

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

news

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Assessing damage, locating risk



Photo by Professor Michael Pender

Faculty of Engineering staff were among the teams of specialists checking quake-ravaged buildings and scouring Christchurch's damaged landscape in the days following the 7.1 magnitude earthquake.

Professor Michael Pender, Associate Professor Jason Ingham, Associate Professor Charles Clifton, lecturer Quincy Ma and six postgraduate students from the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering arrived in the South Island city the morning after the quake.

The engineering staff assessed damaged buildings and conducted research while in the city.

For the assessments, they were divided into teams of five; each team had two engineers, two council staff and a member from the Urban Search And Rescue group.

Each team was assigned a task of either evaluating a city block to locate at-risk buildings, or doing a detailed inspection of a single building.

This is the third earthquake-affected area Jason

has been to in the last 12 months. He was in Indonesia in late 2009 following their earthquake in Sumatra, inspecting schools and medical facilities, and was in Chile in May this year presenting seminars to engineers and architects on how to seismically strengthen buildings.

Inspecting buildings on the Sunday was a different experience to the Monday because people had returned to work, he says.

"It is a very different experience placing a placard on a closed building, versus having to tell the people in the building that they must close up their business and not return until the building has been made safe to occupy."

Jason says only one person was reluctant to leave an unsafe building he inspected. "The man, who ran a lawnmower business, asked me, 'If I ignore you will I be prosecuted?'"

Meanwhile a few doors down, when he had to tell workers at a post office their building was unsafe, they calmly packed up their belongings

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Key events

Acquired tastes

Oysters and opera, we are told, are "acquired tastes". Sometimes we know on good evidence that something is good, and yet we don't like it: we can't properly appreciate what's good about it. How do we get from not liking something which we know is good to liking it because it's good? The strategy that Professor Peter Goldie from Manchester University recommends in the 2010 Robert C. Solomon Lecture is what is known as "bootstrapping", where you in effect get to like something by pretending to like it. The lecture, entitled "Oysters and opera: How to acquire an 'acquired taste'", will take place in the Library Theatre B15 on Tuesday 21 September at 6pm.

Spring graduation

Four graduation ceremonies will take place on 28 September at the Aotea Centre: at 10.30am Business and Economics; at 1.30pm Education, Engineering, Law; at 4.30pm, Science, Medical and Health Sciences; and at 7.30pm, Arts, Creative Arts and Industries.

The Graduation Procession for all faculties will leave from the Alumni Marquee, Old Government House grounds, at 9.15am and will cross Princes Street to enter Bowen Avenue at 9.30am.

World Habitat Day

The University of Auckland, as a partner of UN-HABITAT, will mark World Habitat Day (4 October) with a range of events and activities across the campuses and the wider community from 29 September to 6 October. This year's theme of "Better city, better life" highlights the vision of a sustainable urban world. It will involve departments, disciplines, students and staff across The University of Auckland as well as other interested stakeholders in various key activities including seminars, workshops, an "urban survivor" installation and a photo competition. (See story, page 5)

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The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) recently unveiled a new website which purports to provide the public with comparative data on the performance of students at tertiary institutions. In one sense, The University of Auckland can be well pleased with this – we rank first or second among the universities in all four performance indicators. Unfortunately, the institutions also know – and have pointed out repeatedly to the TEC and the Minister – that the data are not statistically robust and are therefore likely to mislead rather than inform the public.

The fundamental problem is that the TEC uses unadjusted institutional average performance measures in its presentation. In reality, the performance measures are influenced by a great many factors, including the socio-economic backgrounds of the institution's students, student ethnicity, part-time versus full-time status, subject area and whether the students are internal or extramural. It is highly likely that the comparison of institutions based on unadjusted averages simply reflects these underlying differences, rather than true differences in the teaching and learning environment, which is what is implied by the inter-institutional ranking of "performance indicators". While the TEC website includes pie charts showing some aspects of the make-up of each institution's student body, it is impossible for readers to use this information to "adjust" for these underlying parameters.

A second issue is that, even if they were robust, the data would be difficult to interpret. For example, is a high course completion rate a good thing because it reflects an institution that has excellent teaching and a high level of student support, or a bad thing because it reflects an institution that has low standards and makes it easy for students to pass?

Third, the website gives no indication of what are statistically significant differences between institutions, many of which are within a few percentage points of each other. Nor is there any international context for the data. International students are even less likely than domestic students to understand how the make-up of an institution's student body is likely to affect its performance, yet they rely heavily on league tables of this kind to make decisions about where to study. Thus, despite the laudable aims of this exercise, it is likely to be misleading to both domestic and international students.



Enthusiasm from visitors



Feedback from visitors to the recent Courses and Careers Day could hardly have been more positive.

Twitter abounded with such superlatives as "wicked", "amazing" and "awesome". "So well organised and executed!" declared a grateful attendee.

One Twitterer commented on the "unbelievable" student life while another, referring to participating staff and students, remarked that "everyone looked really motivated".

The hundred visitors from schools in the lower North Island and the South Island hosted at a special "travellers' breakfast" where they met the Vice-Chancellor were especially appreciative.

The careers adviser at Palmerston North Boys' High School who escorted a nine-strong party to Auckland called it "a fantastic day", adding: "We will definitely do that again."

After attending Engineering, Law and Medical and Health Sciences lectures, a young woman from Central Otago decided to plump for first-year Medicine (Biomedical Sciences) with a general education paper in Law and Society.

"It was amazing to see the campus," she wrote in an email, "as I now know that I would be able to immerse myself in the student lifestyle, and to know that I would feel

safe in its environment – I've never lived in a city before.

"Visiting the halls was exciting too. The guides were welcoming and enthusiastic and made an effort to interact with everyone, so that no questions were left unanswered."

An increase in musical, cultural and sporting performances, the opening of the Recreation Centre for a popular Zumba class and various competitions, and the Arts Faculty's shift to the Fale Pasifika were "all very positive changes", said Ken Rapson, Director of the Schools Partnership Office.

"The favourable responses from prospective students was a tribute to everyone involved, says Ken "This is a whole university event with everyone coming together to show all aspects of university life in the best possible way."

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and left.

"Generally speaking most of the time people understood. They would say, "I was kind of worried about that myself, or I could see the risk."

Michael, who grew up in Christchurch, is a three-earthquake veteran. He led the New Zealand Society for Earthquake Engineering Reconnaissance during the 1987 Edgecombe earthquake and was on sabbatical in California when the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake struck.

A geotechnical specialist, Michael is very familiar with liquefaction.

Liquefaction is when sandy soil is shaken violently, causing water to rise through the sand. The result is unstable ground which resembles mud pools.

"Liquefaction was very extensive over large areas of the city and had affected mainly residential properties. We did not have time to look at all the affected areas but what we did see indicates that this is a major liquefaction event.

In the town of Kaiapoi, the effects of liquefaction had been "devastating," says Michael.

"One relatively new subdivision had been very badly affected by liquefaction and lateral spreading effects, several houses having been broken apart," he says.

But given the level of devastation in some areas, he had been impressed with the attitude of the Canterburyans he had met.

"I spoke to quite a few people in one area, and they had no running water, no sewage and they were really quite calm about it all, they kept saying, 'no-one died.'"

Jason says what happened to the buildings when the quake struck was for the most part highly predictable.

About 85 percent of the buildings were unaffected by the quake - the most damaged were the older unreinforced brick buildings.

Jason and his team of postgraduate students have taken five gigabytes of photographs which will help with their research. Jason is leading an extensive Civil and Environmental Engineering project which is investigating seismic retrofit of structures. A major aspect of the project is strengthening earthquake risk buildings made of brick masonry.

As we went to print some of Jason's postgraduate students were still in Christchurch and geotechnical engineering staff were about to depart for Christchurch to conduct further research.

Highlighting achievements in equity



Members of the MATES team, from left to right, are Sam Manuela, Tanya Heti, Puni Robertson and Jonaan McLeod, with Professor Stuart McCutcheon (second from right).

The large lounge of Old Government House was packed with supporters for one of the highlights of the University year: the celebration of equity achievements across the University and the presentation of the Excellence in Equity Awards.

The ceremony this year offered a new dimension that added to the enjoyment of those who attended. This was in the form of a series of pre-recorded clips (filmed by Richard Smith and Graeme Henderson from the Centre for Academic Development) in which each individual award-winner or a representative from each winning group speaks briefly of their work, its purpose, and what it has accomplished.

In an entertaining and fast-moving ceremony - comprising a lively introduction to each winner or team from Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity) Trudie McNaughton, followed by the showing of the clip, the award presentation by Vice-Chancellor Professor Stuart McCutcheon, and a brief acceptance speech - the audience gained a surprisingly broad and quick insight into the scope and diversity of the University's equity achievements.

The film clips, as Trudie said "cannot convey the complexity of the work but do give tantalising glimpses of its excellence".

Trudie said the equity awards have two clear purposes: to celebrate the achievements of those whose work helps advance the University's equity goals for staff and students, and to inspire others by sharing good practice and good ideas. The awards, she said, are now presented two-yearly to allow for enhanced quality of entries and more evidence of impact and sustainability. "This has been achieved, with a record number of entries this year."

Trudie thanked all those involved in the awards, with special thanks to Prue Toft and Margaret Freeman from the Equity Office "who have put an enormous effort into these awards over many months".

The function, she emphasised, is held not only to honour the winners but to celebrate all the other entries as well. All entrants are listed in the Equity Awards booklet and on the Equity website.

Winners of the awards are:

- Professor Raewyn Dalziel for "Sustained

excellence in gender equity"

- Mark Thomson for "Exam support for students with disabilities"
- Tanya Heti, Rennie Douglas, Sam Manuela, Jonaan McLeod and Puni Robertson for "Mentoring by Tanya Heti and the MATES team"
- Dr Elana Taipapaki Curtis for "Vision 20:20 and the MAPAS Admissions Process"
- Pikihiua Pomare and Dr Virginia Braun for "Psychology Māori and Pasifika Research Group"
- Dr Airini, Dr Deidre Brown, Dr Te Oti Rakena, Dr Elana Curtis, Tanya Savage, Sonia Townsend, Angie Smith, Fred Luatua, Gillian Reynolds, Mona O'Shea, Matt Tarawa, with former University of Auckland colleagues, Odie Johnson, Pale Sauni, To'aiga Su'a Huirua, Meryl Ulugia-Pua and Sofi Ulugia-Pua for "Success for all: Improving Māori and Pasifika success in degree-level studies at The University of Auckland"
- Dr Marewa Glover ("Special commendation") for the Centre for Tobacco Control Research (CTRC)

When Dr Airini, in her acceptance speech, linked the personal dimension of her team's work with the wider society, her words held resonance not only for her own group but also for all the others who are working in different ways and with different groups to achieve equity for all staff and students across the University.

"At the bottom of all the tributes to equity in this research is that one student after another, walked into one interview after another, sharing one story after another of what good our teaching does, or not, and how. No amount of rhetoric or list of adjectives can diminish the importance of the point and how important the Māori and Pasifika students saw it was to have their voice heard.

"How we teach in our small groups with Māori and Pasifika, in our University, is our future as a nation, in miniature. Thank you for this award. We receive it humbly; mindful of the support of many; and mindful too of the need to continue to research for improved equity outcomes and success for all.

"Kia ora koutou. Fa'afetai tele lava."

New look for Leigh



Leigh Marine Laboratory now has a new Science Centre building, housing custom-designed laboratories and offices for staff and students.

Its completion marks the end of the second phase of the construction project at Leigh. The first phase was construction of a new bunkhouse for students studying and working at Leigh. The next phase will see construction of a new Interpretive Centre giving the thousands of people who visit Goat Island Marine Reserve every year the opportunity to learn more about the marine environment and the work of our scientists.

The Science Centre building was opened on Thursday 26 August at a low-key celebration event to thank the Mayor for her support throughout the redevelopment process.

Pictured on an external stairwell of the new building are (from left to right) Professor John Montgomery, Director of the Leigh Marine Laboratory; John Morgan, CEO of NIWA; Chris Mace, Chair of the South Pacific Centre for Marine Science Strategy Group; Professor Grant Guilford, Dean of Science; and Her Worship Penny Webster, Mayor of Rodney District Council.

Health Research Council Funding Round
Registration for Project, Programme extensions, Feasibility Study and Emerging Researcher First Grant will be open on the HRC portal 23–29 September. The Research Office deadline for “Expressions of Interest” aligned to one of four Research Investment Streams is 12 noon, 6 October. For further information, contact Carmella Lee, Fund Specialist carmella.lee@auckland.ac.nz, ext 83562.

National Heart Foundation Limited Budget Grant (Round 2)

To fund a wide variety of research-related activities which support the aims of the National Heart Foundation, awards are made in three areas: small project, grant-in-aid and travel grants. The Research Office closing date is 24 September. For further details contact Carmella Lee, HRC Funding Specialist, carmella.lee@auckland.ac.nz ext 83562.

Te Tipu Pūtaiao Postgraduate Fellowships

These provide FRST funding for masters, doctoral and postdoctoral research aligned to one of four Vision Mātauranga themes. The Research Office closing date is 12 noon, 6 October 2010. For further details contact Mandy Brown, Research Administrator, mandy.brown@auckland.ac.nz ext 82735.

Royal Society International Mobility Fund

This replaces ISAT, for mobility funding to work on joint international research projects, in particular with Australia, Canada, China, Europe, India, Japan, Korea, Latin America and the United States. The Research Office closing date is 28 September. For further details contact Chris Tews, Fund Specialist, c.tews@auckland.ac.nz ext 88301.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

“Grand Challenges Explorations” are initial grants of up to \$100,000 USD with opportunity for further funding up to \$1m USD. For “innovative and unconventional” global health solutions. Research Office closing date is 19 October. For further information please contact David Saunders, International Fund Specialist, d.saunders@auckland.ac.nz ext 84886.

Ako Aotearoa

Good Practice Publication Grants (Round 2) to enable groups or individuals to share their proven good practice (ie, of benefit to learners) across the tertiary education sector in Aotearoa-New Zealand for publication on the Ako Aotearoa website. The Research Office closing date is 22 October. For further details contact Chris Tews, Fund Specialist, c.tews@auckland.ac.nz.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Historical Research Grants

These provide a maximum of \$5000 (non-salary) for historical research on “New Zealand's place in the world”. The Research Office closing date is 22 October. For further details contact Mandy Brown, Research Administrator, mandy.brown@auckland.ac.nz ext 82735.

For full list: researchoffice@auckland.ac.nz

Better city, better life



Ira Iskandar in Germany

What Ira Iskandar has noticed so far in her brief time at The University of Auckland is that it offers a vibrant, multicultural environment which rewards and encourages creativity.

Ira is a second-year masters student in Environmental Governance from the University of Freiburg in Germany, one of our partner institutions. She is here in as an intern to co-ordinate the activities being planned and organised by staff and students from across the University to mark the UN-HABITAT's World Habitat Day.

Since UN-HABITAT is the United Nations' Human Settlements Programme, with a mandate to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities, this accords well with Ira's scholastic interests and her intention to write a thesis on urban sustainability and the institutional changes required to advance it.

The University of Auckland is the first New Zealand partner in UN-HABITAT's innovative Habitat Partner University Network. This year's World Habitat Day, with its theme of “Better city, better life,” has particular resonance now in Auckland with the imminent transformation to a “Super City”. The University is set to mark the day (4 October) with a range of events and activities from 29 September to 6 October.

Ira is coordinating the working group, comprising students and staff from across the University, with a particularly strong representation from Architecture and Planning.

The series of events, intended to raise awareness of the UN-HABITAT worldwide campaign on urbanisation and its related issues and to showcase the University's initiatives in urban sustainability, will include a seminar series and panel discussions; workshops on gardening and composting held in the University grounds; a photo competition designed to encourage participation and creativity in interpretation of urbanisation issues; and an interactive Urban Survivor Installation led by students of Architecture and Planning.

The photography competition - What does “Better city, better life” mean to you? - will focus on UN-HABITAT's three “pillars of sustainability” equity, ecology and economy. Entries close 29 September, 12noon.

Staff and students are invited to participate in the Urban Survivor Installation, which will be in the Quad in the City Campus from 29 September to 6 October.

For further details and updates to the programme, inquire from Ira Iskandar on i.iskandar@auckland.ac.nz

‘Vital’ programme earns praise



Barbara Kensington-Miller

The Future Research Leaders Programme, seen as vital to the future of the University by Professor Jane Harding, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Kath Clarke, Human Resources Director, is now earning high praise from the staff who have participated.

The programme, which has passed with great success through its pilot stage and has been customised to the New Zealand research context, is being offered to early-to-mid career staff members who aspire to or are about to take on research leadership roles.

“I just loved it,” says Dr Barbara Kensington-Miller from the Centre for Academic Development. “For me, the greatest benefit was how much I learned about how research is done in the

Making of a thesis idol



Lena Kelly delivers her winning presentation.

“Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, my name is Lena and I am a Civil Engineer.”

The speaker was PhD student Lena Kelly, introducing what proved to be the winning entry for the three-minute thesis competition – also known as “Thesis Idol” – which now features in universities worldwide and was held for the first time this year at The University of Auckland, hosted by the School of Graduate Studies.

With its panel of three “renowned judges”, its large and responsive audience, and the high quality of its contestants, the event succeeded in creating an atmosphere every bit as lively as that of the popular TV show, while also providing a training for researchers in the very useful skill of how to present their findings in an accessible way to a general audience.

“And this,” continued Lena as she pointed to the single slide allowable to each contestant as part of the presentation, “is why you should care about my thesis.

“This is the Schohaire bridge, a concrete and steel bridge built in the 1950s which is part of the highway linking New York City and Buffalo. Thirty-five years after it was built, witnesses heard what they described as an explosion of thunder.

The entire bridge plunged into the river below severing the highway and killing ten people.

“So my question for you is, Why? Why did this bridge collapse? Maybe the structure simply wasn’t strong enough. Could it be that the bridge hadn’t been regularly maintained? Could the water have eroded the concrete? Perhaps the supports weren’t well-connected to the bridge?

“The actual answer is something you can’t see at first glance. It’s all the way down at the base of the supports. The answer is bridge scour, which is the topic of my thesis. I aim to improve the method of predicting the amount of bridge scour so that incidents like this one don’t happen to people like you. Think back to the last time you were at the beach. You’re standing in the shallows gazing out to sea and a wave breaks across your ankles. The next thing you feel is the water rushing back past your feet towards the ocean. You will notice that the sand behind your feet is washed out by “scouring” and your heels are left unsupported and sink into the sand.

“Bridge scour is exactly the same thing, it’s the process by which part of the sand surrounding the bridge’s supports erodes away. Below the schohaire bridge, the depth of the scour reached

three metres, causing the supports to tip towards this hole and bring the entire bridge down.

“Existing bridge scour equations only apply to specific bridge designs and water depths, but prove wildly inaccurate for many common configurations. My research involves physical modelling of several different types of bridges, creating a scale real-life scour profile for each. These profiles are then analysed to modify the existing equations to include a more diverse range of bridge types.

“The final result of my thesis will improve the accuracy and scope of the existing design methods, to include cases such as schohaire. With this information designers can determine whether the scour depth will be critical, then optimise bridge designs by changing the bridge support configuration, the shape of the supports or even consider armouring the effected area. This will lead to more efficient designs, cheaper bridges and ultimately fewer failures.”

“So next time you are stuck in traffic driving across the harbour bridge, looking for cracks, feeling it sway, remember it’s what’s underneath that counts.

“The prediction of scour depths by use of empirical formula is not currently accurate for structures that are wide compared to the surrounding water depth. The empirical formulas tend to overpredict the amount of scour, and over the last decade there have been many attempts to fix his problem.

“Most local scour equations give the scour depth as a multiple of the pier typically between 1.5 to 2.4 times the pier width. When dealing with wide piers which can be ten metres wide the effect of overpredicting the scour is critical.”

Lena will fly to Queensland for the Trans-Tasman finals on 21 September. Second and third placegetters were Lyndon Burford (Political Science) and Ashley Young (Chemical and Materials Engineering). All three finalists received a watch from Citizen Watches and a Short Course at the Business School. Warm congratulations to the organisers and their sponsors for an entertaining and successful inaugural event.

University and what is available to researchers in relation to finance, grants and funding.

“I learned about difficulties that can arise from collaborations, which could be personal differences, issues of financial management or intellectual property, or even just the problems imposed by geographical distances.

“I also learned a lot about how to manage and lead a team, taking responsibility for the input of others and being responsive to their needs.”

Developed by the Australian Group of Eight Universities and customised to the New Zealand environment by this university, the FRLP is a structured modular training programme designed to develop capabilities in research strategy and planning, commencement and collaboration, governance and compliance, intellectual property and commercialisation, financial resource and risk management, grant and contract administration,

managing and leading people in a research context, and project closeout. Each module comprises three components: three to four hours of on-line learning, a half or full-day face-to-face workshop, and a guided conversation of 40 to 60 minutes with a senior researcher.

Barbara says the whole strategy of the eight modules is to “lead you right through from planning research to project closeout”, though she adds that each module also stands alone.

The programme is now being presented twice a year with three modules completed last month, another two to be offered in November and December, and three more early next year. The whole programme will begin again in May.

The University of Auckland holds the New Zealand licence for the FRLP, with the right to sub-licence to other New Zealand universities.

Barbara says the programme was very

well-organised, with high-quality speakers (“Some were sensational”), drawn from among the University’s own research leaders, as well as from UniServices, the Research Office, HR and some of the funding agencies. She thoroughly recommends the programme to researchers across all the faculties of the University.

For inquiries or applications please contact Amy Hopper from the Staff and Organisational Development Unit on a.hopper@auckland.ac.nz or ext 87227. Preference will be given to staff who wish to complete all modules, but the programme will also be open to those who wish to “pick and choose”.

Jane Harding and Kath Clarke – the programme’s sponsors – would like to thank all who have contributed their time and expertise: facilitators, presenters, reviewers, panellists and IT support.

Top qualifiers for \$100k Challenge



On 20 August 13 teams stepped closer to turning their business ideas to reality with the announcement of the 2010 Spark \$100k Challenge Qualifiers.

The qualifying teams, which must consist of at least one staff member or current student, were selected from 65 entries. Business ideas ranged from medical devices and a weight-reducing alloy metal to ventures that would seek to bring about social change, such as improving the diets of school children or advancing the retailing of fair trade products.

“Even though only a few could be chosen as qualifiers, each of the ideas submitted for this contest could easily be developed into successful

businesses,” said guest speaker Greg Cross, Chairperson of business growth centre, The ICEHOUSE.

Greg Cross is more than familiar with the Spark programme – he is the co-founder and Executive Chair of PowerByProxi which was a runner-up in the inaugural Spark \$40k Challenge.

Each qualifying team now has a place in the Spark Launch Pad Programme, providing \$5,000 worth of business development workshops and mentorship.

The teams will also now compete for the ultimate prize of \$20,000 seed capital and incubation at The ICEHOUSE – with a total prize value of \$30,000.

Spark is a student-led initiative established in 2003 with the aim of encouraging New Zealanders who strive to be innovative and entrepreneurial. It has given rise to 65 start-up ventures to date.

All teams who entered the competition will receive feedback and advice that will motivate them to continue with their business ventures.

The grand winners will be announced on 20 October.

The 2010 Spark \$100k Challenge qualifiers are:

- Healthy Memory Company Ltd – reducing memory loss in baby boomers

- PhotoPURE Environment Purification – air and water purifier
- Vigilance – device for detecting drowsiness
- The G.I. Joes – medical device for detecting gastric dysrhythmias through electrical activity
- Pluen – technology to develop weight-reducing magnesium alloy metal
- Mind Epos – device for interpreting psychological states based on brain activity
- Health Touch – facilitating data collection using touch screen technology at GP practices
- ZaroaNZ – specialty meat centre operating through retail branch
- OneBeep – connecting computers using radio waves
- MyMix – venture for integrating healthy eating habits within schools
- Vital Link – facilitating fair trade through social networks
- Origin Egg Nog – a unique egg nog, where you can trace the ingredients to its origin
- P3 Foundation – business helping to eradicate youth poverty.

Talking Science

There wasn't a seat to spare at the inaugural Talking Science event, with all 200 places reserved weeks in advance.

Hosted by the Faculty of Science and External Relations, the panel discussion on “Global warming: why can't scientists agree?” was an opportunity for alumni and the public to hear from leading environmental scientists.

An introduction to the greenhouse effect and factors contributing to climate change was provided by Professor Glenn McGregor, Director of the School of Environment. He pointed out that while natural factors such as solar variability and volcanic eruptions play a role, they are insufficient to explain the increases in temperature that have been observed.

Honorary Research Associate Dr Jim Salinger, formerly of NIWA, described the New Zealand climate record, which documents a steady increase in temperatures, and rebutted recent claims that

the data are invalid due to “adjustment”.

Climate physicist Professor Rodger Davies spoke about the critical role of water vapour and clouds – which the audience was surprised to learn have a greater greenhouse effect than carbon dioxide – and the dilemmas scientists face trying to incorporate them into climate models. His own work with NASA observing and modelling clouds is part of international efforts to address this.

Climatologist Dr Anthony Fowler explained how “proxies” like tree rings can be used to reconstruct the ancient climate, and the possible reasons for discrepancies between such reconstructions and events in human history such as the “little ice age”. Using the kauri record he is learning about how El Niño-La Niña oscillations in the southern hemisphere influence global climate patterns.

Marine biologist Dr Mary Sewell talked about her research on acidification of the oceans – known as “the other CO2 problem” – and how this

is damaging marine species that use carbon compounds in seawater to build their skeletons. Many of these organisms, such as plankton and coral, play key roles in marine ecosystems and the effects will be wide-ranging.

Responding to questions from the audience the panellists said that the arguments against human-induced climate change seemed constantly to shift, being replaced as fast as they were disproven by science and derailing international work toward a solution. Some expressed frustration with the time and effort scientists spent addressing these arguments and with the suggestion that scientists sought anything but the truth.

Talking Science will be held twice per year as an informal forum for discussion of controversial and topical scientific issues. Last week's topic was so popular that the next event will look at the social science of climate change – how what we know about people can help in developing a response.

University of Auckland top in NZ

The University of Auckland has once more been ranked as the top university in New Zealand following the publication of the 2010 QS World University Rankings.

This is in line with its place in the Shanghai Jiao Tong (2010) rankings where the University was ranked top among New Zealand universities.

In the latest QS World University Rankings the University's position is 68th; last year it was placed 61st in the rankings QS devised with the *Times Higher*, and 65th in 2008.

“We are pleased to have retained our position in

the top 100 but we will struggle to maintain parity with our international peers if the underinvestment in New Zealand universities continues,” said Vice-Chancellor, Professor Stuart McCutcheon.

“New Zealand's direct public investment in tertiary institutions is 58 percent out of the total expenditure on tertiary education; this compares with an OECD average of 81 percent, and just under 70 percent in Australia for tertiary institutions. As other countries increase their per student expenditure, the gap is only going to widen.”

In the subject rankings of Life Sciences and Medicine and Social Sciences and Management, the University was placed in the top 50 in the world – 41st and 38th respectively. It was placed 51st in Arts and Humanities; 55th in Engineering and Technology and 68th in Natural Sciences. In the important ranking of “employer reputation”, the University was placed 39th.

Two other New Zealand universities – Otago (135) and Canterbury (189) – were placed in the top 200 in the 2010 QS World University Rankings.



Unlike with many of Alex Monteith's other video projects, the critically slow pace of the event that forms the subject of her video work, *1020 metres in 26 minutes Waitangi Day Auckland Harbour Bridge Protest*, grounds the viewer in familiar territory, allowing the location and the subject of the video to be immediately unravelled.

Simultaneously however, the viewer is also drawn into the curious and somewhat dizzying landscape that is formed where the adjacent screens meet. Passages of the Harbour Bridge, segments of land, sky, clouds, sea and automobiles roll across two disparate yet intimately connected fields of vision.

Filed in 2008, *1020 metres in 26 minutes* details in real time the Waitangi Day go-slow vehicle protest that was staged on the Auckland Harbour Bridge that year. In 2008, Transit New Zealand decided that only the New Zealand flag would be flown from the Auckland harbour bridge and not the Tino Rangitiratanga flag, which sparked considerable outrage. As a result, a convoy of vehicles, many with the Tino Rangitiratanga flag flapping from their windows, occupied two lanes of the Auckland Harbour Bridge in protest and drove over it at walking pace. A red landrover that was part of the motorcade was saddled with two bullet-cameras

by Auckland artist Alex Monteith. Facing in opposite directions, one camera recorded material as it came towards the vehicle while the other one, mounted to the rear of the vehicle, tracked material as it was left behind.

Screened concurrently as a dual-channel video installation, the resultant footage has the potential to be completely disorientating and bewildering. However, Monteith avoids this by her pacing of the work which, rather than confusing the viewer, helps to create an oddly calm and syncopated rhythm between the adjacent frames.

Monteith is renowned for her penchant for extreme sports, dizzying speeds and dare-devil antics; *1020 metres in 26 minutes* is definitely one of her more serene works in terms of tempo. The central dividing line acts almost like a magnetic vortex as streams of traffic merge and the Harbour Bridge's iron pylons seemingly dissolve into one another. In contrast to this melting band, the right screen details cars inching slowly forward while more cars, complete with billowing flags, mark out the road ahead on the left screen.

Supremely clever in its simplicity, the footage offers an enchanting lyricism because of the wealth of visual interest that the piece contains. A key facet of the work is that it is filmed in real time with no cuts or editing. As a result *1020 metres in 26*

minutes uniquely documents an important piece of New Zealand political history objectively, and allows it to be revisited and re-experienced much as it unfolded second by second. Content aside, however, the work is also visually appealing as it rolls and eddies past the viewer.

Born in Belfast in Northern Ireland, Monteith immigrated to New Zealand in 1987. She later completed a Fine Arts degree majoring in Photography at Elam School of Fine Arts before moving to the Intermedia Department of Elam to complete both a masters degree and a doctorate.

1020 metres in 26 minutes is set to feature in the comprehensive exhibition of Monteith's work opening at the Govett-Brewster Gallery in New Plymouth on 25 September. Monteith is also one of four finalists for this year's prestigious Walters Prize at the Auckland Art Gallery, nominated for her piece *Passing Manoeuvre with Two Motorcycles and 584 Vehicles for Two-Channel Video*. The winner of the Walters Prize will be announced on 8 October.

Jemma Field

1020 metres in 26 minutes Waitangi Day Auckland Harbour Bridge Protest 2008

Two-Channel Video

7 metres x 3 metres, 26min looping cycle

Clown directs Hamlet for a night

There is still time (as long as tickets are still available) to spend an evening of laughs with a dash of catharsis at this year's University of Auckland annual Drama production *A Night with Hamlet* – a production of two scenes from Hamlet and six adaptations.

It is not surprising that a performance based on Shakespeare's famous tragedy should take a feisty twist – it is directed by a clown!

Over two weeks the internationally acclaimed actor, director, playwright, mime, clown and jester Dr Ira Seidenstein has been working with students to generate and develop ideas while imparting some of his wealth of accumulated knowledge and skill.

Ira, who is in New Zealand to teach workshops in master-clowning, has had a long association with

New Zealand, first touring, teaching and performing here in 1981. He has written his own adaptations of Shakespearean plays including *Hamlet*, helped to establish Australia's national Bell Shakespeare Company and his own Quantum Theatre: Slapstick to Shakespeare.

Ira says: "In Hamlet's famed image he holds the skull of the jester Yorick. In this production we hope to release both the soul of Yorick and the humour of Hamlet."

The show includes the comical *Green Eggs and Hamlet*, Richard Curtis' *Skinhead Hamlet*, and Murray Edmond's new Noh version of *Hamlet*.

Dr Rina Kim, a lecturer in Drama at the Department of English, says: "Ira's direction has added an extra dimension to an already fun and rewarding course. Ira's innovative approach to

Hamlet and the adaptations of *Hamlet* show that Shakespeare can still be fresh after 400 years."

A Night with Hamlet began Thursday 16 September and continues until Sunday the 19th, with performances on Friday 17 September at 8pm, Saturday the 18th at 4pm and 8pm, and Sunday the 19th at 6pm.

All performances are held in the Drama Studio, Level 3 of the Arts 1 Building, 14a Symonds St. Tickets are \$10 for students, \$15 full price. For bookings, please call 09 373 7599 ext. 84226.

For further information, please contact Dr. Rina Kim on 373 7599 ext. 87348, or email rina.kim@auckland.ac.nz.

What's on

FRIDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

Lunchtime concert

Featuring School of Music students from the strings and flute departments. 1.05-1.55pm Music Theatre, School of Music.

Dept of Philosophy research seminar

Ralph Wedgwood, University of Oxford: *The right thing to believe*. 3-5pm Patrick Hanan Room 501, Arts 2.

2010 NZ Aronui Lecture

Baroness O'Neill of Bengarve, past president of the British Academy, Professor of Philosophy, Cambridge University: *Grasping freedom of speech*. 6pm Lecture Theatre, OGH.

SATURDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

Portfolio workshop at Elam

10am-12noon projectspace B431, Main Fine Arts Bldg, 20 Whitaker Pl. Email s.korohina@auckland.ac.nz

Sean Kerr: Film screening

Sean Kerr introduces an exclusive screening of his film and video works. 1-2pm Gus Fisher Gallery.

Medical School Music Fundraiser II

7.30pm Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds St. Door sales \$15. Featuring students from the Medical and Health Sciences. Come and listen to delightful classical music concert. Limited seating. All funds raised will go towards the NZ Heart Foundation.

MONDAY 20 SEPTEMBER

Dept of Political Studies seminar

Prof Peter Davis and Assoc Prof Michael Mintrom: *Teaching quantitative methods in social science: Stories from the front line!* 12noon Meeting Rm, 16 Symonds Street.

School of European Languages and Literatures seminars

Dealing with the past: Historical memory and human rights in Latin America and Spain. 2-3pm Rm 107, Old Choral Hall.

1) Prof José Colmeiro: *Beyond the nation: Memory, forgetting and justice in post-Franco Spain*.

2) Dr Walescka Pino-Ojeda: *Collective memory and transitional democracy: Latin America in the post-authoritarian neoliberal era*.

Bioengineering and Physiology research seminar

Dr Daryl Schwenke, University of Otago: *Role of Rho-kinase signalling in modulating blood flow distribution in pulmonary hypertension*. 4-5pm Seminar Rm 505, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences.

TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

Dept of Mechanical Engineering research seminar

Prof Carsten Werner, Dresden, Germany: *Biofunctional polymer materials for regenerative therapies*. 12noon-1pm Lecture Theatre 3.401, School of Engineering.

School of Music seminar

Dr James Cuskelly: *Music education and older beginners: Adapting the model*. 1.05-1.55pm Music Theatre. Free.

Bioengineering research seminar

Annalisa Swan, ABL: *Using models to gain insights into gas exchange in the lungs*. 4-5pm Level 5 Seminar Room, UniServices House, 70 Symonds St.

Exhibition opening

Master of Fine Arts students Nicola

Holden and Yona Lee: *and and and...* 5.30pm George Fraser Gallery, 25a Princes St. Exhibition runs until 25 Sept.

Future Proof Lecture 2010

Steve Poletti: *Future energy issues in NZ*. 6-7pm Design Lecture Theatre, NICA Conference Centre, 22 Symonds St.

2010 Robert C Solomon Philosophy lecture

Prof Peter Goldie, Hood Fellow: *Oysters and opera: How to acquire an 'acquired taste'*. 6pm Library Lecture Theatre B15.

WEDNESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

Dept of Applied Language Studies and Linguistics seminar

Dr Sun Hee Ok Kim, Macquarie University, Sydney: *From myths to the reality: Perceptions of settlement and language learning among adult immigrants in Australia*. 12noon Rm 103, Fisher Bldg, 18 Waterloo Quad.

Dept of Psychology seminar

Suzanne Barker-Collo, UoA: *Prevalence of neuropsychological deficits in five-year stroke survivors and their impact on functional outcomes: Results from the ASTRO population-based study*. 12noon HSB 604.

Inaugural lecture

Prof Michele Leggott, Dept of English: *Good eyes: Poetry, people and new media*. 6.30pm Conference Centre, 22 Symonds St.

Fast Forward Lecture series

Thom Craig, Thom Craig Architects, Christchurch. 6.30pm Rm 1.439, School of Engineering, 20 Symonds St.

THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

Dept of Mathematics colloquium

Prof Ben Green, Cambridge University: *Arithmetic progressions of primes*. 3pm MLT1, Maths/Physics Bldg.

Department of History seminar

Clive Stone, Royal Society of NZ: *The making, meaning and migration of NZ war art produced in the Pacific in WW Two*. 4pm Room 59, History Department.

Film and Media Studies Employer Panel and Expo

5-7pm venue tba. University Careers Service event. Register at www.auckland.ac.nz/careerhub Queries to ext 88727 or careers@auckland.ac.nz

Department of English lecture

Prof Tiffany Stern, Professor of Early Modern Drama, Oxford University: *Shakespeare on page and stage*. 6pm Lecture Theatre, OGH.

FRIDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

School of Music lunchtime concert

Featuring students from the brass and woodwind departments. 1.05-1.55pm Music Theatre, 6 Symonds St. Free.

SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

Academy of Music Piano Workshop

9.30am-4pm Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds St. Cost \$20. Registration required. With Rae de Lisle and Stephen De Pledge.

MONDAY 27 SEPTEMBER

Women to watch seminar

Assoc Prof Karen Grylls, School of Music. 5pm Main Dining Rm, OGH. Presented by the Kate Edger Educational Charitable Trust. Drinks and nibbles to follow. RSVP to janebellamy@xtra.co.nz

TUESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER

Graduation

The Graduation Procession for all faculties leaves from Alumni Marquee, Old Government House grounds at 9.15am and crosses Princes Street to enter Bowen Avenue at 9.30am. Ceremony times at the Aotea Centre: 10.30am: Business and Economics 1.30pm: Education, Engineering, Law 4.30pm: Science, Medical and Health Sciences 7.30pm: Arts, Creative Arts and Industries.

Visit www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/pid/uoa-home/current-students/cs-academic-information/cs-graduation-information

Window 7 upgrade workshop

10am-12noon CAD, 4th Floor, 76 Symonds St. Phone 923 7951 to enrol.

School of Music seminar

Kevin Field: *Techniques and interpretation for contemporary jazz compositions within a piano trio context*. 1.05-1.55pm Music Theatre. Free.

Bioengineering research seminar

Kenneth Tran, Auckland Bioengineering Institute: *Simulation of cardiac energetics*. 4-5pm Level 5 Seminar Rm, UniServices House, 70 Symonds St.

Exhibition opening

Leonard Kai Fung So and Shahriar Asdollah-zadeh: *The Revolution has not yet succeeded: New China/Middle East* 5.30pm, George Fraser Gallery, 25 Princes St. Exhibition runs until 2 Oct.

Future Proof Lecture 2010

Kit Cuttle: *Turning the criteria for lighting design upside down*. 6-7pm Design Lecture Theatre, NICA Conference Centre, 22 Symonds St.

WEDNESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

Department of Mechanical Engineering research seminar

Dr Fiona Zhao, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), USA: *Research trends in interoperable manufacturing*. 12noon Lecture Theatre 3.401, School of Engineering.

School of Environment seminar

Dr David Conradson: *Thinking geographically about well-being*. 1-2pm HSB 429.

Peer tutors: The teaching tools staring you in the face

1-2pm Rm 420, Level 4, Kate Edger Information Commons, 9 Symonds St. Find out how employing a dedicated band of peer tutors has improved student performance in a large stage Two physiology course. For further details go to www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/workshops, email CADreception@auckland.ac.nz or phone ext 88140.

Department of Psychology seminar

Dr Adam Brown, Dept of Psychiatry, NYU School of Medicine: *Refocusing the trauma lens: From the past to the future*. 4pm HSB 604.

Oticon Foundation Hearing

Education Centre research seminar Dr Grant Searchfield, UoA: *A downunder view of bottom-up top-down tinnitus processing*. 5pm Rm 730.220, School of Population Health, Tamaki Campus.

Auckland branch of Society for Legal and Social Philosophy seminar

Dr Michael Littlewood: *Tax avoidance and the rule of law*. 6pm Small Lecture Theatre, Bldg 803, School of Law.

Songwriter of the Year 2010 Final

7.30pm Maidment Theatre, 8 Alfred St.

Cost \$15/\$10/\$5. Phone 308 2383.

THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER

Postgraduate Study Information Evening

6-8.30pm NICA Student Centre, 26 Symonds St. An opportunity to find out about postgraduate study and research in Architecture, Planning and Urban Design, Dance Studies, Fine Arts, Music and Sonic Arts.

Queries to info-creative@auckland.ac.nz

Japanese film screening

The Girl Who Leapt Through Time. 7.30pm Lecture Theatre B15, General Library Bldg. Animated film directed by Mamoru Hosoda. 2006, 98 minutes, rated PG. Admission free.

Classifieds

ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE

Art Deco apartment available for short term rental.

Quintessential 1930s apartment, faithfully restored with a superb blend of Art Deco furnishings and modern conveniences. Ideally situated in historic Westminster Court, on Parliament St across from OGH. Building is fully secure with swimming pool and recreational facility. In short, a lovely environment. The apartment comprises one bdrm + library/dining rm, large lounge, fully equipped kitchen with all mod cons and tiled bthrm and laundry. Perfect retreat for a busy academic. Carpark optional. Contact Dawn Judge, ph (021) 528 223 or email dawnjudge@ezysurf.co.nz

House-sitter wanted: Responsible, mature professional couple or individual required to house-sit Ponsonby, Ak villa from 24 December 2010 to 15 January 2011. Very handy to shops and cafes. No kids, no pets, n/s. In return for security and garden watering only cost will be \$100 towards power. Reference required. Phone (09) 378 8883 or (021) 637-887. Email sureidy@gmail.com

Modern three bedroom, two bathroom townhouse in Epsom. Dble internal garage. Private sunny courtyard. Newly renovated. Dble Grammar zone, ENPS, ANI. Handy to shops, schools, parks, transport. No smokers/pets please. \$700pw. Available now. Contact Anna on (021) 125 9927 or annalauk@gmail.com

One bedroom flat available in Chatswood, Birkenhead.

Open plan lounge with kitchen area, separate bdrm and bthrm, morning sun, OSP, own entrance in quiet residential street, walk to cafes, shops and bus. N/s. Suit single professional person. \$285 pw, includes power and water. Contact Margaret on 480 9242.

Sabbatical or holiday retreat in Greek fully-furnished apartment

in East Peloponnese close to beach, overlooking the Aegean, pristine village, orange groves. Email t.fookes@auckland.ac.nz or visit www.tyrosapartment.com

Two bedroom townhouse. Two bus zones from downtown, in Mt Eden/Mt Roskill area. Private garden. \$350 pw. Available for 6-12 months. Ph 620 8988.

ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED

House-sit/apartment-sit/flat-sit wanted in central Ak (Parnell, Mt Eden, CBD etc), beginning of Oct until Christmas. Male librarian, mature N/S, currently working at Parliament in Wellington. Will happily take care of garden. No car-parking required. References available. Email bernie.salmon@parliament.govt.nz