



Newsletter  
May 2005

New Zealand Poetry Society  
*Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa*

With the Assistance of Creative NZ  
Arts Council of New Zealand *Toi Aotearoa*  
and Lion Foundation

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☞ This Month's Meeting ☞

AGM in Wellington  
at Turnbull House, Bowen Street,  
May 19<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm

**Whither Goes Haiku**

**Cyril Childs**

The world's most popular genre of poetry is the haiku.\* This claim by Bernard Gadd (NZPS Newsletter, September 2004) is a bold one that could be debated forever from several angles, but it is not without justification.

Two significant international anthologies of haiku poetry published recently, one in Canada and one in Greece, extend to nearly 500 pages and contain the works of poets from over fifty countries. Not surprising are those from the countries of Europe and North America, nor perhaps those from Australasia, South America and parts of Asia. Some might be surprised, however, to see entries from countries like Cuba, Guatemala, India, Morocco, Pakistan, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Russia and Senegal. Incidentally, New Zealand is well represented in both anthologies, and may well be the best represented on a population basis.

And one particular haiku could reasonably lay claim to being one of the best known poems in the world. Matsuo Bashō's 'furuike ya/kawazu tobikomu/mizu no oto' (literal tr. 'old pond—/a frog jumps in/water's sound') is known to nearly all Japanese over five. It's also likely to be one of the first haiku known to many millions more around the world given haiku's current worldwide popularity and its ready acceptance into school curricula. While this poem has particularly great resonance to the people of Japan (as I suspect those who

appreciate Japanese gardens will sense), it does not tend to have the same resonance in other cultures.

Many of the great Japanese haiku undoubtedly do have resonance elsewhere. Pablo Picasso once remarked "Japanese haiku... what a simple beauty! I read Kikaku's haiku last night with my son. As my son urged me to continue, we went on reading until two o'clock this morning." We often see links between poetry and art, poets and artists. The link between abstract art and haiku may be especially strong as a striving for clarity and essence often lies at the heart of both. According to the sculptor, painter and poet Jean Arp "I was surprised by haiku. It has a symbolical beauty of spirit and feeling that is removed from all necessary matters. What we, the artists of abstract art, are seeking is the same thing as the spirit of haiku. Haiku must be one of the most difficult genres of poetry. It seems to be a genre in which only either plainness or excellence can be achieved."

An interesting point this: plainness or excellence. The apparent simplicity of haiku makes them look easy to write. This appearance is deceptive but it does result in a large number of poor quality haiku and pseudo-haiku (so-called 'spam-ku' come to mind). These aside, for 'plainness' we might interpret that the reader doesn't connect with the poem; and for 'excellence' that the reader does. As for appreciation of a piece of abstract art by a viewer, appreciation of a haiku requires a high degree of participation by the reader, and this depends on the knowledge, life experience and imagination the reader brings to bear in interacting with the poem. A reader who connects might regard a haiku as excellent; one who doesn't might regard the same haiku as plain.

Haiku remains alive and well in its country of origin. The most significant pioneering contemporary movement in haiku is led by the Japanese poet Ban'ya Natsuishi, a law professor at Meiji University and senior member of the 7000-member Modern Haiku Association of Japan. A book containing some of his poems and essays is available in English translation (A Future Waterfall, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA22604, 1999). Terms like avant-garde, metaphysical, and surreal have been used to describe his haiku, yet, according to

reviewer Richard Gilbert (Frogpond XXIV#3 2001), they often draw upon mythology and ancient literary references.

On a different note, a feature movie entitled "Koi wa Go Shichi Go (Love is Five Seven Five)" has just been released in Japan. It's about an unlikely group of high-school students who take part in "Haiku Koshien" – a team haiku competition held each August, which is evidently conducted much as it is in the film, with competitors critiquing each other's poems and a panel of judges choosing a winner by raising flags. The Japan Times rates the movie highly and describes it as a Japanese take on an old theme: losers making good at something regarded as 'uncool', thereby becoming cool. "Shall we Dance" and "An Officer and a Gentleman" come to mind. Expect a surge in interest in haiku competitions in Japanese schools in the next year or two. View:

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?ff20050330a2.htm>

Here in NZ the current health and development of haiku poetry is perhaps best indicated by two things: (1) the increasing number of poets writing haiku (and related forms, especially tanka and haibun) and being published in reputable haiku journals overseas; and (2) the outstanding success of the recent 3-day Haiku Festival Aotearoa in Wellington. For conceiving and organising this festival Nola Borrell and Karen Peterson Butterworth deserve a resounding vote of thanks.

Footnote:

\*I use the word haiku here to include the very closely related form senryu which Bernard also mentioned. The difference between the two is often imperceptible especially in English. Senryu may be regarded as a subspecies of haiku that is often not differentiated.

## ☞ From the Committee ☞

### AGM – Committee Membership

This month is AGM month and we are looking for members who would be keen to take an active role on the Committee.

Although some Committee members are willing to continue for another year (namely Gillian Cameron, Laurice Gilbert, Harvey Molloy, James Norcliffe, and Margaret Vos), not all are able to do so - and so we need some enthusiastic, capable newcomers.

Gillian and Vivienne are stepping down as President and Vice President respectively – so nominations are sought for these positions as well as for new committee members.

There are four Committee meetings a year. While these involve some work they are also lots of fun – helped along by a few glasses of wine!

If you are willing to help or would like to know more about what is involved, please contact our Secretary Helen Heath at [info@poetrysociety.org.nz](mailto:info@poetrysociety.org.nz)

### AGM – Notice of Motion

The Committee would like to give notice of the following motion to be presented to the Annual General Meeting on 19 May 2005:

That the Annual General Meeting approves:

- (1) A NZ resident annual membership rate of \$25 for individual membership and \$35 for joint membership at the same address.
- (2) An overseas annual membership rate of \$35.
- (3) And that the above rates are effective from 1 April 2006.

Comment on the motion:

The Society offers a wide range of services to members including: the monthly newsletter, advance notice of poetry events around the country, discounted prices on NZPS competition and publications, workshops, poetry advisory services, access to the members-only section of the website etc.

The proposed subscription of \$25 provides excellent value for money for members – in part due to the fact that the Committee is successful in obtaining some external funding (from Creative NZ, Lions Foundation etc) for some of these services.

### Proxy Voting for Members Unable to Attend AGM

If you are unable to attend the AGM but would like to vote on this motion you are entitled under Section 3.5 of the constitution to make a Proxy Vote. You may do this either by:

- (1) Sending your signed proxy to the President, Gillian Cameron, at 80 Duthie St, Karori, Wellington 5 to arrive no later than 18 May 2005; OR
- (2) Appointing another member to exercise your proxy at the AGM. If you are going to do this, you will need to give the other member your signed written proxy and he/she needs to present it to the President before or at the commencement of the AGM.

## ☞ From the Editor ☞

Welcome back to all renewing members. Thank you for your continued support. You should find your 2005/2006 membership card inserted in this issue. A reminder that membership benefits include: discounted entry into the annual International Poetry Competition, an annual Poetry Workshop with an established poet as guest tutor, discounted fees for the Poetry Advisory Service, information on poetry competitions in New Zealand and overseas, an informational and member-driven website as well as this newsletter. We are currently working behind the scenes on our website to provide more resources for members.

The June newsletter will have Lynn Davidson and the Whitireia Publishing students at the helm. I am looking forward to seeing what interesting new directions Lynn will take the newsletter. I'd like to thank everyone for all the supportive feedback I have received over my time as guest editor and welcome Lynn wholeheartedly.

## ☞ Competition Update ☞

The poems and haiku are rolling in nicely. Thanks to all those who've made my job easier by getting in early. To everyone else – what's holding you up?

Despite extensive promotion overseas via email to all the haiku and poetry sites I could find, the international entries are sparse. Those of you with overseas poetry/haiku contacts, I urge you to encourage your friends and relations to enter. We've been accused of having too few international place-getters and anthology selections, and all I can say is it's not for lack of trying.

The school entries are trickling in at this stage, but I expect that to pick up after the holidays. The standard so far is good, and there have been quite a few independent junior entries from enterprising young people who haven't waited for their schools to put together group entries. Good stuff. Please remember to encourage young writers of your acquaintance to enter. I did so with one of my offspring last year and she won the Junior Open section (thereby making more money from a single poem than I have in all my years of entering competitions).\*

Thanks to member Sandie Legge for her comments on the use of so much paper in entering. She has offered suggestions for reducing the amount of wastage, and we will certainly be reconsidering this problem in constructing next year's competition. In the meantime, I'm open to further suggestions as to how to save paper. Feel free to send them to me at [competition@poetrysociety.org.nz](mailto:competition@poetrysociety.org.nz) For now, there's nothing in the rules that says you have to present a lonely haiku on a single sheet of A4. Smaller pages are acceptable.

So keep those entries coming in, I enjoy seeing the wide variety of poetic forms and subjects that comes

through the mail box, and look forward to reading many more haiku in the course of my work.

Good luck to all our entrants. Remember that if you don't win a place in the competition, you can still score a page or two in the anthology later in the year.

*Laurice Gilbert*  
*Competition Secretary*

Footnote:

\* Bear in mind that all poems are judged "blind", with no identifying information that would alert the judges to the identity of the writer, or her mother.

## ☞ Upcoming Events ☞

### NATIONWIDE

#### **Spread the word – its poetry as usual on Montana Poetry Day, Friday 22 July 2005**

Planning is well underway for New Zealand's national celebration of local poetry, Montana Poetry Day, Friday 22 July 2005. From dawn till midnight and beyond, leading poets will be sharing their verse and spreading the word. The stage is also set for aspiring writers to introduce their verse to an ever-increasing audience of poetry-aficionados nationwide.

Montana Poetry Day is organised in conjunction with the Montana New Zealand Book Awards. Established in 1998, and supported by an army of poetry enthusiasts around the country, Montana Poetry Day has grown to become a much-anticipated event on the New Zealand arts calendar.

Celebrating the brilliant spectrum of poetry in New Zealand on Montana Poetry Day might be as simple as sharing a favourite poem with a friend or chancing upon a street poetry performance, listening to a reading from one of New Zealand's top poets, or perhaps just drinking a glass of wine at a poetry book launch. For others, it might mean improving their own form at a poetry workshop, entering one of the many poetry competitions arranged around the day or actively participating in an 'open mic' session or a 'poetry slam' in a city café. The line up of events promises to be as varied and rewarding as the best sort of poetry anthology and it's guaranteed there will be something for everyone on the day.

A full line up of participating poets and details of all events will be available online at [www.montananzbookawards.co.nz](http://www.montananzbookawards.co.nz) from early June 2005.

This year for the first time, the winner of the Poetry category in the Montana New Zealand Book Awards will be announced on Montana Poetry Day. The winners of all categories in the awards, plus the Montana Medal for

Non Fiction and the Deutz Medal for Fiction or Poetry will be announced three days later at the Awards Ceremony, in Wellington on Monday 25 July 2005.

The principal sponsors of the Montana New Zealand Book Awards and Montana Poetry Day are Montana wines and Creative New Zealand. The awards are managed by Booksellers New Zealand and supported by Book Publishers Association of New Zealand, the New Zealand Society of Authors and Book Tokens (NZ) Ltd.

To register your event or for further information, contact Laura Kroetsch at (04) 475 8589 or [laura.kroetsch@paradise.net.nz](mailto:laura.kroetsch@paradise.net.nz)

## AUCKLAND

### Preview of the Writers & Readers Poetry Events

*Open Mike: BYO Genius* Float Bar - Princes Wharf  
Saturday 21 May: 10.00am–2.00pm  
FREE EVENT

The BYO genius part of the festival is now established as a lively, popular and unpredictable event. Published poets appear at scheduled times of the day – the rest of the time it's an open mike and an open floor.

Guest Poets include:

10.00am Anne Kennedy  
10.30am Diane Brown  
11.00am Iain Sharp  
11.30am Jo Randerson  
12.00pm Sonja Yelich  
12.30pm Karlo Mila  
1.00pm Mike Johnson  
1.30pm Harry Ricketts

*Sing Song* Maritime Museum, Princes Wharf  
Saturday 21 May: 12.00–1.00pm

Anne Kennedy's volume of autobiographical verse *Sing Song* won the prize for Poetry in the 2004 Montana New Zealand Book Awards. She joins popular poet Diane Brown, poet and academic Michele Leggott, and Paris domiciled William Direen. Chaired by Harry Ricketts.

Ticketek \$12 / Door \$15

*Palaver Lava: Readings*  
Maritime Museum, Princes Wharf  
Saturday 21 May: 3.00pm–4.00pm

Sue Fitchett's new collection of verse *Palaver Lava Queen* centres on Auckland, its history, geography and culture. Fellow Auckland poets Murray Edmond, CK Stead, Sonja Yelich and Paula Green read and discuss Auckland as a demanding muse. Chaired by Iain Sharp.  
Ticketek \$12 / Door \$15

## CHRISTCHURCH

### Canterbury Poets Wrap Up Poetry in Performance Autumn Readings 2005

Open microphone and guest readers. Wednesdays 7pm at the Madras Café Bookshop, 165 Madras St – licensed and BYO. \$5 waged and \$3 unwaged

Win a \$20 MCB voucher – audience vote for best open mike poet each night

Guest Poets

4 May Rob Allan, Koenraad Kuiper, Tom Weston

11 May Final Night Poetry in Performance Competition

First prize \$50 MCB voucher. Second Prize \$30 MCB voucher. Open entry. Judge: James Norcliffe. A copy of the poem(s) entered must be submitted by 4 May

## DUNEDIN

### New Venue for Poets in Dunedin

Poetry and Prose at Carey's Bay (Harbour Open Mic Evening) 7pm Tuesday, May 10 Carey's Bay Historic Hotel. This is a chance for writers of prose and poetry - contemporary and traditional - to read their work in a friendly, informal atmosphere. Contact Meg Davidson, [megdavidson@paradise.net.nz](mailto:megdavidson@paradise.net.nz) or Debbie Cartwright, 472 7699, [debbie.cartwright@paradise.net.nz](mailto:debbie.cartwright@paradise.net.nz)

## WELLINGTON

### Poets Collaborate with Painters

Don't miss the collaborative project of the year, *Kissed*, open for one last week at Porirua's Pataka. The *Kissed* exhibition features original artworks interpreting and incorporating poetry. The highly popular show has been widely acclaimed and recently described as:

*Moving, emotionally evocative, beautifully structured and presented. Great paintings and poems* – Mark Amery (National arts critic, journalist and broadcaster)

*Kissed* runs until May 8<sup>th</sup> at Pataka, Porirua.  
View: <http://www.pataka.org.nz>

### Windrift

Windrift meets again on Thursday May 19, 1.00 p.m. at Jeanette Stace's, 58 Cecil St., Wadestown, Wellington. Please let Nola Borrell know if you would like to receive the invitation and 'homework'. All welcome.

Contacts: Jeanette Stace (ph 04 473 6227, [njstace@actrix.gen.nz](mailto:njstace@actrix.gen.nz)) or Nola Borrell (ph 04 586 7287, [nolaborrell@xtra.co.nz](mailto:nolaborrell@xtra.co.nz)).

☞ **A Warm Welcome to ...** ☞

**Donald Buglass** – Hokitika  
**Elizabeth Robertson** – Christchurch  
**Maree McMenemy** – Carterton  
**Amelia Herrero-Kidman** – Wellington  
**Catherine Kelsey** – Auckland  
**Jacqui Goodall** – Wellington  
**Brent Kinimont** – Tokyo, Japan

**Quotation of the Month**

‘Poetry is part of the reaching for the ultimate reality...going to the other side of the curtains.’

*Miroslav Holub*

☞ **Other News** ☞

**Bookings Open for  
Auckland Writers & Readers Festival**

Tickets are now on sale for the fifth Auckland Writers & Readers Festival. The Festival opens on 19 May 2005 and with over 100 of top international and local writers participating in a fantastic line up of events.

Events likely to sell out quickly are those sessions starring Alice Sebold, The Buddle Findlay Sargeson Dinner on Sunday 22 May with guest speaker the food historian Mark Kurlansky, and the NZ Herald Luncheon with travel writer maestro, Eric Hansen on Friday 20 May. There are no door sales for these two events, so tickets must be purchased in advance.

The Opening Star Night on Thursday 19 May, Friday Night Feast on Friday 20 May and Westpac Girls’ Night Out on Saturday 21 May, offer book lovers a medley from the visiting international writers, including Man Booker Prize winner, Alan Hollinghurst, Augusten Burroughs, UK crime writers and comedians Stella Duffy and Mark Billingham, Australian writer Sue Woolfe, and Orange Prize shortlisted writer Gillian Slovo. Not to be missed is the inaugural Michael King Memorial Lecture will be given by American biographer Diedre Bair. In her lecture, Bair uses Steinberg’s quote about the biographer’s thumbprint as a springboard to examine her own processes and the nature of biography itself.

The New Zealand Post Writing Workshops will be held on Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 May in the lead up to the Festival. Eight workshops cover a number of genres,

and skilled practitioners tutor in their specialty subjects: Jill Malcolm on travel writing; Harry Ricketts on creative non fiction; Diane Brown on poetry; Owen Marshall on short prose; Michael Bennett on writing for the screen; Joan Rosier-Jones on writing family history or memoir; James George on the novel; and Stephen Stratford on editing. These workshops fill quickly and again, the Festival organisers recommend early bookings.

The full programme is available online at [www.writersfestival.co.nz](http://www.writersfestival.co.nz) or from bookshops, libraries or from the Auckland Writers & Readers Festival offices, ph 09 376 8074. Tickets are available now from Ticketek, ph 09 307 5000.

**Griffin Poetry Prize Anthology to Raise Funds for  
UNESCO**

2005 Griffin Poetry Prize judge Erin Moure is the editor of the 2005 Griffin Poetry Prize Anthology, a selection of poems from the shortlisted books, published by House of Anansi Press Inc. Royalties from the Anthology are donated to UNESCO's World Poetry Day.

Following the Awards, which will be announced on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Canadian and International winners will accompany a Griffin team – including Carolyn Forché, Scott Griffin, Robin Robertson, David Young, Leslie Greentree, David Kirby and Gerald Stern – to Ireland to participate in readings and celebrations for the 2005 Dublin Writers Festival on June 16th and 17th. The trip to Dublin is part of the vision Scott Griffin sees for bringing the Griffin Poetry Prize and prize winners to an increasingly international audience.

**Best New Zealand Poems 2004**

Best New Zealand Poems 2004, edited by Emma Neale, is now up online at:

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/bnzp>

The 2005 editor will be Paris-based poet Andrew Johnston.

**New Zealand Berlin Writers’ Residency  
Announced**

Tim Corballis has been awarded the next Creative New Zealand Berlin Writers’ Residency.

**Wellington City Arts Enews**

No.8 Wire, is a weekly/fortnightly email compendium of creative opportunities, projects, and happenings. Past editions are archived at [www.arts.blogspot.com](http://www.arts.blogspot.com)

The editor is happy to include items relating to your work, organisation, and events. If you'd like to be added to the distribution list or to submit contents, events, opportunities, or comments to contribute to...No. 8 Wire Please email to: [arts@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:arts@wcc.govt.nz)

### International Travelling Writers

Creative New Zealand maintains a list of New Zealand artists and arts events travelling internationally. It includes dates, venues and contact details, and is made available to all New Zealand diplomatic posts, the arts community and the media. It is posted on the Creative New Zealand website and updated regularly. If you are aware of a New Zealand artist/s travelling who may wish to feature on this list, please forward these links to Creative New Zealand's website to them where you will find the current list and relevant contact details.

<http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/our-work/international/index.html>

<http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/our-work/audience/index.html>

### The Griffin Poetry Prize Shortlist Announced

The shortlist for the C\$100,000 Griffin Poetry Prize, the most lucrative prize to accept books of poetry from any country in the world, has been announced:

#### The Canadian Shortlist

Short Journey Upriver Toward Oishida • Roo Borson  
Changing on the Fly • George Bowering  
Camber • Don McKay

#### The International Shortlist

Corpus • Michael Symmons Roberts  
A Green Light • Matthew Rohrer  
Selected Poems: 1963-2003 • Charles Simic  
Faber and Faber

The judges are the distinguished poets Simon Armitage (UK), Erin Moure (Canada) and Tomaz Salamun (Slovenia). The seven finalists will be invited to read in Toronto at the MacMillan Theatre on June 1st. The winners, who each receive C\$50,000, will be announced on June 2nd at the fifth Griffin Poetry Prize awards event. Following the Awards, the Canadian and International winners will accompany a Griffin team to Ireland to participate in readings and celebrations for the 2005 Dublin Writers Festival on 16–17 June.

### Pulitzer Prize for Poetry Announced

For a distinguished volume of original verse by an American author \$US 10,000 awarded to “Delights & Shadows” by Ted Kooser (Copper Canyon Press). Other finalists were: “The Orchard” by Brigit Pegeen Kelly and “Search Party: Collected Poems” by the late William Matthews.

### Albert Wendt Receives Honorary Doctorate

Acclaimed Samoan poet, writer and educator, Professor Albert Wendt CNZM, will receive an honorary doctorate from Victoria University of Wellington at its May 2005 graduation. Professor Wendt, who is one of Victoria's most distinguished alumni, will be awarded an honorary Doctor of Literature for his contribution to Pacific and New Zealand literature over the past 40 years. As the foremost writer of the South Pacific and winner of several major literary prizes, Professor Wendt has played a major role in promoting Pacific creative writing and the academic study of the Pacific.

### New Arts Programme Starts

*Artsville* can be seen on TV One, Saturdays, 9pm. The programme brings New Zealand's art and artists to the screen with a series of vivid documentaries of varying lengths. The series will be studded with short performance pieces, including a series of short performances from some of our most charismatic poets - stylishly presented in a cross between a music clip and a short film.

### Publications

#### New Poetry from AUP

*Milk and Honey* by Michele Leggott (Auckland University Press) is a beautiful new collection in which deft word play, allusion and quotation go along with liquid sounds, intense images and stirring rhythms. There are moving elegies and haunting love poems and many echoes of other poets, from Lorca to Robert Duncan to Alan Brunton to pop songs. There are many signs too of a poet moving into an international context. Leggott has travelled to a number of overseas poetry festivals in recent years and a sense of wider world pervades the latter part of this text. Each of Leggott's collections is a new step forward and while she challenges the reader she exhibits ever greater mastery of the form, a remarkable and quite distinctive voice. PB; \$27.99.

*Along Blueskin Road* by James Norcliffe (CUP) is a rich and diverse collection of poems from one of New Zealand's leading poets. Whether tender, lyrical, quirky or comic, the poems are invariably richly imaginative and beautifully crafted. Many of the poems were written in Dunedin during James Norcliffe's tenure as Burns Fellow and are imbued with a sense of this most poetic and individual of New Zealand cities; other poems derive from places as diverse as Borneo and the antebellum American South. PB; \$24.95

### Other New Releases

Loving Art: poems By Peter Dane  
(2004) Hudson Cresset Publishing

Stories and Poems from the Kaka Point Writers Group  
1/13 Burns Street, Owaka, South Otago *p.p.*, 2004

### ✎ Residencies & Opportunities ✎

#### Sanskriti Residency - India

Applications are sought from established writers, visual artists and craft/object artists who are New Zealand citizens or permanent residents to undertake a residency at the Sanskriti Foundation of India's Kendra campus. The residency will be for three months between September 2005 and April 2006 and. Further background information on the Sanskriti Foundation and the Kendra campus can be found at:

[www.sanskritifoundation.org/home.shtml](http://www.sanskritifoundation.org/home.shtml)

The closing date for applications is 5.00 PM Friday 20 May 2005. For more information please contact: Assistant Arts Advisor, Arts Services, Creative New Zealand. T: (04) 473 0880 or E: [info@creativenz.govt.nz](mailto:info@creativenz.govt.nz)

#### Red Gate Residency – Beijing

Applications are sought from established writers, visual artists and craft/object artists who are New Zealand citizens or permanent residents to undertake a residency at the Red Gate Gallery in Beijing. The residency will be for 12 weeks between October and December 2005. Further background information on Red Gate Residency facilities can be found at:

[www.redgategallery.com/residency.htm](http://www.redgategallery.com/residency.htm)

The closing date for applications is 5.00 PM Friday 20 May 2005. For more information please contact: Assistant Arts Advisor, Arts Services, Creative New Zealand. T: (04) 473 0880 or E: [info@creativenz.govt.nz](mailto:info@creativenz.govt.nz)

### Applications Now Open for Two \$35,000 Awards for Writers of Non-Fiction works

New Zealand writers of non-fiction books are invited to apply for two grants worth \$35,000 each in this year's Copyright Licensing Ltd (CLL) Writers' Awards. The CLL Writers' Awards were established in 2002 and are financed from copyright licensing revenue collected by CLL on behalf of authors and publishers. This is the second time that two awards of \$35,000 each have been provided. Last year the awards were presented to two Dunedin-based writers to enable them to devote time to a specific non-fiction writing project and to provide reasonable research expenses for their projects.

Poet and critic, David Eggleton and writer and academic, Lloyd Spencer Davis were each awarded with \$35,000. Eggleton is using his award to work on a contemporary guide to New Zealand cultural history. Spencer Davis describes his work-in-progress as a science book – the unravelling of Darwin and Darwinism – but also part travelogue, part personal memoir. He said that the award "offers the prospect of the one commodity a writer really needs – a period of uninterrupted time."

A grant of \$30,000 was awarded in 2002 to Sarah Quigley to write a biography of poet and patron of writers, Charles Brasch.

The Board of Copyright Licensing Ltd (made up of authors and publishers) encourages all established writers of non-fiction to consider applying for one of the two awards on offer this year. It is hoping to encourage applications from writers with interests in the sciences, business, Māori and Pacific studies, the arts and beyond. Applicants must be New Zealand citizens or permanent residents and writers of proven merit.

Applicants must submit details of a project planned or under way to a selection committee set up by CLL. Applications close at 5pm on Friday 15 July 2005. The two winners of this year's awards will be announced at a special ceremony to be held on Tuesday 20 September 2005. Full application details for the CLL Writers' Awards are available on the website [www.copyright.co.nz](http://www.copyright.co.nz) or by telephoning 09 480 2711.

For further information, please contact: Sandra Noakes on behalf of Copyright Licensing Ltd Ph 09 411 9908 | email [sandra.noakes@xtra.co.nz](mailto:sandra.noakes@xtra.co.nz)

### Entries called for 2005 Bell Gully Poetry Award

Entries have now opened for this year's \$1,000 Bell Gully National Schools' Poetry Award, to be announced in Wellington in August. The Award, which is organised by Victoria University's International Institute of Modern Letters (IIML) and supported by leading law firm Bell Gully will be judged by the North Canterbury poet and playwright Bernadette Hall.

The winner will receive a \$500 cash prize; a \$500 book grant for their school's library; a year's membership to the New Zealand Book Council; and subscriptions to leading literary journals *Landfall* and *Sport*. Entries close on 10 June 2005.

The winning poet will be announced at a reception in Wellington during the Bell Gully National Schools' Writing Festival (20-21 August) — a chance for young writers across all genres to work with some of the country's leading fiction writers, poets, and scriptwriters. Schools are invited to nominate gifted year 12 or 13 students to attend the Festival, which also offers workshops for teachers of creative writing with support from the Ministry of Education.

Entry and nomination forms have been sent to English departments at all secondary schools and can also be downloaded from [www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/activities](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/activities)

### *Report from the IIML*

#### **United/Creative Nations**

International programme offers range of fellowships. The UNESCO-Aschberg Bursaries for Artists programme, established in 1994, will offer 62 arts fellowships with 50 partner institutions in 30 countries - from Australia, Brazil and China to Spain, Thailand and the United States.

The programme aims to open up new career prospects for artists and provide them with the opportunity for further training in specialised institutions. The fellowships are co-financed by the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture and an international network of partner institutions specialising in the training of artists.

There are fellowships available in visual arts, music, dance, writing, theatre and media arts. View the link below for more information.  
<http://www.unesco.org/culture/aschberg>

*Report from NZSA*

#### **🌀 Congratulations 🌀**

##### **Red Moon Anthology**

Ernest J Berry has had 3 Haiku published in the new Red Moon Anthology of *Best 100 English language haiku for 2004*.

*long eulogy –  
the brother I never knew  
I loved*

*2<sup>nd</sup> honeymoon  
how nonchalantly  
he pokes the fire*

*first light  
a fly fisherman  
catches it*

#### **Australian Poetic Society**

Congratulations also to Mike Subritzky who recently won the Australian Poetic Society's Weekly Poem with his poem 'Waiting'. This was his second APS award.

APS are calling for submissions at:  
<http://www.ozpoeticsociety.com/>

#### **🌀 Reviews 🌀**

***Land Below the Waves, Julie Leibrich, Wellington, Steele Roberts, 2004, 55pp, \$19.95.***

This was an enjoyable collection of poems that, in the main, delicately carry layers of meaning. 'The land below the waves' was the colloquial name for the Isle of Tiree, but it also seems to stand for the mystery of relationships and those metaphysical forays we make into our own psyche, as in:

*Exhibit IV*

*Here is my brain  
in a pickling jar.*

*Note the tired synapses.  
Observe the threadbare nerves.*

*Then tell me, if you will  
where is my love of rain*

*my craving for colour  
my vanishing dream?*

The rhymed (or half-rhymed) poems didn't work so well for me, they added a mechanistic quality that did not sit as easily with Leibrich's more usual style of elegant simplicity. The best of her poems in this deeply rewarding collection I returned to again and again. For example:

*Ice Age*

*Before words melted brains  
we stood on the edge of silence.  
Only the sound of snow dissolving.*

*No way to express what we saw.*

*Now we travel backwards  
in the rush to know.  
Flee silence like the edge of death.  
Hollow to hear. Too cold.*

*It is braver to stand still  
and be counted than to count  
to let words find us than forever  
be searching for meaning.*

I think that Julie Leibrich is a poet who will always 'let words find her' and use them wisely and well to generously shape and share her ideas and observations with us.

*Review by Tauranga poet and tutor Jenny Argante*

***Cassandra's Daughter* Michael Harlow, Auckland University Press, 2005, 56pp, \$21.99, ISBN 1-86940-332-0.**

This is Harlow's seventh poetry collection. It's a book of accessible, straightforward, enjoyable poetry based on everyday life viewed very often from a different even supernatural kind of perspective. Sometimes it's apparently based on Harlow's experience as a Jungian psychotherapist (a Glenn Colquhoun of the mind?). There are a couple of recurring motifs, one of "the small stone of death", and the other of words as agents of the unconscious,

*... you are waiting  
waiting inside the word  
that wants to dream again. ("Neck" Riddle)*

and a linked pervading sense that

*... there are too many words  
Without wings, and gravity is everywhere  
(Anti-gravity)*

There are references to well known phrases and works of literature, as in "elected silence". Harlow lists some of them in his notes.

The poetry has a conservative even conventional appearance on the page, often using stanzas of regular numbers of lines. But that appearance is caused not by a desire to make traditional lyric verse but by Harlow's care with cadence. Only very occasionally does this seem to slip:

*I shall be as loyal as possible;  
and I shall stop looking  
for more truth than there is. (La Trapeziste)*

It is mellifluous poetry which achieves some quite striking lines:

*And now, inside the mirror,  
as if for the first time, he sees  
himself— his dark twin: perched  
on his shoulder the bird  
who never sings, wholly  
sincere in its silence. (The Dark Twin).*

And sometimes employs play with sentence forms and words:

*... a song  
between two grass blades,  
we hear what secret  
grammar of wish  
they stalk the air (Reading Mandelstam)*

It's a collection divided into seven sections. In the middle of the book, when you turn the page to begin the section *The Fascination of Fictions*, it's as if Harlow has suddenly decided to take a break from fashionably quite-easy-to-read poetry, and suddenly there is the Harlow of the 1970s. These are set out as prose poems ... though again appearances are not whole story and these poems have the same careful attention to cadence and sound as the rest of the poems. They also are zestful, the lines exude the joy of their creation as they move from the details of everyday life to the impishness of the imagination, from "The décolletage of the smiling floorwalker/ in women's wear" to "opening his briefcase, the colour of old tin, he shakes himself charitably in all his existential places, younger than springtime, he says, humming a few bars of that old tune, and he reaches down inside the story he has prepared for such an occasion as this ..."

He even gives a classy demonstration that an e e cummings' style still can dance on the modern page in his 'A Posy'. He cites the old Japanese poet Basho, the Middle English *Parlement of Birds*, makes puns and jokes on shoes, and much much else. And in poems that follow, the joy and the imaginativeness never quite subside. Poems like 'I am a Tyger' and 'Opening the Book' have definite glints in their images and lines.

This varied and accomplished collection should appeal not only to those who know Harlow's work but also to readers new to his poems.

Apart from its other qualities, this collection raises an interesting question: Where next poetically for Michael Harlow and his readers?

*Review by Auckland poet Bernard Gadd*

## 🌀 Websites 🌀

### Calling All Poets

Want to have your work reviewed by a published poet? Looking for objective feedback? Every month, The Guardian Books poetry workshop is hosted by a different poet who sets an exercise, chooses the most interesting responses and offers an appraisal of them. That's the hard part taken care of - all you need to do is start writing ... Check out the last few months on the Guardian Website and watch for May's poet.  
<http://books.guardian.co.uk/poetryworkshop/>  
Also check out the Poetry Masterclass with James Fenton  
<http://books.guardian.co.uk/fentonserial/0,12098,728495,00.html>

## 🌀 Out & About 🌀

### PICTON

#### Picton Poets

Elisabeth contributed a poem begat (I can't remember why) by the line, "Stricken he gazed at the cellulite", thus,

*ELSINOR TIFF*

*Stricken he gazed at the cellulite  
That dimpled Ophelia's thighs.  
"I'm thinking, my darling, how well you might  
Have looked in a less fitting size.  
That pair they were trying to sell you, right  
Now was designed for an elf!"  
"Don't criticise me, dear Hamlet", said she,  
"Till you're utterly perfect yourself.  
There are one or two things I could tell you, right  
Now, though it's not very fair -  
My Dad told me how they can smell you, right  
Down at the foot of the stair.  
I'm sure I don't know why the hell you light  
One cigarette after another  
'Perchance to dream', Hamlet, how well you write,  
So why won't you write to your mother?"*

Anything after that would be an anticlimax, but I suppose I should tell you that, in commenting on the recent very successful Senior Expo in Blenheim at which local poets were represented, we decided that 'Senior' would perhaps be better replaced by 'Community', or similar, as the show caters mainly for cultural activities that are of interest to all. With an eye on documenting our ten-year history, we are to type up some earlier efforts, starting with a collection of Round Robin sonnets. Anne treated us to Jack 'Kiwi Banjo Paterson' Drake's *The Little Fat Cricketer Bloke*, read by Jack on CD.

Julie ('Creating in the Moment') K continued, even more breathlessly, with more of her poetic memories. Assignment for next month: a poem around the word 'ubiquitous'

*Report from Sandy Arcus*

### Dunedin: Upfront – Spotlighting Women Poets

Our first Upfront for the year was on March 29. Guest poets Jenny Powell-Chalmers and Diane Brown read from recent publications to a full and appreciative audience. Open mike poets included Debbie Williams, who read her prize-winning Listener competition 'McGonagall' poem. Upfront gives women the opportunity to read their work in public, and for audiences (men welcome!) to hear lively, contemporary poetry. If you're in Dunedin on the last Tuesday of any month, come along. Contact Sue Wootton, email: [suewoo@xtra.co.nz](mailto:suewoo@xtra.co.nz)

*Report from Sue Wootton*

### Haiku Workshop, Christchurch, April 8<sup>th</sup>

Three members of Airing Cupboard Women Poets Group attended Haiku Festival Aotearoa, Wellington, in March. Together with invited guests from The Small White Teapot Haiku Group we held a haiku workshop to pass on some of the knowledge we gained.

Barbara Strang, a tutor at HFA, led group discussion on 'what is haiku' and updated us on this dynamic and continually evolving form. Anne Edmunds discussed nine Zen principles of haiku (and acknowledged Richard Von Sturmer). Judith Walsh talked on senryu from her own readings and compared this form with 'nature' haiku.

We enjoyed a ginko (a haiku walk in which people walk alone or together jotting down notes which they turn into haiku after the walk and share with the rest of the group). Barbara helped us discuss our rich source of ideas and newly formed haiku.

Both of our groups have members who are top haiku writers and by passing on what we learnt from the very informative and stimulating workshop in Wellington we hope to nurture haiku in Christchurch.

*Report by Anne Edmunds*

## 🌀 Competitions 🌀

### Bravado Poetry Competition

Judge: Alistair Paterson  
Prizes: 1<sup>st</sup> 500, 2<sup>nd</sup> \$250, 3<sup>rd</sup> \$100

plus 10 Highly Commended Prizes of \$50 each  
For entry forms email: [info.bravado@xtra.co.nz](mailto:info.bravado@xtra.co.nz)  
Closes August 30th

### Atlanta Review International Poetry Competition

Grand Prize: \$1,000  
Second Prizes (5): \$100  
20 International Publication Awards; 30 International Merit Awards; includes Certificate, Honorable Mention in Atlanta Review, and Free Issue  
Winners will be published in Atlanta Review (in over 120 countries)  
Entry fee: \$5 for the first poem, \$3 for each additional poem.  
Entries must be postmarked by 16 May 2005. Winners will be announced in August.  
The Poetry 2005 contest issue will be published in October. For more information, see [www.atlantareview.com](http://www.atlantareview.com)

### The Bridport Prize 2005

The Bridport Prize International Creative Writing Competition started in 1973 to raise funds for the development of Bridport Arts Centre. There are two categories – Poetry and Short Story.

The first prize in each category is £3000, second prize £1000 and third prize £500. An additional 10 supplementary prizes (for each category) of £50 each are awarded. The entry fee for the year 2005 is £6 per poem or story. The top four poems are entered for the *Forward Prize for Poetry*, an award not open to the general public. The long list of shortlisted stories will be read by leading London literary agents with a view to representing writers.

All entries to the competition are judged anonymously. The judges make their evaluations on the quality of the work alone. Nobody wins because of who they are, who they know or what their name sounds like. All the poems and stories go into the same pile whether the writer is famous and very experienced or the writer is entering his/her first competition. Deadline June 30 2005.

For more information and an entry form log onto the website: [www.bridportprize.org.uk](http://www.bridportprize.org.uk)

### Bright Light Multimedia - Writing Competition

Based on the theme “A Successful Life”, the competition is for Articles & Short Stories (300 – 800 words), and Poems (to 50 lines). Prizes - AU\$100, AU\$50, AU\$25, plus Bright Light product, plus publication and performance on website. Highly

Commended entries also published and performed on website. Entry Fee AU\$5 (per 2 items). Guidelines and online entry form at [www.brightlightmultimedia.com](http://www.brightlightmultimedia.com). Competition closes May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2005.

### The Bright Light Café - Submission Opportunities

Submit short stories, poetry and articles for possible publication on website and inclusion in future Bright Light Multimedia product releases. Submitted material must be ultimately positive and heart-warming. Guidelines and online submission form available at [www.brightlightmultimedia.com/BLCafe](http://www.brightlightmultimedia.com/BLCafe).

### ☞ Regular Gatherings ☞

Regular Gathering listings are printed in the March and September issues, can be viewed on the website or requested from the editor. View:

<http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/events.html>

### ☞ Talk Poem 13 ☞

From Makara  
Bill Sewell

This time it isn't cloud  
whisked up, set into landscape  
the kind that might trick  
an inexperienced sailor

into sighting a fabulous coast.  
Today the air is playing it  
straight; and that is the white  
of the South decorating the sky.

Some try to swim over;  
or there's the quick route  
along the cliff, winding up  
through hebe and gorse

on a track that clutches so hard  
it's worn to a groove  
(the sea below laying out its net  
of green and purple): to where

the batteries used to swing  
from horizon to horizon.  
Suddenly, the South sets out  
to meet you, breaking

off into islands that strain  
to become buoyant; opening up  
its channels like the space  
between arms to you:

Jump,  
is the advice, launch yourself  
into the gap; and something  
will reach out far enough  
to gather you across.

When I read this poem in *Big Weather: Poems of Wellington*, two things happened. First, and most simply, I enjoyed the poem; its graceful progression and vivid images. Secondly, the Irish Poet Seamus Heaney came to mind, particularly his ‘Station Island’ sequence; poems I wrote my MA thesis on a few years back. It seems to me that *From Makara* touches on some Heaney-like preoccupations.

One of the piercingly original observations I made about the ‘Station Island’ sequence chronicling Heaney’s pilgrimage to the island of St. Patrick’s Purgatory, was that “‘Station Island’ was a pilgrimage of circles and silences ... of the poet reaching across an empty space (or a silence), even across the threshold between life and death, to keep the conversation going, to keep stories circulating...”

Heaney was not talking about taking a leap of blind faith, and neither is Sewell in his poem, “This time it isn’t cloud/ whisked up, set into landscape/ ... Today the air is playing it/ straight”. This is no romantic ‘fabulous’ illusion, no haunting promise that doesn’t deliver. As the speaker says, from the track that is “worn to a groove” you can see that “the South sets out/ to meet you”. The speaker has the ‘big’ view, “(the sea below laying out its net/ of green and purple)” and from this vantage point, above and at the edge of things, sees so much more clearly.

The South Island is sometimes portrayed as a place of mythical status, the vast, mountainous white spaces upon which we impose our own perceptions, possibly empty and frightening or awesome and inspiring. Possibly the emptiness of a page before the words are set down. However, the speaker in the poem responds to the “the white/ of the South”, when it proves its substance by breaking into islands “that strain/ to become buoyant”. When he contemplates the advice to “launch yourself/ into the gap” it seems to me it is towards connection and communication, “like the space/ between arms to you:” rather than mythology and monologue. This jump reminds me of Heaney’s desire with his poetry to “raid the inarticulate”, with an educated guess that in doing so, as Sewell writes, “something/ will reach out far enough/ to gather you across.”

*Lynn Davidson is a Kapiti Coast poet who begins work as editor of this newsletter with the June issue..*

*Makara IN (2001) Eds O’Brien, G and White, L. Big Weather: Poems of Wellington. Mallinson Rendel.*

### ☞ Poetry Advisory Service ☞

Set up to provide writers of poetry with a written critique of a sample of their work, PAS offers focused and constructive feedback from an individual member of an experienced and published panel of poets selected for their proven teaching skills.

#### For further information, contact:



Poetry Advisory Service NZPS  
PO Box 5283  
Lambton Quay Wellington.  
[info@poetrysociety.org.nz](mailto:info@poetrysociety.org.nz)

### ☞ Correction ☞

Bernard Gadd’s KiwiHaiku published in the April newsletter should have read:

*admires handbag  
on the sill then  
Rangitoto’s Fuji*

### ☞ KiwiHaiku ☞

Anzac morning –  
in the town square  
an explosion of poppies

**Agnes Jones**  
(Carterton)

*Please submit KiwiHaiku, preferably, but not essentially, with a New Zealand theme, to the Editor at PO Box 5283, Lambton Quay, Wellington.*

**June DEADLINE IS May 23rd**