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Ala Mai Pasifika

NEWSLETTER FOR PACIFIC ISLAND STUDENTS, UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

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

Hi Everyone!

Pacific Islanders have come a long way in recent years. More and more we see ourselves in high profile roles such as sport, entertainment and the media. It's heartening to see the tremendous things we can achieve when we set our minds to it.

We have profiled the achievements of two Pacific Islanders for you in this edition of AMP. We hope their stories will interest and motivate you. Michel Tuffery's success as an artist and Letaulau Paia'ua Laumua's achievements as a training teacher, mother and student are inspiring. Read their stories and enjoy their successes. We hope to have more positive stories for you again next term.

In the meantime enjoy your holidays, recharge your batteries and all the best with your studies.

Silipa Ripa Silipa

SO'OTAGA 1997 TO BE HOSTED BY WAIKATO UNIVERSITY

The "So'otaga," founded more than ten years ago, is a very important annual event in the diaries of Samoan tertiary students throughout New Zealand. Students from Auckland, Massey, Victoria, Otago and Canterbury will join their Waikato counterparts at the 1997 So'otaga to be held at Waikato University. The programme

will include debates in both English and Samoan, (topics will be chosen by the host university); sports competition both indoor and outdoor; christian rallies; cultural competitions; a series of lectures and seminars on Pacific Island communities health and educational issues.

Ms Malaea Veu, a final year commerce student and last year's president of the Canterbury Samoan Student's Association (CUSSA), says "participating in the So'otaga has been a very rewarding and educational experience for me. As a New Zealand born Samoan, I get the opportunity to meet and socialise with other Samoan tertiary students from around the country, learn about my language and culture and the holism of *Fa'a Samoa*, and more importantly maintain my self-esteem and self-confidence."

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	1
<i>So'otaga 1997</i>	1
FEATURE STORIES	
Tara Ross interviews <i>Michel Tuffery</i> , 1997 Pacific Artist-in-Residence.....	2
Silipa Silipa interviews <i>Letaulau Laumua</i> , a mature student at Canterbury University.....	3
FESTIVAL REVIEW :	
<i>Return to Paradise</i>	3
RESEARCH PROJECT	
<i>Domestic Violence in Pacific Island Communities</i>	4
Contacts	
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Last Friday, 16 August, the CUSSA held its major fundraising "Social" at Roy Stoke Hall, Central New Brighton School. *A big thanks to all those who helped and participated.*

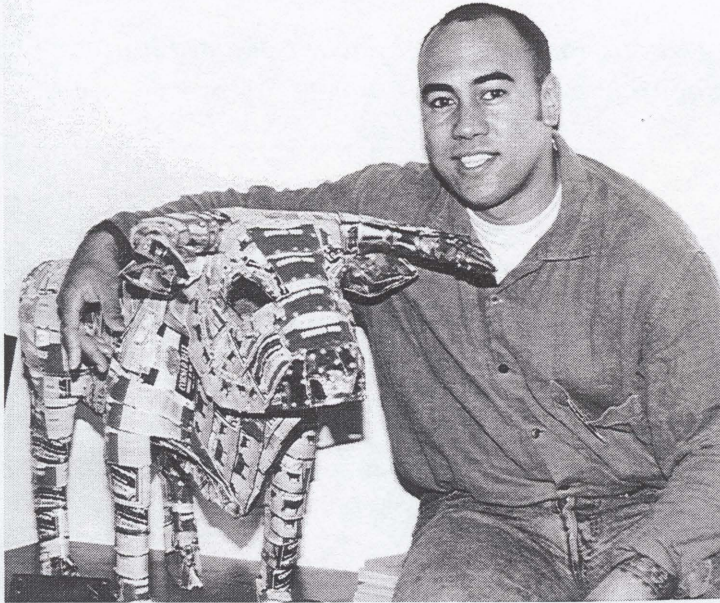
"IA MANUIA LE TU'UAGA FA'APEA LE SO'OTAGA"

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Pacific Artist says, "I'm really paranoid about rubbish"

by Tara Ross



Michel Tuffery

When most of us imagine artists at work we picture them throwing paint around a studio, or sketching landscape scenes from a riverbank. We don't think of them scavenging around in rubbish dumps. But rubbish is precisely what Michel Tuffery, Pacific Artist-in-Residence at the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, is most interested in.

Tuffery visited a rubbish dump in Christchurch recently and was appalled by what he saw. He says we take material things for granted. "They put holes in tyres, in the retreads, so that you can't use them. I thought how stupid. In the islands we wouldn't do that. You'd be an idiot."

Tuffery who works in a wide range of artistic forms, says we should be teaching people conservation skills and demonstrating what can be done with rubbish. "I'm really paranoid about rubbish," Tuffery says, "and I'm really paranoid about how people just take things and not give anything back. I've always looked at environmental issues in my art."

Tuffery, who has come to Christchurch from Wellington, is best known for his woodcuts and his quirky 'Corned Beef 2000', which was brought to Christchurch for the recent arts festival. 'Corned Beef 2000' is a mechanical sculpture of two life-sized bulls (*povi*) made of flattened corned beef cans riveted over a wooden armature. The brightly coloured bulls whimsically

identify the place of European tinned imports in Polynesia and the bully-beef tin in Polynesian culture in New Zealand.

Of Samoan, Tahitian and Rarotongan heritage, Tuffery visits the Pacific Islands each year. He says that, like all of his work, the bulls reflect his strong links with the Pacific. They also have a lot to do with rubbish. Building the bulls out of beef tins that would otherwise have been added to the rubbish pile was a way of showing other ways to use those materials.

A display of Michel's works is planned for the latter part of October. For further information contact: Kate Scott on Telephone 364 2957.



Letaulau Paia'aua Laumua

***"It is never too late to embark
on tertiary studies"***

by Silipa Ripa Silipa

Tara Ross was at Return to Paradise earlier this month, the Christchurch Arts Festival showcase of Pacific Island culture. She reviews the evening's fun.

It was hailed as an extravaganza of traditional and contemporary Pacific Island music, dance and fashion. "Return to Paradise" was also a showcase for Christchurch's young Pacific Islanders to show the city their pride for their culture.

Those who expected a night of traditional dance and song would have been disappointed. Although the show opened with traditional welcomes from six different cultural groups, the performances that followed united the old

Letaulau Paia'aua Laumua, is a mature student at the University of Canterbury and is working towards completing her Bachelor of Education at the end of this year.

Letaulau has been in New Zealand for almost 27 years, and has worked in various jobs during this time. In 1988 she enrolled at the Christchurch Polytech studying computing and clerical subjects. She was there for 3 years. In 1993 she decided to follow in the footsteps of her father, the late Paia'aua Faasino, a former chief school inspector in Apia. Letaulau decided to do a Diploma in Teaching and a Bachelor of Education. She chose to do her studies part-time to balance out her family commitments as well as her obligations to the church and her involvement with various women's committees. Through sheer determination and enthusiasm, Letaulau has managed her schedules well. This single mum dedicates her successes to her parents, her children and to members of her extended family. Her words of advice to anyone considering coming to university are: "If I can do it, so can you."

Return to Paradise . . .

and the new. The rousing welcomes of the University of Canterbury Samoan Students' Association, and the Aranui Sports Academy in particular, hinted at the energy and spirit that was to follow.

Oscar Kightley, relaxed, hip and so very funny, guided the audience through an amazing array of talent and vigour. Funky and futuristic themes, and traditional influences were inventively woven together by the various young Pacific Island performers.

Summer Paradise, a song performed beautifully by Nathan and Craig Chalmers, was smooth and upbeat, and their stylish offering just begged the opportunity to show more.

Performers had fun with Lavalava O Atu Motu, an imaginative blend of funk and traditional dance, and Heavy Combat, a surreal and fast-paced dance with wrist-strapped torches. The freshness and energy of the contemporary acts was striking.

Steve Tafea's Elewise was comic, irreverent, and very well received. There was a stomping of feet in the circle seats as members of the audience rushed to the balustrade to see him take his act from the stage into the audience.

The most poetic and elegant performance of the evening was Laumei - Return to Paradise. This act by members of Pacific Underground was a graceful contrast to the hip and hop of the earlier performances. Both the singing and

the dancing were sweet and gentle, and an exquisite addition to the evening.

The finale, as befitted an event to which so many had contributed, was a packed stage affair, with members of the PIC Youth Choir sending their voices soaring through the theatre.

Return to Paradise provided young Pacific Islanders the chance to prove their talent, and the audience a chance to see the many faces of Pacific Island life in Christchurch. The tremendous wealth of imagination and performance showed that Pacific Island cultures are made up of so much more than a hula or a haka. Return to Paradise was a high powered, high energy show that one can only hope becomes a permanent fixture on the Christchurch arts calendar.

Domestic Violence in Pacific Island Communities

-----Tara Ross

Dr Susan Wurtzburg is aware of the difficulties she faces with her latest research. Currently resident at the Macmillan Brown Center for Pacific Studies as a visiting research scholar, she is undertaking a study of domestic violence in the Pacific, with a specific focus on the cross-cultural difficulties of women's reactions to domestic abuse.

She described her topic as a taboo issue. "It's such a secret hidden thing that people do not want to acknowledge. It is very much an underground issue."

Dr Wurtzburg said the shame that seemed to exist for all groups dealing with the issue of domestic violence was even more acute for the Pacific Island and Asian women she had spoken to. There were separate issues that Pacific Island women had to face in terms of domestic violence, she said.

"The importance of the family and the idea that things should be resolved within the wider family context place all sorts of prohibitions on women to go outside for help. For Pacific Island women it's even harder than for other women to contact the police."

Dr Wurtzburg's study will look at the cross-cultural differences in women's strategies for changing domestic violence situations and any differences in women's access to justice. She said she was particularly interested to see if the different roles women have in separate Pacific Island societies provide different ways of dealing with domestic abuse.

She was working closely with the Christchurch Women's Refuge, as well as conducting research in various Pacific Islands.

She hoped the three-month research post at Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies would enable her to publish a book on her research within six months.

Anyone interested in talking to Dr Wurtzburg about her research can contact her at the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies - Ph 364 2957, Fax 364 2002.