



## FOSTERING HUMAN-COMPUTER INTERACTION

University researchers and postgraduate students with strong technical or artistic skills in computer animation are being invited to get involved with the University's brand-new Laboratory for Animate Technologies.

Based in the Auckland Bioengineering Institute (ABI), the pioneering laboratory has been set up by 2012 Distinguished Alumnus and Oscar-winning bioengineer, Dr Mark Sagar (pictured). It will take computer animation to a new level, creating interactive autonomously-animated systems which "will help define the next generation of human-computer interaction and facial animation.

"Imagine a machine that can not only express what is on its mind, but also allows you to glimpse the mental imagery that it is constantly changing in its mind," says Mark.

Industries to benefit from research and technology created in Mark's lab could include those where establishing emotional rapport is important such as education, advertising, and the entertainment industry.

Mark says his lab will create an experience that will allow visitors to engage with "smart technology" that appears conscious, emotive

and thinking. "One question we are pursuing is: can technology be made more appealing if it is more natural?"

He says the technology created in his lab will simulate the lifelike qualities and the observable natural reflexes and behaviour of someone engaging with another person.

"Our computational models of emotion, perception, learning and memory will generate highly expressive realistic – or fantastic – imagery which engages the user on a visceral, emotional level," he says.

The lab will also develop advanced computer vision techniques to track facial expression and behaviour. These techniques will be used with other modes of sensory input to allow the smart machine to sense its world.

"We are building a collaborative modular model of the face and brain, a brain and face Lego with swappable and re-shapable parts. Both scientists and artists who want an interactive context to test and visualise their work can design, combine, integrate, inspect, react, be reacted to, and redesign," says Mark.

Dr Sagar previously worked for Weta Digital where he created technology for achieving the

realistic appearance and performance capture animation of digital characters such as Avatar's Na'vi people. His pioneering work in computer-generated faces was recognised with two consecutive Oscars at the 2010 and 2011 Sci-tech awards, a branch of the Academy Awards that recognises movie science and technological achievements. Dr Sagar will continue to work with Weta on selected projects.

The former medical researcher started his career building computer simulations of the human eye for virtual surgery. He has a Bachelor of Science and a PhD in Engineering from The University of Auckland.

Professor Peter Hunter, Director of the ABI, says he feels very fortunate to have Dr Sagar working at the Institute.

"Mark is an exceptional researcher, scientist and artist with immense vision and passion. He has made a huge contribution to the motion picture industry in a relatively short time and I expect that he will continue to excel here and abroad with his work at the Laboratory for Animate Technologies."



## Our distinguished alumni

This year's Distinguished Alumni Award winners took time out for a photo call on the steps of University House, en route to the awards dinner on 9 March.

Following a highly engaging and entertaining panel discussion at the Maidment Theatre the evening before, the winners were honoured by the University community, with their family, friends and whanau. Each winner was chosen for accomplishments in their particular field and

each brought a unique and personal flavour to the evening. Video coverage of both *Auckland Live! Mana, Mettle & Magic* at the Maidment Theatre and the Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner will be available to view by the end of March at: [www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz)

Winners are, from left: Dr Privahini Bradoo (Young Alumna of the Year); Don McGlashan; Emeritus Professor Ranginui Walker; Professor Charles Alcock; Dr Mark Sagar; and Dame Robin White.



Charles Alcock

## Visits to CareerHub skyrocket

Visits to the University's CareerHub have more than doubled over the last year.

The hub's Google Analytics statistics show an increase in visits from 63,330 in 2010 to 132,063 in 2011. That's an increase of 109 percent.

"We're pleased to see the upward trends illustrated by these figures," says Marshall Barlow, Director of University Careers Services. "Auckland CareerHub is a great way to provide students with information about our services and events, employers and jobs. At the same time it provides employers with a way of reaching students and qualified graduates."

Auckland CareerHub [www.auckland.ac.nz/careerhub](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/careerhub) is a database of jobs, internships and other opportunities targeted at University of Auckland students and recent graduates. It's run by University Careers Services and is a bit like Seek, but for students and graduates.

Part of the Services' 2011 strategy involved providing students and graduates access to more information online - via the Career planning website [www.auckland.ac.nz/careerplanning](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/careerplanning) and other tools, including Auckland CareerHub.

Once registered on Auckland CareerHub, students can browse job and internship opportunities, find out about University Careers Services' events and workshops, and make appointments with Careers Consultants. University staff can also register and see the sorts of jobs that are available to graduates.

Here are some other statistics from Auckland CareerHub:



The CareerHub markets jobs and opportunities through various channels, including a monthly student e-newsletter Auckland CareerConnect.

"We can see the newsletter really makes a difference," says Marshall. Each of the highest

peaks in the graphic below corresponds to the date that the newsletter was sent out.

Visits to Auckland CareerHub in 2011, as compared with 2010 (in orange).

For more information about University Careers Services, Auckland CareerHub and the Auckland CareerConnect e-newsletter, please see [www.auckland.ac.nz/careerplanning](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/careerplanning).

	2010	2011	% change
Organisations added	224	417	86%
Jobs added	751	1273	69%
New students registered	4848	7221	49%



## Hearing Hero

Professor Peter Thorne from the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences' Audiology Discipline is the recipient of the National Foundation for the Deaf's inaugural Hearing Hero award.

The award has been instigated by the Foundation to salute individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the deaf and hearing impaired sector and "(we) cannot think of a more deserving recipient for this award," said CEO Louise Carroll.

Peter has published widely in the area of inner ear homeostasis and the effects of noise on hearing, which includes studies on the mechanisms of noise injury in animals and the epidemiology and prevention of noise-induced hearing loss in humans. He was the prime mover in the establishment of the Section of Audiology at the University in 1990 and the development of Audiology professional training through the establishment of the Master of Audiology degree.

In addition to the senior positions he has held in both the School of Medical Sciences and the School of Population Health, Peter has contributed substantially to the hearing impaired community, serving as the President of the National Foundation for the Deaf and was one of the lead advocates for the establishment of Newborn Hearing Screening and chaired the Newborn Hearing Screening Implementation Advisory Group for the National Screening Unit. He serves on the Board of the Auckland Medical Research Foundation and three years ago was made a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for his services to audiology.

## From the Vice-Chancellor



A proposal that will potentially have a significant impact on academic outreach activities in the University is currently being consulted on with affected staff, and (shortly) with Senate.

The proposal concerns the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE). CCE has for some years offered a broad programme of public courses, events and seminars. Most have been supported by Adult and Community Education (ACE) funding. Continued reductions in government funding for these programmes have significantly reduced their financial viability. This is part of an international trend for governments to focus on "for credit" courses at the expense of those of a more general "public interest" nature.

Unfortunately, attempts to offer these courses to the public at full cost have led to markedly reduced enrolments, demonstrating that they are not sustainable other than via a (diminishing) government subsidy. Furthermore, most CCE courses are delivered by contracted tutors face-to-face so that they do not contribute as much as they might to the University's community engagement through research-informed teaching. Nor do the present arrangements take advantage of modern distance learning technologies to offer programmes beyond Auckland.

It is therefore proposed that responsibility for and academic ownership of all outreach courses and events will shift to Faculties, Schools and Departments, with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) leading a new initiative to build engagement with local and distant communities through increased electronic access to community education such as public lectures and events. Also proposed is that CCE will cease to develop its own professional development programmes, but where appropriate its courses will transfer to the parallel Short Courses programme in the Business School.

Better coordination will also be achieved between "New Start", which provides not-for-credit programmes that prepare students for university study, and the related Tertiary Foundation Certificate programmes. Both are well aligned with the University's Maōri and Pacific Island strategies, forming an increasingly important part of a wider portfolio of preparatory programmes that contribute to the University's commitment to ensuring equity of access for all those with the potential to succeed.

## London's Lord Mayor on campus



The Lord Mayor, a partner in the international law firm Allen & Overy, was accompanied by the British High Commissioner to New Zealand, Her Excellency Vicki Treadwell, and fellow envoys. Their visit was organised by University Council member Peter Kiely (left), an Auckland lawyer who is Honorary

Consul for the Slovak Republic and actively promotes links with Europe through the NZ Europe Business Council.

In discussion Mr Wootton, the 684th Lord Mayor, spoke of his optimism about the City's continuation as a leading centre of global finance and business notwithstanding tensions with the European Union and the state of the world economy.

Formality was at a minimum during his party's hour-long stay. Mr Wootton, who travelled dressed in colourful ceremonial regalia in an ornate gilded coach after being sworn in last November for his one-year term, arrived unobtrusively in Princes Street in a sleek grey Rolls-Royce.

Our ties to the City of London, mainly through the contribution of graduates, were apparent when its Lord Mayor led a delegation to the University on 14 March.

Alderman David Wootton (pictured far right), holder of the ancient office for 2011-12 and a practising lawyer, came in his role as champion of the City which, with New York, is the world's premier financial centre.

Over morning tea the Dean of Law, Dr Andrew Stockley (centre), representing the University, spoke of the numerous Law, Commerce and other graduates from Auckland who work in the City. He knows many of them from his time at Oxford University and, as Dean, his regular contact with Auckland alumni based in London.

## Robb Lecturer from Berkeley

Professor Alison Gopnik, an authority on children's learning and development from the University of California at Berkeley, is the Sir Douglas Robb Lecturer for 2012. She will deliver three lectures on "The

philosophical baby: What children's minds can teach us about the big questions" on 17, 21 and 23 May. Full details at [www.auckland.ac.nz/robb](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/robb)



## Aspire

Want to reposition your career? Be inspired? Or simply gain some new skills and information?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes then head along to the ASPIRE 2012 Professional Staff Conference on 18-19 April.

The conference's website went live last week and boasts a packed two-day programme with something for everyone.

"We've designed the programme to cater for

a diverse range of interests and development needs for professional staff," says organiser Melanie Moorcroft who is the Staff and Leadership Development manager, Human Resources. "Overall we have tailored the conference for: personal leadership, leadership of others, and technical matters."

Individual sessions range from the fundamentals of career planning, to future proofing your career, and looking at how neuroscience can help you set and achieve your goals. There

are sessions on resilience during career transitions, managing office politics and a chance to see some of the University's technical staff in action.

One session is based on the speed dating concept. "In this session you have the opportunity to meet with four members of staff and find out their secrets to a successful career," explains Melanie. "You will join two or three

other participants and have 12-15 minutes to ask questions at each 'career date'."

Professional staff participating in the Speed Dating session include Angie Smith - Maori Careers Consultant, Careers; Brenda Dias - Council Committee Officer, Office of the Vice-Chancellor; Brendan Mosely - Director of Campus Life; Chris Berry - Deputy Director, International Office; Colleen Seth - Planning and Development Manager, Property Services; Elspet Garvey - Manager, Business Process Management Office; Everdina Fuli - Business Manager, Faculty of Arts; Glenda Haines - Manager, Calendar, Regulations and Timetabling Services; Lyn Clark - Office Manager/Chief Technical Adviser, Research Programmes; Nina Herriman - Senior Planning Analyst, Planning and Quality; Peter Cattin - School Manager, Biological Sciences, Faculty of Science; Robyn Hill - International Research Developer, Research Programmes; Terry Grijters - Science IT, Faculty of Science; Walter Fraser - Director of Centre for Pacific Studies.

For more information see: [www.uoaaspire.co.nz/uoaaspire2012/](http://www.uoaaspire.co.nz/uoaaspire2012/)

## Asian historian (and singer) retires

The large numbers of colleagues and well-wishers from throughout the Faculty of Arts and beyond who attended the retirement function for Dr Richard Phillips (School of Asian Studies) in early March may have expected some musical element to grace the event.

What was notable was that the music was presented by the guest of honour himself, an accomplished tenor. Accompanied on the piano by the School of Music's James Tibbles, Richard sang songs from Europe, including his native Wales (in Welsh), China and Korea. An historian of China, Richard has recently studied Korean language. Those who spoke at the reception attempted to sum up the manifold contributions that Richard has made to the University and more widely over a career at Auckland spanning 37 years.

Former Dean of Arts and Head of History, Emeritus Professor Nicholas Tarling took credit

for recruiting Richard in London in 1975, fresh from completing a doctorate at Cambridge, including a stint as a visiting scholar at Harvard. As soon as he arrived in Auckland to lecture in the History Department, Richard began contributing to the work of the newly formed New Zealand Asian Studies Society. He managed to combine his academic and musical interests in providing entertainment at NZASIA meetings: "Those who came to the conferences would sometimes be surprised to find a singing Secretary." Active as tenor soloist in Auckland ensembles, including Bach Musica, Richard has been in demand for parts in Handel operas, Easter oratorios and more modern works. Gilbert and Sullivan featured in the retirement performance.

In their remarks, Dr Paul Taillon (History) and Professor Manying Ip and Dr Hilary Chung (Asian Studies) noted the strong sense of service



Richard and Hilary Chung

that has driven Richard's work at Auckland. His sense of responsibility and ability to get things done are legendary. In 2000 he moved from History to become the inaugural Head of the School of Asian Studies, serving in that capacity for two three-year terms. Colleagues are warmly appreciative of the care and support for staff and students that he brought to these and other roles. Students in his classes on Chinese history, New Zealand's relations with Asia, and the rise of East and Southeast Asia speak fondly of his attention to their progress and understanding.

## Children have their day at University

It's unlikely that the grounds of Old Government House would have ever seen anything like this before. Some 200 children, all under the age of five, all inside the Alumni Marquee, all there to celebrate a day set aside especially for them.

Children's Day is a national campaign organised by the Ministry of Social Development as a day where parents, families, guardians and friends can set time aside to spend with their children. Usually celebrated on the first Sunday

of March, the University made arrangements to celebrate the day, during the week.

"One of the main reasons for organising this event was to celebrate our lovely children and to have an opportunity for parents to interact with each other and with some of our early childhood education centre staff," says Cherie Boyd, Manager for the Early Childhood Education Centres and head wish-granting fairy for the day.

The day was a success with 200 children and 100 parents at the marquee, along with



fairy-wing makers, magicians, dancers and a six-foot-tall Kiwi.

“Children’s Day gave us a chance to bring together ECE staff across all the campuses and have them not only interact with children and parents but with other staff members and make them feel they are part of a larger group within

the University. It also meant that our staff could be more visible and recognised as an important part of the University – they provide a very valuable service to both students and staff.”

For more information visit [www.childrensday.org.nz](http://www.childrensday.org.nz)

## New associate professors



**Associate Professor Lynette Tippett (Psychology)** (right) was appointed to the Department of Psychology in 1994, following post-doctoral fellowships at Carnegie-Mellon University and the University of Pennsylvania.

Inspired as an undergraduate by the research and work of pioneering neuropsychologist, Dr Dorothy Gronwall, Lynette went on to complete her PhD in Psychology and a Diploma in Clinical Psychology, specialising in neuropsychology. She has explored cognitive, behavioural and emotional impairments that accompany diseases such as Huntington’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease, motor neuron disease and Parkinson’s Disease, and the implications for clinical management and therapeutic strategies.

Lynette is particularly interested in the nature of clinical variability in neurodegenerative diseases, especially in Huntington’s disease, and how this interacts with underlying pathological mechanisms. Findings from her research, conducted in collaboration with Professor Richard Faull and neurologist Dr Richard Roxburgh, have been central to the reconceptualisation of Huntington’s disease as a complex and variable disease involving cortical and subcortical regions of the brain. Lynette says the most valuable contributions to this work come from individuals with Huntington’s disease and their families.

Lynette also provides leadership in the professional discipline of clinical neuropsychology, delivering workshops and supervision to clinical psychologists working in neuropsychology, and in 2011 was co-convenor of the committee organising the International Neuropsychological Society conference, held in New Zealand for the first time. Lynette lives with her partner Michael and their 12-year-old daughter, Georgia.

**Associate Professor Stuart Parsons (Biological Sciences)** initially trained as a parasitologist, gaining a BSc (Hons) at the University of Otago. He then enrolled for a PhD and quickly turned his attention to more charismatic megafauna – the native bats of New Zealand. A FRST-funded post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Bristol (UK) followed giving him a world-view of bat biology, something not available in New Zealand at the time. Like many New Zealanders, the desire for his young children to grow up in New Zealand drew him home, and he was appointed to The University of Auckland in 2001.



Much of Stuart’s career has been spent researching echolocation by bats, focusing on signal design, acoustic ecology, signal detection and classification, and the use of automated signal identification systems in behavioural and conservation studies. In 2009 he began a research programme investigating the biomechanics of echolocation during flight and terrestrial locomotion by bats, and this work regularly takes him to Central America to work with vampire bats.

Stuart has active research collaborations in the UK, USA, South Africa and Japan. Although he loves bats, not all his graduate students do. As a result, research in his lab covers a broad range of topics, including the acoustic ecology of birds, the neurobiology of hearing in kiwi and weta (jointly with FMHS colleagues), effects of underwater noise on marine mammals, and the inking behavior of pygmy sperm whales.

In his time as an academic, one experience stand out above all others – shaking the hand of a student who has just successfully defended their PhD. The sense of achievement, and relief, is palpable and sharing that moment with each and every one of them is something he will always remember.

### Sir Charles Hercus Health Research Fellowships

Two University of Auckland academics have been awarded Sir Charles Hercus Health Research Fellowships by the HRC. Dr David Baddeley, Department of Physiology, will investigate the nanostructure and organisation of cellular signalling domains. Associate Professor Ralph Maddison from the School of Population Health will evaluate the effectiveness of mobile phone intervention to modify lifestyle factors (exercise, diet, smoking and adherence to medication) in people with heart disease. This research has the potential to improve delivery of cardiac rehabilitation and thereby improve outcomes for people with heart disease. Congratulations are also extended to the following researchers who were awarded Clinical Research Training Fellowships: Dr Daniel Lemanu, Dr Rakesh Premkumar, and Dr Nichola Wilson.

### Opportunity for Early Career Researchers U21 Workshop Ecological Civilization

A U21 workshop for Early Career Researcher Development will be hosted by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Tuesday 4-Thursday 6 December 2012. The theme of the workshop is: “The status-quo and the future of ecological civilization”.

The University is able to put forward two nominees, and is keen to support staff to attend. Those interested should apply to the International Central Network Fund ([www.auckland.ac.nz/uoq/home/about/international-strategy/international-central-networks-fund](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoq/home/about/international-strategy/international-central-networks-fund)) for funds to support their travel and accommodation. The ICNF Committee will also double as a selection committee for the nominees should more than two people apply. Applications close 5pm, Monday 16 April 2012.

Contact: Robyn Hill, [robyn.hill@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:robyn.hill@auckland.ac.nz)  
For further information on the ICNF process please contact: Matthew O’Meagher, [m.omeagher@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:m.omeagher@auckland.ac.nz)

### Record submissions for first stage of Marsden round

A record 272 preliminary proposals were submitted to the Marsden fund at the end of February (an increase of 10% on last year), and already an assistance programme is being prepared for those researchers who will be invited to submit a full application. We expect around 25% of the applicants to progress to the next stage and an intensive package of critiques, exemplars, reviews, external editing and budget support will be offered to all. Because there will be only six weeks to complete the full proposals, before the Research Office compliance checks, researchers are being urged to start thinking now about how this will be achieved.

## From the collection



Two Auckland brothers, John and Charles Tole, are the northern equivalent of Rita Angus. Neither of them had any formal art school training although they both associated with the Elam painter John Weeks (1886-1975). The Tole brothers lived together at 12 Seaview Road in Remuera and developed their own credo in art which they revealed to University of Auckland's Kurt von Meier in 1964: "We have always been intensely interested in modern developments in style and technique, yet we think these elements should not be arbitrarily or consciously striven for but should emerge and flow freely from the subject matter and from the artist's creative intuition towards the expression and communication of his message."

John Tole (1890-1967) worked as a lawyer from 1919 until 1946 when he became a full-time artist. Thirteen years younger, Charles Tole was educated at Sacred Heart College and Auckland University College and became a civil servant. He started painting with oil paints on prepared boards around 1940 when he was 37 years old. John Tole had taken some lessons in how to work in oils from the English immigrant landscape painter Walter Wright, who, with brother Frank Wright, operated a painting studio in Victoria Arcade at the bottom of Shortland Street.

For 25 years until 1965, Charles Tole's painting was a hobby, and limited to weekends and holidays with perhaps one or two exhibitions a year. He worked in oil and occasionally tempera, and restricted himself to landscape and still life subjects. After he retired at the age of 62, he started to experiment with collage. A 1968 work entitled "Christmas is no time for cutting corners on sherry" is one memorable result. Charles Tole entered his work into Benson and Hedges competitions and received favourable reviews from knowledgeable critics like Gordon H. Brown who saw the resemblance of his cubist regionalism to the Americans Charles Sheeler and Charles Demuth of the early twentieth century. John Cawte Beaglehole, in opening an exhibition of paintings by Charles and John Tole at the Architectural Centre Gallery in Wellington in 1957, remarked that he thought of the Toles as twins with their hard design and romantic colour.

In sending notes to Professor Tony Green for an entry in the Thieme-Becker *Kunstlerlexicon* in November 1971, Charles Tole acknowledged early influences from John Weeks and a

friendship with the late Dr Stanley Wallis. The latter worked in the Rotorua region to develop a landscape painting style which broke geographical features into fractured lines in a Cubist manner to form what Damian Skinner has characterised as the "Mudpool Modernism" of the 1950s.

While confining exhibitions of their work to the various art societies around New Zealand, the Tole brothers were members of the Thornhill Group in Auckland which exhibited regularly at the Auckland Art Gallery. Membership included Helen Brown, Louise Henderson, Stanley Wallis and John Weeks – all artists who were interested in continuing to explore the cubist revolution in the construction of form in painting and adapt it to the New Zealand environment.

In the early 1970s, Charles Tole made a number of still life studies, often using a cross motif, and these were titled as "Decorations". The vases which are repeated in outline and solid form in Decoration 3 are combined with areas of golden and blue scumbling and glimpses of other kiwi modernist abstraction such as koru shapes and parallel lines. These show that Tole was aware of the completely abstract work of both Colin McCahon and Gordon Walters which was circulating locally, but content to pursue his own version of the analytical cubism of Picasso and Braque in their interrogation of still life forms in space.

Linda Tyler

*Charles Holbert Smales Tole (1903-1988) Decoration 3 1971, oil on board*

## Books



*Competencies of Trial: Fitness to Plead in New Zealand* addresses issues around the determination of fitness to plead, or competency to stand trial, which has long been a vexed issue for the law. Recent statutory developments in New Zealand follow legislative changes that have occurred in other common law jurisdictions in response to the acknowledged importance of the fitness of a person to stand trial as a threshold issue. With the emergence of human rights culture in the last 25 years, criminal procedure has been especially impacted upon as legislatures struggle to ensure that local criminal laws and procedure are "rights-compliant" and conform with international human rights standards.

Written by Professor of Law, Warren Brookbanks, this book examines how the courts have operationalised the fitness rules relation to such questions as how the issue is raised, how it is determined and the extent to which the rules ought to reflect a best interest component. It concludes with some recommendations for reform.

# What's on

## THURSDAY 29 MARCH

### Short takes on long poems trans Tasman symposium

Runs until 30 March. FGW Rm, OGH. The NZ Electronic Poetry Centre (nzepc) and visiting American poet Rachel Blau DuPlessis invite you to attend two days of talks and performances culminating in a long poem collaboration on Onetangi beach, Waiheke Island.

### Auckland and Beyond: Four Future Architects

11am-4pm George Fraser Gallery, 25a Princes St. Runs until 31 March. Yunwei Xu, Min Tian, Jessica Mentis, and Raukura Turei, recipients of the 2011 NZIA Graphisoft Student Design Award exhibit their winning pieces. Email events-archplan@auckland.ac.nz Visit [www.georgefraser.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.georgefraser.auckland.ac.nz)

### School of Biological Sciences seminar

Rauri C.K. Bowie, University of California at Berkeley: *The role of mountains in the diversification of birds*. 1-2pm Mac 1 Seminar Rm, Biology Bldg. Queries to [rk.barraclough@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:rk.barraclough@auckland.ac.nz)

### Word presentation and graphics training

1-4pm CAD Training Rm 202, 2nd Floor, Fisher Bldg, 18 Waterloo Quadrant. Visit [www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/workshops/IT/Training](http://www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/workshops/IT/Training).

### COMPASS research seminar

Dr Steve McEachern, Australian National University: *The Australian Data Archive: Preserving the past for access in the future*. 4pm Rm 104 Fale Pasifika.

### Centre for Supply Chain

**Management seminar**  
Dr Peter Stevens, CEO, GS1 NZ: *Dude, where's my stuff? Improving your supply chain visibility*. 5.30-7pm Owen G Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd.

RSVP to <https://secure.business.auckland.ac.nz/GS1March201>

### Faculty of Law public lecture

Prof Andrew Ashworth QC, NZ Law Foundation Distinguished Visiting Fellow 2012: *Human rights, judges and politicians: Recent controversies in the UK and Europe*. 6pm Lecture Theatre, OGH.

RSVP to [lawevents@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:lawevents@auckland.ac.nz)

### Monthly Japanese film screening

*Can you see our lights?* 2011, 48 minutes, documentary. 6.30pm B15, Library Bldg, Alfred St. Runs until 26 April. Free. English subtitles. Presented by The Consulate-General of Japan, The University of Auckland, The University of Waikato and The Japan Foundation.

## FRIDAY 30 MARCH

### Accounting and Finance seminar

Patrick Verwijmeren, University Amsterdam and University of Melbourne: *Topic tba*. 11am-12.30pm Rm 325, Level 3, Owen G Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd. Queries to [w.li@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:w.li@auckland.ac.nz)

## SATURDAY 31 MARCH

### Exhibition talk

1pm Gus Fisher Gallery, 74 Shortland St. A poetry reading and talk from Dinah Hawkins, who is collaborating with John Edgar on a publication for Holloway Press, and whose poems are part of his *Ballast* exhibition. Queries to [gusfishergallery@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:gusfishergallery@auckland.ac.nz) Visit [www.gusfishergallery.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.gusfishergallery.auckland.ac.nz)

## TUESDAY 3 APRIL

### Legal Research Foundation/Faculty of Law seminar

Professor Susan Bright, University of Oxford: *Shared ownership: Can the wrong be righted?* 1-2pm Forum 4, Bldg 803, Faculty of Law. Queries to [barbara@legalresearch.org.nz](mailto:barbara@legalresearch.org.nz) or [ka.palmer@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:ka.palmer@auckland.ac.nz)

### Faculty of Education research seminar

Prof Regan A. R. Gurung, University of Wisconsin - Green Bay: *What educators (and mere mortals) need to know about using social media for health and learning*. 4pm J2 Lecture Theatre, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Epsom.

### Bioengineering research seminar

Dr Stephen Gilbert, University of Leeds: *Imaging of cardiac microanatomy: Approaches, recent results, challenges and future directions*. 4-5pm Ground Floor Seminar Rm G010, UniServices House, 70 Symonds St.

### Book talk

Dr Jan Cronin, Dept of English: *The Frame Function*. 5.30-7pm Whare Wānanga, Level 2, Auckland Central Library, Lorne Street. Free. Welcome glass of wine at 5.30pm, session starts at 6pm. A NZ Book Month event.

### Legal Research Foundation Visiting Scholar lecture

Professor G Edward (Ted) White, University of Virginia: *No-fault accident compensation in NZ and the US: Divergent species from a common ancestor*. 6pm Stone Lecture Theatre, Faculty of Law, Level 3, 9 Eden Cres. Queries to [barbara@legalresearch.org.nz](mailto:barbara@legalresearch.org.nz) or [pt.rishworth@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:pt.rishworth@auckland.ac.nz)

## WEDNESDAY 4 APRIL

### Dept of Sociology/Dept of Asian Studies seminar

Prof Manying Ip: *New media and Chinese diasporic identity*. 11am HSB 901, 10 Symonds St.

### Dept of Applied Language Studies and Linguistics seminar

Neil Matheson: *Enhancing writing peer review performance using online training*. 12noon DALSL Meeting Rm 206-408, Arts 1.

### Department of Sociology seminar

Prof Jeffrey M. Masson: *Questioning dominant paradigms: Freud, animals and the origins of human violence*. 4-6pm B5, Owen G Glenn Bldg 12 Grafton Rd.

### Fermata: time out to talk music seminar

Prof John Drummond, University

of Otago: *Praxial music and formal education: A clash of cultures?* 5.30pm Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds St. Free.

### Legal Research Foundation/Faculty of Law public lecture

Professor Susan Bright, University of Oxford: *Losing homes: Personal stories and the problem of 'chalk and cheese' in law*. 6pm Stone Lecture Theatre, Faculty of Law, Level 3, 9 Eden Cres. Queries to [barbara@legalresearch.org.nz](mailto:barbara@legalresearch.org.nz) or [ka.palmer@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:ka.palmer@auckland.ac.nz)

## THURSDAY 5 APRIL

### Faculty of Science seminar

Dr Chaitanya Joshi, University of Waikato: *Computationally efficient methods for Bayesian inference/ Bayesian modeling of trait-based community assembly*. 4-5pm Briefing Rm 257, Level 2, Bldg 303S, Science Centre, 38 Princes St.

## FRIDAY 6 APRIL

Good Friday

## MONDAY 9 APRIL

Easter Monday

## TUESDAY 10 APRIL

University holiday

## WEDNESDAY 11 APRIL

### Liggins Institute seminar

Dr Aaron Petersen, Victoria University, Melbourne: *Post-exercise muscle recovery interventions: The good, the bad, and the useless*. 4-5pm Seminar Rm, Level 1, Liggins Institute, 2-6 Park Ave, Grafton. Queries to [dx.liu@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:dx.liu@auckland.ac.nz) or [m.debock@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:m.debock@auckland.ac.nz)

## THURSDAY 12 APRIL

### Department of Statistics seminar

Jared Tobin, UoA: *Bayesian nonparametrics and scalable probabilistic inference*. 4-5pm Briefing Rm 257, Level 2, Bldg 303S, Science Centre, 38 Princes St. Queries to [office@stat.auckland.ac.nz](mailto:office@stat.auckland.ac.nz)

## SATURDAY 14 APRIL

### Exhibition talk

1pm Gus Fisher Gallery, 74 Shortland St. Artists Peter Madden and Tessa Laird discuss their work in *Paper-jams*. Queries to [gusfishergallery@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:gusfishergallery@auckland.ac.nz) Visit [www.gusfishergallery.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.gusfishergallery.auckland.ac.nz)

## TUESDAY 17 APRIL

### MS Project introduction training

9am-12noon CAD Training Rm 202, 2nd Floor, Fisher Bldg, 18 Waterloo Quadrant. Visit [www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/workshops/IT/Training](http://www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/workshops/IT/Training).

# Classifieds

## ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE

**Apartments for rent.** Call us for your rental requirements; we offer city apartments furnished/unfurnished, all sizes and prices; great rental deals for long-term leases; call Andrew (09) 303 0601 or Lauren Valcarcel (021) 103 4865 at City Sales or [rentals@citysales.co.nz](http://rentals@citysales.co.nz) or log on to [www.citysales.co.nz/rentals](http://www.citysales.co.nz/rentals)

**Belmont.** One-bdrm flat in house, available immediately. North-facing. Self-contained. Shared back yard. Furnished. Close to buses and ferries. Long or short term. Would suite a couple or visiting researcher. \$200 pw negotiable. Contact [k.obradovic@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:k.obradovic@auckland.ac.nz)

**Freemans Bay/Ponsonby Apartment.** Fantastic views of City and Harbour from lounge, bdrms and Waitakeres and Upper Harbour from kitchen. Available mid-June to mid-Nov 2012, however dates are flexible. Private walkway to Ponsonby Rd, taxi stand, Link Bus etc. Fully furnished, two bdrms, plus study, two bthrms, two balconies. Phone/Wifi Broadband package available. Would suit visiting academic. NZD630 pw. Contact Brian on (09) 378 1832 or email [brianpet@extra.co.nz](mailto:brianpet@extra.co.nz)

**Fully furnished house in Epsom South/Royal Oak.** Available from 12 May to 16 June 2012. \$420 pw. Queen-size bdrm with French doors and separate study. Modern kitchen and shower bthrm, dishwasher, washing machine/dryer and fireplace. Secure house with alarm, carport with automatic garage door and tropical garden. Walking distance to Cornwall Park and to bus stop going to CBD Midtown or Britomart. Email [sdefontenay@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:sdefontenay@slingshot.co.nz)

**Fully furnished, 180 square metre bungalow in Epsom** available from August 2012 to January 2013. Four bdrms (two currently used as studies), two bthrms, separate dining and living rooms, private north-facing deck, central heating, WIFI, broadband and delightful cat. Walking distance to Cornwall Park, shops, transport. Suit couple or family with up to two children. \$600 pw. Contact [alison.kirkness@gmail.com](mailto:alison.kirkness@gmail.com)

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Editing and proofreading services** for all academic, literary and general writing (short or lengthy items). Please contact Dr Jan White, (021) 025 87579 or email [jweddingservices1@gmail.com](mailto:jweddingservices1@gmail.com)

**Travel.** I have 12 years experience in booking all aspects of personal travel for university staff and lecturers. I pride myself in ensuring that your travel plans are sourced at the lowest possible costs and are tailor-made to your requirements. Contact Karen on [Karen.embleton@mondotravel.co.nz](mailto:Karen.embleton@mondotravel.co.nz) or 940 0064 (wk) or (021) 188 7781.



# STYLISH ACADEMIC WRITING

Several years ago I sent out an email asking two simple questions: What is “stylish academic writing”, and who are the most stylish writers in your field? Within days, responses had pinged into my inbox from across the disciplines and around the globe. Stylish academic writers, my colleagues told me, convey complex ideas in lively, well-crafted prose that engages readers, tells stories, expresses passion, employs concrete examples and avoids gratuitous jargon.

There were some disciplinary nuances, of course; for example, literary scholars value linguistic playfulness, whereas scientists favour precision and concision. All the same, I was struck by the overall consistency of the responses, which echo advice found in most guides to effective writing but do not, sadly, reflect the turgid realities of scholarly publishing. A detailed stylistic analysis of more than one thousand peer-reviewed articles from across the sciences, social sciences and humanities confirmed what I already suspected: there is a yawning gap between what academics know good writing is and what we actually produce and publish.

Fortunately, I also discovered some bright lights in the gloom: examples of academic researchers who produce energetic, engaging prose, and damn the torpedoes. Amongst the dozens of stylish authors recommended to me by their peers were University of Auckland colleagues such as Brian Boyd (literary studies), Anne Salmond (anthropology), Michael Corballis

(psychology), Shanthi Ameratunga (population health), Bill Barton (mathematics education) and Selina Tusitala Marsh (Pacific poetry). In my new book, *Stylish Academic Writing*, I showcase the work of these and other skilful stylists, using examples of their work to illustrate transferable techniques that any writer can master.

Stylishness is in the eye of the beholder. All the same, several overarching principles govern the writing of nearly all the exemplary authors featured in my book. First, they work hard to engage their readers – for example with eye-catching titles and subtitles, compelling opening paragraphs, first-person anecdotes and memorable examples. Second, they are meticulous wordsmiths whose sentences are mostly verb-driven, concrete and clutter-free. (To check whether your own writing is “flabby” or “fit”, run a few samples through the WritersDiet Test at [www.writersdiet.com](http://www.writersdiet.com); for best results, bring along a sense of humour and a grain of salt!) Finally, stylish academic writers communicate in an authoritative yet conversational voice, never forgetting the real people who sit at the other end of their sentences.

Over the past few years I have conducted more than 50 academic writing workshops and seminars at universities in Africa, Australasia, Europe and North America. Colleagues and PhD students attending these sessions often tell me afterwards that they feel inspired and empowered to write differently. Others, however, have confessed to me their deep-seated anxieties

about the writing process. How can we write more stylishly and accessibly, they ask me, if we cannot find the time to write, or the resources to develop our skills, or the confidence to resist academic conventions that seem to demand wordy, wooden prose?

My next book will move beyond words on the page to address the human side of academic endeavour, exploring the behaviours, attitudes and personal circumstances that enable or inhibit successful writing. Through my research, I hope to lay to rest the widespread myth – one I have heard again and again – that academics who produce anything other than “safe”, impersonal prose are doomed to be discounted or rejected by their peers. In the nearly 50 in-depth interviews that I have conducted thus far with successful academics from a wide range of disciplines, I have heard stories of intellectual passions indulged, disciplinary conventions thwarted and risk-taking rewarded. With few exceptions, their experiences affirm that the road to scholarly success is paved with stylish writing.

Helen Sword, whose research has been supported by several grants from the Faculty of Education’s Research and Development Fund, is an Associate Professor in the Centre for Academic Development. *Stylish Academic Writing*, published by Harvard University Press in April 2012, is available through her website at [www.helensword.com](http://www.helensword.com).