

## A FAMILY OCCASION

The Medical and Health Sciences graduation on 8 May, was a very special one for the Dean, Professor John Fraser, and his wife Tam.

Among the total of 722 FMHS graduates (26 PhDs), was John's oldest daughter Ashleigh, a Senior Scholar, who is graduating with a

Bachelor of Medicine and a Bachelor of Surgery. (MBChB)

"I'm very, very proud," says John. "Ashleigh has wanted to do medicine for a long time."

Ashleigh is currently working as a house officer at Whangarei Hospital.



*Pictured: Dr Raj Das, Early Career Research Excellence Award winner (left) with Auckland Mayor, Len Brown.*

### Research excellence rewarded

The smiles reflected the spirit of the occasion as a bigger crowd than ever before gathered in the marquee in front of Old Government House on 1 May for the University's Research Excellence Awards.

At this sparkling evening event attended by 350 guests the University revealed some of its most exciting research and celebrated the achievements of its top researchers.

The guests, including Hon Stephen Joyce, Minister of Science and Innovation, and Auckland Mayor Len Brown, had the chance to see displays of the University's research, discuss the latest discoveries with the researchers involved, and even watch demonstrations of the

*Continued on page 3*



### Autumn Graduation

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Stuart McCutcheon, shows his pleasure (above) at Autumn Graduation, one of the year's most satisfying events for staff, students and their families.

Some of the many graduation stories can be found on the staff intranet, while a few more are printed on the next page of this issue of *Uninews*.

Some 6,461 graduands received a total of 7,072 qualifications at ten ceremonies spread over three days (6, 8, and 10 May). These included 128 doctorates.

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## Hundreds of sponges

NIWA biologist and sponge expert, Michelle Kelly, received a distinguished Doctor of Science (DSc) on the first day of Autumn Graduation.

Michelle, who is New Zealand's only professional sponge expert, graduated at The University of Auckland with a BSc in 1983, followed by an MSc in Zoology with First Class Honours in 1988 and a PhD in Zoology in 1991. Her MSc was supervised by the late Professor Dame Patricia Bergquist.

The DSc award recognises Michelle's distinguished research career, which has maintained a primary focus on the taxonomy, systematics and phylogenetics of sponges, but also has involved research in fields such as regional biodiversity, chemical oceanography, aquaculture and marine natural products chemistry. Her career has included a postdoctoral position based in Florida and four years at the Natural History Museum in London, after which she returned to New Zealand as a New Zealand Lottery Board Repatriation Grant Fellow in 1998, leading to her employment at the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research since 1999.

Michelle's DSc thesis presents, in two volumes, an impressive selection of 140 of her published scientific papers. The first volume covers sponge taxonomy and systematics, and the second covers technical applications which derive from and use her expertise in sponge taxonomy.

"The DSc is in recognition of 30 years hard work and dedication," says Michelle, who grew up in Papua New Guinea and began her education by correspondence. Michelle has done a lot of the basic identification work discovering what sponges live in New Zealand waters. She says her goal is to define New Zealand's sponge fauna. And she can't be too far off, as she's already identified some 600.

"This hasn't been a job," she says. "It's been a career. In fact looking for sponges is like reading an Agatha Christie novel and I love Agatha Christie novels."

## Studying feral pigs

Graduate Teaching Assistant and Research Fellow in Biological Sciences Cheryl Krull was awarded a PhD during Autumn Graduation for her thesis titled: "Feral pigs in a temperate rainforest ecosystem: Ecological impacts and management".

Cheryl's research has featured in media recently and led to a call for feral pigs to be controlled as a pest in areas of high ecological value.

"Feral pigs are seen as an important hunting resource in New Zealand and I'm by no means suggesting that they should be controlled country-wide," says Cheryl.

"But in areas of high conservation value, we may need to view them in a different light – as a conservation pest rather than a resource – and look at methods to control or eradicate them locally to help the ecosystem to recover."

The impact of feral pig ground disturbance had never before been studied in New Zealand.

Her research was conducted in the Waitakere ranges as part of a study funded by Auckland Council Biosecurity.

## Taking on the world

"The great thing about my degree," says Daniel Fitzpatrick, who graduated with a Bachelor of Engineering (First Class Honours) in Chemical and Materials Engineering, "is that it has taught me transferable skills that can be applied in the real world".

One of seven graduates who finished their degrees while still aged just 19, Daniel (now 20) is excited about his future and certain about his next venture. "By focusing on theory, research techniques and a broader set of skills such as communications and management, my study has prepared me for postgraduate research," he says.

Daniel has won a Woolf Fisher Scholarship that will cover the full costs of study for a PhD programme at Cambridge University in the UK. He will be conducting research in pharmaceutical engineering with a focus on the production and purification of anti-cancer drugs. The scholarship includes an annual return airfare from London back to New Zealand, which is where he sees himself setting the trend for a reversal of the brain drain: "I would love to play a role in developing our pharmaceutical industry to contend on the world stage," he says.

## Distinguished supervisor



Distinguished Professor Jane Harding, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), is seen here at Autumn Graduation with Best Doctoral Thesis Award winner, Dr Chris McKinlay (Liggins Institute).

Jane was primary supervisor for Chris's PhD study, which showed that the children of women treated with repeat doses of glucocorticoids for preterm birth do not have increased physiological risk factors for later cardiovascular and metabolic disease, a concern that had previously limited wider use of this treatment.

Chris's co-supervisor was Professor Wayne Cutfield.

# Last chance to have your say

All permanent and fixed term staff should by now have received an invitation to complete the 2013 Staff Survey, which closes on 24 May.

This provides an opportunity for staff to give feedback on their experience of working at the University and to help shape an environment that will continue to ensure success for the University and its staff.

Previous survey feedback has resulted in new policies and new communication channels - such as the Vice-Chancellor's Update email - and a whole range of improvements including Evolve, the ASPIRE Career Centre, the Leadership Framework, a greater variety of leadership programmes, and the renaming of "general staff" as "professional staff".

This is the fourth biennial staff survey, with response rates increasing each time. The 2011 rate was 61 percent and this year's aim is to improve on that, bearing in mind that more participation brings stronger results on which to base decisions.

In 2011, Financial Services, the Bioengineering Institute, the Research Office and Human Resources had some of the highest participation rates with almost all staff providing feedback. Others such as Campus Life and The Faculty of Law trailed behind, with less than half of staff having their say.

This year, as part of the effort to increase participation, data will be analysed at the next level down from faculty or service division level, though only for certain groups in which the subgroups are large enough to protect confidentiality. The hope is that this will provide more meaningful information for local action planning and to allow staff feedback to have more influence at the local level.

For more information, see [www.auckland.ac.nz/staffsurvey](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/staffsurvey).

## Research excellence rewarded continued from page 1

latest advances in Biomimetics - which makes use of systems from the world of nature to solve problems and develop new technologies.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Vice-Chancellor's Commercialisation Medals, created to recognise and reward commercialisation and contract research that has contributed both to industry and society.

Recipients of the three medals were Professor Diana Lennon from the Department of Paediatrics; Professor Peter Malin, Director of the Institute of Earth Science and Engineering; and Professor Mark Taylor from the Faculty of Engineering, founding director of the Light Metals Research Centre.

"Rather than mark a single contribution, the medals recognise high impact and excellence over a number of years," said Dr Andy Shenk, recently-appointed CEO of Auckland UniServices Ltd, which sponsored the medals.

The annual "Celebrating Research Excellence" awards function also recognised Early Career

Research Excellence, with awards to six of the University's emerging top researchers, introduced by Distinguished Professor Jane Harding, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), who congratulated the winners "for their hard work and contributions to New Zealand's social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing".

The researchers who received this award were Dr Justin Dean (Medical and Health Sciences), Dr Raj Das (Engineering), Dr Peng Du (Bioengineering), Dr Alexandra Monteith (Elam School of Fine Arts), Dr Claire Postlethwaite (Mathematics) and Dr James Russell (Biological Sciences and Statistics).

Recipients of the five awards for Best Doctoral Theses, introduced by Dr Caroline Daley, Dean of Graduate Studies, were Dr Chris McKinlay (Liggins Institute), Dr Stefan Oehlers (Molecular Medicine), Dr David Russell (Bioengineering), Dr Cosmin Laslau (Chemical Sciences) and Dr Susan Potter (Film, Television and Media Studies).

## Autumn Graduation continued from page 1

Arts was the faculty awarding the most qualifications with 1,363, followed by Science (1,326), Business & Economics (1284), Education (1,045), Medical and Health Sciences (722), Engineering (602), Creative Arts and Industries (499), and Law (215).

Around 17,000 guests had tickets for the ceremonies at the Aotea Centre, with each ceremony also being webcast live, enabling relatives and friends to watch proceedings from anywhere in the world.

Speakers at the ceremonies included Andrew Patterson, founding director of renowned architectural firm Patterson Associates Ltd; Mr Bruce Hassall, CEO PricewaterhouseCoopers; Maori Television's General Manager of Production, Carol Hirschfeld; General Manager Altitude Aerospace Interiors, Michael Pervan; Patrick Snedden, Business Adviser, Snedden Publishing & Management Consultants Ltd; and Fady Mishriki, Co-founder and CEO of PowerbyProxi.

## From the Vice-Chancellor



The first of May was a very significant day in the research life of the University as we hosted the annual "Celebrating Research Excellence" event in the Graduation Marquee. Minister Steven Joyce presented Vice-Chancellor's Commercialisation Medals to Professors Diana Lennon, Peter Malin and Mark Taylor. Mayor Len Brown presented Early Career Research Excellence Awards to six of our up and coming researchers while Chancellor Ian Parton presented five Best Doctoral Thesis Awards.

Earlier in the day, the Government had announced the final ten selected National Science Challenges and \$133.5 million in new funding to be allocated to them over the next four years. The challenges are: **Aging well** - harnessing science to sustain health and wellbeing into the later years of life; **A better start** - improving the potential of young New Zealanders to have a healthy and successful life; **Healthier lives** - research to reduce the burden of major New Zealand health problems; **High value nutrition** - developing high value foods with validated health benefits; **New Zealand's biological heritage** - protecting and managing our biodiversity, improving our biosecurity, and enhancing our resilience to harmful organisms; **Our land and water** - research to enhance primary sector production and productivity while maintaining and improving our land and water quality for future generations; **Life in a changing ocean** - understanding how we can exploit our marine resources within environmental and biological constraints; **The deep south** - understanding the role of the Antarctic and the Southern Ocean in determining our climate and our future environment; **Science for technological innovation** - enhancing the capacity of New Zealand to use physical and engineering sciences for economic growth; **Resilience to nature's challenges** - research into enhancing our resilience to natural disasters.

Implementation of the challenge programme will involve government officials, members of the independent panel that developed them, the science sector and end-users. It is anticipated that three to four of the challenges will commence work in 2013 with the balance starting up in 2014. As New Zealand's most comprehensive University, with over a third of the top-rated academic researchers in the country, we look forward to making a significant contribution to all of the challenges as they develop over the next few months.

## Bodies on the line



Some 45 members of Unisafe have signed up for a six week-wellness programme at the Recreation Centre. For most of them it is their second time on the programme, following on from a successful and enjoyable introduction last year.

"We've all done it before and really enjoyed it and except for those who have since retired, we were all keen to do it again," says Rehan du Toit, Unisafe Security Manager, who explains the motive behind signing up for the programme was one of improving team dynamics.

"We wanted to create a good team environment and improve the team's general health and wellbeing. We proposed a recreational programme to UniSafe during Unisafe union negotiations and once we reached

a consensus, we approached the Recreation Centre directly."

Matt Newey, a Health and Fitness Supervisor at the Recreation Centre, and Group Fitness Instructor Kristy Robertson, had coincidentally been piloting a staff wellness programme called Bene-fit, that offers exercise and nutritional support and coaching in support of mutually agreed upon goals.

The challenge for Unisafe staff, according to Matt, is that the nature of shift work made bad eating habits easy to slip into.

"Their meal timings aren't structured like those who work from nine to five, so when they work late shifts, they would eat meals with their families and then come to work and snack through the night."

Staff would also drink a large amount of coffee during night shifts, which places a lot of pressure on the heart and increases fat stores around the stomach, making it easy to gain weight.

To help address this, Unisafe staff were given nutritional advice on keeping sugar and energy levels under control through eating whole foods, such as nuts and seeds, more regularly, as well as on what types of foods to eat during the day.

As well as the exercise circuits, three sessions per week, with group session times meticulously planned to work in with the varying times of availability of Unisafe staff, the programme has been a notable success with significant gains made in fitness, strength, team and individual weight loss goals.

The four Unisafe staff to have lost the most weight lost a combined total of 36.6 kilogrammes in six weeks, including one staff member who lost over ten kilogrammes, at an average of almost two kilogrammes per week of the programme.

Rehan, who has made further improvements to his own fitness levels, is proud of the effort the team has put in and has seen the benefits that extend beyond personal health and fitness.

"The feedback about the team has been really good and there has definitely been an increase in team morale. We held a prizegiving recently to celebrate our successes and it was attended by all of the Unisafe and the Facilities Management team and at least 60 percent of Unisafe staff who could make it. It has changed the dynamic of our team for the better."

## Highlighted Events

### Postgraduate Fair

This event is open to students or graduates from any university, and to professionals who are considering furthering their studies, providing them with an opportunity to find out about postgraduate study at the University. They have the chance to explore their options, meet academics, advisers and current students, and talk about programmes, career prospects, scholarships and how to apply. The fair will take place on Wednesday 29 May (Arts, the Business School, the Graduate School of Management and Education) and on Thursday 30 May (Auckland Bioengineering Institute, Education, Engineering, Law, Liggins Institute, Medical and Health Sciences, Science, National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries). The event is free but registration is essential and can be completed on [www.auckland.ac.nz/pgfair](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/pgfair)

### A terrifying illness

You are invited by the Auckland Medical Research Foundation to attend a free public lecture on "Meningococcal meningitis: A terrifying disease". The lecture, which will take place at the AMRF Auditorium at the Grafton Campus on Thursday 23 May at 7pm, will be delivered by Dr Mark Thomas, infectious diseases physician at Auckland City Hospital and associate professor in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, and Dr David Galler, Director of Clinical Leadership, Ko Awatea, Centre for Health System Innovation and Improvement, CMDHB, and senior intensive care specialist at Middlemore Hospital. Clinical experiences and relevant medical research will be discussed. For further information, please contact Kathleen on 923 1701 or visit [www.medicalresearch.org.nz](http://www.medicalresearch.org.nz)

### World of plants

Discover the amazing world of plants. Fascination of Plants day is an international initiative to draw attention to the importance of plants to our environment and our economy. To recognise the day on 18 May the Joint Graduate School for Plant and Food Science is hosting an event for high school students, teachers, parents and the general public with a programme which will include guided tours of New Zealand native plants in the grounds of Old Government House, talks on plants and interactive displays including "Fascinating fungi", "Plant virus villains" and "Vanilla: the posh spice". The event will take place 1-4pm at the at The University of Auckland, Biology Building, 5 Symonds Street. For more information contact Mike Pearson, [m.pearson@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:m.pearson@auckland.ac.nz)

## Treatment helps with lazy eye



Playing a well-known computer game called Tetris under controlled conditions may bring about a cure for amblyopia (commonly known as “lazy eye”) in both children and adults.

The game of Tetris involves manipulating blocks in different colours to form horizontal lines. The world-first experiments to discover the effects of the game of Tetris on amblyopia were devised by vision scientist Dr Ben Thompson from the University’s Centre for Brain Research, in collaboration with a team including Professor Robert Hess from McGill University.

Although amblyopia is often referred to as “lazy eye” the impairment in vision is due to abnormal development within visual areas of the brain, not a defect of the eye, says Ben.

These experiments have shown that presenting a higher intensity Tetris stimulation to

the affected eye than the good eye helps train both eyes to work together. Different blocks are presented to each eye and the two eyes must work together for the game to be played.

The team’s latest study published in *Current Biology* demonstrated fast improvements in vision after the Tetris treatment, and that the benefits have so far proven to last at least three months.

“We found much larger improvements in patients who were treated with the version of the Tetris game that encouraged both eyes to work together than those that played Tetris with their good eye patched,” says Ben.

The study was funded by the Health Research Council and the Auckland Medical Health Research Foundation.

## Strong affirmation



A book by Professor Jean-Jacque Courtine (European Languages and Literatures) has been named by The French National Library as fourth in their 2012 rankings of the most requested and read books in their main research reading room.

Of all books held by the library, one of the top research libraries in the world, two books by Michel Foucault come first, then one by the French philosopher Jacques Rancière, followed by the third volume of *Histoire du corps. Les mutations du regard, XXème siècle (History of the Body. The Mutations of the Gaze, XXth C.)*, edited by Professor Jean-Jacques Courtine and published in 2006.

Jean-Jacques says the most important thing for a writer is to know his books are read. He is therefore very pleased at this affirmation from the French National Library, which is one of the libraries used by researchers from all over the world.

*Histoire de la virilité (History of Manliness)*, authored by Jean-Jacques Courtine (with Alain Corbin and Georges Vigarello) and published in 2011, received one of the Grand Prizes from the French Academy.

## Research Funding News

### Health Research Council

Māori Health Research Development Grants and Māori Health Knowledge Translation Grants. Funding to support Maori health researchers in developing a project proposal for the funding round via one of the four Research Investment Streams. Knowledge Translation Grants are available for dissemination of research which key stakeholders (e.g. iwi, community, health providers, Ministry of Health, Te Puna Kokiri) have identified as important for future use, including policy and health service development. University deadline is 5pm Thursday, 30 May. Contact Dr Hilary Lapsley, Fund Specialist, Research Office, ext 83562, h.lapsley@auckland.ac.nz.

### Royal Society of New Zealand

James Cook Research Fellowships. Two-year fellowships that provide a stipend of \$100k p.a., plus expenses. The 2013 round is open to applicants from the research categories Engineering Sciences & Technologies and Health Sciences. Awarded to researchers who are recognised leaders in their respective fields, have the requisite qualifications and experience, and are able to demonstrate they have achieved national and international recognition in their area of scientific or technological research. University deadline is Monday, 17 June. Contact Chris Tews, Fund Specialist, ext 88301, c.tews@auckland.ac.nz

### Health Research Council

Career Development Awards. Guidelines and application forms for Clinical Research Training Fellowship, Sir Charles Hercus Health Research Fellowship, Foxley Fellowship and the new Clinical Practitioner Research Fellowship are now available on the HRC website [www.hrc.govt.nz](http://www.hrc.govt.nz). University deadline is Wednesday, 26 June. Contact Dr Hilary Lapsley, Fund Specialist, Research Office, ext 83562, h.lapsley@auckland.ac.nz

### University of Auckland Foundation

Hood Fellowships. The foundation is calling for applications for the 2013 Outgoing and Incoming Hood Fellowships. The fund supports The University of Auckland’s best academics and up and coming researchers to visit leading overseas institutions and to bring the best academics from other leading institutions to visit this University. Awards are for up to \$20,000. University deadline is Monday, 1 July 2013. Contact Pramilla Da Silva ext 88113, pc.dasilva@auckland.ac.nz. See [www.uoafoundation.org.nz/fellowships](http://www.uoafoundation.org.nz/fellowships)



As a teenager, Shigeyuki Kihara was sent in the late 1980s from the balmy climes of Samoa to the Marist school, St Patrick's Silverstream in Upper Hutt, for secondary education.

Already identifying as a fa'afine, a biological male who expresses a feminine gender identity, Kihara's experience of an all-male boarding school renowned for prowess on the rugby field was inevitably unpleasant. Yet Catholic imagery has proved an abiding influence on Kihara's subsequent production as an artist, both in the performance of ritual and in the production of iconic images which are used to tell creation stories such as this one.

Photoshopping her own features in male guise onto a husky male torso, Kihara presents her figure of Maui as Christ, *contre jour* or "against the light" as the convention used by Caravaggio and his followers, the Caravaggisti, in seventeenth-century Europe was described. This technique creates a moody effect, with the figure looming from a dark background, all shadow and warm flesh tones. Holding the source of the light by which he is illuminated in his hands, Maui gazes meditatively down, not looking at the flames but with a face rendered supernatural by them.

The staging of the photograph consciously evokes these art historical precedents. The titling of the series from which the image comes relates to a book, and therefore gives the work an illustrative role, to persuade viewers of the veracity of the story. In this way, the styling and approach recall the counter-Reformation approach to image-making using the human figure. Kihara's *Vavau: Tales from Ancient Samoa* derives directly from *Tala o le Vavau Myths and Legends of Samoa*, a collection of stories interpreted by the German folklorist Oskar Steubel and translated into English by the Catholic monk, Brother Herman, for publication in Wellington in 1967. It is a book of explanations: the Earth's creation, the origin of tattooing, coconuts, royalty and the miraculous feats of a variety of Samoan mythological figures including Ti'iti'i.

The Samoan legend of Ti'iti'i matches the fire myth of Maui in Aotearoa, locating the home of Mafuie the earthquake god in the land of perpetual fire. Ti'iti'i's father Talanga partly lived in the underworld and was a great friend of the

earthquake god. Ti'iti'i repeated his father's incantation in front of the rock that concealed the entry and followed him down below. Mafuie gave him fire to carry to his father. The boy quickly had an oven prepared and the fire placed in it to cook some of the taro they had been cultivating. Just as everything was ready, an earthquake god came up and blew the fire out and scattered the stones of the oven. Ti'iti'i was angry and began to remonstrate with Mafuie, breaking off one of his arms. To save his other arm, the god offered to teach Ti'iti'i the secret of how to make fire by rubbing two sticks together.

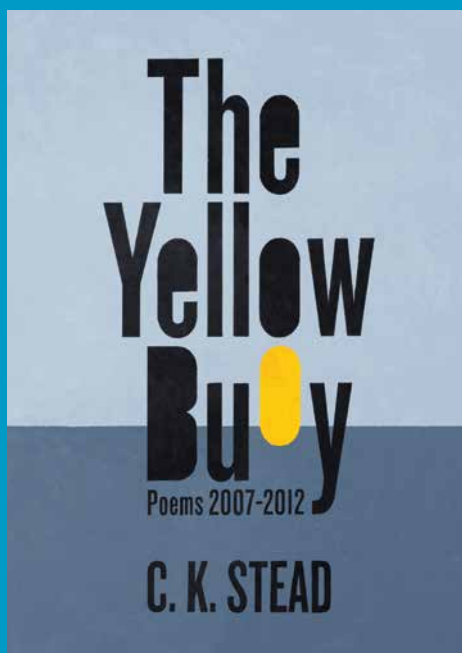
While her work is often related to the so-called "dusky maiden, velvet painting" genre where the exotic meets the erotic in the portrayal of Pacific peoples, Kihara likes to give her subjects some agency: "Where the velvet painters are notorious for portraying Pacific people from the colonial gaze, what I do is re-occupy that gaze" she says. "I come from a point of view from the insider."

Linda Tyler

Shigeyuki Kihara (born 1975), *Maui - Ti'eti'e - Talaga How Maui obtained Samoa's first fire*, 2004, digital type C print, 590 x 375mm

*Image: Courtesy of the artist and Milford Galleries, Dunedin.*

## Book



Emeritus Professor C.K. Stead has always swum through literatures, cultures and surroundings, both physical and social, with a deft stroke. Completed in his eightieth year, this collection, *The Yellow Buoy*, published by Auckland University Press, sees the poet firmly attached to his memories, attuned to his craft and attentive to the world.

In classic vein, Catullus returns to receive the ONZ, write to friends and "read the world". Various other literary fellows appear, in person, dream or conversation – Curnow, Kawharu, Sargeson, Creeley, Mansfield, Wordsworth – and the book includes warmly-translated versions of poems by Montale, Vita and Jaccottet, alongside glimpses of fantails and elegies for friends. These poems urge a reader to stay alert, to pay attention to "the poetic moment/so easily missed,/so quickly lost".

Since the late 1950s C.K. Stead has had an international reputation as a poet, literary critic and novelist. He has published more than 40 books and received numerous prizes and honours.

"Then suddenly... the music will sound again... And with it comes the Steadword, the Steadpause, the Steadstress and the Steadlinebreak, all steadfast in their commitment to the Steadvoice, now enhanced, augmented, liberated, expanded." Dougal McNeill, *New Zealand Books*.

# What's on

THURSDAY 16 MAY

## Department of Molecular Medicine and Pathology seminar

Dr Andrea Vincent, Eye Department, NZ National Eye Centre: *Genetic characterisation of inherited eye disease*. 3.30pm, Room 501.505, Level 5, Building 501, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, Grafton Campus. Queries to r.mcdonald@auckland.ac.nz

## Department of History seminar

Margaret McClure, independent researcher: *An irregular life: The work of a freelance historian*. 4pm, Room 59, 7 Wynyard St.

## Pacific Studies seminar

Dr Yvonne Underhill-Sem and Dr Teuila Percival: *Climate changes, challenges and contexts in Oceania*. 4pm, Fale Pasifika, 20 Wynyard St.

## School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work research seminar

Assoc-Prof Liz Beddoe: *Blaming and shaming: Mothers, child abuse and media framing*. 4-5.30pm, J2 Lecture Theatre, Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave, Epsom.

## Film, Television and Media Studies seminar

Kirsten Thompson, School of English, Theatre and Media Studies, Victoria University: *Classical cel animation and colour*. 4.15pm, Pat Hanan Rm 501, Arts 2.

## 2013 Gibbons Lecture series

Picture this! Computer graphics in NZ. Dr Burkhard Wuensche, Dept of Computer Science, UoA: *Computer games: Friend or foe? Research challenges in game technology*. 6.30-7.30pm, Rm OGG83, Owen G Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd.

The lectures in this series will be streamed live.

FRIDAY 17 MAY

## School of Music lunchtime concert

Chamber music ensembles. 1.05-1.55pm, Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds St.

A series of lunchtime concerts showcasing School of Music students in both individual and ensemble settings. Queries to concerts@auckland.ac.nz

## Poetry Slam

7pm, B28, Library Basement, General Library, Bldg.

Check out the amazing student talent on campus when University of Auckland students perform spoken word poetry in the 2013 Poetry Slam. There will also be a special performance by international guest Miles Merrill from the Auckland Writers and Readers Festival.

SUNDAY 19 MAY

## Karlheinz Company Concert

*From Berg to ...* 5pm, Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds St. Cost \$15/\$10. Book at 361 1000. Queries to concerts@auckland.ac.nz

MONDAY 20 MAY

## Student Jazz Ensemble Concert

*Jazz combo concerts*. 7pm, Studio One, Kenneth Myers Centre, 74 Shortland St. Jazz Performance students perform a mix of jazz standards, modern pieces and original work prepared over one term. Also 21 May. Queries to concerts@auckland.ac.nz

TUESDAY 21 MAY

## Communiqué 2013

Natalie Robertson, AUT: *Local time*. 12noon-1pm, Auckland Art Gallery Auditorium.

Queries to events-archplan@auckland.ac.nz

## Bioengineering research seminar

Prof John Fraser, Dean, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences: *A view of the immune system from the eye of a pathogen*. 4-5pm, Ground Floor Seminar Rm G010, UniServices House, 70 Symonds St.

## Film, Television and Media Studies seminar

Manying Ip, School of Asian Studies: *Cyber China and evolving diasporic identities in NZ*. 4pm, Pat Hanan Rm 501, Arts 2.

WEDNESDAY 22 MAY

## 2013 Rutherford Lecture

Distinguished Professor Margaret Brimble, School of Chemical Sciences and School of Biological Sciences, UoA and Maurice Wilkins Centre for Molecular Biodiscovery: *Mastering molecular chess to mine nature's medicine chest*. 6pm, The Auditorium, Level 2, Auckland Museum, The Domain.

Queries to lectures@royalsociety.org.nz

## Piano master class

*Yevgeny Sudbin*. 7pm, Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds St. Free. Queries to concerts@auckland.ac.nz

THURSDAY 23 MAY

## Film, Television and Media Studies seminar

Mark Percival, Media, Communication and Performing Arts, Queen Margaret University: *Investing in culture? Public radio broadcasting and popular music in Scotland and NZ*. 4.15pm, Pat Hanan Rm 501, Arts 2.

## 2013 Gibbons Lecture series

Picture this! Computer graphics in NZ. Prof Gordon Mallinson, Department of Mechanical Engineering: *Engineering computer graphics*. 6.30-7.30pm, Rm OGG83, Owen G Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd. The lectures in this series will be streamed live.

FRIDAY 24 MAY

## School of Music lunchtime concert

Voice students. 1.05-1.55pm, Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds St. A series of lunchtime concerts

showcasing School of Music students in both individual and ensemble settings. Queries to concerts@auckland.ac.nz

SATURDAY 25 MAY

## Gallery talk

MikuNobu Komatsu. 1pm, Gus Fisher Gallery, 74 Shortland St.

## Queries to

[gusfishergallery@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:gusfishergallery@auckland.ac.nz)

SUNDAY 26 MAY

## The Auckland Chamber Music Society Prize

2pm, Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds St. School of Music chamber music ensembles of 3 to 6 instrumental players compete for a \$4,000 prize. Queries to concerts@auckland.ac.nz

WEDNESDAY 29 MAY

## Dept of Computer Science seminar

Niklas Carlsson, Dept of Computer and Information Science, Linköping University, Sweden: *Popularity dynamics and scalable content delivery techniques*. 12noon-1pm, Rm 303-561, City Campus.

## Fermata seminars

5.30pm, Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds St.

1) Morag Atchison: *The soloist as an ensemble singer*.

2) Celeste Oram: *Iconoclastic iconography: Imagery and its function in post-modern stagings of Das Rheingold*.

## Postgraduate Fair - Education

This event is perfect for professionals with degrees in other fields who are considering a rewarding career in education or social services. Learn how you can make the transition and take your career in new and exciting directions.

Presentations:

• 6.30-7.30pm, Graduate Diploma in Teaching, OGG84, Level 0, Owen G Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd.

• 7-7.30pm, Master of Social Work (Professional), Case Room 3, Level 0, Owen G Glenn Bldg.

# Classifieds

## ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE

**Albany.** Country living at its best close to the city! Lovely fully furnished family home on lifestyle block. Available from 1 August 2013 to 5 January 2014. Three bdrms, one bthrm, foodies kitchen and great inside and outside entertaining areas. Large flower and vegetable gardens and play areas for children. All mod cons, sunny and comfortable spacious living. 7 minutes to motorway. \$700 pw. For photo's please view [www.sabbaticalhomes.com](http://www.sabbaticalhomes.com) Listing 47086. Email [m.hoogerland@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:m.hoogerland@auckland.ac.nz)

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## MISCELLANEOUS

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# VALUE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

This article was written by Associate Professor Martin East from the Faculty of Education in response to an expression of opinion in the media that getting school students to learn an additional language is a waste of time, except for those who are included in a bilingual immersion teaching context. Without being surrounded by the language and compelled to use it for a considerable period each day, they would learn only the basics, which they would soon forget.

I have some sympathy for the “use it or lose it” position. It could be argued that limiting students’ exposure to language learning to a few short lessons a week for a couple of years, while for the remainder of their time they are immersed in English, is effectively achieving very little. But I do not buy into the argument that this makes school programmes in additional languages a waste of time.

My own initial exposure to languages was as just one school subject among many. Nevertheless I learnt a lot. If you now put me in a context where I am required to speak French or German, I will rise to the occasion. This does not mean I will do so unflinchingly, but I will do so effectively. This is because I am able to tap into the language I acquired, starting in school and then through university. To counter “use it or lose it” I would argue that speaking another language is somewhat akin to riding a bicycle – it’s arguably a skill you never forget.

I am mindful of a conclusion reached by the Nuffield Languages Inquiry, a committee set up in 1998 to review the UK’s capability in languages other than English, and to project its future language needs. Under the heading “languages for the next generation”, the final report asserted “English alone is not enough.” It then went on to argue that “in a world where bilingualism and plurilingualism are commonplace, monolingualism implies inflexibility, insensitivity and arrogance.” This is just as relevant to any country in which English is the majority language, including New Zealand. To rely on those who have been fortunate enough to have been brought up in bilingual homes or to have benefited from bilingual immersion programmes is essentially to “pass the buck”.

Also, the purpose of learning another language is not just to learn the language. It has to do with being confronted with what it means to be “different” and “other”, and learning how to appreciate and relate to that “otherness”. In the New Zealand context, this makes learning an additional language an important way of realising the vision, values and key competencies that form the foundation of our school curriculum, which encourages students to value diversity of cultures, languages and heritages, equity, fairness, social justice and community, and to relate to a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts. Languages open the door to achieving these laudable aims. This adds

significant value to school languages programmes.

Of course, one means of meeting New Zealand’s language needs could be to rely on those who, by virtue of immersion, have reached, and can maintain, a high level of proficiency in the language in question. I believe our languages programmes in schools should be doing all they can to enable students to achieve high levels of proficiency in additional languages, and I certainly believe that, when measured against other nations, the skills in additional languages that many of our young people reach would have to be rated as “could do better”, indeed, “could do *much* better”. Nevertheless, I would not want to rob any of New Zealand’s young people of the opportunity to learn an additional language. This is not only because of the “value added” that learning a language can bring. It is also because even the most basic attempts to communicate with others in their own languages are appreciated by the hearers. Let us counter the assumptions of inflexibility, insensitivity and arrogance that only speaking English communicates, by encouraging our young people to learn an additional language.

*Martin East is a language teacher educator at The University of Auckland. He is also the incoming president of the New Zealand Association of Language Teachers.*