Whitireia Creative Writing Programme

NEWSLETTER #2, 2015

Kia ora

Last week saw a big focus on poetry across the country with National Poetry Day.  While first year students headed to Palmerston North to join in the action with poetry tutor Mary-Jane Duffy, some of us celebrated this wonderful genre from the comfort of the couch.

The writing life takes many forms. Read more about it below…

Poetry

<Poetry is the best words in the best place[[1]](#endnote-1)[i]>

Congratulations to graduate Sandi Sartorelli who won the adult section in this year’s Upper Hutt Library’s poetry competition with her poem *Timing*. Well done!

[Winning poem](http://www.upperhuttlibrary.co.nz/upper-hutt-poetry-competition/)

In other National Poetry Day activities tutor Mary-Jane Duffy and first year students headed up country to Palmerston North on Friday to the Manawatu Art Gallery. And tutor Adrienne Jansen joined a group of poets reading landscape poems in Lower Hutt.

Poet Hinemoana Baker’s on a roll—not only has she been awarded the 2016 Creative New Zealand Berlin Writer in Residence but her latest poetry collection, *Waha—Mouth,* is a finalist in the Massey University Nga Kupu Ora Aotearoa Maori Book Awards. Hinemoana has a long association with the Creative Writing Programme having tutored poetry online and edited our 4th Floor Journal for many years.

[Maori Book Award Finalists](http://www.thebigidea.co.nz/news/industry-news/2015/aug/168485-maori-book-awards-finalists)

[Berlin Residency](http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/news/hinemoana-baker-to-take-up-berlin-writer-s-residency)

Congratulations to Lynn Jenner who’s second book Lost and Gone Away—a mix of memoir, essay, prose poems and poems—was launched in July.

[Read more on her website](http://pinklight.nz/)

In November all those who love poetry are invited to the national poetry conference. If you’re keen to participate earlier, they’re on the look-out for people to help promote the conference through social media and other outlets. Email Janis Freegard  conference2015@poetrysociety.org.nz

[2015 Poetry Conference](http://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/PoetryConference2015)

Novels

<the novelist’s job is to reveal and unfold, not simply portray[[2]](#endnote-2)[ii]>

Novel writing tutor Mandy Hager has won the prestigious Margaret Mahy Book of the Year Award (and the award for best YA fiction) for her novel *Singing Home the Whale*. What an achievement! *Singing Home the Whale* also finaled in the Lianza (Library) Book Awards. As well as being the Writer in Residence at Waikato University this year, Mandy’s been running workshops, judging a short story competition, talking to groups, writing her next novel and of course teaching at Whitireia.[Read what the judges said about  *Singing Home the Whale*](http://www.booksellers.co.nz/awards/new-zealand-childrens-book-awards/winner_Singing_home_the_whale)

[Hear Mandy speak about her Menton experience on 8 September](http://citygallery.org.nz/events/menton-report-mandy-hager)

[Read about her thoughts on writers as truth tellers and on dystopian (or speculative) fiction](http://mandyhager.blogspot.co.nz/)

*A Line of Sight*, tutor Adrienne Jansen’s new novel, has been receiving lots of attention. At the launch in June Adrienne talked about how a real event inspired the novel— a tense and moving drama about an accidental shooting in a small North Island town. The novel underwent many re-writes and a large number of people contributed to the final story. The cover, which features a striking painting of a swan by Sarah Maxey, has caught the eye of German designer, Florian Hardwig who featured it on his website, Fonts in Use. And in another cover story, Adrienne’s project, *The Curioseum*, stories for children based on objects in Te Papa’s collection has won the PANZ award for best cover. Congratulations to Sarah Laing for her design!

[Read more about A Line of Sight and/or purchase a copy](http://www.escalatorpress.co.nz/product/a-line-of-sight/)

[See the cover of *The Curioseum*](http://www.bookdesignawards.co.nz/the-curioseum-2015-best-cover/)

The job of a novelist might be to reveal and unfold, but what is the job of those marketing novels? When media maven Elizabeth Heritage came to visit in June this year, creative writing students had the chance to hear about using social media to market e-books.

[Read about what they learnt](http://www.whitireia.ac.nz/AreasOfInterest/Creative-Writing/Pages/CreativeWriting.aspx) (click on the news tab)

Graduate Olivia Giles is gearing up to publish her next novel, *Feather from the Kākahu*, the second in the *Heart of the Tapu Stone* trilogy. ‘It’s set three years on from the first novel, finding the characters in very different places,’ she says. ‘I decided it would be the first book of a trilogy (at the launch, quite glibly actually) as I adored one of my characters, Mauki, and I didn’t think she received a fair shake of the lamb’s tail in the first novel.  Then my business partner and everybody else around me took me seriously and just like that I'd committed four years of my life to write those next two books.’

[The Heart of the Tapu Stone Trilogy](http://www.heartofthetapustone.com/)

Mary-anne Scott, also a graduate of the novel writing course, has a new novel in the pipe-line.  More on Mary-anne’s book in the next newsletter, but in the meantime her story *The Last Syrah* won the Central District Regional Prize in the National Flash Fiction competition. Entering competitions is one of the tips mentioned further down. Competitions are a way to keep writing. Looks like it works!

[The Last Syrah](http://flash-frontier.com/2015/08/30/august-2015-national-flash-fiction-day-winners/)

Last newsletter we mentioned graduate Jennifer Mortimer’s novel *Trilemma* had been shortlisted in the Ngaio Marsh Award for best crime novel. Jennifer talks more about crime writing, chief executives and killing ‘crappy’ words in this article on The Big Idea website.

[Talking about writing and *Trilemma*](http://www.thebigidea.co.nz/connect/media-releases/2015/jun/165761-crime-writing-chief-executives-and-killing-crappy-words)

In the first term creative writing students learn how to tell a good story—and then they get the chance to read them out on the airwaves.

[Listen to this year’s students read their stories on Access radio](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Faccessradio.org%2Fmedia%2Fdownload%2F201505211155551432166155-Mixdown-Whiti-Students-May-2015.mp3%3F_uid%3D1432165910-60-3&h=EAQGYzhItAQHOoZCzLP-_pkX0eCyW1XEdOj1eghsDXqdSGQ&enc=AZMOjUgGq90-bqeswynVHVY0ild9E66OPjqiHPeHKRMFbN7ksChZx72r_ChSFZqygfzNPtHF7mUJePOxfMJowAIW_Y8LeqGwNHj4STQadCPLK7IjIGFHClAmG360puIs7dlNqQEQcmkQ8i5LVsehvKAc3xG_R9zSNOkhJnVlIZgEwAJNNCtawM53HCBuQDEjpzZHJ3ZPYib7gqVg6FX6sz5a&s=1)

The ‘writing life’ is different for each person—that’s why it’s important to hear a spread of perspectives. Anna Taylor’s  second and third year students have been visited by three Wellington writers so far this year—Fleur Beale, John Summers and Man Booker prize long-listed author Anna Smaill. Anna Smaill’s recent success was met with delight, especially as she mentors one of the students.

[Read about John Summers’ visit](http://www.whitireia.ac.nz/AreasOfInterest/Creative-Writing/Pages/CreativeWriting.aspx)

Tutor Anna Taylor is also on the team of writers offering a Writer’s Retreat in January next year.  The Kāpiti Writers’ Retreat is an immersive, two-day gathering for writers, happening on the Kāpiti Coast in January. See under events below for more information.

Scriptwriting

<your script is always the story of the person who takes the longest journey, even though they maybe don't even leave the room[[3]](#endnote-3)[iii]>

For the intrepid first year students who entered the 48 hour film festival earlier this year their longest journey was helped by large quantities of V!

[Read more about their experience and watch the movie itself here](http://www.thebigidea.co.nz/connect/media-releases/2015/jul/167400-students-enter-%E2%80%98guerilla%E2%80%99-48-hr-film-making-competition)

Third year student Rene Le Bas is applying what he’s learnt at Whitireia and Victoria University by running scriptwriting workshops this month. When it comes to living the writing life, running workshops is a great adjunct to pursuing your own writing goals.

[Writing a script](http://www.thebigidea.co.nz/work/jobs-opportunities/writing-publishing/screenwriting/166369-write-a-screenplay-from-scratch-work)

From theatre in a Croatian monastery to jandals in Vienna, scriptwriting tutor Donna Banicevich Gera’s recent trip overseas is inspiring her teaching this year. It’s also getting her excited about scriptwriting possibilities at Whitireia next year. Yes, in 2016 we’re delighted to be offering the scriptwriting option for students wanting to produce a full-length script.

[Read more about Donna’s trip](http://www.thebigidea.co.nz/connect/media-releases/2015/aug/168983-symbolic-jandals-in-vienna-and-making-theatre-in-croatia)

[Scriptwriting at Whitireia to first draft](http://www.whitireia.ac.nz/courses/Pages/DiplomainCreativeWriting%28Advanced%29.aspx?return=/AreasOfInterest/Creative-Writing)

[Scriptwriting at Whitireia to finished script](http://www.whitireia.ac.nz/courses/Pages/GraduateDiplomainCreativeWriting.aspx?return=/AreasOfInterest/Creative-Writing)

Non-fiction

<part of writing creative non-fiction is…… cultivating the sense that you are telling a story[[4]](#endnote-4)[iv]>

George Town in Penang, Malaysia is the location for Adrienne Jansen’s latest non-fiction project. Earlier this year she visited George Town to write the text for ‘The Crescent Moon: Sharing The Same Moon’, an exhibition of photographs and personal narratives from the local Indian Muslim community. In August she returned to complete the project, and it was launched by New Zealand High Commissioner Dr John Subritzky, along with Penang [CM Lim Guan Eng](https://www.facebook.com/cmlimguaneng) and Tunku 'Abidin Muhriz at the [GeorgeTown Festival](https://www.facebook.com/GeorgeTownFestival). This fascinating exhibition was well received at the festival. ‘New Zealand writing has a long reach!’ Adrienne says.

[The Crescent Moon: Sharing the Same Moon](http://www.nzembassy.com/malaysia/news/photographic-exhibition-%E2%80%9Cthe-crescent-moon-sharing-the-same-moon%E2%80%9D-debuts-at-george-tow)

Renee, editor of our 4th Floor Journal this year, has helped many people write about their lives. Now at age 86 she’s taking a unique approach to writing about her own. ‘I’ve decided to write my life in 86 pieces.  I don’t want it to go on forever because I’ll get bored so some weeks there’ll be two patches, maybe more.  86 is a number that doesn’t have a lot going for it.  Not like 21, for example, or 50, or 75.   86 is a knobbly, uncompromising little number, but there it is.  Like Iris says in *Wednesday To Come*, “We don’t get asked.”

It will be a crazy patchwork, a ragbag of bits and pieces, no through-line, except me, the living through-line.’

[Writing a life through patches](http://wednesdaybusk.com/category/blog/)

Escalator Press news

There’s plenty of hard work happening as Helen Waaka’s book of short stories *Waitapu* and Rudy Castaneda Lopez’s novel *Open Your Eyes, Jackson Ryder* head off to the printers. \*Mark your diaries now for their book launches\*

*Open Your Eyes, Jackson Ryder*, 6.30-7.30, Wednesday 14 October, Community Room, Mezzanine Floor, Wellington Central Library

*Waitapu*, 5.30-6.30, Wednesday 21 October, Community Room, Mezzanine Floor, Wellington Central Library

More news plus launch photos of *A Line of Sight* in the latest EP [newsletter](http://www.escalatorpress.co.nz/august-newsletter/#more-838).

Top tips from graduates: what keeps them writing

**Lucy O'Connor**:  A decent writing chair and workshop groups.

**Annie Muirgen**: The five minute, ‘first thing’ (still in my PJ’s) writing practice habit I caught at Whitireia. When I think about it the benefits are similar to a robust walk or a set of weight bearing exercises—a ritual that frees up the creative endorphins, and provides a sense of wellbeing and aliveness and the experience of pleasure. And secondly talking to friends who love writing, listening to interviews with authors, and reading, reading, reading.

**Sarah Harpur**:  Monthly word count goals.

**Liz Elson**:  Deadlines (competitions, 4th Floor Journal etc.) and honest feedback from friends. And increasingly I base my stories on memoir— that might be a function of aging!

**Richard Anderson**:  What keeps me writing? I want to put something down on the page and I want to say something. I'll do the two tips in one but it's more a saying: [For me] Just remember writing helped you get through difficult times and it’s a tool to help you understand your experience of life. That's what I try to live by.

Where you can find us

[Our website](http://www.whitireia.ac.nz/AreasOfInterest/Creative-Writing/Pages/CreativeWriting.aspx)  *course and enrolment information, staff profiles, news*

[Our facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/WhitireiaCreativeWritingProgramme) *competitions, events, news*

[On The Big Idea](http://www.thebigidea.co.nz/profile/whitireia-writing/track) *feature articles about students, tutors, graduates*

[On the Escalator Press website](http://www.escalatorpress.co.nz/) *books books books!*

[On the Escalator Press facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/WhitireiaCreativeWritingProgramme#!/escalatorpress?fref=ts) *events and news*

Submissions /competitions / events

### Menton report from Mandy Hager Oct 8, 6pm

### At Wellington City Gallery

### <http://citygallery.org.nz/events/menton-report-mandy-hager>

### Whanganui Literary Festival **12 to 20 September** A week-long celebration of writing, beginning with a Fringe Festival on September 12 2015. The main festival weekend will be from Friday 18 September to Sunday 20 September.

### [More](http://authors.us5.list-manage.com/track/click?u=905a5275ec5c023659502ec21&id=1ca87be903&e=6cccc8bfb7)

The Writing Workshop Where We Don’t Write 26 Sept/3 Oct
Led by Pip Adam this workshop explores what happens when we take away the dominant tool of our craft. When we try to create story without chasing, capturing or displaying it in writing. We will explore story through alternative literacies such as picture, sound, touch and movement. 10-2 pm, 26 September and 3 October, Thistle Hall.
<http://kahini.org/the-writing-workshop-where-we-dont-write/>

Victoria University Writer in Residence 2016: closes 30 September 2015

Writers in all areas of literary activity, including drama, fiction and poetry, New Zealand art, biography, history, music, society and culture, are eligible to apply.

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/careers>

NZSA Central Districts Short Story Competition

Closes 2 Oct

[More](http://authors.us5.list-manage.com/track/click?u=905a5275ec5c023659502ec21&id=276c481f9c&e=6cccc8bfb7)

### Tinderbox  **2-5 October, St Catherine’s College, Kilbirnie, Wellington**Tinderbox is a professional conference for new and established children’s writers and illustrators. The conference aims to shed light on new writing and illustration practices, inform about current practices and practitioners, and otherwise foster and energise its delegates.

[More](http://authors.us5.list-manage.com/track/click?u=905a5275ec5c023659502ec21&id=07da90b604&e=6cccc8bfb7)

Auckland Museum Library Research Grants: closes 5 October

The grants comprise one National Grant and one Auckland Regional Grant for local writers. Both grants are open to fiction, non-fiction and academic writers who are also members of the NZ Society of Authors.

<http://www.authors.org.nz/wa.asp?idWebPage=38553&idDetails=193>

Starling: closes 20 October

Online journal for New Zealand writers under 25. Prose and poetry. <http://www.starlingmag.com/>

The Lilian Ida Smith Award: closes 30 October

Offered by the NZ Society of Authors PEN (NZSA) for writers of non-fiction, fiction, poetry, comic / graphic novels and drama for adults and children. Applicants need to be aged 35 years and over, working towards completion of a specific project, and members of the NZSA.

[www.authors.org.nz](http://www.authors.org.nz)  or email office@nzauthors.org.nz

Young-Adult Unpublished Novel Prize Closes 30 Oct

[More](http://authors.us5.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=905a5275ec5c023659502ec21&id=64b0d15a4d&e=6cccc8bfb7)

### 2015 NZ Poetry Conference

13-15 **November, National Library, Molesworth St, Wellington**.

[More](http://authors.us5.list-manage.com/track/click?u=905a5275ec5c023659502ec21&id=976d14dad5&e=6cccc8bfb7)

### Wellington LitCrawl 2015

**Saturday 14 November** / Launch 23 Sept

[More](http://authors.us5.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=905a5275ec5c023659502ec21&id=cd7a2e8115&e=6cccc8bfb7)

Writers’ Retreat 22-24 Jan 2016

The retreat includes morning workshops, afternoon panels, discussions and space and time to write, relax and engage with topics critical to your work.

<http://kahini.org/the-kapiti-writers-retreat/>

The 2016 Independent Publisher Book Awards

Closes 27 Feb 2016

<http://www.independentpublisher.com/ipland/IPAwards.php>

Where can *we* find you?

We’d love to hear your writing news: writing@whitireia.ac.nz Keep in touch and keep writing.

From the Creative Writing Programme team

1. [i] quote from the online poetry course [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. [ii] Joào Guimaràes Rosa, quoted in the short fiction online course [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. [iii] Coral Drouyn, quoted in the online scriptwriting course [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. [iv] quote from the online non-fiction course [↑](#endnote-ref-4)