

Summer 2017  
Volume 7, Issue 4

ISSN 1179-7681

## Inside this Issue

1

Welcome

Heather McPherson:  
An Obituary by Michael  
O'Leary

3

Tribute to Teresia Teaiwa

4

Report on the Dylan-  
Cohen concert in  
Paekakariki

5

Poetry by Peter Bland

New publications by  
PANZA members

6

Donate to PANZA through  
PayPal

Recently received  
donations

About the Poetry Archive

PANZA  
1 Woburn Road  
Northland  
Wellington 6012

# Poetry Notes

## Quarterly Newsletter of PANZA

### Welcome

Hello and welcome to issue 28 of *Poetry Notes*, the newsletter of PANZA, the newly formed Poetry Archive of New Zealand Aotearoa.

*Poetry Notes* will be published quarterly and will include information about goings on at the Archive, articles on historical New Zealand poets of interest, occasional poems by invited poets and a record of recently received donations to the Archive.

Articles and poems are copyright in the names of the individual authors. The newsletter will be available for free download from the Poetry Archive's website:

<http://poetryarchivenz.wordpress.com>

### Heather McPherson: An Obituary by Michael O'Leary

*Poet Heather McPherson, a ground-breaking and innovative writer/publisher of the 1970s and 1980s, died recently. Friend (and PANZA Co-founder) Michael O'Leary offers an obituary.*

Heather McPherson died on January 10th, 2017. I was a friend of hers and published her collection of poems, *Travel and other compulsions*, in 2004. During the gestation of the book's birth Heather and I spent time together and we discussed much about her life and work, and we kept in contact over the years.

Family was also a big part of her life as well as writing and she was very involved with her grandchildren. Rather than writing a traditional obituary I would like to share Heather's answers to a questionnaire I produced as part of my MA thesis on small press publishing in New Zealand [published in book form as *Alternative Small Press Publishing in New Zealand* (Steele Roberts Ltd)] in which she discusses the Spiral Collective and how difficult it was getting published as a woman poet in the 1970s.

**1 - What was your initial reason for getting involved in publishing? Please try to think of this in the spirit of what you were thinking and doing at the time.**

The context was the early seventies. I'd had poems published in *Landfall* and approached Leo Bensemann, then Caxton Press and *Landfall* editor, with a collection. I mentioned that I had become a feminist. He said that Rita Cook – Rita Angus – had become a feminist “but it didn't do her any good either.” He said that yes, my poems were publishable but to go away and get a grant. I didn't know how to do this. The book languished unpublished. Some time (and a child) later, in a group called S.H.E. (Sisters for Homophile Equality) I was working on a Homosexual Law Reform submission. It was a large group, my input was negligible. But the experience spurred me into thinking what I would prefer to be doing. With the general excitement of Women's and Gay Liberation in the air, with a number of talented women artists in the group, with their stories of being turned down for

publication or by art galleries, I thought I would rather be working with/for women artists.

I made contact with Don Long and Alan Loney who had contacts with American small press associations. Both were helpful and supportive and I printed off flyers on one of their elderly printing presses for a women artists group. The physical work was tiring; I realised that the priority for me was not beautiful and/or old-style printing but getting the work out.

A little before that time Robin Sivewright and Jill Hannah had set up Herstory Press in Wellington and were printing off Womens' Liberation material & posters & pamphlets. We negotiated; Katherine Algie, Allie Eagle, Patsy Keene, Zusters, Morrigan, Saj, Paulette Barr and other women, we put together a first issue and Herstory printed it.

**2 - Who or what was your main influence behind your decision to publish? These may include literary or non-literary influences.**

Women's Liberation – and the stories of women artists (in the widest sense of painters, writers, photographers, sculptors etc.) of being turned down by publishers and galleries. A spirit of defiance strode abroad . . . Some of our ideas were . . . Art is not made in a vacuum but out of our lives. Women's and men's lives are different experiences of socialization, child-rearing. Thus women and men artists have and express different values as well as content. Sexism both causes and affects women's marginalisation in the arts by overt and covert censorship of women's experiences as acceptable art content. In the same way, homophobia censors the expression of lesbian and gay experiences in the arts. Women artists – some great – have been overlooked and dismissed by male gatekeepers of the literary and artistic canon. Publishing and art selection in New Zealand as elsewhere being male-dominated gave little support to women writers and artists and often actively discouraged us. I was familiar with the story of Walt Whitman's self-publication, also of various founders of U.S. small

magazines such as Margaret Anderson's *Little Review*. (My primary school experience of making a magazine had some influence also?) The most profound influence on my thinking initially was *The First Sex* by Elizabeth Gould Davis and a little later, *How to Suppress Women's Writing* by Joanna Russ.

**3 - In your choice of authors was the main consideration for inclusion philosophical, literary or pragmatic?**

All three considerations operated. We advertised for women only and printed only what we received. We had a feminist agenda. But there is a process in defining what is meant by 'feminist' & what is meant by 'feminist artist' – and our ideas changed over time. For instance, the sixties for women artists had been notorious for the "suicide syndrome" – the brilliant women artists as depressive and/or self-destructive (e.g. Plath, Arbus). As feminists in the early seventies our context was that we wanted positive portraits of strong women, we wanted celebrations of being women/lesbian etc., we wanted to erase the images of sex symbol or victim. I once turned down some good work because it was too 'depressing'; if I now question that decision I also note that the writer became very successful in the mainstream. Similar political/philosophical issues arose later with the Women's Gallery e.g. over women artists showing images of men.

**4 - "...and if there is still a number of commissioned works which seem to have been dreamed up by a sabotaging office-boy on an LSD trip, there are now each year a growing quantity of books which worthily add to our literature." Professor J.C. Reid from an article introducing New Zealand Books in Print, written in 1968. I interpret Reid's assessment as an indication of the rift between the acceptable 'worthy' literature as endorsed by academia, and the new wave of sabotaging office boys and girls who at that time commissioned publishers to put out their works, or simply published things themselves, and in many cases the work of their**

**friends. Comment on this quote in relation to the 'Vanity Press' vs 'Real Publishing' debate.**

Since the reasons for our Spiral publishing venture were political – sexism, racism and homophobia are political/gatekeeping issues by which a mainstream majority culture suppresses, censors or disregards minority concerns – I have nothing to say on the above issue.

Except that long may political publishing flourish, and if political publishing – to extend limits/boundaries, to give a political minority a voice – is considered a Vanity Press concept, long may Vanity Presses prosper and flourish.

**5 - Initially, was your focus outwardly cosmopolitan or inwardly New Zealand looking, and how has this emphasis changed over the years?**

Initially, much feminist and Women Artists Movement theory came from overseas, particularly the United Kingdom and the United States. With growing confidence, we women/artists applied & modified it to New Zealand conditions in our own consciousness-raising groups.

Our main focus was to publish New Zealand women, to build connections and rapprochements between artists working in different media and to get New Zealand women's art and voices heard overseas; there was in the seventies quite a vital exchange of arts magazines with Australia, the UK and the US feminist presses. I have not been involved in Spiral publishing since *Spiral* 7 and am not aware of changes in policy.

**6 - What were your methods of printing and distribution as a publisher? Did you receive any financial or other assistance from either public organisations, or private sponsorship?**

Printing of first issues was done by the feminist Herstory Press. Later local printing presses were used – the magazine was typeset, laid-out and mocked up to printing quality. Distribution was always a problem. The women's community in Christchurch

(where the first 4 issues originated) helped; the Women's bookstores and *Broadsheet* (in Auckland), were helpful; individual members of each collective did much wonderful work to get *Spiral* throughout the country. The first four *Spiral* issues were, apart from sales, subscriptions and donations, mostly funded by the Christchurch women's/lesbian community dances. When a sales cash box disappeared at a conference, the *Spiral* collective held a special dance to replace the stolen money. Briefly, the distributing was voluntary, both it and fund-raising communal.

**7 - How much of your publishing was commissioned and paid for (either fully or partially) by the author? Was your operation helped by the voluntary work of friends and family?**

*Spiral* could not have existed without the wonderful voluntary support of friends, partner(s) and the Christchurch lesbian community. The first issue's loose pages were laid out in Saj's living room of The Blue House and literally stapled together by about a dozen women – the house's occupants and the *Spiral* collective. I guess the authors paid their time, paper, postage. For the first issue(s?) we gave the authors a magazine and a token payment (\$2)(!) to acknowledge their 'work'; this was to be augmented but we never made enough money to fully cover expenses. I don't remember when we stopped the token payment; nor what happened after I left the collective (after issue 4, returning to share the editorial role for issue 7).

**8 - What has been the cost to you personally in terms of time, money and resources, of being involved in publishing in New Zealand? You may consider this in relation to more difficult areas such as relationships with friends, family etc. also.**

The cost . . . mmmm, I have tended to think rather of rewards – to have been in an exciting venture in an exciting time, to have met many talented artists, to have made life-long friendships and argued and worked with some wonderful women, good at their jobs – writers,

artists, printers, layout artists or whatever . . . also to see the inspiration continue, so that later women's collectives published under the name/imprint (e.g. Keri Hulme's *the bone people*) . . . I guess one cost was extra stress – a solo mother raising a son and doing a part-time paid job to augment my benefit, I never had any spare cash let alone being able to subsidize a magazine. The other cost was having little time for my own writing – I relinquished my involvement with the collective to write more.



Photo: Heather McPherson, from the back cover of her 2004 poetry collection, *Travel and other compulsions* (ESAW)

**9 - Where do you place yourself and your achievements as a publisher (and as a writer if applicable) in the history of the modern-day New Zealand literary scene? Do you feel that your contribution has been adequately acknowledged.**

I place myself in an accident of herstory – being the person in the place at the time when a conjunction of interests – personal and political – offered the opportunity, with other women, to make a statement about women's work . . . Re the second question – do I feel my contribution has been adequately acknowledged – I'd have to ask by whom? By the New Zealand literary scene? It could be surprising to be

acknowledged at all, given some of the hostile editorializing at the time . . . and I'd rather be acknowledged for my writing. But by women artists and friends? Yes. By feminist herstorians? Yes.

H.McP. Hamilton, 2000.

## Tribute to Teresia Teaiwa

I-Kiribati and American poet and academic Teresia Teaiwa died in March 2017 following a short illness. Teresia contributed to PANZA's *Poetry Notes* with an essay on the Ethiopian refugee poet and writer Yilma Tafere Tasew.

Teresia was born in Hawai'i in 1968 to an I-Kiribati father and an African-American mother, and raised in Fiji.

Teresia, director of Va'aomanū Pasifika, Victoria University of Wellington, was well known for her academic work in the field of Pacific Studies, and was on the editorial board of the *International Feminist Journal of Politics*.

Teresia held a Bachelor of Arts from Trinity College, Washington D.C., a Master of Arts from the University of Hawai'i and a PhD from the University of California.

She has also contributed to a range of poetry journals, including *broadsheet: new new zealand poetry*, *Side Stream*, *Black Mail Press*, and the *4th Floor Literary Journal*, and was included in the *First Wellington International Poetry Festival Anthology* (HeadworX, 2003), and on the CD, *Terenesia*, with Samoan writer Sia Figiel.

She published a collection of her poetry, *Searching for Nei Nim'anoa*, and, in 2008, she produced a CD of her oral poetry *I can see Fiji*. Teresia regularly performed her poetry internationally (Guam, New York, Niue, Honolulu and Suva, the International Festival of Poetry in Medellin, Colombia), and at venues in Wellington, New Zealand, where she has lived and worked since 2000.

PANZA expresses their deep sympathy to Teresia's family and friends at this time.

A poem tribute to Teresia appeared online in *The Huffington Post* (USA, 21 March 2017):

**Lagipoiva Cherelle Jackson**

### TRANSCEND TERESIA

You transcend  
Islands, scattered across the Pacific  
Races dotted by 'amnesia'  
Voices, scathed by externals

You transcend  
Pacific literature flaunted by giants  
Poetry drenched in 'coconut' flavour  
Woman, born of marawa

You transcend  
Social media circles  
Local values, marred by change  
'Estuaries' bleeding your land

You transcend  
Generations of Pacific writers  
Professors, columnists and amateur poets  
Aspiring capturers' of mother  
'earth/father sky'

You transcend  
Ocean, with your stretch of cognizance  
Silence, with your confident prose  
Death, with your voice, drenched in  
'mango' flavoured truth



Photo: Teresia Teaiwa, Victoria University of Wellington

## Comment on the Dylan-Cohen concert in Paekakariki

### PAEKAKARIKI TRIBUTE TO COHEN & DYLAN by Clare O'Leary

The small town of Paekakariki on the Kapiti coast punches above its weight when you look at the number of musicians and artists that live there. Along with that are the gigs arranged at St Peter's Hall, from local singer/songwriters to international acts. It's been the hub of the community for over a hundred years and this night it brought together young and old to honour two great Masters of song with the passing of Leonard Cohen and in the honour bestowed on Bob Dylan last October when he received the 2016 Nobel Prize for Literature. Local poet, publisher and bookseller, Michael O'Leary who is the proprietor of the Kakariki Bookshop next to the Paekakariki Museum had an idea to honour these two great contributors to song/poetry with a special evening. The idea caught the imagination of locals and it quickly drew together those wanting to perform.

Performers chose a favourite song – the first half dedicated to Leonard Cohen. The evening started off with Michael O'Leary welcoming everyone and giving an overview of the evening. He was accompanied by the brilliant local pianist, Gilbert Haismann and followed by a soulful rendition of Cohen's "Hallelujah" by Meg Prasad. Other performers included Debbie James, Nada Mills (Elan Mills / Ray Butler / Andy Christianson), Danilo Blaza, Helen Dorothy (Janet Holboro) and Jason Johnson.

Cohen, in recent years, toured the world several times gathering new fans and reconnecting with older ones and it was great to be in a community of music and poetry lovers across generations. After an interval of locally made food and BYO drinks, and a 5-minute tribute video, the second half of the evening

was dedicated to the work of Bob Dylan.

The hall was packed and the people were moved by memories, shared histories and nostalgia for the songs that mapped their youth.

When Dylan won the Nobel Prize for Literature, some critics bemoaned the fact that it had gone to a songwriter, whereas others saw it as a victory for the contribution of music and lyrics to literature.

The second half included performances by Peter Ware, Holly Ewens, Francis Mills (Gary Allen / Ray Butler), Jason Tamihana, Shayn Wills (Zephyr Wills), Ebony Lamb, and Jason Johnson (Chris Winter / Nick Brown). Yes, that's Eb & Sparrow, folks, who dropped in to honour a great influencer to their music. One of the highlights was the humble admission by Rob Hack that he couldn't equal the Master's voice, so he had key words from the lyrics on large cards which he held up and dropped down as Dylan sang them...a poetic gesture of silence honouring Dylan's voice. The finale, "Knockin' On Heaven's Door" brought everyone back to the stage and the whole hall sang together. Paekakariki honoured both artists in a moving tribute which will stay in the hearts and minds of all those that were there.

*Clare O'Leary is a Wellington documentary film director.*

**COHEN  
DYLAN**



**TRIBUTE CONCERT**

**21 Poets & musicians**

**Sat 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 7.45 pm \$10**

**St Peters Village Hall**



## Poetry by Peter Bland

**broadsheet** /19  
new new zealand poetry RRP \$10.00



FEATURING THE POETRY OF PETER BLAND:  
FLEUR ADCOCK PETER BLAND GORDON CHALLIS  
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GUS SIMONOVIC ELIZABETH SMITHER C K STEAD



May 2017

The major New Zealand poet Peter Bland (recipient of the Prime Minister's Award for Poetry in 2011) features in the latest issue of PANZA archivist Mark Pirie's journal *broadsheet: new new zealand poetry*, May 2017. Here are two of Peter's poems from the issue.

### Peter Bland

#### ENDS AND BEGINNINGS

*After Hafiz*

Oceans have shrunk  
to a childhood pond  
and the road to Samarkand  
was never more  
than a dream. Now  
ends and beginnings  
meet under this tree  
where, as evening comes,  
I await my love. Speak,  
old poet, let her know  
I'm here. Light a lamp  
to show her the way.

#### EVENSONG

At the end of the garden  
a soft evening light  
blooms between two  
grapefruit trees. Night  
hasn't been invented yet  
but it's beginning  
to suggest itself. You  
can hear earth pausing  
between breaths. I return  
here at the close of each day  
like an animal coming  
back to drink.

## New publications by PANZA members

Title: **Collected Poems 1981-2016**

Author: **Michael O'Leary**

ISBN 978-0-473-38831-7

Price: \$35.00

Extent: 260 pages

Format: 143mmx222mm

Publication: May 2017 (forthcoming)

Publisher: HeadworX Publishers

#### About the Book

*Collected Poems 1981-2016* is a thirty-five year retrospective from an important Irish-Māori influenced writer. It offers the most complete view so far of O'Leary's remarkable literary achievement and offers a body of original and significant work that continues to grow in stature and regard in Aotearoa-New Zealand and world literature.

"Irishness, Māoritanga, proudly held working-class values, rock 'n' roll, buses, trains, ferries, Baudelaire – you'll find them all in this book... There's an inextinguishable joyousness at the heart of [O'Leary's] work that makes reading him an upbeat and uplifting experience." – Iain Sharp, from the Introduction

#### About the Author

Michael O'Leary is a poet, novelist, publisher, performer and bookshop proprietor. He writes in both English and Māori; and his diverse and prolific work in poetry, fiction and non-fiction explores his dual influences: Māori (Te Arawa) on his maternal side and Irish Catholic on his father's as well as his mother's. Born in Auckland in the year of the Tiger 1950, he was educated at the universities of Auckland, Ōtago (Dunedin), and Victoria University (Wellington) where he completed his MA and PhD theses. His Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop imprint (inspired by Andy Warhol's 'Factory', the Beatles' Apple label, and John and Yoko's 'Plastic Ono Band'), which he founded in 1984, has published some of his own prolific output, as well as many other New Zealand writers. Michael O'Leary is a trustee for the Poetry Archive of New Zealand Aotearoa (PANZA), a charitable trust dedicated to archiving, collecting and promoting New Zealand poetry.

He now lives in Paekakariki, north of Wellington.

Website:

<http://michaeloleary.wordpress.com>

**MICHAEL O'LEARY**  
**COLLECTED POEMS**  
**1981-2016**





Title: *Ride the Tempest: Uncollected Early Poems 1993-1995*

Author: **m r pirie** [Mark Pirie]

ISBN 978-1-86942-168-7

Price: \$25.00

Extent: 56 pages

Format: 149mmx210mm

Publication: December 2016

Publisher: Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop

#### About the Book

m r pirie was Mark Pirie's original writing name in the early 1990s, and the book collects three groups of poems from his uncollected notebook poems during the period 1993-1995 at the ages of 18 to 20.

ESAW publishes his book as an archival edition to complete the publication of Pirie's early poems. Pirie has been one of ESAW's most prolific authors over the years since his booklet *The Blues* was published by ESAW in 2001.

Pirie also took the cover photo of a friend bodyboarding at Mahia Peninsula in early 1992.

#### About the Author

**Mark Pirie** was born in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1974. He is a poet, fiction writer, literary critic, publisher, editor and anthologist. His poems and critical essays have been widely published internationally and he is represented in major anthologies of

New Zealand poetry such as *Essential New Zealand Poems*. As a publisher (HeadworX), he has published more than 60 titles of New Zealand and Australian poetry. He currently edits *broadsheet: new new zealand poetry*.

## Donate to PANZA through PayPal

You can now become a friend of PANZA or donate cash to help us continue our work by going to <http://pukapukabooks.blogspot.com> and accessing the donate button – any donation will be acknowledged.

## Recently received donations

PANZA kindly thanks these donators to the archive.

Mark Pirie – 12 titles.

Torpedo Bay Navy Museum – *75 years* booklet, includes poem by C K Stead.

Original Books – *Shake Speer's Faith* by Michael O'Leary.

## About the Poetry Archive

*Poetry Archive of New Zealand Aotearoa (PANZA)*

#### PANZA contains

A unique Archive of NZ published poetry, with around five thousand titles from the 19th century to the present day. The Archive also contains photos and paintings of NZ poets, publisher's catalogues, poetry ephemera, posters, reproductions of book covers and other memorabilia related to NZ poetry and poetry performance.

#### Wanted

NZ poetry books (old & new)

Other NZ poetry items i.e. critical books on NZ poetry, anthologies of NZ poetry, poetry periodicals and broadsheets, poetry event programmes, posters and/or prints of NZ poets or their poetry books. **DONT THROW OUT OLD NZ POETRY! SEND IT TO PANZA**

#### PANZA will offer:

- Copies of NZ poetry books for private research and reading purposes.
- Historical information for poets, writers, journalists, academics, researchers and independent scholars of NZ poetry.
- Photocopying for private research purposes.
- Books on NZ poetry and literary history, and CD-ROMs of NZ poetry and literature.
- CDs of NZ poets reading their work.

You can assist the preservation of NZ poetry by becoming one of the Friends of the Poetry Archive of New Zealand Aotearoa (PANZA ).

If you'd like to become a friend or business sponsor of PANZA, please contact us.

#### Contact Details

Poetry Archive of NZ Aotearoa (PANZA)

1 Woburn Road, Northland, Wellington

Dr Niel Wright - Archivist

(04) 475 8042

Dr Michael O'Leary - Archivist

(04) 905 7978

email: [pukapuka@paradise.net.nz](mailto:pukapuka@paradise.net.nz)

#### Visits welcome by appointment

#### Current PANZA Members:

Mark Pirie (HeadworX), Roger Steele (Steele Roberts Ltd), Michael O'Leary (Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop) and Niel Wright (Original Books).

#### Current Friends of PANZA:

Paul Thompson, Gerrard O'Leary, Vaughan Rapatahana, Cameron La Follette (USA), Rienke Ensing and the New Zealand Poetry Society.

PANZA is a registered charitable trust