



PMC unveils creative showcase



Professor Guy Littlefair with *Pacific Journalism Review* team members designer Del Abcede (from left), founding editor Professor David Robie, associate editor Dr Philip Cass, assistant editor Khairiah Rahman and Associate Professor Camille Nakhid, an editorial board member and chair of the PMC Advisory Board. Image: Michael Andrew/PMC

A CREATIVE “grab bag” of projects has been unveiled by the Pacific Media Centre in a showcase of collaboration across academic and communication communities.

Held at Auckland University of Technology recently and hosted by PMC advisory board chair Associate Professor Camille Nakhid, the PMC “Midwinter Showcase” celebrated the launch of a double edition of *Pacific Journalism Review*, the 2018 Bearing Witness documentary *Banabans of Rabi*, the *Pacific Media Watch Project—The Genesis* video and the new *PMC Online* website.

Doctoral candidate and journalist Atakohu Middleton opened the night with a karakia before pro-vice chancellor and faculty dean Professor Guy Littlefair officially launched *PJR*—which focuses heavily on the New Zealand mosque massacre and media dilemmas of democracy—with a powerful and poignant speech.

Describing universities as the “critic and conscience of society”, Dr Littlefair lauded the value of the new *PJR* research in light of the media response to the March 15 atrocity.

He said how the privileged Pākehā narrative of New Zealand history made the violence of the attack all the more affronting for a media community consisting of mostly young, white journalists.

“This double issue of *PJR* that I have the privilege to launch

picks up on the narrative at precisely this point,” he said.

“Dilemmas for journalists and democracy [*PJR* title]—these five words encapsulate for me the critic and conscience role of universities.

“This journal provides once again a magnificent example of the best, most relevant, most meaningful research that I as a dean could hope to see come from this wonderful faculty of ours.

“David and the team, I could not be more proud.”

Banabans of Rabi

Banabans of Rabi was then screened after an introduction by AUT screen production senior lecturer Jim Marbrook.

Marbrook, who helped produce the film, described it as a successful product of collaboration between journalism and screen production students.

He explained that film creators Blessen Tom and Hele Ikimotu had to overcome particular challenges to get to the remote Fijian island of Rabi and make the documentary.

“The philosophy of the Bearing Witness project is to go to areas that are under reported, that are quite difficult to get to; with that comes risks and complications. – Michael Andrew



Professor David Robie (left) and Michael Andrew with Rosa Moiwend from West Papua.



Pacific Media Watch contributing editor Michael Andrew at work.



Rosa Moiwend with two PMC publications.



Documentary makers Blessen Tom and Sri Krishnamurthi.



Documentary maker Hele Ikimotu with his parents Janet and Jone.



Inaugural Geraldine Lopdell Diversity Award winner Malia Latu at the School of Communication Studies awards with her mother.



Climate Change protest march, 24 May 2019.



The Love Aotearoa, Hate racism march, 24 March 2019.



PMC Advisory Board chair A/Professor Camille Nakhid at the Midwinter Showcase.



Design and Creative Industries dean Professor Guy Littlefair with PMC director David Robie.



Postgraduate students Stephanie Tapungu and Jonah Lim with PMC advisory board member Khairiah Rahman.



The Midwinter Showcase night.



Postgraduate student Nga Rima and friend at the Midwinter Showcase.



Head of School Dr Rosser Johnson with senior lecturer Angelique Nairn.



School manager Edelita Clark at the Midwinter Showcase.



Documentary maker and senior lecturer Jim Marbrook at the Midwinter Showcase.

Pacific Media Watch ‘lighthouse’ role featured in doco

By Sri Krishnamurthi

‘IT’S A bit of a lighthouse’ for vital regional news and information, says former contributing editor Alex Perrottet summing up the value of the Pacific Media Centre’s *Pacific Media Watch* freedom project for New Zealand and Pacific journalism.

The Radio New Zealand journalist is among seven international media people involved in the 23-year-old project featured in a new video.

Pacific Media Watch—The Genesis is a 15-minute mini documentary telling the story of the project launched by two journalists at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) in 1996 and adopted by Auckland University of Technology’s Pacific Media Centre in 2007.

The video was released recently to coincide with the global media freedom conference in London.

Pacific Media Watch has become a challenging professional development opportunity for AUT postgraduate students seeking to develop specialist skills in Asia-Pacific journalism.

It is was launched by Professor David Robie, then head of the UPNG journalism programme in Port Moresby and Peter Cronau, editor of *Reportage* investigative magazine at UTS.

Now Dr Robie is director of the Auckland-based PMC and Cronau is an award-winning senior producer of the ABC’s flagship *Four Corners* investigative journalism programme.

The ‘Tongan three’

The catalyst for *Pacific Media Watch* was the jailing of the “Tongan Three” – founding editor of *Taimi ‘o Tonga* Kalafi Moala, his deputy Filokalafi Akau’ola, and pro-democracy MP ‘Akilisi Pohiva, now Prime Minister of Tonga—for contempt of Parliament in 1996.



Filmmakers Blessen Tom and Sri Krishnamurthi working on the *Pacific Media Watch* documentary. Image: David Robie/PMC

Dr Robie and Cronau could not sit back and allow this happen—the second major attack on media freedom in the Pacific after Fiji was thrown into turmoil with the first coup in 1987.

“The Tongan Three was really how we got started,” recalls Dr Robie about their response to the unprecedented and “outrageous” 30-day jailing sentence imposed on the trio at the time.

Peter Cronau says: “The case of the three was just a shock and it was a rallying point.”

Since then *Pacific Media Watch* has grown to become a reliable media outlet based on professional development for student journalists but it also has a network of contributing media and academic correspondents around the region.

Many events

The PMW has covered many events in the Pacific including tsunamis, Fiji peacekeepers being taken hostage in the Golan Heights, beatings and torture of a prisoner by the security forces in Fiji, two Fiji general elections, the New Caledonian independence referendum and – most recently – the massacre of 51 Muslims at two mosques in Christchurch and the impact on journalism.

So far nine postgraduate student contributing editors and two reporters have been trained on the *PMW* project, between them at least 11 awards have been won at the annual Ossie Awards for the cream of student journalism in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.

PMC director on sabbatical

PACIFIC MEDIA CENTRE director Professor David Robie is on sabbatical for the rest of the year. He will visit Paris,



Doha, Iran, Indonesia and the Philippines as part of several research projects. Professor Barry King is acting director in his absence.

Michael Andrew will be working on the Pacific Media Watch project until the end of semester. He will be assisted by Sri Krishnamurthi working on special projects.

The new PMC Online website is now accessible on your mobile: www.pmc.aut.ac.nz

