Lamb.

Since that time Knight has continued to operate both outside haiku – in impressive free verse and by extensive publication of other writers' books – and within it, as haijin and as a founding editor of *Paper Wasp: An Australian Journal of Haiku*.

As one would expect given this background, *Big Man* easily passes the negative test of technical competence. After that, appreciation begins.

Perhaps my favourite is the exceptional comic/serious

head first
in the garbage bin
sacred ibis

but so many others compete with it.

How, for instance, does one choose between the various qualities of

mud crab / on my plate ... / praying very hard ...

always just about to / slip into the pool – / her inflatable crocodile

cancer / making love and coffee / stronger

forties jazz / bubbling up / with my lager

look at her ... dying / to get out in the fresh air / for another
smoke

dusk, a surfboard / comes in to the beach / alone

putting my stick / in the bush pool / mud swirls up

without employing largely subjective criteria?

That breadth is one of the marks of a truly fine book of haiku/senryu. I say this because haiku deals with the commonplace world. The more aspects of that a text connects with, the more complete, interactive and interesting the picture. (Also the assumption behind Japanese linked verse.)

Another mark of a fine book of haiku is a cumulative sense of spirituality. Naturally, this is impossible to demonstrate in a review, but it is, I think, present and it gives us more than the sum of the spiritual parts without diminishing any of them individually. The last poem, 'December 2, 2005' feels absolutely right in context. It's an imagistic/Zen-like piece dedicated to Van Tuong Nguyen, the young Australian recently hanged in Singapore for drug trafficking:

dawn ...

hearing the first doves call
mist thick on the water

circling above the rotting wharf
a sea-eagle
turns downstream

three blue cranes fly over the river
two return ... the nest in the gantry
is empty

on my seventieth birthday
this beginning ...

which wisely avoids getting too close to its theme
(human savagery) and thus gives itself the (realised)
possibility of transcending it.

Big Man is essential reading. It takes a simple
(haiku) interest in the world – is therefore much more
than simply interesting to read.

John O'Connor is a Christchurch poet

At the city train platform of Oslo airport, travelers can enter a sound-cone "which gently intones poetry as you wait for the train. Two minutes of Norwegian and then two of English."

Source: The Architectural Review. September 2006.

empty garden, Beverley George. Yellow Moon, Sydney, Australia, 2006. ISBN 0 9578831 6 1. Price: AU\$17.50. US\$13. Obtainable from the author, PO Box 37, Pearl Beach 2256, NSW, Australia.

Patricia Prime

Beverley George is multi-faceted – as the editor of *Yellow Moon*, a children's short-story writer, a poet, teacher of creative writing and a tireless promoter of the work of other poets. She is well known both at home and overseas in her role as a tanka poet and for the recently inaugurated *Eucalypt*, Australia's first literary magazine devoted to tanka: www.eucalypt.info

empty garden is George's first collection of tanka. Difficult, always, approaching a new volume of verse. If the slim volume before you contains work from a poet whose voice, whose work you have already encountered, the path seems at once easier and also more complex. You know where you are – where you are likely to be – but will the new and unread pages satisfy?

George's voice is, to my ear, distinctively feminine: the female perspective is very strong. In each tanka, the poet's language and mastery of form sweep you along, convince – on their own terms – and there is a true eclectic delight to be had from each individual tanka. This collection is crammed full – the tanka elegantly displayed one or two to a page. Design and layout are by George's son Matthew, his elegant black and white drawings illustrating some of the pages.

Several tanka may seem to be disarmingly simple, but a twist at the end of the poem often reflects the bathos of life, of lived experience, as we see in the following poem:

chilly night –
you buy sweet and sour for two
still wearing
your blue cardigan
that outlasted me

In this poem we have an ordinary situation: someone buying a simple meal for two, but the everyday garment "that outlasted me" conveys the impression that the relationship isn't as comfortable as it once was.

There are triumphs too, clearly observed, sharp and small – after he mends / the five bar gate / the old man / rides it once / across the puddle. George is hungry for experience and is unafraid to show us the pain of everyday life, as in the tanka: rose arbour - / sipping perfumed tea / we avoid the barbs / that drew blood / when we parted. She serenades us with the delightfully erotic poem: day in the garden / two under the same shower / we slide into bed / nothing between us / but the outstretched cat.

This is a poet who offers considerable honesty and a deal of expertise in her handling of the short lyrical poem. Her subject matter – human relationships, romantic love and loss are traditional themes, but she brings renewed vigour with her vivid, exacting eye. Her lyrical gifts are considerable and the tanka linger in the mind like fragile scraps of music.

For me, the most successful of her tanka epitomise the inherent beauty of the form, a playful, inventive approach to language, to individual words, to the shape of the poem, as in:

roadside grass –
two blackbirds rise
then settle
and I am surprised
by longing

The collection ends with several of George's tanka sequences: 'Mask', 'City Park', 'The Fisherman's Wife', 'The Business of Living' and the title poem 'Empty Garden'.

It is obvious that this is a writer of impressive agility and insight. You will delight in the measured, lyrical intensity of image and line that somehow also offers direct narrative experience, as in the two verses that comprise "Mask":

mourning your son
you say his name over
as if the words
might forge a life-line
from earth to the stars

shreds of paperbark –
you learn to wear a mask
sometimes
you peel it back to show
the raw face of endless grief

There isn't a single weak line in the book. Every page, every poem offers marvels of observation. The last tanka sequence, 'Empty Garden', searches for the final truth – words grow clumsy / when grief rules heart and mind / only in silence / can I find you / and live with previous joy. There is, I think, a lesson here for anyone – for everyone who has suffered loss of a loved one, through divorce, separation or death. George is correct: in the silence and peace of her poems we find joy in the everyday and in experiences that we may share with each other.

Patricia Prime is an Auckland poet

Haiku NewZ

CONGRATULATIONS

Katikati Haiku Contest 2006

"A good competition", says Catherine Mair, with nearly 500 haiku submitted.

18 years & over: 1st & 2nd: **Nola Borrell**; 3rd: **Janine Sowerby**; Highly commended: **Ernest J Berry** and **Barbara Strang**.

twilight
a tui mimics
a tui

Nola Borrell, Lower Hutt (1st)

Best local haiku: Jan Goldthorp.

13 – 17 years: 1st: Sophia Frentz; 2nd: Ashley Sycamore; 3rd: Sasha Itchener; Highly commended: Ryan Andrews and Sophia Frentz.

wet Saturday
glass shards
fill the gutter

Sophia Frentz, 14, Tauranga

12 years & under: 1st: Harry Frentz; 2nd: Cheyenne Murphy; 3rd: Luke van Lith; Highly commended: Harry Frentz (2) and Lydia Verschaffelt; Special Mention: Fletcher Jackson.

afternoon rain
her hair wet
leaves begin to fall

Harry Frentz, 10, Tauranga

Yellow Moon Spirit of Place

Four New Zealand poets, all NZPS members, were successful in the recent 'Spirit of Place' competition run by Yellow Moon magazine in Australia. **Keith Westwater** of Lower Hutt was both first equal, for *Canterbury Visit, Winter 1982*, and Highly Commended for *National Anthem*. **Helen Lowe** of Christchurch was also Highly Commended for *My Dunedin*, and **Elaine Riddell** of Hamilton and **Mary Logan** of Wellington were finalists for *Across the Road* and *Evening* respectively. All five poems will be published in Yellow Moon 20.

'Spirit of Place' was the final competition for Yellow Moon magazine, which is closing down after ten successful years' building bridges between haiku and western forms of poetry and encouraging and recording poetic endeavour in print.

Yellow Moon Seed Pearls, 2006

Fewer NZers this time: **André Surridge** gained a commended haiku, and **Patricia Prime** a commended haiku and a commended tanka.

We won't get another chance. Yellow Moon 20 is the final issue of this widely appreciated magazine with its results of frequent competitions not only for haiku, tanka and haibun, but also for other literary forms. Editor Beverley George is an outstanding promoter of haiku and tanka and supporter of new writers. The New Zealand haiku community has much to thank Beverley George for. We wish her well in her new ventures and her own writing.

Beverley has taken up a new challenge with the soon-to-be-launched magazine *Eucalypt*, Australia's first tanka magazine. She is now President of Haiku Oz, the Australian Haiku Society, and over the years she has been gaining awards and publication for her own haiku and tanka (UK, USA, Canada, NZ, Japan, Russia, Croatia, Australia). Somehow, in 2006, she managed to get two books to publication standard too. See Publications for details of Beverley George's work.

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 15, 1.00 p.m at home of Nola Borrell, 177A Miromiro Rd., Normandale, Lower Hutt. And, hey, we could do with some new members. Give yourself a (small) challenge, and much delight in creative company. We meet on the third Thursday, every 2nd month. Contact: Nola Borrell, ph 04 586-7287 or nolaborrell@xtra.co.nz.

Haiku NewZ collated by Nola Borrell

COMPETITIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

For a full list of competitions and submissions please go to the NZPS website at: www.poetrysociety.org.nz/haiku or send a SSEA to National Coordinator, NZPS, PO Box 5283, Wellington 6145.

The Annual British Haiku Society Haibun Anthology 2007

Entry fee: £5 (cheque made out to 'British Haiku Society') or US\$8 (in dollar bills), plus £2/\$4 for every additional haibun. **Conditions of entry:** Entries must be written in English, and between 100 and 2000 words long, including haiku. Work must be unpublished and not under consideration for publication elsewhere. Each haibun should be given a title. Entries will not be returned, so please retain copies of each submission. In the unlikely event of an insufficient quantity and/or quality of submissions, those that are received will be carried forward to the following year for consideration. **Submission details:** Three copies of each haibun, with

each copy starting on a separate A4 sheet. One copy should show your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address (if applicable). The other copies should carry no identification. If you require acknowledgement of receipt of your entry, please either request an e-mail acknowledgement or send an IRC stamped by the originating office. **Address for entries:** BHS Haibun anthology, 95 Winns Avenue, London, E17 5HD, UK. **Closing date:** In hand by 1 August 2007. The authors of all the selected haibun will receive a free copy of the Anthology.

PUBLICATIONS

Eucalypt: Two issues per year - May and September. \$A35 or \$US25. Editor, Eucalypt, PO Box 37, Pearl Beach NSW 2256, Australia. Website: www.eucalypt.info

Spinifex (Pardalote Press, 60pp). Vanessa Proctor says, 'Beverley George's haiku take us on a compelling journey through the Australian landscape from the coast to country towns. These intimate, keenly observed poems deserve to be read again and again. *Spinifex* is a collection to be treasured.'

train tunnel -
the sudden intimacy
of mirrored faces

lengthening shadow -
above her eggs the hen's heart
beats against my arm

\$A18.50 from PO Box 37 Pearl Beach 2256, or order via the website: www.pardalote.com.au

empty garden (Yellow Moon) has 84 poems (including 5 sequences), rich presentation, and has been well-reviewed. \$A15 including post within Australia. Website: www.eucalypt.info.

KiwiHaiku

nor'wester
seagull
flying
backwards

Nola Gazzard, Christchurch

From March there will be two Kiwi Haiku per issue. Please send your Kiwi Haiku submissions to: Richard von Sturmer, 18 Crocus Place, Remuera, Auckland. Email address: rvonsturmer@yahoo.com

Definitions

Nola Borrell

You're finding it hard to get a crisp, clear definition of haiku? Be warned: Writers immersed in haiku differ markedly. Max Verhart, a member of the editorial team for Red Moon Anthologies, invited the views of 29 English-speaking haiku writers from 19 countries. He chose them for the 'real haiku quality' in their work. The results are in his paper, *The essence of haiku as perceived by western haijin*. His conclusion: 'One thing I learned is that any definition of haiku can and will be debated. This convinced me that a set definition is impossible'.

However, '... a majority expresses the view that haiku is a short (20) form of poetry (15) concerned with insight (19). To a lesser extent they say that a haiku is based on a moment (7) experienced in nature/seasons (12) or reality in general (9)'. There's a small something to hang on to.

Verhart expected, and received, mainly descriptive definitions, but also intuitive and symbolic definitions. Here's a sample to put alongside your own definition.

* Haiku is a concise poetic form which is often inspired by an epiphany or close observation of the natural world. 'The haiku moment' expresses universal human experience which cuts through cultural boundaries. (Vanessa Proctor, Australia).

* Haiku is a literary bonsai. (Boris Nazansky, Croatia).

* The haiku is a breath-length poem that describes a moment of insight into the mystery of existence by combining two or three sense images, one of which is always from nature. (George Swede, Canada).

* In French, a weakly-accented language, specific style procedures increase the harmony of the 5-7-5 metrics. Any topic can be a source of inspiration, from existential emotions to wild surrealist dreams (Georges Friedenkraft, France).

* Generally haiku is a three-line poem of 17 syllables at most, that does not comment or interpret, but describes a situation directly and graphically (Martin Berner, Germany).

* Haiku: n, a style of Japanese verse characterised by brevity, seasonality and the (unstated) emotions of a strongly felt, often momentary experience (**Ernest Berry**, NZ).

* Haiku: the truthful rendition of the reality that surrounds me and in which and from which I live (as you and all of us do), and this within the scope of one breath (Wim Lofvers, Netherlands).

* Haiku: a short poem that uses an image of nature or the seasons to present an intuitive and emotional complex in an instant of time (Lee Gurga, USA).

* A haiku is the (only correct) answer to the following Zen koan: You cannot possibly express your experience in words and you have to do just that. What then; speak, speak! (Vladimir Devidé, Croatia).

Back to NZ and a comment from **Cyril Childs**: 'Asked to come up with a definition each of us would take a somewhat different angle with different emphases. There can be no correct final descriptive definition. None can be the right one with all others being wrong'.

Max Verhart concludes: 'To paraphrase Basho: learn about haiku from haiku.'

Nola Borrell is a Lower Hutt haijin and poet

Notice of Special General Meeting

7.30pm Thursday 15th February 2007

To be held at Turnbull House, Bowen St, Wellington, immediately preceding the regular monthly meeting.

The purpose of the Special General Meeting (SGM) is to make changes to the Society's Constitution.

Changes to the Constitution require: "a two-thirds majority of those members present or represented at a special general meeting of the Society called by a notice of special general meeting in which the proposed changes to the constitution are stated". An SGM can be called by resolution of the committee, which took place via email on 20th November, 2006. (Moved L. Gilbert; Seconded J. Norcliffe. Carried, one abstention.)

Proposed Changes to the Constitution, required by the Inland Revenue Department:

Clause 4 inclusion of the following paragraph:

"No addition to or alteration or recession of the rules shall be approved if it affects the charitable objects, personal benefit clause or the winding up clause.

"The provisions and effect of this clause shall not be removed from this document and shall be included and implied into any document replacing this document."

Clause 12.4 addition of the following paragraph:

"Any income, benefit or advantage shall be applied to the objectives of the organisation. No member of the organisation or any person associated with a member shall participate in or materially influence any decision made by the organisation in respect of the payment to or on behalf of the a member or associated person of any income, benefit, or advantage whatsoever.

"Any such income shall be reasonable and relative to that which would be paid in an arm's length transaction (being open market value)."

Clause 13.3 replaced with the following paragraph:

"If upon the winding up or dissolution of the organisation there remains after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities any property whatsoever the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the organization but shall be given or transferred to some other approved charitable organization or body having objects similar to the objects of the first organization - or for some other charitable purpose - within New Zealand."

Additional Changes Proposed

At the 2006 AGM, those present agreed in principle to change the aims of the Society (see: Minutes, 2006 AGM, available to members on the website). We would like to ratify and slightly alter the change to **Clause 2** to read:

"The object of the Society is to advance education by promoting, developing and supporting poets and poetry in New Zealand."

We have not reached the quorum of 16 at the last two AGMs, one of the two SGMs held subsequently as a result of the lack of a quorum, or at the SGM held in December 2006 to change the Constitution. It is proposed at this SGM to change **Clause 14.3** to read:

"A quorum shall consist of six (6) persons)."

And to update matters after the recent appointment of the National Coordinator, a change to **Clause 14.4**:

"The registered office of the Society is to be 14 Albemarle Rd, Northland, Wellington 6012."

The existing Constitution is available for reading on the Members page of the website. You will need to register on the website to have access to this.

Laurice Gilbert
National Coordinator,
The New Zealand Poetry Society Inc.
info@poetrysociety.org.nz
www.poetrysociety.org.nz

Talk Poem

Anne Tucker

Having a Coke with You

By Frank O'Hara

is even more fun than going to San Sebastian, Irún, Hendaye, Biarritz, Bayonne
or being sick to my stomach on the Travesera de Gracia in Barcelona

partly because in your orange shirt you look like a better happier St. Sebastian

partly because of my love for you, partly because of your love for yoghurt

partly because of the fluorescent orange tulips around the birches

partly because of the secrecy our smiles take on before people and statuary

it is hard to believe when I'm with you that there can be anything as still

as solemn as unpleasantly definitive as statuary when right in front of it

in the warm New York 4 o'clock light we are drifting back and forth

between each other like a tree breathing through its spectacles

and the portrait show seems to have no faces in it at all, just paint

you suddenly wonder why in the world anyone ever did them
I look

at you and I would rather look at you than all the portraits in the world

except possibly for the Polish Rider occasionally and anyway it's in the Frick

which thank heavens you haven't gone to yet so we can go together the first time

and the fact that you move so beautifully more or less takes care of Futurism

just as at home I never think of the Nude Descending a Staircase or

at a rehearsal a single drawing of Leonardo or Michelangelo that used to wow me

and what good does all the research of the Impressionists do them

when they never got the right person to stand near the tree when the sun sank

or for that matter Marino Marini when he didn't pick the rider as carefully
as the horse

it seems they were all cheated of some marvellous experience

which is not going to go wasted on me which is why I'm telling you about it

Editor's note: this poem is distorted by column width limitations. For a copy of the poem in its original form, please email me, or send a SSAE to Po Box 5283, Wgton 6145.

In 1960 when this poem was written, the Coca Cola Corporation had made a world-wide phenomenon of its soft drink and O'Hara, at that time Assistant Curator of Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, had been in Paris on business for the Museum. These worlds at opposite ends of the populist–elitist spectrum are juxtaposed in this poem written to O'Hara's lover, the dancer Vincent Warren, who was soon to leave New York for Montreal.

The poem displays the secret world of communication between besotted lovers when everything is funny and only objects and places graced by the lover's presence have meaning in "the secrecy our smiles take on before people and statuary". Thus, despite O'Hara's having been in San Sebastian, Biarritz, and Barcelona, he'd rather be having a Coke with Warren in New York in spring, where the tulips surrounding the birch trees that grow out of tiny squares in New York sidewalks are made so vivid by the lover's presence they're not just orange, they're fluorescent orange. Throughout the poem the seriousness of the emotion is counterpointed with the lightness of these surreal or irreverent images.

The poem is constructed of long lines, 20 syllables, more or less, which hint at the enumerations of the Old Testament, Walt Whitman or Allen Ginsberg, particularly in lines 3–6. The poem maintains a drifting forward momentum until lines 11–12, which, set apart by white space, seemingly stop. It's as if O'Hara suddenly stops, when he realises:

and the portrait show seems to have no faces in it at all, just
paint
you suddenly wonder why in the world anyone ever did them

The poem resumes its forward momentum, until the concluding two lines which have a closure and finality rather like the final couplet of a Shakespearean sonnet. In sonnet XVIII Shakespeare also addresses a lover in terms of an artwork, but there the permanence of the artwork is a protection from the inevitable decay of human beauty. In "Having a Coke with You", O'Hara, who usually took an "intensity of pleasure" from viewing art, parades his preference for the vivid "there-ness" of his human lover to any art.

Throughout the poem there is contrast between inanimate art: paintings and statuary; and animate non-art: yoghurt, tulips, trees, the human body in movement and the dance rehearsal, even the New York 4 o'clock air seems alive. O'Hara seems certain he would rather forget the ubiquitous image of medieval art and see his lover as a different sort of Saint Sebastian. The immediacy of the human body in dance rehearsal pushes aside the drawings of Leonardo or Michelangelo, both known for

their depictions of the male form. Yet there is some uncertainty – he makes an exception for occasionally viewing Rembrandt's 'Polish Rider' and when he goes from "partly because of my love for you" immediately to "partly because of your love for yoghurt" there is a hint that the feelings of love may go more in one direction than the other.

At the end of the poem, after pointing out the inferiority of art that doesn't have Warren in it, O'Hara addresses his lover. Artists don't have Warren so they just don't get it, but he, O'Hara, does and is going to get it and make the most of it. The irony, however, is that despite O'Hara's protestations through the poem the relationship survives in the permanence of the poetic artwork rather than surviving in reality, and time and time again recreates the bliss of immediate swooning love for its readers.

Anne Tucker is a Wellington poet and regular contributor to this magazine.

Two New Magazine Columns

MEMBERS' POEMS

Beginning with this issue, we are including a limited number of previously unpublished poems submitted by members. Future selection will be at the Editor's discretion and subject to the availability of space. Members are reminded that if their poems are published here they may be rendered ineligible for competition entry, both in the NZPS International Poetry Competition, and in other competitions, so choose your submissions carefully.

Please send submissions to: info@poetrysociety.org.nz with "Editor's Choice" in the subject line.

TANKA MOMENTS

Submission details on the Last Page, under this issue's Tanka Moments.

March DEADLINE IS February 14

The Great Escape

- Jin the otter escapes from Auckland Zoo, June 2006 -

there's an otter
in the harbour
that was erstwhile
in the zoo

it escaped
with several mates
who didn't
make it through

they were caught
they were brought
to the place
where otters go

who've escaped
with other otter mates
for a half
an hour or so

there's an otter
in the harbour
& a search
is underway

- for the otter -
with a chopper
& a dozen
boats or so

but the din
is making Jin
just a trifle
chopper shy

as she spots 'em
through the flotsam
she resolves
to do or die

*they'll not catch 'er
they can't match 'er
she's an otter
through & through!*

*

but they got 'er
Jin the otter
who escaped
from Auckland zoo!

John O'Connor

MEMBERS' POEMS PAGE

Finding the painted you: 2

Forest lake with two nudes, Otto Mueller, c. 1915

leaves surround you
dully green
or the single brown
of your skin,
branches and boles black
as your hair

you stare in the quiet
at a lake
white with sun

you'd imagined this,
I can almost see
your lips shaping
images' speech

Bernard Gadd

Tanka Moments

on a busy street
a group of students
listen to an old man
play an unfamiliar tune
on his chinese flute

Pat Prime

are you happy
she asked and if you are
tell me how you know?
a summer breeze plays gently
through white trumpets of *mandevilla*

André Surridge

Readers are invited to submit one tanka
to: bernard.gadd@xtra.co.nz for "Tanka Moments"

*Happy New Year to everyone, from the Editor. May 2007
bring you exactly the right word in exactly the right place at
exactly the time you need it.*