



The New Zealand Poetry Society

Te Hunga Tito Ruri o Aotearoa

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

New Zealand Poetry Society
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WELLINGTON

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This Month's Meeting

'Something to Expiate' Launch of 2003 Anthology

Thursday November 20th
7.30 p.m. Turnbull House

Readings by Winners & Contributors

Speaking of the Competition, we had hoped to include forms and instructions for the 2004 International Poetry Competition, but we are still waiting to confirm sponsorship before we can release them. But forms and instructions for the Open and Haiku sections will be available - and easy to access! - on our website on the new Competition and Anthology page. You can also request forms and instructions by e-mailing info@poetrysociety.org.nz. We plan to post entry forms and instructions before the end of November, and they will be included in the next edition of the newsletter. So keep writing over the summer holiday and submit your masterpieces to the Competition!

From the Committee

Anthology & Competition 2004

Instead of guest poets, for our November meeting we are delighted to launch the anthology of winning, commended, and other selected entries from our 2003 International Poetry Competition. In keeping with tradition, the title *Something to Expiate* is taken from one of the winning poems; this year it is from Jessica le Bas' *And I Have Something to Expiate*.

Poets included in the anthology have been invited to read on the night, which will be compered by one of our Patrons, Dame Fiona Kidman.

The anthology will be on sale that evening (or you can purchase your copy using the form included in this newsletter) and as customary, NZPS member receive a discounted price. Sales will be cash or cheque only - no credit cards or EFTPOS accepted.

Refreshments will also be complimentary - please RSVP to Margaret Vos. There will be no koha, so do feel free to buy a copy of the anthology instead! Members are welcome to bring a plate if they wish.

A complete judges' report of the 2003 Competition can also be found on our website under News and on our new Competition and Anthology page.

From the Editor

After putting together this monthly newsletter for the first time I've got nothing but the deepest respect for the hard work of Kay Wall and other editors before her.

I'm also finding out how much we rely on the reports and news that our members send in about their activities, publications, and meetings and about poetry occasions and occasions for poetry.

Please continue to do so and thereby ensure that the newsletter remains truly representative and supportive of the whole membership of the New Zealand Poetry Society. Remember that all is grist to the editorial mill!

When I was a young Brit I fully intended to be Poet Laureate one day. However, I've had more success in later years with prose than with poetry, and I haven't fully mastered the art of being a Kiwi poet, in spite of excellent advice from Alistair Paterson, Owen Bullock and others. ('Stick to the day job, Jenny'.)

However, I've read so much good work since I came here from both established and beginner poets that I know that poetry is alive and well and living in Godzone. And I am privileged to be among the company of poets.

NZPS Wellington Meeting October 16th 2003

The NZPS was delighted to host the Wellington International Poetry Festival on their inaugural night, and to welcome our six guest poets representing *A Local Flavour*. It was standing room only for the audience who didn't seem to mind going over our usual time to hear the guest poets. Poets were not limited to reading peace poems or from published works, which gave great variety and breadth to the evening.

The evening's readings, upon request of Mike Eager, were dedicated to Simon Williamson, a well-known Wellington poet who died three years ago that night. Simon is greatly missed by his fellow Wellington poets and friends.

The elegant Stephanie de Montalk started the evening's readings, which travelled throughout New Zealand, around the world, and back again. She started us with a historical European perspective and her poems included the evocative *April 1941*, *Thermopolae*, *Hotel Hungary* and *Exercise Master*. She was followed by Denis Welch, an excellent reader who recited from memory his works including *The Hunt for the Self*, *Why We Love the Russian Poets*, *Regret*, *Passover* and *Hansel and Gretel Are Not Dead*. Then Julie Liebrich rounded out the first part of the evening in her wonderful reading voice with poems anthologised from our own competitions, including *Admission to Acute Unit*, *Suspended Venus*, *At Last the Taj*, *Before Music* and *Kissing Shuttle*.

After a break for some well-deserved liquid refreshments, the evening resumed with three mics - no, make that three Mikes! Mike Webber kicked us off again in his inimitable style (spiders, tights and all) on a poetry theme with *Personal Poetry Ping Pong*, *What Poetry Means to M*, *Reading Poetry in a Pub*, *What's Poetry?* and finished off with some new poems including one he had written that evening.

Mike Eager settled us down to a more serious reading with his works, including *Letter to London*, *Stillborn*, *Amsterdam Today*, *The Old Man and the Southerly* (which was curiously absent that evening); and finished with *Arum Lilies*. Michael O'Leary concluded the evening with his unique style. His reading included *Nuclear Family*, *For My Father in Prison, 1965*, *Revolution Song*, *Us at the Funeral of John Patrick Kennedy, 1994* and a new poem *Timihanga* (self-deception).

This evening was a great start to the Festival, a three-day cornucopia of poetry for those of us lucky enough to be in Wellington - even the weather kindly co-operated to bring poetry lovers and friends out to celebrate.

Wellington International Poetry Festival

Organising an event like the International Poetry Festival held on 16th-19th October takes an enormous amount of energy, time, commitment, and love of the arts. It also takes a lot of support, from volunteers, family and friends, from the community, and from sponsors, and none of these are easy to find these days for any of the arts. It is a testimony to the festival organisers that they were able to make this fantastic event happen and to include such a broad range of poets and venues, including an opening event at Wellington's Town Hall. Poets from around the world as well as from New Zealand participated to make it truly an international festival of poetry.

Once again I'd like to recognise the Festival organisers Ron Riddell and Saray Torres for making this event happen for Wellington and for New Zealand. (Ron and Saray are also NZPS committee members.) It is a benefit not only to our poets but a great opportunity for the public to hear them read their own works and to encourage a greater interest in the arts, and of course poetry in particular. I'm sure they will recognise they have built a great platform for future festivals - as soon as they recover from the first one!

(Reports by Margaret Vos)

Obituary Dennis McEldowney (1926 – 2003)

Writer and publisher Dennis McEldowney died on 23rd September aged 77. Founding and managing editor of Auckland University Press from 1972, McEldowney built up distinguished poetry and history lists and was a crucial figure in the development of university publishing in New Zealand. The University awarded him an honorary doctorate when he retired in 1986.

McEldowney's best-known book is still his first, *The World Regained* (1957) which won the PEN Hubert Church Award for the best prose book of the year. He was much loved by family, friends and readers, and a tribute was broadcast on Kim Hill's Saturday morning National Radio show. A fuller obituary by Michael King appears in the October/November issue of the NZ Author. Further information on the writer can be found at <http://www.bookcouncil.org.nz/writers/mceldowney.htm>

Coming Events

Wellington

Viggo Mortensen

Benefit Reading for Victoria University

It has just been announced that Lord of the Rings star Viggo Mortensen, who is also an accomplished poet, is to give a fundraising poetry reading for the International Institute of Modern Letters at Victoria University.

He will read his work at City Gallery alongside exciting new writers and Victoria graduates Tusiata Avia, Hinemoana Baker, and Cliff Fell. Bill Manhire, who directs Victoria's creative writing programme, will introduce Viggo Mortensen.

All proceeds from the benefit reading are donated to a scholarship fund for students enrolled in the creative writing workshops at Victoria University.

The Benefit Reading will be held at 6 p.m. on Saturday 29th November 2003 in the City Gallery Wellington, Civic Square. Tickets @ \$50 Booking essential: please phone 04 801 3017 or e-mail art.gallery@wcc.govt.nz.

Wellington Windrift

The Windrift Haiku group meets for an extra meeting on Thursday November 20th at 2 p.m. at the home of Jeanette Stace, 58 Cecil Road Wadestown. Those on the mailing list will receive an invitation with suggested 'exercises'. Others interested please ask for this catalyst sheet.

Enquiries to Jeanette (ph 04 473 6227, or e-mail njstace@actrix.gen.nz).

Quintessence

Quintessence is an exhibition in association with the New Zealand School of Dance Graduation Season by Leigh Brewer (new bronze dance sculptures), Sameena Yoon (artist) and Jo Thorpe (poet). The show is based on dance poems by Jo Thorpe, author of *Len and Other Poems* and a graduate of Victoria's 2001 MA Workshop.

November 5th – 14th. New Zealand School of Dance, Te Whaea. Viewing hours 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Around the Country

Auckland

Magazine is a new, annual arts journal to be launched on 14th November at the Grey Lynn Community Library Hall, 474 New North Road, with an exhibition of art and musical performance, along with readings of published work. *Magazine* includes poetry from Janet Charman, Owen Bullock, Catherine Mair, Richard Taylor, Jack Ross, Julie Puia, Hallvard Viken (Norway), Lee Dowrick, stories from Amy Muldoon (USA) and Jacqueline Crompton Ottoway, an interview with playwright and director Patrick Graham, reviews too, along with visual art by Barry Linton, Cornelius Stone, etc. For further info, please e-mail bright_com@xtra.co.nz

Courage Day is to be celebrated in Auckland on November 16th.

In November each year PEN Centres throughout the world celebrate the International Day of the Imprisoned Writer. It is a day of remembrance for those incarcerated for telling their stories, but also a celebration of freedom of speech and expression.

The NZ PEN Centre, which is incorporated into The New Zealand Society of Authors (NZSA), decided to name this day Courage Day after two NZ writers. James Courage (1903-1963) was a novelist and poet who expressed his homosexual orientation in his writing and because of this had his works banned. His grandmother, Sarah Courage, had her book - a description of colonial life - burned by neighbours who resented comments she made about them. 'Courage' also seemed an appropriate word for the purpose.

This year Courage Day will be celebrated in Auckland at St Matthew's Cathedral. This year we seek to widen and deepen the focus from Imprisoned Writers to those who struggle to keep their voices alive in a global context of continual war, fear and persecution.

From 5–7 p.m. at St Matthew's Cathedral, we will provide an opportunity for people from all cultures to come together in an affirmation of the unity of the human spirit and their common cause in freedom of speech and cultural expression. There will be a line up of prominent speakers plus music and performance.

The organisers need volunteers to help with the distribution of fliers and on the evening. For further information and/or to volunteer your help, please contact Mike Johnson: e-mail: m.johnson@xtra.co.nz

Nelson

Yaza Poets

The October Meeting of Yaza Poets was recorded for the local Radio Station, Fresh FM. The evening opened with Leslie Haddon dressed in full 1950s regalia, reading a 1955 article entitled *The Good Housewife Guide* – which contained the rules every good wife should follow. Though deadly serious at the time it was written it was received with much humour by the audience.

Michael Lee continued the theme of marital life with his poem *The Wife*. Benjamin Nathan gave some very pointed tips in his poem on how to deal with a married woman offering you an affair. The theme of nature and human relationships dominated the evening especially in the poetry from Joan Lees, Panni Palasti, Dorothy Pallesen, Jean Bird, David Perrott, Adele Chapman and Lorraine Cahusac.

The evening contained a mixture of poets from the well-known Gordon Challis, Penny Hall, Colin Gunn, Cliff Fell and Jessica Le Bas to the first timers. Regular readers Mark Raffills, Gaelynne Pound and Ian Burn also entertained. The evening was well compered by Martina Kingston.

Yaza Poets meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Yaza Café – new and visiting poets are always welcome.

Bandaid by Ian Burn

When I was little
and I cut myself
my mum would fix it with a bandaid,
and a kiss.
But now
when I've left the place a mess
and the girlfriend has gone off in a huff
Vacuuming serves
as a good domestic bandaid
And a kiss needs to be approached with some
caution.
And when Helen needs to make up with Tony
for the nasty things she's said about his war
she takes lots of advisors and they treat the wounds
with the document sized bandaids of bureaucracy,
and when this is done H and T get to do a nice little
photo-op kiss on
the cheek
Which is all very well.
But what if it's cancer?

(Report by Gaelynne Pound)

Rawene

Biennial Book Festival Friday-Saturday 7th – 8th November

Every two years Rawene celebrates its readers and writers, and this year's Festival has a decidedly Hokianga flavour with most of the speakers and panel members having affiliation with the local Ngapuhi iwi.

The programme begins with a powhiri on Friday morning, and includes book launches, workshops and writer discussions. *Telling Our Stories* is a panel of three Maori writers, including Toi Maihi, a Kaikohe artist, weaver, illustrator and poet and writer. Her new book, a collection of poems, *Whakaaro Aroha*, was launched recently at the Tuna Cafe in Moerewa.

For further information, please contact Janine McVeagh (ph 09 405-7529 or e-mail jmcveagh@clear.net.nz) or Beth Austin (ph 09 434-0227 or e-mail bethau@free.net.nz.)

Wanganui

This January's Wanganui Summer School offers among others a poetry workshop with Vivienne Plumb. Each workshop runs for four days, 11th – 14th January 2004. Full details are at www.summerschool.ucol.ac.nz, or you can e-mail co-ordinator Libby Gray at l.gray@ucol.ac.nz.

Wellington

Prime Minister's Awards

Your newsletter editor was proud to represent Tauranga Writers and the Bravado Editorial Collective at this celebratory function. I travelled down to Wellington with Auckland writer Raewyn Alexander, editor of *Magazine*, braving the Desert Road and the first fall of snow I've seen in New Zealand.

Three 'giant kauri' in New Zealand literature - Janet Frame, Michael King and Hone Tuwhare – were recognised in these inaugural Prime Minister's Awards for Literary Achievement, held in association with Creative New Zealand and celebrated in the Grand Hall of Parliament Buildings.

Aimed at writers who have made an outstanding contribution to New Zealand literature, the Awards were presented to Janet Frame of Dunedin for fiction; Michael King of Opoutere on the Coromandel Peninsula for non-fiction; and Hone Tuwhare of Kaka Point in South Otago, for poetry. Each writer received \$60,000.

Announcing the Awards, Helen Clark, Prime Minister and Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, said that Janet Frame, Michael King and Hone Tuwhare stand out as huge contributors to New Zealand writing. They are the result of an additional \$1 million per year to the literary sector, announced by the Government in May 2002.

Writers International News

Writers International (NZ) meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on the 1st Floor, Wellington Chamber Building (Town Hall). The last meeting was held on September 30th. Chair for the meeting was Amanda Scotherm and there were readings by Kevin Cudby – the next instalment from the *Jason & Simon* series; Naomi O'Connor - poetry, Ron Riddell - reading poems on the theme of the First International Poetry Festival held in Wellington on October 16th – 19th, which was 'peace and reconciliation'.

Some events, featuring a combination of poetry and music, were linked to the 7th Wellington International Jazz Festival. A number of poets travelled from overseas to attend the Festival. They included the internationally acclaimed Turkish poet - musician Turkey Ilicak, the distinguished French novelist and poet, Charles Juliet and two exciting new voices from the Cook Islands, Jean Tekura Mason and Vaine Wichman.

Editor of the silenced publication *Migrant Voice*, Sala Abraham is about to leave New Zealand in search of better opportunities in Australia. Unable to get equal employment opportunities in New Zealand after five years of hard work and disheartening experiences he has decided to move on.

Sala was a dedicated volunteer working with refugees and migrants. He worked hard to give hope to newcomers to New Zealand who felt isolated, ignored and lost. All of this took courage, talent, generosity, gratitude, creativity and intelligence. However, none of it seemed to count when it came to employment opportunities. For further information, please contact: purialvarez@paradise.net.nz

Whakatane

Report from the East Bay Live Poets

East Bay Live Poets were delighted to be asked to participate in the Poem-Paint-Patch Challenge for the Positively Patchwork Exhibition. This was the brainwave of Nancy Neilson, a member of a local patchworkers group. She is also past-president of our Community Arts Council.

We were not sure what to expect but found that the theme of our work was captured in the fantastic use of colour, form and expression by both painters and patchworkers. It was so rewarding to see our poems come to life.

We were amazed at the success of the whole concept and the positive feedback from the public was a real buzz. Participating in this event meant we had another forum in which to present our work and we were very pleased with the result.

Each of the nine poets who participated were presented with a photographic record as a thank you for participating which will be a treasured reminder of a fantastic opportunity.

The following poem by Esther Geerlings was featured in the exhibition:

All Growed Up

by Esther Geerlings

Why don't you buy lollies with your 20c?
You should put your gummies on
and jump in those puddles.
Aren't you gonna pick up that shiny thing
on the footpath?
can't you race your bike any more
or pull wheelies?
Try and do a flip on the trampoline.
Don't you 'member how to make boats
to sail on a gutter that's overflowed?
Why don't you cross it out
'stead of using that white stuff?
Why don't you sit in the trolley anymore?
How come you drink coffee 'stead of Milo?
Why don't you stay up real real late?
Till 9:00 so you can have a midnight feast.
Can't you play tiggy any more?
Are you a growned up?
Cheers

(Report by Mary Pullar)

Publications

New Zealand poets showcased
by New York publisher

Fusebox 2 is produced by the New York publisher Rattapallax Press. Rattapallax works closely with the United Nations and UNESCO in programming events around the world for World Poetry Day, and has published work from leading cultural figures like Billy Collins, Marilyn Hacker, Lou Reed, and Breyten Breytenbach.

View of a Skipping Stone: Contemporary New Zealand Poetry is a Catholic sampler from the Protestant editor, David Howard, that includes work by James Brown, Kay McKenzie Cooke, Paula Green, Michael Harlow, Dinah Hawken, Mike Johnson, Michele Leggott, Sally Ann McIntyre, Cilla McQueen, Emma Neale, James Norcliffe, Chris Orsman, Richard Reeve, and Brian Turner.

One of three international features in *Fusebox 2*, it is complemented by *Poetry from Slovenia*, edited by Brane Mozetic & Suzana Tratnik, and *Indian Poets Respond to the Gujarat Riots*, edited by Jeet Thayil. Find *Fusebox 2* online at <http://www.rattapallax.com/fusebox2.htm>.

Magazine - 'loaded with arts, fire and boodle - is a new arts journal brought out under the direction of Raewyn Alexander. *Magazine* will be launched at the Grey Lynn Community Library at 6pm on Friday 14th November with an art exhibition and musical performance (Tamasin Taylor of Peachy Keen on violin, Gerhard on guitar with percussionist). Please RSVP bright.com@xtra.co.nz, say the organisers, 'so we get the nibbles and refreshments ordered properly'.

Magazine is sponsored by BF Publishing and Bright Communication in association with UNITEC School of Communication, and with thanks to Poetry NZ.

Red Moon rising

The latest issue of *Red Moon Anthology* showcasing the best haiku in English during 2002, includes works by no fewer than six New Zealanders (no Aussies!) as follows:

Ernest J Berry

doorbell

my thoughts
dress up
desert heat
the lizard disappears
into a snake

Greeba Brydges-Jones

monday
pegging the wind*
into our sheets

(*Chosen as this years RMA title. Congratulations, Greeba!)

Owen Bullock

ex-junkie
two bags
in his teacup

Jeffrey Harpeng

twilight drizzle
at the accident scene
scattered oranges

Richard von Sturmer

hot day in Kyoto
people pass by God of Wind
fanning themselves

Alan Wells

At the end of its leaf
the inchworm, feeling
for a foothold on the wind

(Ernest J Berry is co-editor of *Pegging the Wind: a Red Moon Anthology* available from redmoon@shentel.net for \$US16.95.)

Two new poetry titles by Stephen Oliver

Deadly Pollen, described as a poetry chapbook, is published by the Word Riot Press, Middleton, New Jersey and distributed in New Zealand by Addenda. *Ballads, Satire & Salt: a Book of Diversions* is illustrated by Matt Ottley and published by the Greywacke Press. It is distributed in Australia by Dennis Jones & Associates, and in New Zealand by Addenda.

Stephen Oliver, who is now a resident of Sydney, grew up in Brooklyn West, Wellington and is the author of twelve titles of poetry, including *Night of Warehouses: Poems 1978-2000* (HeadworX, 2001). He is widely represented by poems published in New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, USA, Canada, the UK and South Africa.

Website: <http://people.smartchat.net.au/~sao/>

Rob Jackaman's thirteenth book of poems, *Apes Road: Poems since 1997*, was launched by Hazard Press in Christchurch on 1st October 2003.

Peter Bland's two new poetry collections *Let's Meet* and *Ports of Call* were published recently by Steele Roberts. For further information please contact books@publish.net.nz.

Stylus is an e-zine that attracts international interest. The haiku editor is Janice M. Bostok. Go online at <http://www.styluspoetryjournal.com>.

haiku wine is a duet of prize-winning haiku by Ernest J. Berry and an'ya. Each book is hand-stitched with natural fibres and complimented by Ernie's ink paintings. These unique, large print, limited edition volumes reflect the largo and allegro of two of the world's most accomplished haikin and are available in the Southern Hemisphere only from E. Barry PO Box 272 Picton @ \$30, plus \$5 p. & p. *haiku for a moonless night* by an'ya is also available – you can buy both for \$60 incl. p. & p. Enquiries: bluberry@xtra.co.nz.

Reflections from the Moon, published in 2003 by Yellow Moon, is a collection of prize-winning sonnets. Editor Beverley George says, "Poets intending to enter our sonnet competitions may find it helpful in defining the form." \$8 from Yellow Moon PO Box 37 Pearl Beach 2256 Australia.

first rays of the sun, linked verse and linked tanka by Catherine Mair and Patricia Prime, with sumi-e artwork by Janice M. Bostok. Katikati, 2003. Original voices exploring new and important boundaries. For details e-mail pprime@ihug.co.nz.

Reviews

El Milagro de Medellin y otros poemas by Ron Riddell (2002) Casa Nueva, Medellin, Colombia

Auckland born Ron Riddell is the author of some dozen books of poetry including his 1988 *Elegy* in memory of Barry Mitcalfe. He attended the International Poetry Festival in Medellin, has presented his work in Chile, and now has returned to New Zealand with his Colombian wife Saray Torres. Together they are taking an active part in the Wellington poetry scene.

Ron Riddell is a man of versatile talents, which include music and painting. Anyone who has heard him will know how much his voice adds to the text in his public readings.

In a long, appreciative introduction to his book he pays tribute to the spirit of Medellin where 'poetry is vividly seen, vividly experienced. It is a beautiful bird of paradise! A creature fashioned out of passion;

arising out of the Anitoquian spirit. It breaks its fetters and soars into the heady Andean atmosphere.'

Riddell sees the poetry and flower festivals of Medellin as bravely pitted against 'the blood-dimmed tide' of violence and civil war in Colombia. The book takes its title from the long poem which ends it - a love song to Medellin in all its vibrancy, its sordid magnificence - a city which was a revelation to this New Zealand poet, one which he recognised as a spiritual home:

'I want to eat the feast of dry bread
in your riverbed of fable and fiesta'

and

'Everywhere I taste it - this elixir of soul -
from your pavements, your churches, your
bomb-sites and bullet-scarred buildings.'

This collection gives the poem in English on the left page and the Spanish version on the right. It opens with a love poem for his grandmother. Others are written for friends including Hone Tuwhare ('I am alone with the light, / speaking to the sea ...')

The New Zealand settings in the first half contrast in their spacious emptiness with the teeming life of the Colombian city. They are suffused with light ('I send you this token ... / in the spirit of the light, / which blesses this coast. / Such light, such love.'). Poems like *First Light* and *At Ohope* are simple, ecstatic utterances in which the poet fuses with nature. In experiencing light, the ocean, 'every sense is attuned'.

'I am the path lit by silver puddles
and a wash of starlight -

I am the dark space
where the light enters.

The Empty Tomb (for Colin McCahon); a visit to *Jerusalem on the Wanganui*, *Good Friday and St Francis Knew* reveal the poet's sense of the mystical. These are poems of praise.

'He knew how to empty himself,
to walk the sacred way.'

Ron Riddell writes as someone at home in the world, alert yet at peace, whether weeping for his beloved Colombia or surrendering to its marvels.

For sheer verve, it would be hard to match this voice. It can also speak with simplicity and serenity:

'The rain has eased
and all is still.

Water beads are loosed
from silver boughs.
I walk beneath the street lamp
through the arc of light;

Deeper yet, into
the freedoms of the night.

One world follows another.
I asked you to and you -

you go deeper too.'

(Review by Robin Fry)

Working Voices
by John O'Connor & Eric Mould
(2003) Hallard Press

An eager crowd gathered at the Madras Café Bookshop on 24th September to hear these two high profile poets launch their new book.

John has been prominent in the local poetry scene for many years and has a long publication record. Eric has been winning awards lately, and is the present chair of the Canterbury Poets' Collective.

At the Devil's Knob
by Eric Mould

At the Devil's Knob turn your back
on infernal ground

but not right on the corner as we used to.

The turn-off's been shifted west,
around to the Motukarara side by
a chain or two.

No more having to cut across,
almost blindly if you're coming from town

some joker's got his foot down
on the Birdlings straight

They've filled in the cattlestop

the one that always clattered & clanged,
just before you passed the macrocarpas
around the old school grounds

Eric and John have in common that they both spring from working class backgrounds, and found that many of the poems they wrote 'concerned the experience of working New Zealanders'. In the prefatory note they say that they found '[their] subject markedly unrepresented in New Zealand poetry'. Creating a joint book in the voices of working people seemed like an idea whose time had come.

MC David Gregory opened the evening by saying the book was a treat to read after hard labour, and its authors were toilers in the field of words. Fiona Farrell, who launched the book, said she had been asked to provide a critical commentary on the poems. She said that she reads primarily for content and is not an abstract critic at all, but would give it a go.

There were two parts to the book, linked by an awareness of class. It depicted a strong and vibrant world, superbly masculine. Often the voices were heard in direct speech, and there was a self-deprecating humour arising from them, with little or no authorial comment. She said a tender and wonderful beauty was created from an often shabby reality, which she likened to Robin Morrison's photography.

Brother
by John O'Connor

At the end of his life
he sat in the sun
at Nazareth House, just one
of the old men without wife

or family. Both wrists
were held by a leather strap
having had a stroke? nap
meal mass and shower, twists

in the rope he called vocation.
His work had been teaching,

and in that he'd seen
over fifty years, location

after bare location, after the place
he termed home, where
he had been raised in fear
of God 'and no other face',

who had wanted when younger
and back from training for a while
to dance with the girls, to smile
and maybe join in the boy's laughter.

...Eric and John then took turns at reading a selection of the poems. Eric's poems are about hunting, dogs, freezing works, rural activities, family, and events like a phenomenal lightning storm. The voice is that of a rural working man, capable of wonder, who is firmly rooted in the local landscape on and around Banks Peninsula.

John O'Connor extends a side of his writing we have seen and enjoyed before. His voice is that of an urban working person, enduring rather than enjoying a Catholic upbringing in central Christchurch. The people vary in age and sex, but unite in stoicism at facing their grim world, which is often softened by humour or pathos.

John and Eric say, "We do not see ourselves as objective observers of these aspects of working culture - they're often enough our voices." To judge from the reaction of the people at the launch, they have hatched a great idea, and the book will be a popular addition to the poetry of this country. You can order *Working Voices* from Hallard Press 43 Landscape Road Papatoetoe Auckland, for \$20 (incl. p. & p.)

Kokako/Spin No. 46
ed. by Patricia Prime & Bernard Gadd
with artwork by Ernest J. Berry

Oh, what a cornucopia of goodies is here spread out before me. I would like to make reference to 'the discerning editorial palate of Prime & Gadd', but the deft economies of the writing would reproach me. I am not naturally 'into' haiku, tanka, senryu and other brief forms which, I am told, would be extremely good for me to practise. I remain obstinately and accidentally verbose.

Which is not to say that I cannot appreciate a small-scale subtlety:

'wedged behind Mother's photo
from 1942
a stranger's love note
folded over a spray
of forget-me-nots'

Linda Jeanette Ward (USA)

In the search for brevity, for 'the heart of the matter', reading *Kokako 46* has been delicately stimulating and gently instructional. Last night I was reading it in bed and woke up with a haiku in my head ('I need sleep. The cat/wants food and wakes me, tapping/my nose politely'.)

This is a rare event lately, and I am sure I owe it to an unconscious desire to be counted among the

exalted company featured here. *Spin/Kokako* is published twice a year, and the new managing editor is Owen Bullock (42 Galbraith Street Waihi, or e-mail bullocktrail@value.net.nz).

The quality of work has been consistent over the years. That is no accident and owes much to the enthusiasm and hard work of outgoing editors Tony Chad and Jack Ross, and to the input of Bernard Gadd and Patricia Prime.

The Stones Stand

Rangi Faith

for each of us
there will be words
in the trees
& on the hillsides

& *the stones stand*

for each of us
a singing
f songs
& a falling of earth

& *the stones stand*

& at the gate,
water falling from the air

& *the stones stand*.

I shall think of these stones as markers of sanity – which is how I think of good poetry.

The Dancer
by Celia Power-Loeffler
(2003) National Pacific Press

Celia Power-Loeffler's poems in this beautiful production are, in the main, descriptive observations of both the inner and outer life. Many have a sharper edge that both intrigues and satisfies. Power-Loeffler is obviously a thoughtful and responsive writer.

Some of the poems slide too deeply into the personal for me, but that is not something every reader will object to. Enough of her words lodge delicately in the mind and stay to make *The Dancer* a worthwhile study.

Please read over the page Celia Power-Loeffler's elegy for her father, which demonstrates the power of simplicity.

Snow in September

My father died
after the fashion
of his living

No fuss or complaint
the beginning of a smile
in his eyes,
lying neatly in his bed

Leaving on the linen sheet
the outline of a
mariner's chart
with no directions.

Yellow Moon 13 Winter 2003

Yellow Moon is a literary magazine for writers of haiku and other verse, edited by Beverley George and with sumi-e by Janice M. Bostok. *Yellow Moon 13* is a compilation of prize-winning poems from the competitions which it organises, most of which concentrate on particular poetic forms – in this instance, the sestina, which is a complex form of 36 lines. So to publish twelve is generous, and brave.

The articles focus on how to write haiku and related forms of poetry, and demonstrate how haiku is now an international rather than a purely Japanese form. *Some Japanese poetic terms explained* by Susuma Takiguchi, Chair of the World Haiku Club, was particularly helpful.

feeling the cold
I gather a load of wood
for the pot-belly –
opening its door I find
ashes of that last year's fires

Patricia Prime

Yellow Moon is an Australian publication, but several other New Zealand poets have found a place among the chosen entries. The mixture of competition and compilation, theory and practice has also found good support from around the world.

Representing New Zealand: Elaine King from Auckland with *Ride* and a haiku; Ernest Berry, Picton; Veronica Haughey, Wellington; Jeanette Stace, Wellington; Kay McKenzie-Cooke, Dunedin, and Nola Borrell from Lower Hutt (Commended) – Nola's poem follows, in full.

phone silent –
a fly keeps hitting
the window pane

waiting halfway
through my new haiku
he arrives

night chill –
only moonlight
comes and goes

sky tilts from blue to red
walking apart
our shadows

sun bloodies the sky
silently our shadows
sip wine.

Nola Borell

Other News

The Canadian Poetry Association

The CPA was founded in 1985 as a collaborative effort by a number of poets with the objective of creating a community that would 'represent poets and non-poets alike, openly and democratically in one organisation regardless of personal bias, publication criteria, or professional capability.'

In pursuit of these aims, the association has exceeded its mandate over the years by connecting with writers in Canada and now around the world. Their next objective is to work within the larger global community, with other poetry and writers' organisations. "Creating a more global presence for poetry will enable our members to become familiar with and collaborate with poets from other areas in Canada and around the world and in turn introduce Canadian poets and poetry to areas that otherwise might not be familiar with our talent."

To this end, CPA is interested in partnering with poetry and other writing groups. They would like to share their resources and offer a publishing collaboration in the way of anthologies, contests or any other project NZ groups might propose. If you're interested, please contact Stacey Lynn Newman, Chair, Marketing Committee: info@yawpmedia.com.

Dr. Paul Millar wins CLL Writer's Award

Dr. Paul Millar, a specialist in New Zealand and Pacific Literature and a leading expert on James K. Baxter, has won the Copyright Licensing Ltd. Writer's Award. Dr. Millar said the \$35,000 award would allow him to scale down his work as a senior lecturer at Victoria University and complete his biography of writer Bill Pearson by the end of 2004. Pearson's story embodies some key developments in 20th century life in New Zealand, including intellectual culture, left wing politics, homosexuality and the development of Maori academia.

"Although Bill's output is not large by current standards, every piece of writing is a carefully cut and polished gem," said Dr. Millar.

Poetry, Le Rugby, and La Belle France

French poet, novelist and rugby follower, Charles Juliet, is the new writer in residence at the Randell Trust Cottage. The 68-year-old writer has published over thirty books including collections of poems, short stories, autobiographical novels, and plays. He also has a close association with the world of Fine Arts: he has written about the painters Cézanne, Bram van Velde and Giacometti, and has contributed literary texts to art books in collaboration with contemporary painters.

Charles Juliet will give a series of public lectures in the coming weeks. The programme of lectures (most of which will have an English translation provided) can be found on the following website: www.france.net.nz. Monsieur Juliet can be contacted through Jean-Marc Philippeau at the French Embassy on 04-802 77 79

Prize in Modern Letters shortlist announced

Thirty-nine entries for the prestigious \$60,000 Prize in Modern Letters have been short listed to four authors - two novelists and two poets, as follows:

William Brandt: *Alpha Male* (1999) & *The Book of the Film of the Story of my Life* (2002):

Victoria University Press

Kate Camp: *Unfamiliar Legends of the Stars* (1998) & *Realia* (2001).

Victoria University Press.

Glenn Colquhoun: *The Art of Walking Upright* (1999) & *Playing God* (2002).

Steele Roberts Ltd.

Geoff Cush: *Son of France* (2002).

Random House.

Professor Bill Manhire, Director of the International Institute of Modern Letters (IIML) at Victoria University, says the finalists' work now goes forward to be read by a panel of American jurors, convened by Eric Olsen, Director of the IIML at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. The winner will be announced at an award ceremony in Wellington during Writers and Readers Week at the International Arts Festival in March 2004.

Glenn Schaeffer, the literary activist who founded the International Institute of Modern Letters at Victoria, funds the Prize in Modern Letters.

Multi-media opportunity for writers

Glenn Heenan is an emerging photojournalist who has put together an insightful, interesting look at the New Zealand people, our language and culture. He has been photographing and interviewing people up and down the country, from all sorts of backgrounds, who have shared their stories and experiences.

Sensibility is a contemporary photography exhibition with a bold twist. The project will have 15 outstanding photographs of the contemporary New Zealand landscape combined with a writer's reaction to them. These writings will be printed onto glass in Braille with the photographs displayed underneath.

The exhibition is to be presented in a public space with equal access for both the blind and sighted community. What will be created is a collection of art works that a broad spectrum of the community will be able to experience and enjoy. In particular, people who are unable to participate in the traditional realms of visual arts but are able to read Braille and can experience the descriptive writings of leading contemporary New Zealand authors about the scenes depicted.

Glenn needs 15 New Zealand authors from any ethnic background, adult and children's, poetry and prose writing backgrounds to take part in this exciting project. For more information please contact Glenn Heenan e-mail: slideway@ihug.co.nz

Griffin Poetry Prize

It has been announced that Bill Manhire, the International Institute of Modern Letters' co-director, will join US poet Billy Collins and Canadian poet Phyllis Webb in judging the 2004 Griffin Poetry Prize. The judges are selected annually by the Griffin Trustees: Margaret Atwood, Robert Hass, Michael Ondaatje, Robin Robertson and David Young.

Collins, Manhire and Webb will be judging books of poetry published in the 2003 calendar year. The shortlist will be announced in New York on April 1st 2004.

The Canadian \$80,000 Griffin Poetry Prize, divided between International and Canadian winners, will be presented at the awards event in Toronto on June 3rd 2004, following the shortlisted poets' reading on June 2nd.

The Griffin Trust was created to serve and encourage excellence in poetry written in English anywhere in the world. Eligible collections of poetry, including translations, must be submitted by publishers in the calendar year of their publication. For further information, check out the website: <http://www.griffinpoetryprize.com/index.html>.

New Zealand poems online

As reported elsewhere, an anthology of New Zealand poems, *View of Skipping Stone*, which includes work by editor David Howard and other noted poets, has recently gone online at <http://www.rattapallax.com/fusebox2.htm>.

The most comprehensive listing of online New Zealand poems is at the New Zealand Electronic Poetry Centre: <http://www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz/misc/online.ptml>.

The IIML's own annual anthology of the *Best New Zealand Poems* can be read online at <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters/bnzp/>.

KiwiPoet

Check out a poetry forum and request information about KiwiPoet at: <http://groups.msn.com/KiwiPoet>. Registration is required. The purpose is to build a community where poets can share poems, feedback, and good humour in a supportive atmosphere. All who would like to take part in contributing to the KiwiPoet community are welcome.

Poetry on air

The Bard of Christchurch, Steve Thomas has broadcast poetry on National Radio for the last 4 years, Friday at 4.45pm In Touch With NZ. If you want to hear his weekly poem tune in.

Dunedin community radio (Hills FM) has a half-hour of local poetry every second Tuesday from 6 to 6.30. Tune in and check it out.

Poet's hanging

Robert Cross's photographic portrait of last year's writer in residence, Chris Orsman, has now been hung in Glenn Schaeffer House alongside his portrait of Charlotte Randall. Poet and novelist look quite cheerful in one another's company.

Cross has been photographing Victoria's writers in residence since Joe Musaphia was awarded the inaugural fellowship in 1979. You can check out earlier portraits online via the NZ Electronic Text Centre's archive, *Writing Wellington*, by visiting <http://www.nzetc.org/etexts/RobWrit/index.html>.

(Click on name then on small photo to enlarge.)

***Dreamcatcher* goes Kiwi**

A number of New Zealand poets were included in the latest issue of *Dreamcatcher*, a prestigious UK literary arts journal edited by Canadian expat Paul Sutherland, and supported generously by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

Due to the exigencies of space and of funding restrictions, this was not an entire issue dedicated to Kiwi writers, as originally envisaged by Paul and by his New Zealand co-editors, Jenny Argante and Mark Pirie of HeadworX Press. However, it is still a generous representation of New Zealand talent. (Mark has since gone on to sell a further representative collection of New Zealand writing to another magazine in the UK. Well done, Mark – you open so many doors for us all.)

The front cover featured scenes and symbols from New Zealand and proclaimed a *Special Feature: Works from contemporary New Zealand authors*. Inside was a melange of poems, stories and articles. There was a scholarly round-up of the local scene by guru Alistair Paterson – himself no slouch when it comes to extolling the virtues of New Zealand writing abroad. Denis Welch's contribution was reprinted with kind permission of *The Listener* and the author (*No ordinary son: Hone Tuwhare goes forth* IN *The Listener*, April 2002).

Peter Farrell, a relative newcomer to the Wellington literary scene though not to its cultural life, added an inviting description of *The World Headquarters of the Verb: the Wellington Writers' Walk*.

Other writers included Sue Emms, now fiction editor of *Bravado* magazine with her short story *Cat and Mouse*, and Owen Bullock, its poetry editor, a Cornish insight into *Mining*. In addition, there were fine poems from such luminaries as Elisabeth Smither, Catherine Mair and Patricia Prime, James Norcliffe and Cilla McQueen. (Am I the only person who thinks *Living Here* is the quintessentially New Zealand poem?) Congratulations to Kay McGregor of Rotorua Mad Poets for a first-time publication in the UK of *Canterbury Gold*.

There were some difficulties with such long-range co-operation but the end result was extremely worthwhile and it will be good to see some other international exchanges of poetry and prose between editors of literary arts magazines.

Poetry landmarks in the UK

October marked the 10th anniversary of National Poetry Day in the UK and the search is on to identify poetry landmarks. The Poetry Society has joined with BBC radio presenter Ian Macmillan to locate the country's poetry landmarks and archive them into an interactive map that allows poetry enthusiasts to find the sites throughout the UK.

For more information or if you're planning to make a writer's tour of Great Britain, please visit www.poetrysociety.org.uk/landmark.htm

Correction & Apology

Catherine Mair wrote to us as follows: "Thanks for the review of *first rays*. There is, depending on how one sees it, an interesting misprint. I wrote 'their red underbellies - darting swallows' and this became 'their fed underbellies- darting swallow'. This gives a comical image of one overfed swallow glorying in a plural nomenclature. Is it worth reprinting correctly in the next newsletter? I am a bit of a fuss pot when it comes to details."

I believe it was Oscar Wilde who said a poet can survive anything except a misprint, and it is important for any writer to care about detail. Catherine, we are very sorry —and we'll try very hard not to let it happen again. Here is the poem again, in its entirety – hopefully this time without error.

A Gap in the Trees by Patricia Prime & Catherine Mair

through a gap in the willows - the river
ominous cracks - wind in the gum trees
wasps hover above the haiku boulder
bitten by an insect the dog chases her shadow
moving downstream - sunlight on water
their red underbellies - darting swallows
a sudden squall - heading home against the westerly
glancing, the heron glides from its feeding ground
we step over acorns strewn on the pathway
not yet fallen leaves crisp & curl - early winter
removing our shoes on the porch - deep sighs

Congratulations ...

... to MA graduate Tusiata Avia whose acclaimed performance show, *Wild Dogs Under My Skirt*, was part of Circa's Fresh Young Playwrights Season', 15th – 19th October. Her poetry collection of the same name will be published by Victoria University Press early in 2004. Kim Hill interviewed Tusiata Avia on her National Radio show on October 4th. Further info: <http://www.circa.co.nz/Fresh.htm>

... to Ernest J. Berry of Picton, among winners of the Jack Stamm International Haiku Award with two haiku commended, and reproduced below:

landfill
yesterday's headlines
still sinking in

scenic drive
i'm interrupted
by her snores

... to Andrew Surridge of Upper Hutt, two of whose poems, *Corona Australis* and *Monoceros*, are included in the recently launched Astropoetica website <http://astropoetica.com> Mapping the Stars through Poetry.

A warm welcome to ...

the following new members: Jacqueline Crompton Ottaway of Birkenhead, Auckland, Ann Helen Nutsford of Otaki, Sydney Granger of Manurewa and the Happy Oasis in Tryphena.

If you would like to become a member, the annual subscription for overseas members is \$30. For those living in NZ, the sub is \$15. From October 1, please pay HALF the appropriate subscription rate. Send a cheque to The Treasurer, PO Box 5283 Lambton Quay Wellington.

Regular Gatherings

Auckland

Poetry Live meets at Pog Mahones Tavern, 108 Ponsonby Road on Tuesday nights. Contact: Judith McNeil, (09) 360 2510.

The Glad Poets of Henderson meet at the Waitakere Community Resource Centre Ratanui Street Henderson on the last Sunday of each month, 2.30-4.30 p.m. Contact: Maxine Green (ph 09 836 7280).

The Pub Poets meet in the Royal Room at The Cock and Bull Botany Town Centre at 7.30 p.m. on the first and third Monday of the month. For more information contact Alan (ph 09 272 4104).

Passionate Tongues is a monthly reading at Temple, 486 Queen Street from 8 p.m. There's also an open Poetry Slam (prizes). \$5 or \$3 entry. Contact Michael Rudd: (ph 09 441 7034 or 021 299 86 43, or e-mail oralink@hotmail.com). Michael is also running the occasional **Vocal Point** at The Depot 28 Clarence Street Devonport.

Balclutha

Meets every first Wednesday of the month from 7 p.m. at The LumberJack Café Owaka (15 minutes down Southern Scenic Route). Information: Gwyneth Williamson (ph 03 418983).

Christchurch

The Airing Cupboard Women Poets meet at 10 a.m. every 2 weeks (starting from February 1st) at The Quiet Room in the YMCA on Hereford Street. Ring Judith Walsh (ph 03 359 74330 or Barbara Strang (ph 03 376 4486).

Another group is **The Live Poets' Society**, which meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Linwood Community Arts Centre (corner of Worcester Street/Stammore Road). Contact Alan McLean (ph 03 389 0908).

A haiku group, **The Small White Teapot**, meets upstairs at the Mainstreet Café Colombo Street, at 7.30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month. Contact Barbara Strang (ph 03 376 4486) for more information.

Lost Friday Salon. 7.30 p.m., last Friday of the month, upstairs Mainstreet Café, Colombo Street. 'Open text surgery and the laying on of words in the company of the muse.' Contact Jeffery Harpeng or Eric Mould: eric.mould@xtra.co.nz.

Cromwell

Cromwell Writers meet on the last Tuesday of the month in the homes of members on a shared basis. Contact Tom Llandreth (ph 03 4451352) or e-mail tomal@xtraco.nz.

Dunedin

Fortnightly readings are held at 8.30 p.m. at the Arc Café, 135 High Street. Check with the Café itself for dates and times.

Golden Bay

Joe Bell from Milnthorpe is the Convenor of **The Golden Bay Live Poets Society**. This Society has a monthly Performance Night at the famous Mussel Inn Bush Café at Onekaka. Visiting poets are most welcome. For news of meetings contact Joe (ph 03 524 8146, fax 03 524 8047; or e-mail gbaybell@xtra.co.nz).

Hamilton

The Hamilton Poets Group meets on the last Thursday of each month at the Satellite Campus on Ruakura Road Hamilton at 7.30 p.m. Contact Penny at: pen101nz@yahoo.co.nz (ph 07 854 0378).

Hawke's Bay

The Hawke's Bay Live Poets' Society meets at 8 p.m. on the second Monday of each month (except January) at the Cat and Fiddle Ale House in Hastings. Contact Keith Thorsen (ph 06 870 9447) or email: kthorsen@xtra.co.nz

Lower Hutt

The Poets' Pub & Café (Murphy's Bar, Angus Inn) meets on the first Monday in each month at 7 p.m. Guest reader and open mike session. Contact Steven Douglas (ph 569 9904).

Nelson

The Yaza Poets meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 8.00 p.m. at Yaza Cafe Montgomery Square Nelson. New poets welcome. Contact: Martina (ph 03 548 2989) or Gaelynne (ph 03 546 8434).

Picton

The Picton Poets meet at The Cottage 75a Waikawa Road Picton at 10.30 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month. Contact Ernest Berry (ph 03 573 7774, fax 03 573 6882, or e-mail bluberry@xtra.co.nz)

Porirua

Poetry Café meets in the function room upstairs at Selby's Sports Café 1 Selby Place Porirua on the second Monday in each month. Free entry.

Rotorua

The Rotorua Mad Poets meet every Monday night at the Lakes Hotel Lake Road, 7.30-9.30 p.m. Contact: Colleen (ph 07 347 9847) or Kay (ph 07 349 0219).

Tauranga

Tauranga Writers meet on the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Staffroom, Otumoetai Primary School. For more information please contact Kellee Maree Attwood (ph 07 572 2669) or e-mail Sue Emms on sue.emms@xtra.co.nz, or fax Jenny Argante (fax 07 570 2446).

Timaru

If you are interested in the Timaru **Poetry in Motion** performance poetry group contact Karalyn Joyce (ph 03 614 7050) or e-mail karalynjoyce@xtra.co.nz.

Wanaka

Poetry Live at the Wanaka Arts Centre, first Thursday of the month 7.30 p.m. Contact Pip Sheehan (ph 03 443 4602).

Wellington

The New Zealand Poetry Society meets on the third Thursday of each month (except for December and January) at 8 p.m. at Turnbull House Bowen Street.

Bluenote, 191 – 195 Cuba Street, has performance poetry most Sunday evenings at 8 p.m. Contact: Blaise Orsman (mob 025 616 04 53) or Blue Note (ph 04 801 5007) after 4 p.m. to confirm.

Cafe Poetry to Go at The Rock Café 4 Glover Street, off Ngauranga Gorge (up from LV Martin). If poetry is new to you this is the place find friends, learn to read aloud and exchange tips and books. Last Thursday of the month, supper provided, gold coin donation appreciated. Contact Stephen and Rosa Douglas (ph 04 569 9904, or e-mail DouglasSR@xtra.co.nz or phone 04 5699904).

Poesis: Poetry and Religion Forum

A forum to discuss religious poetry (international and New Zealand) will be held every five weeks in the WIT Library, Anglican Centre 18 Eccleston Hill Thorndon. All enquiries to antonin@wn.ang.org.nz.

West Coast: Hokitika

Contact Don Neale (ph 03 755 7092) or email: startledworm@paradise.net.nz for news of the winter meetings of the **Hokitika Wild Poets' Society**.

Whakatane

East Bay Live Poets meet at 7.30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the Settlers Bar of the Chambers Restaurant.

Whangarei

Poetry, prose, tea and talk. Last Sunday of the month, 2.30 p.m. at 18a Vale Road Whangarei. Contact: Rosalie (ph 04 388 913) or e-mail chtoomer@xtra.co.nz.

Do you belong to a group not listed here? Are any changes needed to the information on show? If so, please let me know immediately by e-mailing jenny.argante@xtra.co.nz.

ORDER FORM FOR 2003 ANTHOLOGY/ NZPS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Send your order/membership form and payment to:

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Reading Your Poems Aloud Some Good Advice for Beginners

Oh yes, it can be scary to read a poem aloud in public. It can also be fun and a learning experience.

If it's the first time for you, here are a few pointers to help.

Most writers think it's better not to share brand new work. Like all writing, a poem needs to be put away for a week or so and re-read 'cold'. That's when you can fine-tune it for sharing with an audience. When you've first written something is never the time to analyse it for flaws. Wait until you're in editing mode, and prepared to check out that you've got 'the best words in the best order'.

At most open mike sessions you only get three to five minutes – and this is not long enough to read an epic. Generally speaking, shorter poems work better, and you can read two or three in the time allotted.

You don't have to be serious all the time. People like to think, and that's what poetry is for. But the audience is here for enjoyment, too. Sometimes lighter poetry makes for easier listening – and can still make a point.

Pick what you read with care. If it's deeply personal, it could be tough to share it with people you don't know. Keep it for family and friends, and choose something else.

If it's sexist, racist, ageist, homophobic or pornographic, leave it at home. People do know the difference between being witty and being rude.

Put your audience first. Pick a poem for their delight, not yours. With this in mind, do a read-through at home first. If you stumble over any lines, they probably need fixing. Try a minor rewrite before you present it in public. Test it out on family and friends. What do *they* think?

A practical point. Is your copy legible? It does help. If your eyesight's not that good, print it bigger.

Don't start your reading with apologies or long explanations. Let your poem stand or fall on its own merits. One or two sentences will do to introduce it.

Stand up straight and speak clearly, not too fast and not too slow

If you're reading more than one poem, pause between each. (Count to ten in your head.)

Most of all, go with the flow. After all, the people out there listening must like poetry or they would have stayed at home!

(This article first appeared, in a slightly different format, in *Freelance*, the quarterly magazine of the NZ Freelance Writers Association, edited by Alyson B. Cresswell. For information about subscriptions, please e-mail alysoncm@clear.net.nz.)

Competitions

Kokako Haiku/Senryu Contest. The aim of this contest is to encourage haiku/senryu that don't try to carry over the conventions of traditional Japanese haiku or culture into English but which use the flexibility of the modern English lyric to achieve the same result. Entry fee is \$5 for unlimited entries with no age restrictions. Please send us two copies of your entries, one with your name, address, e-mail and phone number and the other without to 43 Landscape Road Papatoetoe Auckland 1701 of unpublished haiku not on offer elsewhere. We'd prefer not to receive e-mail entries but if you are pressed for time, do so. The best three will get free subscriptions to Kokako and the best 20 will be published in Kokako 2004, thus gaining international exposure.

The Patron is Catherine Mair, judges Patricia Prime and Bernard Gadd. The deadline is December 31st 2003. We'll let the winners and best 20 know the results just as soon as possible.

The Third Ashiya International Haiku Festa is running a competition in conjunction with their festival. No charge for submissions. English only. Deadline: November 30th. Send SSAE to NZPS secretary for competition entry forms and rules. Or go to www.kyoshi.or.jp/e-index.htm to download information.

If there are any new members wanting competition information, please send an SSAE to the Secretary NZPS PO Box 5283 Lambton Quay Wellington.

KIWIHAIKU

Otaki winter -
between dairy and price chopper
snowy peaks

Owen Bullock
Waihi

(First published in *Kokako/SPIN* No. 46 Winter 2003)

KIWIHAIKU features one haiku, senryu or tanka each month. Poems with a New Zealand slant are preferred. Fresh submissions (including details of any previous publication) with SSAE to Owen Bullock 42 Galbraith Street Waihi.

**February deadline:
January 24th 2004**