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Ala Mai Pasifika

NEWSLETTER FOR PACIFIC ISLAND STUDENTS, UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

No. 4

OCT/DEC 1996

Greetings, Kia ora, Ni sa bula, Kam na mauri, Talofa lava, Fakalofa lahi atu,
Halo olgeta, Malo e lelei, Kia orana!

EDITORS NOTE

Hi everyone! - This is the final edition of Ala Mai Pasifika for 1996. It has been a rewarding challenge spending time putting articles together and it has certainly been an invaluable learning experience.

We have enjoyed being editors and working together with the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, keeping you informed about local issues concerning Pacific Island students at university.

Don't forget any news that you think should be advertised can be sent to editors of 'Ala Mai'.

Kimberley and I are very happy to announce that Silipa Silipa will take over as editor for 'Ala Mai' in 1997. Silipa is a graduate student from Auckland University and has a Masters in Education. He has enrolled as a Ph.D student in the Macmillan Brown Centre's Pacific Studies Programme.

We wish everyone the very best with studies and exams - hang in there...you can do it!

Something to remember for next year - if you are having difficulty with anything relating to your studies and want to start a study/support group, contact Dr Neemia-Mackenzie on ext 6957.

Have a safe holiday, a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Sara Vui-Talitu and Kimberley Polata (1996 editors)

Silipa Silipa (1997 Editor) ext 7958.

“... experiencing the diverse cultures of the Pacific”

Interview with Kate Scott

by Sara Vui-Talitu

Held every four years, the seventh Pacific Festival of Arts '96, was hosted in Apia, Western Samoa and attracted approximately 10,000 - 15,000 visitors from around the Pacific, including Australia, New Zealand and Hawai'i.

This Arts Festival enables Pacific peoples to come together for a cultural exchange. Skills in Pacific arts and crafts were displayed - a mix of traditional and contemporary arts. Cultural presentations included performing arts and traditional handicrafts like woodcarvings, weaving, sculptures and tattooing. Tattooing was very popular among visitors. Some had tattoos done traditionally while others preferred the less painful modern method. Bracelet and anklet designs were also popular.

Kate Scott, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies attended the festival at the invitation of the Institute for Pacific Studies (IPS), University of the South Pacific. The Macmillan Brown Centre and IPS have a close working relationship and have worked together on several joint publications.

“It was invaluable exposure for us to be able to promote the Centre's publications, to make our presence known as a small Pacific publisher and a further opportunity to work alongside Linda Crowl, Editor, Institute for Pacific Studies (IPS). Such occasions not only strengthen relationships but also offer opportunities to discuss future projects and be informed about what is happening in the literary circles of the Pacific,” says Kate.

The festival began on September 8 with the grand opening ceremony held at Apia Park, attended by a crowd of approximately 15,000 people. The Head of State and the Prime Minister of Western Samoa gave keynote addresses. The Maori Queen Dame Te Atairangikaahu was also in attendance and received a warm welcome from the crowd. Twenty-four countries paraded before the appreciative crowd. One of the highlights was watching 2000 school children perform the *sasa* (a Samoan slap dance).

Exhibitions included books and paintings; creative writing displays; musical sounds; Pacific dramas filled with legends of Polynesian history; seminars on various topics; displays of oral traditions; comedies; film festivals, the construction of traditional houses, watching demonstrations of traditional rites, traditional healing methods and food preparation. The festival also had pageants showing off Pacific-flavoured fashions, traditional costumes and a flower show.

Publications by publishers, Macmillan Brown, IPS and Pasifika Press were displayed daily from 9.00 - 3.00 p.m. in a *fale* provided by the festival organisers within the festival village adjacent to the Government buildings. Publications were also displayed in the evenings at the Women and Youth Cultural Centre as part of the Literary Arts sessions. Transportation of books was difficult, but offers of assistance by friends was gratefully accepted.

Tony Murrow, Book Editor, Pasifika Press was also on hand to assist us with book sales. Tony was present to promote Sia Figiel's novel "Where we once belonged." (*see notices for book review*) "The success of the book displays and sales was mainly due to the support we had from each other as publishers. There were some frustrations dealing with transactions, weather conditions, security and transportation of books, but we managed to work things through. It was also good meeting everyone at our book *fale*. People were interested in what was being published about the Pacific and were very specific about what they were looking for."

A National Bibliography of Samoa was launched at the opening of the Pacific Book exhibition. A copy is now available at the Macmillan Brown Library along with a copy of the 1996 Contemporary Arts exhibition catalogue.

Festival visitors were pleased to find a varied selection of books available. IPS alone had a total of 100 titles on display. Browsers and buyers varied from collectors of Pacific material, school groups, tourists, locals and academics. Buyers were pleased to be able to take some literature away with them.

The Literary Arts opening various authors and writers. books by rising Samoan authors including "Where we once belonged" and "The Girl in outstanding young writer,

Pacific artists from New Zealand visual arts exhibition at the Zealand *Tautai* group, artists at the Macmillan Brown Tuffery. Christchurch-based had her works on display. village within the scenic

Kate described the Arts the diverse cultures of the Samoa. "The island of Upolu I had more time to spend catching up with friends there



ABOVE: Kate Scott, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies

saw the launching of 22 books by Professor Albert Wendt launched two author, Sia Figiel; "Where we once the Moon Circle." Sia Figiel is an performer and performance poet.

Zealand were well-represented at the first festival. This included works by the New Zealand such as Fatu Feu'u, currently in residence Centre, Johnny Peninsula and Michel Mouali print artist Loretta Young also The artists were based at the artists Sinalei Reef Resort at Siumu.

festival as a 'fantastic' way to experience Pacific and a great opportunity to visit is very beautiful" Says Kate. "I wish that there — it's definitely worth a revisit and was definitely a bonus."

The venue for the 8th Pacific Festival of Arts, in the year 2000 is New Caledonia.

Solomon Islander 'Fresh Prince'

Interview with Paul Roughan

by Sara Vui-Talitu

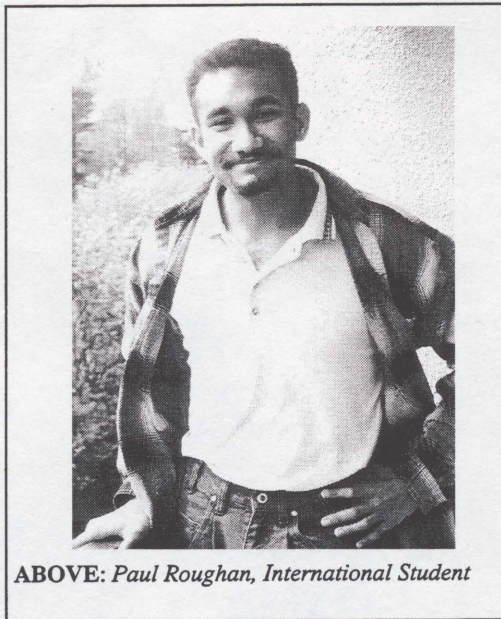
Paul Roughan has been likened to Mike Larry or Fresh Prince Will Smith but that doesn't surprise him in the least - he has been likened to a lot of people. Paul, 20, from Honiara in the Solomon Islands is completing his third year at the University of Canterbury with a major in biochemistry genetics. He is also studying maths, statistics, physics and politics.

"Hopefully I'll do another year and do honours - probably in science," he says with an American accent. An only child, Paul's American dad is a naturalised Solomon Islander who runs a multi-national Non-Government Organisation (NGO) Solomon Island Development Trust (SIDT) that raises awareness on issues affecting Solomon Islanders. His Solomon Island mother is the principal, teacher and administrator of Bishop Epalle Primary School.

"I miss my family back home, but I'll be back, and I may as well enjoy New Zealand was the country Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) which he is a recipient. The international course fees, a living from the Solomon Islands where he academic year.

For Paul, the Solomon Islands will New Zealand life too predictable. "I in the first world permanently. I craziness almost. " While culture finds time management with his

Food took a while to get used to ago. "Back home we don't eat too grease. At first it came as a shock grease and dairy products but I've Fish though is more expensive.



ABOVE: Paul Roughan, International Student

it's not a strong miss. I know myself while I'm here," he says. chosen by the Ministry of bilateral award scholarship of scholarship pays his allowance and travel to and goes at the end of every

always be home and he finds wouldn't like to live anywhere like a bit of unpredictability - might partly be to blame, Paul studies very challenging.

when he first arrived four years much meat or nearly as much to the system - all the meat, gotten used to the meat now."

Paul says supermarkets are something else. "There are so many unnecessary things here - like the supermarket there is quite specialised and I still don't eat many processed products. Most food back home is from the market like fruit, vegetables and fish."

As for politics, Paul believes New Zealanders are more reserved compared to other places he has been to such as USA, Australia and the Solomon Islands with first-past-the-post. "It's not a raging issue - there are no burning debates about it. I'd like to see what happens with this MMP election." Even having a 'no-confidence' vote in the government would say as much as a party vote he says.

Outside of study, Paul enjoys mixing with people of different ethnicities and about once every three months he goes to the gym. While his flatmates insist Paul claims whatever is cooking in the kitchen is his favourite food, he says he has discovered the joys of cooking - and eating.

Pacific Island students Get-together

Thanks to all those who were able to attend the final get-together in early September. The next function will be held sometime in the new year to welcome new students.

Samoan Students' Association

The following are the newly elected committee for 1997:

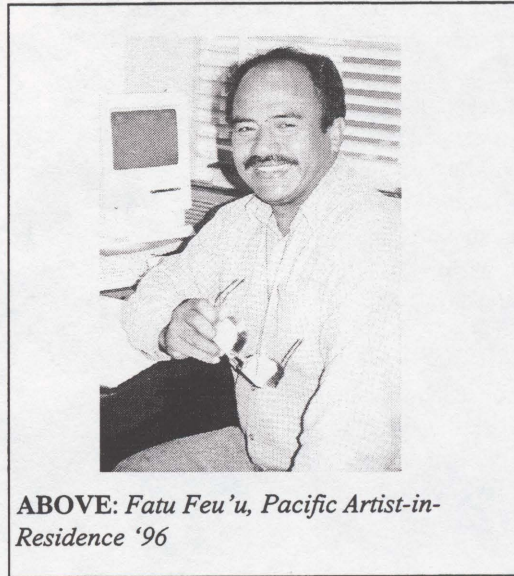
Patron:	Leua Iosefa
President:	Salelupe Leota
Vice President:	Perelini Perelini
Secretary:	Ana Mulipola
Treasurer:	Bubsy Memea-Ma'aelopa

Fatu Feu'u returns to Canterbury

A warm welcome is extended to Fatu Feu'u, Pacific Artist-in-Residence for 1996. Fatu is returning to complete the second phase of his residency sponsored by Creative New Zealand. He has an office on the 7th floor, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies and a studio in the School of Fine Arts.

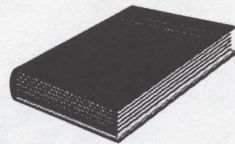
Fatu was a member of the First Pacific Festival Contemporary Art Exhibition Committee at the most recent 7th Pacific Festival of Arts held in Western Samoa. An exhibition of art by artists from around the Pacific was displayed in the Women and Youth Cultural Centre in Apia.

Fatu is presenting a seminar on Thursday 24 October, 4.30 p.m. (see notices)



ABOVE: Fatu Feu'u, Pacific Artist-in-Residence '96

Book Review



Where we once belonged by Sia Figiel

Reviewed by Sara Vui-Talitu

Published by Pasifika Press

Available from Whitcoulls \$24.95

This startling yet blatant account of village life in the islands, as seen through the eyes of a teenage Samoan woman, aims to redefine Pacific Island literature.

'Where we once belonged' is Sia Figiel's first novel that succeeds in de-romanticizing Western perceptions of Pacific Island women. Nothing is sacred.

At 29, Figiel's first novel is undeniably a woman's book because of her deliberate focus on female characters. She does well to capture the essence of innocence in the main character Alofa Filiga, whose coming to terms with her identity and role as a girl becoming a woman in a nu'u or village.

In true Pacific style Figiel, who likes to be referred to as a performance poet, mixes poetry with narrative prose adding atmosphere. She also mixes Samoan and English languages. It works well due to the logical sequence of events and easily digestible chapters that makes her writing style reader-friendly.

Figiel leaves few stones unturned in tackling deeper social issues close to home. Her writing style is fearless and brutal in its degree of realism when portraying silent tragedies women endure like female violations and domestic violence. One feels instinctively that "this is how it really is".

Figiel had well-known Pacific author Albert Wendt singing her praises at a recent book launch in Western Samoa at the South Pacific Arts Festival in September.

Educated in Samoa, New Zealand and the United States, Figiel was the 1996 Artist-in-Residence at the Arts in Education programme in American Samoa.

NOTICEBOARD

SCHOLARSHIPS

A current list of scholarships available can be found in the latest edition of Achievers '97 magazine available from the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, level 7, James Hight Library Tower.

Applications forms for *Pacific Island Youth Leadership Trust* (closing end of November), and *Public Trust Maori and Pacific Islands Scholarships* (1 of each) (closing date 25 October 1996), *Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs* (closing date end of January) are available from the Macmillan Brown Centre.

Abstract of Awards Handbook 1996-98 (Summary of Scholarships, Bursaries, Fellowships, Awards, Funds and Grants) is available for viewing at the Centre.

GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN PACIFIC STUDIES

If you would like a brochure about the courses being offered contact Dr Ueantabo Neemia-Mackenzie on 364 2937.

We would like to wish Silipa Silipa a warm welcome to Christchurch. Silipa has enrolled as a Ph.D student in Pacific Studies - the very first to do so under the Centre's Graduate Programme.

MACMILLAN BROWN WORKING PAPER SERIES

The Macmillan Brown Centre has recently published a series of working papers. The titles available are:

WP1: The Legal Needs of Pacific Island Women and Responses to These Needs *by Kim Aiomanu*

WP2: The Establishment of an Oyster Mushroom (Pleurotus) Industry in Tonga: A Model for other Pacific States
by Kelvin W Duncan

WP3: Assessing Modern Treaty Settlements: New Zealand's 1992 Treaty of Waitangi (Fisheries Claims) Settlement and its Aftermath *by Richard T Price*

WP4: Paddling a Multicultural Canoe in Bicultural Waters: Ethnic Identity and Aspirations of Second Generation Cook Islanders in New Zealand *by Yvonne Underhill-Sem and Tom Fitzgerald* WP's 1-4 Price \$12.

'O MITI & ATA VALI' 'Dreams and Painted Pictures'

Pacific Art Seminar - by Fatu Feu'u

Pacific Artist-in-Residence, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies

Date: Thursday 24 October

Time: 4.30 p.m.

Venue: School of Fine Arts Lecture Theatre (SFA203)

Enquiries phone 364 2957

'Ala Mai' Mailing List

Please advise us if you have any changes to your address or know of others who would like to be on our mailing list for 1997.
