

Island

John Donne's famous poem includes the still more famous "No man is an island, entire of itself...any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." This issue of *Junctures*, on the theme of Island, focuses on that which is circumscribed by sea, yet richly collective, never without connection. Brisbane-based Pat Hoffie commences her article on artists' residencies on Australia's Peel Island – a former lazaret or lepers' colony – by quoting from Donne's poem. On Peel Island artists strove for connectedness with the landscape and with its particular histories, histories which remain dystopic despite their efforts.

Wendy E Cowling responds to the writing of Sia Figiel (Samoa) and Celestine Hitiura Vaite (Tahiti) and investigates some of the effects of insularity on the work of these island authors. Through his visual art practice, German-born Markus Hofko presents a series of sculptures showing miniature snapshots of life isolated on floating islands, dystopias where living beings try to survive. Hailing from the UK, Andrew Grainger examines the cultural politics of race and nation as played out through physical culture and rugby: a sport in which players from the Pacific islands have an increasingly pivotal position internationally. He writes that the western understanding of islands, of their presumed alien and primitive nature, has important repercussions in understanding the relation between racial representation and modern sporting performance.

New Zealander Kerrin Sharpe's poem included in this issue uses words like map and compass, net and fishing, wind and sky to evoke island experiences; while Paul Maddern – born in Bermuda and now working out of the Seamus Heaney Centre at Queen's University in Belfast – stacks words and lines in his poem to a similar but also very different end. Based in Hamilton, New Zealand, Luke Strongman's investigates the links which connect Captain Cook's journeys between Pacific islands and Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. Wellingtonian Mike Lloyd explores joinings and linkages in history between the different islands which form New Zealand. In South Island painter Peter Cleverley's series entitled *Sea Dogs*, images float like islands in a sea of paint to become trophies pointing to the isolation of species doomed to

fail due to the hubris of man. Hubris is also a central theme in Sue Wootton's creative fiction entitled *Snow Kindness*, in which Western notions of kindness and the ethics of a father from the island of Tuvalu come face to face.

Nelson-based curator Anna-Marie White and a group of New Zealand artists contributed to an exhibition called *Cold Comfort: The Craft Sublime* through which the isolation of 'craft' within the wider arena of the visual arts is suggested by island-like elements within a larger installation. White entices us to look at the images where she writes: "This exhibition was constructed as a fantasy tropical island. Imagine that you have been shipwrecked in stormy waters, only to find yourself washed up on a colourful island paradise. While the island is a sanctuary, there are traces of human habitation but no one is to be seen. Who are these occupants? Are they friend or foe? In the face of the unknown, the warmth and colour of the island presents a cold sort of comfort." Juxtaposed with these artists' pages is Sussex-based Mandy Pannet's poem, *Passerine: a Quartet* which evokes island imaginaries through its travel between contexts and the elegiac use of *passer...passerine*, which we learn are words for songbirds, songbirds momentarily perched on a branch before flying to their next destination. North Islander Pat White's *T Galatos: Those Who Came Home* speaks of the brief lives of young men soldiers who lost their lives in wars on islands such as Crete and also in the Pacific.

Calling the highlands of Scotland home, Jenny Holden contributes *Power Cut*, a piece of creative fiction, to this issue of *Junctures: The Journal for Thematic Dialogue*. The protagonist muses and reminisces while on holiday on an island. Being on the island provides a holding pattern for her memories, while danger seems to lurk within the confines of the island, danger which becomes patent in the last sentence of the piece. Again, the different functions of 'island' are manifest: it can seclude and contain, but it can also enclose and endanger through isolation. Also, the utopian and dystopian aspects of 'island' are both present, uncomfortably rubbing up against each other in this story.

Visual images through which islands are created are contributed by Belgrade-born Nela Milic in her artist's pages entitled *Imaging Islands*; while Otago-based Sarah Muller responds to the creation of an 'island' through particular editorial and publishing strategies in her "Survivor: Wom-po Island – A Review of *Letters to the World*, an Anthology of Women's Poetry Written, Compiled, and Edited by Members of the Wom-po Listserv".

Hailing from different 'island' places or focusing on 'island' experiences and metaphors, the contributors to this issue of *Junctures* all add to a rich layering of associations and embodied experiences aligned with the theme of 'island'. The differences in approach evident throughout the issue invite the reader to broaden and reconsider any insularities which our own views on the theme may exhibit.