RENEW, RESTORE, REGENERATE
Pop-up art initiatives revitalising empty spaces

CLIMATE CONTROL
Saving the environment one building at a time

WHAT WE REALLY THINK
Unveiling the issues most important to Australians
Describe one of your challenges for 2012.
2012 is shaping up to be one of my most challenging years. Pushing ahead with a rapid campus build program while managing the university finances, as well as mitigating the impact of large scale construction and environmental change on staff and students, will be some of my prime concerns. Excavation is now underway for three buildings to support the faculties of Engineering and Information Technology, Science and Business. This is one of the most intense construction projects in the city! While all of this is underway, we are supplying some wonderful new student spaces in areas, such as the ‘green space’ in building 5’s blocks A and B, Haymarket campus, as well as the brand new facilities for all of our students in building 6. I would encourage everyone to check these out.

What will be one of the greatest achievements in the City Campus Master Plan?
The creation of a modern, sustainable, campus that students and staff will be proud of, want to spend more time at, and better reflects the excellent learning, teaching and research happening at UTS. All of this must naturally take place while we maintain a healthy financial position as a university. The master plan will deliver much needed revitalisation to UTS’s urban surroundings – the cultural and commercial hub that is Ultimo – by creating a clear pedestrian network and connections impacting not just our students and staff, but also the people of Sydney.

One of the things I’d like to tick off my bucket list is...
Heli skiing in some awesome powder.

What aspect of your work life are you passionate about?
Facilitating the interaction of a vast number of fascinating stakeholders, from students and staff, to the local community, to city and state officials. Most of the people I deal with are passionate about their own areas of interest, however it appears like all of the stars are aligning and all our interests are converging in one direction, which is both surprising and gratifying. It’s truly amazing what can be accomplished under these circumstances.

What sports are you into at the moment?
Mountain biking, skiing, swimming, surfing and running. I run three kilometres each morning with my dog. All I have to do now is stop injuring myself.

What’s a big lesson you’ve learnt in life?
Life is a marathon and not a sprint, so learning balance early on is highly beneficial.

Photographer: Carmen Lee Spiers

Georgia

WHAT ARE THE MEASURES OF A GOOD EDUCATION?
The Gonski report highlights our currently inadequate measures of educational success and raises concerns about what’s been largely ignored. It seems impossible to have a discussion about school funding without reference to NAPLAN and international tests, so it’s important to question the merits of these as the seemingly only measure of educational quality. The recommendations look like there will be no significant losers. However, if Australian governments don’t come up with the recommended funding, then we all know who’ll be in the winning circle in the educational race between the rich and the poor.

Peter Aubusson

For some, a good education may simply be good grades (and for a small subset of these opinion holders it applies to only the ‘important’ subjects like maths, English and science). As a parent, a good education is, to me, one that produces a well-rounded individual, one that nurtures the mind, body and spirit. Unfortunately, measuring the outcomes of these can be quite difficult and the only way I have seen them reported is in the traditional means, which includes standardised testing. I measure the success of the education my children are receiving when I see happy and confident individuals with high self esteem.

Georgia

NEXT MONTH’S QUESTION
In India, climate-responsive architecture, rather than air-conditioning, is resulting in less energy use and higher occupant comfort. How reliant are you on year-round air-conditioning for comfort?
Read Leena Thomas’s opinion piece on page 6 and email your name and response to ufluts.edu.au or comment online via newsroom.uts.edu.au
FEATURES

CLIMATE CONTROL

Leena Thomas explains how climate-responsive architecture in India is offering the subcontinent alternatives to energy-intensive urbanisation

WHAT WE REALLY THINK

Though politicians claim global warming is the greatest moral dilemma of our time, new research suggests everyday Aussies think otherwise

RENEW, RESTORE, REGENERATE

The UTS Shopfront and Arts NSW initiative that is using pop-up art projects to revitalise empty spaces

REGULARS

ASK THE EXEC: PATRICK WOODS

U: SAID IT: THE EDUCATION RACE

NEWS: FELLOWSHIP FIRST

AROUND U: VOICE YOUR VIEWS

STAFF PROFILE: THE SCHOOL OF LIFE

ALUMNI PROFILE: RESEARCH IN THE BLOOD

TWO OF U: FAMILY TIES

STUDENT PROFILE: WAR STORIES

U: READ IT: UTS IN PRINT

FEATURED EVENT: GREAT ESCAPES

WHAT’S ON: MAY

ART & U: UTS ART COLLECTION
Cochlear implants have been providing solutions for the hearing impaired since Australian man Rod Saunders was fitted with the first Cochlear device in 1978.

As demand for the implants continues to grow, so too does the need for a substantial body of research around best practice for the design, manufacture and implantation of Cochlear products. And this is what an ongoing research partnership between UTS and Cochlear Limited has set out to achieve.

Researchers at the UTS iThREE institute have been undertaking pioneering work with the global leader in implantable hearing solutions since 2006, providing research expertise in the area of biofilms (microorganisms that stick to each other or a surface and can impact the body’s acceptance of medical implants). The collaboration has now resulted in the 12-month appointment of UTS researcher Rosalia Cavaliere as the first ever Cochlear Research Fellow.

“Dr Cavaliere has a background in the study of environmental microbes and biofilms and has been working on the UTS Cochlear program since 2009,” says Associate Professor Cynthia Whitchurch, who developed the original partnership with the company.

“With the formal fellowship in place, Dr Cavaliere will now work full time on a range of Cochlear projects.

“Preventing the formation of biofilms is an ongoing consideration for companies who design and produce medical devices for implant in the human body.

“With any implanted device, there comes a very small risk of infection. Our role as a collaborator with Cochlear has been to provide expert advice on biofilms and how to mitigate the risk of biofilm formation for Cochlear users.”

The research has already demonstrated proper management of biofilms can reduce infection risks to minuscule proportions.

“These research outcomes are important for all manufacturers of implant devices and have the potential to be applied in a range of health and medical areas where biofilm formation is an ongoing problem,” says Whitchurch.

The Cochlear Fellowship is the first formal fellowship arrangement between the company and an Australian university. The unique relationship between the two organisations has helped build Cochlear’s profile as a leader in collaborative research opportunities and has reinforced UTS’s reputation as a university with strong industry connections.

Cochlear CEO Chris Roberts said the collaboration with UTS allows the company to remain at the forefront of technology and innovation.

“We place a huge amount of importance on the innovation that can be achieved through multi-disciplinary collaboration,” he says.

“We are excited about this fellowship and the broader opportunities that our active relationship with UTS will present. It’s a big step forward for research in this industry.”

Alexandra Berriman and Claire Thompson
Research and Innovation Office

Photographer: Joanne Saad
Biofilm image supplied by: Rosalia Cavaliere

Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/5/fellowship-first
With 35 Australian universities participating in Voice Project-run surveys, it gives UTS an opportunity to benchmark performance within the sector. Anderson says we're doing well. “One of our strength areas is industry and professional engagement. We've always outshone other universities on that one. UTS is also known as a good place to work – it comes back time and time again in the survey results; we look after our people.”

Being new to UTS, Lacoon says she's eager to learn about the culture of the place and is passionate about staff engagement. “I see it as a primary indicator of the health of an organisation. Do staff feel proud to work here? Are they satisfied with their work and are they willing to stay?”

“I was attracted to UTS because of the positive things I’d heard from people – word of mouth is really powerful. If someone recommends UTS then it’s likely to have an impact on whether you’re going to come and join us.”

This year's survey is the third conducted by UTS. Feedback received in the 2009 survey resulted in UTS founding initiatives to address career development, cross-unit cooperation and process improvement. The Leading Academics and Early Career Research Development programs are two projects providing opportunities for academic career progression, while the UTS Staff Intranet project will improve communication and processes and promote collaboration across the university.

An ambitious project, the intranet is currently in an early development phase. Lacoon is chairing the Intranet Board overseeing the development of the university-wide system and says it is “fundamentally a project about people”.

“I see the intranet project as a chance to improve the way we work together. We’ll be providing staff with a collaborative space and the opportunity to share ideas, knowledge and resources in easy and accessible ways.

“Our success at UTS is dependent on our people, so we need to encourage participation in the survey and to act on your feedback.”

To voice your views, from 14 May, visit staffsurvey2012.uts.edu.au

Izanda Ford
Marketing and Communication Unit
Image design: Paul Boosey
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/5/voice-your-views
Over the last decade India has experienced an unprecedented rate of urbanisation with the building sector accounting for the largest share (47 per cent) of India’s final energy use between 1995 and 2005. Increased energy consumption has fuelled a 60 per cent increase in greenhouse gas emissions during the same period.

The mind-boggling projections for the future reiterate the energy intensive consequences of the built environment.

While Australia and other developed economies in the western world contend with a scenario where 80 per cent of the buildings that will be with us in 2050 have already been built, projections for India, by global management consulting firm McKinsey and Company suggest 70 to 80 per cent of the India of 2030 is yet to be built. And as that country shifts from 30 per cent (in 2008) to 40 per cent of its population living and working in urban areas by 2030, they forecast greenhouse gas emissions in Indian cities could increase to 1.6 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (up from 230 million tonnes in 2005, and more than two-and-a-half times Australia’s net emissions in 2007).

While there are numerous social, political and economic forces that can explain these trends and influence the pace and nature of urban development, arguably the current trends in the Indian commercial office sector have much to answer for.

Why office buildings? Firstly, as the workforce shifts towards a service orientation that is office based, more people will spend more time in these buildings.

Secondly, from an energy perspective, air-conditioning in warm-to-hot climates represents the single largest energy end use in commercial buildings (approximately 50 per cent). And in a sector that is growing at the rate of 15 per cent of floor space per annum, this obviously requires urgent attention.

Thirdly, and perhaps most significantly, is the manner in which development in this domain is being pursued and valued. Together with shopping malls, the recent development of up-market office buildings is a visual symbol of globalisation and economic success.

Catch the metro to Gurgaon on the outskirts of New Delhi, or drive through the new technology parks in Bangalore or any one of India’s burgeoning cities, and you will see them – ‘clean’, un-shaded and extensively glazed buildings, with sealed windows and deep floor plates that require artificial lighting and central air-conditioning. Often they come fully kitted with mini power stations capable of 100 per cent power generation to combat the frequent electrical blackouts that plague many Indian cities.

In the absence of a thermal comfort standard specifically focused on India’s climatic and cultural context, the trend is to design air-conditioned office buildings based on a set of universally standardised comfort criteria – 22.5 degree Celcius plus or minus one degree Celcius. And here lies another point of concern – stipulation of such a narrow band of comfort mandates a very energy intensive (and expensive) solution for heating or cooling every time temperatures ride above or below this range. It forces a reliance on air-conditioning almost all year round – a condition which we have seen is highly addictive in western buildings.

One may argue these buildings are only developed for the top five to 10 per cent of the population. However, the look and feel of these buildings, and the expectation for stable comfort conditions that air-conditioning offers, permeates to residential living and goes on to influence the expectations, aspirations and consequent consumption of the next level of building occupants.

My research into post occupancy evaluations of buildings has developed a rich narrative of building performance in terms of their energy efficiency as well as the experience of the buildings from the users’ point of view. It shows that understanding the social, or qualitative, dimension of occupants offers opportunities for a more sustainable future.

To date, most of the regulatory and research efforts to ameliorate greenhouse gas emissions from the building sector in India have remained in the technology domain. In other words, they focus on energy monitoring of exemplars for efficiency, and the development and promotion of remedial measures (such as high performance glazing, insulation and equipment) to deliver energy-efficient comfort. However, they do little to question or renegotiate the fundamental basis for the adopted comfort norms or to develop a better understanding of the expectations of occupants.

There is no doubt that buildings must be comfortable for their occupants. Admittedly, in countries like India, this is a challenge when temperatures range from 10 to 40 degrees in New Delhi or soar above 44 degrees in Ahmedabad.

However, the climate-rejecting approach currently in use is in stark contrast to a rich tradition of climate responsive architecture that the subcontinent has been noted for. This includes the evaporatively cooled and ornately shaded retreats offered by the step tharavadu homes in humid Kerala.

There are also a significant number of built examples of climate responsive, contemporary workplaces in India such as Torrent Research Centre at Ahmedabad and the Institute for Rural Research and Development in Gurgaon. Often initiated as a partnership between the enlightened owner/developer and committed architect, these buildings use locally sourced materials and construction techniques. Environmental control is designed and achieved through passive means, sometimes in conjunction with alternate low-energy cooling systems which do not rely on refrigerant cooling. In other cases a mixed mode of operation, where supplementary air-conditioning is used only when conditions ride outside the acceptable comfort range, is set in sympathy with outdoor climatic conditions.

Our field studies on some of these sustainable and climate responsive buildings in India show they not only deliver low energy outcomes but also register an overall occupant satisfaction well above international benchmarks. Interestingly, they also indicate occupants in these buildings are actually tolerant of a higher range of temperatures when compared to western standards.
India may be one of the world’s fastest growing economies, but that doesn’t mean its greenhouse gas emissions need to follow suit. Senior Lecturer in the School of Architecture Leena Thomas explains how a collaborative research project involving UTS, India’s CEPT University and the University of Sydney is combining local knowledge with international research to create a unique thermal comfort model.

These findings begin to challenge the design approach and adoption of stringent comfort standards seen in the climate-rejecting new developments and an assumption that greater energy inputs translate automatically to improved occupant comfort.

Against this backdrop is the project to develop a thermal comfort model for the Indian climatic and cultural context for naturally ventilated and air-conditioned commercial buildings. It’s currently being undertaken in collaboration with the Centre for Sustainable Environment and Energy at CEPT University, Ahmedabad with funding from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy of the Government of India.

Through post-occupancy evaluation and thermal comfort field studies of commercial buildings and their occupants, located across the climate zones of India, the model aims to offer an energy efficient, low-carbon development pathway for its commercial building sector, without compromising overall comfort or productivity.

In a developing country like India, where much of its built stock is yet to be developed and the efficient utilisation of resources is paramount, real game changers of this nature are needed to steer clear of the mistakes made in the energy-intensive western approach.

Leena Thomas
Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building

Photographer (L. Thomas): Joanne Saad
Photographer (jaali cladding and internal court): Ashok B. Lall Architects

U: SAID IT QUESTION
In India, climate-responsive architecture, rather than air-conditioning, is resulting in less energy use and higher occupant comfort. How reliant are you on year-round air-conditioning for comfort?

Comment online at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/5/climate-control
WHAT
WE
REALLY
THINK
A study from the Anatomy of Civil Societies Research Project at UTS has shown Australians value local issues over global concerns, and that Australian society is significantly more conservative than many of us may be willing to admit.

Led by UTS Business School’s Professor of Strategy Timothy Devinney, the study, titled ‘What Matters to Australians: Our Social, Political and Economic Values’, is funded by the Australian Research Council. It studied over 1500 Australians in 2007 and 2011 and their reaction to issues of salience, or importance, in their everyday lives.

The top three concerns of Australian people were food and health, local crime and public safety, and rights to basic services. Global issues like environmental sustainability and international security appeared only as middling importance on the list of issues about which respondents felt concern.

The outcomes of the study provide a fascinating snapshot of Australian society which, despite a reputation for being a fun-loving, laid back nation, is actually a fairly conservative society with an eye for issues that are close to home.

“It’s conservative in the sense that the things that matter are closer to the individual. The saying goes all politics are local and that is seen in these results – most of the issues people are concerned with are local issues," explains Devinney.

The study uses a unique variant of best/worst scaling, a choice measurement method. It asks participants to make simple choices amongst groups of options, allowing for better estimation of trade-offs. It has significant advantages when compared to traditional polling or surveying methods, particularly in the case of emotive social issues.

“When we were testing the study methodology, one of the things we did was to ask a panel of 400 people to use our best/worst instrument to answer a series of questions, and then to complete some surveys based on rankings and ratings,” says Devinney.

What the team found was that typical polling methods were uninformative – respondents claimed all the listed issues mattered to them, without being able to effectively determine which mattered more than the others.

“With a traditional polling method, if I came to you and said, ‘Do you care about the environment?’ you’d say, ‘Of course I care about the environment’. But if I then came to you and said, ‘You have a choice – the choice is that we can cut back a bit on your children’s schooling, say $50 a child, and we can put that money into a subsidy for solar energy, or we can forget about the subsidy and keep the money in schools. What do you think?’, you are now forced to think about which of the two options you value more; and that’s when we begin to see where people’s priorities really lie.”

The participants in the study were a representative sample of Australians over the age of 18. The study sought to capture information about their voting and political activities, religious beliefs and practices, and donating and volunteering practices, as well as information about their general and life satisfaction.

“What we found was that there was very little variety in preference across the demographic spectrum in terms of the issues people identified as being salient to them. Where people are normally expecting to see a difference in the attitudes of rich and poor, male and female, and young and old people, there was actually very little variation,” says Devinney.

“It was interesting to note Australians, as a whole, are probably much more like-minded than they might think when it comes to identifying issues they see as being critical to their lives and wellbeing.”

The findings were also consistent across international samples in Germany, the UK and the USA that were examined as part of the same study.

“The consistency across countries is pretty high. What’s at the top, what’s at the bottom of the list of salient issues is pretty similar across countries.”

The research outcomes hold particular relevance for politicians and policy makers who are regularly swayed by public opinion polls that may not provide accurate information.

“Every politician in any country where there is even moderately thriving democracy is poll-paranoid. What they want to know is what really matters to their constituents,” Devinney says.

“So the use of polling instruments that are inaccurate in some ways creates a serious problem in terms of making policy based on those poll results. You want to give the policy makers valuable, legitimate information.

“For example, one of the most critical outcomes from this study was the Australian attitude towards environmental issues. Despite numerous public opinion polls showing strong support, our study showed these issues have actually taken a significant fall in terms of how highly they are valued.

“This is important because as a politician, you want to create a portfolio of things in which the government should be active because the population is interested in these things.”

The study was launched in Melbourne at the State Library of Victoria on 3 May, and at the UTS Aerial Function Centre on 4 May. International results will be released later in the year.

Claire Thompson
Research and Innovation Office
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/5/what-we-really-think
I like to call it an old-new idea – this is just the lawful version of an art squat,” says Shopfront’s Community Engagement Coordinator Lisa Andersen who manages the Empty Spaces project. Since launching the project’s website in 2010, Shopfront have helped set up over 20 separate empty space initiatives around Australia. All have brokered the short-term re-use of empty shops and unused spaces for creative types and the community.

“I want to support the idea of using spaces that wouldn’t otherwise be used,” says Andersen. “It’s about providing creative people with the space to work, exhibit, and sell their work.”

The Empty Spaces project has seen artists transform vacant retail spaces into vibrant creative studios, art galleries, and performance spaces. The project has been so successful that it has spawned a growing number of similar initiatives across Australia. The website serves as a platform for artists, landlords, and local governments to connect and explore new ways of using empty spaces.

But the project is not just about providing space for artists. It’s also about reinvigorating local economies and communities. By bringing together the community, artists, and commercial property owners, the Empty Spaces project is helping to create new opportunities for local businesses and industries.

As the project continues to grow, Shopfront and its partners are working to ensure that the legal and financial aspects of these space re-use initiatives are properly addressed. The website includes a section dedicated to legal resources and planning information, helping to ensure that artists and landlords are able to navigate the complexities of using empty spaces in a legal and sustainable way.

When the factories of Chippendale moved out west in the 1940s and 50s, the industrial spaces of inner city Sydney were left empty and wide open for artists to quarter – often without a landlord’s knowledge. Now, an initiative lead by UTS Shopfront and Arts NSW is bringing back this old tradition and guiding landlords, artists and local governments through space re-use initiatives.

Andersen elaborates: “It started in 2008 with the success of Renew Newcastle, established to rejuvenate Newcastle’s Hunter Street Mall. With 180 vacant retail spaces and an emptied-out city centre, landlord, The GPT Group, worked with a group of local arts organisers to allow short-term, low-cost use of empty shop fronts where artists could make, exhibit and sell their work. They’d get their chance at a start-up business and the mall would get much needed foot traffic.”

Shopfront is working with the Arts Law Centre of Australia, the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure and the growing group of empty space project managers around Australia to provide the legal resources, planning information and case studies. The website also includes a space for community discussion about the concepts of space re-use and cultural enterprise development.

“These empty space projects act as the broker between the landlord and the artist occupying the space,” says Andersen. “Part of the process of recruiting and filling spaces is making sure the legalities are right and insurances are there. Our website gets around 5000 visits a month, with about 80 per cent of them being in Australia.”

Plans to build on these global connections are in the works, thanks to funding from the UTS Partnership Grants Scheme.

Closer to home, FraserStudios, on nearby Kensington Street, remains a shining, local example of a well utilised empty space. Owned by Fraser Property – developers of Central Park opposite the Tower – the heritage listed warehouse building is managed by local arts organisers Queen Street Studio as a low cost, inner city studio space for visual and performance artists. The residency was only meant to last one year. Come July, Queen Street Studio will vacate the space – three and a half years after they first moved in.
In addition to helping artists showcase their work, the projects also promote local design and incubate local business. Occupancy of the empty space is either free or extremely cheap; at $20 to $50 per week for some inner city spaces, it’s a steal. Though, Andersen says, each local project has its own criteria that need to be met in order to qualify for access to a pop up space.

“The other day I got a phone call from a fashion retail outlet in a posher Sydney suburb that wanted to access a pop up space for free and I told them straight-off, ‘I don’t think you’ll fit anyone’s criteria for what these projects are about’.

“Look at somewhere like Gosford. They have a very high youth unemployment rate in that region – about 35 per cent. Create Innovate Gosford City is an initiative that aims to match property owners of empty spaces with creative projects to revitalise the high street. This year they’re focusing more on connecting landlords with youth start-up businesses and small, handmade enterprises. So it’s a locally based response, and that’s why this concept looks different in every community it lives in.”

According to Andersen, empty space projects fall into three different categories: artist-led like Renew Newcastle, CBD-led like Create Innovate Gosford City, and local authority-led. The Rocks Pop-Up, which experienced a successful pilot last year, falls into this last category. Set up by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority – who own most of the historic spaces in The Rocks – their aim is to inject more colour and culture into the precinct and address the decrease in foot traffic due to a recent decline in international tourism.

“There really was a loss of authenticity with one too many ugg boot shops and didgeridoos made in South-East Asia. The Rocks Pop-Up is less about retail and more about exhibition, events, displays, those sorts of activities. It’s about connecting the broader arts and creative community with the living heritage of The Rocks.”

From the beginning, Andersen recognised the opportunities available for UTS students to be involved with Empty Spaces – either as space users, as part of sharing and expanding information to help set up pop up initiatives, and in networking the sector.

Business student Dominic Bressan is leading a team of fellow MBA students to develop a series of electronic booklets that will provide guidance to community and cultural organisers leading empty space initiatives. They will detail how to go about negotiating with landlords for short-term, low-cost use of vacant shops in shopping malls, for properties awaiting development and for properties in receivership.

“The most interesting thing for me so far has been how landlords, tenants and empty spaces coordinators are all working towards what is essentially a common goal – getting an empty space occupied,” says Bressan. “Because they’re coming at it from different angles and backgrounds, they can fail to achieve that goal, and this can prevent them from adequately addressing the other party’s requirements and concerns.”

Andersen says it hasn’t been “too difficult” to convince some of the larger property groups to get involved. “Landlords need to show activity, they can’t let properties become run down. Properties being re-used in this way don’t deteriorate and are less likely to be vandalised. In actual fact, the people using the space usually improve the property during their use. It changes the commercial vibe of an area and diversifies the potential market because active, surprising, creative spaces are going to attract new people.

“It really brings people together,” says Andersen. "Putting 'meanwhile use' into the planning mix will build local cultural industry while providing an alternative to 'clone town' or 'ghost town' high streets.”

Katia Sanfilippo
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer (L Andersen): Joanne Saad
Photographer (FraserStudios): Arunas Photography
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/5/renew-restore-regenerate
Stories of the Australian continent have always fascinated Melita Rowston – playwright, theatre director and, from nine to five, Marketing Consultant at Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning.

“I’ve always loved the stories this country has to tell. I love to learn more about my country and that’s one of the benefits of my work with Jumbunna.

“They brought me in as a marketing consultant to help build their brand. The second day I was here I began to wish this was permanent as I love working so closely with the students and learning about Indigenous culture along the way.”

Since joining Jumbunna at the start of the year, Rowston has taken on multiple projects both at UTS and in her art.

A graduate of the National Institute of the Dramatic Arts, and of UTS (Rowston completed a Master of Arts in Creative Writing in 2010), she has had her full-length plays produced in Sydney, worked as a dramaturg for theatre companies, toured with a contemporary opera company, directed cabaret and physical theatre, and even was assistant director to controversial Australian director Barrie Kosky at the Olympic Arts Festival.

Though Rowston’s latest creative work, Crushed – a haunting play about a missing teenager – is scheduled to play at Newtown’s New Theatre from 16 May to 9 June, she admits making a living out of the theatre is a bumpy road. “If you want to eat, you kind of have to find different ways to make ends meet.”

That’s how she got into marketing. Though Rowston is quick to add her work at Jumbunna – the unit which provides services and support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at UTS – is not just a desk job that pays the bills.

“Just over 1000 Indigenous students, compared to 69 000 non-Indigenous students, in all of NSW completed their HSC in 2009. So there’s definitely a dire need for organisations like Jumbunna.

“For many Indigenous students, university is totally foreign. But we’re all about getting students on campus and showing them that going to uni is achievable and accessible.”

Rowston says it’s this that drives her work. “Knowing my work can build awareness and attract more Indigenous students to UTS just ticks all the boxes for me. It’s about connection – people telling their stories.”

Projects currently in the pipeline include collaborations with the Sydney Story Factory as well as heightened celebrations for Indigenous Literacy Day in September. Building a strong alumni network of role models for potential and current students is another key project, and Rowston says this year will see one of the largest Indigenous cohorts to graduate from UTS at the same time.

“They all have amazing backgrounds and experiences and I want to capture their stories, because hearing another student’s experiences of university, knowing that person can do it and thinking, ‘I can do it too’, is the best form of encouragement.”

Frances Mao
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)/ Bachelor of Law
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/5/the-school-of-life
In only a short time, Karieshma Kabani has amassed an incredible number of scientific and research achievements. She has had five articles published in major journals, presented papers at more than 20 local, national and international scientific conferences and undertaken research that may have implications for future cancer studies.

The 27-year-old’s early career achievements were recognised last year when she was awarded the UTS Young Alumni Award.

The graduate, who completed a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Science in 2007, credits the course for much of her success.

Over the last five years, Kabani has been working at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPAH). She began working as a volunteer at the Institute of Haematology after her final year of studies. During that time, a research assistant position became available.

“The position involved investigating the interaction between cells in patients with multiple myeloma, a bone marrow disorder where the plasma cells become malignant and attack the body like cancer. I was encouraged by the staff at the institute to apply. I did, and two weeks later I got the job.”

Kabani used her work with the institute as part of her Master of Science (Research) degree. Her final bound thesis was submitted last month.

“I was researching the significance of cellular interaction and tumour escape – where the immune system fails to stop the spread of tumours – in patients with multiple myeloma.

“My project looked at a new phenomenon, trogocytosis, which is a term used to describe the fast, cell-to-cell, contact-dependent transfer of membrane proteins between cells.”

Though her research may offer future study options, Kabani is currently working as a transplant scientist at RPAH. “In my role, I give patients who have haematological disorders stem cells that boost the white blood cell count and help them recover and fight infection.

“I love that I am able to make a difference in patient’s lives, being a part of their treatment and knowing that they appreciate what scientists do. I also enjoy being part of a wonderful team.”

Kabani says her interest in science lies in the constant search for answers. “There are so many questions and every day is different; you’re constantly thinking.”

The young scientist's role model is her mother, who studied nursing as a mature age student. “It was inspiring to see her go back to uni. It doesn’t matter how old you are or if you’ve got kids or not, it’s still achievable.”

On her future aspirations, Kabani says, “I hope to stay within the Cell and Molecular Therapies unit at the Institute of Haematology here at RPAH, and in the second half of this year or early next year, I’m looking at starting a PhD in stem cell research.”

Brendan Wong
Bachelor of Arts in Communication | Journalism/International Studies
Photographer: Anna Zhu
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/5/research-in-the-blood
Hung Nguyen is the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology and the Co-Director of the Centre for Health Technologies. His son Jordan is completing his PhD in biomedical engineering. Though both are involved in the development of the Aviator thought-controlled wheelchair, and have teamed up to take out their fair share of local doubles tennis tournaments, that’s where the similarities end.

Hung Nguyen

Jordan first showed interest in what I do when he was 10, when I brought him into UTS for Open Day. I have three younger children, one girl and two boys. They are triplets. During one Open Day at UTS, I had to mind Jordan while my wife looked after the triplets, just to give her a break, otherwise he would have caused havoc at home. I was already working in robotics at that time – I had an intelligent robot that could play chess and Connect 4 in real time – and had set up a demonstration. On that day, I had to leave the robot briefly and left Jordan to line up people to wait for my demonstration, but when I got back he had the whole thing going and was talking to people about how it worked.

I never thought he’d go into engineering; it was only in year 12, in 2002, that he came up to me and said, ‘Dad, I kind of like what you’re doing’. I had already moved into biomedical engineering and I think that’s what interested him. I started working on my first wheelchair in 1995, on head movement control, and in 2000 I started to work on thought control. I said to Jordan, ‘Please go to Sydney University or to UNSW, they’re very good there’. I thought there would be big problems because I was teaching and he would have to be in my class at some stage. But Jordan came back and said he wanted to study at UTS. Maybe I was tougher on him than other students, but during that time I realised he could work very well independently, so after that I left him alone.

The work we do with the wheelchair is really big; we have a lot of PhD students. Jordan’s looking at one area of the wheelchair – he’s into the cameras and he’s also trying to link it to some sort of hands-free control, including head movement. Jordan’s path is a bit more focused on robotics and biomedical engineering. My research looks at three areas: one is diabetes, the second is cancer and the third is disabilities. This year my device HypoMon, which detects low blood sugar non-invasively, without taking blood, was named the MedTech Product of the Year in the BioSpectrum Asia Pacific Awards.

Jordan’s quite different from me at the same age – I was introverted and he’s an extrovert. That’s probably why we work very well together. I can see us working together in the future, but he probably needs to spend some time in a biomedical company first to learn a few different skills.

Our relationship is very solid; we have learned to cope with each other, trust each other. Jordan and I play doubles tennis in many championships at the Crestwood Tennis Association and never fight on court. We fight now and then outside – Jordan’s still living at home, and probably will be until after he finishes his PhD. He’s the same person at home as he is at UTS – he has a wonderful disposition and is very kind. He has a lot of strength and when he works hard, he works extremely hard. He’s very well-rounded and I’m very proud of him.
Leading up to year 12 I was most interested in becoming a professional tennis player. From memory, dad did back me – he got me to see a couple of professional coaches because he’s been my coach since I was eight. Then I got a back injury. When I was young I’d been exposed to the robotics he’d designed, so I started looking at electrical engineering courses. But I thought UTS’s balance between theory and practice was what I really needed because I wasn’t very good at learning only from books.

When I was in third year I had an accident that changed my whole direction. I went to a friend’s house and was diving into their pool. The diving board came loose and moved back when I dived off it, which resulted in my head hitting the bottom of the pool and snapping to the side. I damaged the muscles in my neck, but luckily I didn’t break my spine. I started looking at what options there are for quadriplegics. There aren’t many.

I told dad I was going to get first class honours and possibly move on to do a PhD, but he didn’t believe me. My marks in second year weren’t very good, but I put in a lot more effort from then on and graduated with first class honours. During that time Senior Lecturer in the School of Electrical, Mechanical and Mechatronic Systems Steven Su offered me a research assistant position. I also worked in different parts of the uni, going out and talking to high schools and contributing to a few conference papers. I didn’t realise all those things would count towards doing a PhD, but it meant I was able to skip my masters and get a scholarship to do my doctoral degree.

Steven is my supervisor so he’s the person I consult with at all stages of development, but in all honesty it’s dad I talk to. I give him updates on what I’ve done and he tries to keep me on track. Last year he was a state finalist in the NSW Australian of the Year. I was so proud of him. He’s worked so hard to get to where he is and that inspires me. Sometimes it’s like I’ve got three dads. He’s a very sharp-shooting professional at uni – he’s the dean and that’s the way I see him. At home he’s a dad – we actually don’t talk about work. And at tennis he’s my coach, my partner. He’s kind of like Mr Miyagi on the tennis court – you know how the karate kid would get frustrated and couldn’t understand how he was learning – it was the same with many aspects of the way dad taught me.

People just assume I want to become a lecturer, but I don’t think anyone realises how connected I am to this project. The more well-known our work becomes, the more people tell me their stories. At first it was confronting, now it’s motivating. I know dad has his doubts, and in all honesty I do too, but I’m aiming to finish my PhD this semester. I have a whole bunch of ideas that relate to the wheelchair, but don’t have anything to do with my PhD, and I can’t wait to move forward with those.
With a career spanning more than 27 years, Walkley Award-winning journalist Helen Vatsikopoulos has spent most of her life telling the stories of others. Now it’s her turn.

After a successful career reporting and presenting for the ABC and SBS, Vatsikopoulos decided to embark on her very own adventure. In 2009 she enrolled in a UTS Master of Creative Arts (Research) course, which has expanded into a Doctorate of Creative Arts and full time position lecturing in television journalism.

Vatsikopoulos’s career shift into academia focuses on a non-fiction memoir about her family during the Greek Civil War between 1946 and 1949. The aftermath of the war can still be felt in Greece today, with many suffering the emotional effects of a divided society that has experienced little reconciliation.

“The journalist has spent the last four years unearthing untold stories of the civil war through extensive research and interviews, many with her own family members.

Vatsikopoulos’s father Petros was a young boy during the war and one of the 28 000 children taken by the communists and resettled behind the Iron Curtain. Initially he was forcibly conscripted into the communist army and trained to fight.

“He was only 16 or 17 when he was taken down to the mountain and taught to shoot. However, a little old lady from our village of Laimos prepared a concoction for him and told him to smoke it.

“When he turned up to training the next day his whole face had turned yellow and he looked very sick. They realised he was no good for fighting and let him stay with the children. His life was saved by that little old lady, and I may not have existed today had he been taken to fight.”

Vatsikopoulos admits the project has come with challenges, which is one of the reasons she chose to undertake it as part of her degree. “There’s a structure to follow here. I have my supervisor John Dale who looks over my progress and helps me with narrative and writing technique. Then I also have Senior Lecturer Sue Joseph who helps me find that academic framework and build upon the existing knowledge.”

In addition to juggling what she calls her different “hats” – journalistic, academic and creative – Vatsikopoulos has encountered some hesitation from interviewees.

“There are some branches of the family that want to know why the hell I’m bothering to do this. Potentially you’ll be digging up skeletons that perhaps some people would prefer remain underground. So there is a slight element of controversy.”

However, Vatsikopoulos is determined to shed light on this period. “I have conducted a lot of interviews and some people have passed away since I did them, so I am lucky their stories can still be told. Really, that is the urgency of it all – it’s important for me to get their stories out before they’re lost forever.”

Sarah Gillett
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/5/war-stories
**Time Out**

**UTS IN PRINT**

**WATER UNDER WATER**
**BY: PETER RIX**
**PUBLISHER: RANDOM HOUSE**

Water Under Water is the type of narrative born of experience, not imagination. Peter Rix has created authentic characters – characters who reveal much more of their true selves to the reader than to each other in this sometimes raw, often moving book. It is a book that reminds readers of the laws of human nature and begs self-examination. Told principally through two alternating points of view – a father’s and a son’s – Rix uses internal monologue to provide his readers with a humbling glimpse of the day-to-day challenges he and (we assume) his daughter, face living with Down syndrome. But as engaging as this book is, 'story' and 'message' jostle for the reader's attention to its detriment. Rix labours his work with metaphor undermining the book's power. He also uses too one many writing devices, stylistic choices that sometimes stumble over one another. At its core, Water Under Water is Rix reaching out to give society a good shake by the shoulders. It is sure to be a hit with the book groups (Random House is betting as much judging by the inclusion of discussion points), but even for the lone reader it inspires quiet contemplation.

Jacqui Wise  
Marketing and Communication Unit

Peter Rix completed a Master of Arts in Creative Writing and was published in the 2008 UTS anthology We All Need a Witness. He has written a number of business textbooks for the tertiary sector, including the award-winning Marketing: A practical approach, now in its seventh edition.

**DATA ANALYSIS FOR PHYSICAL SCIENTISTS: FEATURING EXCEL**
**BY: LES KIRKUP**
**PUBLISHER: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS**

Data Analysis for Physical Scientists: Featuring Excel is a prime example of Les Kirkup’s passion for promoting the essential skills required by science students in order to carry on and succeed in the world of research. Not only does Kirkup clarify the application of statistics in the physical sciences in this second-edition book, he also provides a simple method of learning how to apply the associated mathematics with the help of Microsoft Excel 2010 so researchers can validate their models through critical analysis and comparison. From fundamentals of measurement, errors and uncertainties following international guidelines, through to an in-depth consideration of linear regression, and finally non-linear least squares analysis, Kirkup forms a comprehensive understanding utilising detailed examples and step by step exercises from the real physical world; building confidence in the reader to independently collate their own data. Whilst covering a broad overview of topics in detail, the structure of this book allows the user to easily proceed to the chapters of the book most relevant to them. It is, however, written in such an engaging manner that you may frequently find yourself motivated to explore other related sections. In this sense, it can be considered a requisite for undergraduate students wishing to explore data analysis and a must-have text for junior researchers.

Fadi Bonnie  
Faculty of Science

Les Kirkup is an Associate Professor in the School of Physics and Advanced Materials. Having written five books for undergraduates, his contributions to teaching and learning were recognised nationally in 2011 with the award of an ALTC National Teaching Fellowship.

**SARAH THORNHILL**
**BY: KATE GRenville**
**PUBLISHER: TEXT PUBLISHING**

From page one, the voice of Sarah Thornhill transports us to 1880, to Kate Grenville’s beloved Hawksbury River. Grenville is the best of history teachers, light of touch with no interesting rock left untumbled. Though this is the third book in a trilogy, (The Secret River and The Lieutenant came before) it stands completely alone, so it’s suitable for a new reader. When we meet Sarah Thornhill she’s as a child, who moves on to experience young love and the loss of her brother. Devastated by her family’s racism regarding the love of her life, she undertakes a marriage of convenience, which brings a child and an acceptance of sorts for her new life. The novel dwells on forgiveness of others as well as self, along with the frightening question of how well we really know those we love. It includes loss of great love, racism, grief, relatives in exile, removal of children from their homeland and kin. Sarah finds that forgiveness comes in many forms, making her life an interesting one in which to immerse yourself.

Therese Blakemore Saffery  
Marketing and Communication Unit

Kate Grenville is a UTS Doctor of Creative Arts graduate. Her bestselling novel The Secret River received numerous awards including the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize and was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize and the Miles Franklin Literary Award.

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**U:BOOKWORMS**

During May, the Co-op Bookshop on Broadway is offering Co-op members a 20 per cent discount on all books reviewed this month. For more details, email uts@coop-bookshop.com.au
May is shaping up to be an eventful month in the UTS Library, as it hosts a series of five author talks on the theme of escape. Presented by prominent and award-winning UTS writers, the free talks are part of the library’s program of events for the National Year of Reading 2012.

“Author talks are always really exciting,” says Director of the Library Resources Unit Belinda Tiffen. “It’s great to bring in the authors and hear their thoughts on their work and the writing process and how the work came into being. Students and staff are always really receptive to it.”

The series kicked off on 2 May with a talk by novelist, essayist and non-fiction writer Debra Adelaide, who’s also an Associate Professor in Creative Practices at UTS. Adelaide read a piece of short fiction, talked about her novel The Household Guide to Dying – published in over a dozen countries worldwide – and answered questions from the audience.

On Wednesday 16 May, fellow Associate Professor in Creative Practices, writer and literary critic Anthony Macris will talk about his most recent book When Horse Became Saw: A family’s journey through autism, which was shortlisted for the Age Book of the Year in 2011.

Poet, dancer and filmmaker Richard James Allen, ALS Gold Medal shortlisted author Kirsten Tranter, crime writer Pam Newton and young adult novelist Pip Harry will also give presentations. All are UTS graduates and will talk about their latest novels (which will be available for sale at the events), how they became writers and what inspires them to write. They will also be available for book signings.

“It’s a great opportunity to showcase Australian literature and particularly the creative writing that’s done here at UTS,” says Tiffen. “We’re keen to share our love of reading, books and literacy.”

Promoting UTS writers and writing has long been a priority for the library, which has a special collection of writing by UTS staff, students and alumni, and offers the ability to search specifically for UTS authors as one of the functions of its online catalogue. The National Year of Reading’s Love2Read initiative has given them added impetus to support and celebrate literacy. The collaborative project brings together public libraries, government, community groups, media, commercial partners and the public to promote books, reading and literacy through programs and events Australia-wide throughout 2012.

As part of Love2Read, the library has planned a calendar of events that engage with the program’s monthly themes. These have so far included laugh, think and feel, and of course, this month’s theme: escape.

Each month the library is holding one big event, such as a movie screening or an author talk, along with some smaller events. They are also running book displays around each theme in the library foyer and publishing themed reading suggestions on their Read@UTS blog. The smaller events include e-books and e-reader workshops for people who are new to iPad and e-reader technology.

“It’s going to be a really fun year,” says Tiffen. “We want to encourage people to think beyond just reading their textbooks to read a bit more broadly and explore the library’s collection.”

For more information about UTS Library events or the National Year of Reading, visit read.lib.uts.edu.au or love2read.org.au

Rachael Quigley
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2012/5/great-escapes
whAt’S on

MAY

3
UTS: GLOBal EXChAnGe FAIr
Find out how to add an overseas experience to your UTS degree
10am to 2pm / Building 1, level 3 concourse
ssu.uts.edu.au/globalexchange

7
UTS: LIBRARY AUTHOR TALK – PAM NEwTON AND PiP HarRY
Discussing their latest books The Old School by Pam Newton and I’ll Tell You Mine by Pip Harry
12 noon to 1pm / Blake Library, City campus, level 3 learning commons

MAdER OF PHArmACY PREREQUISITE INFO SEssION
Requirements and course information for the 2013 Master of Pharmacy intake
5.30pm to 7pm / Building 1, level 13
nicole.scott@uts.edu.au

10
SCiEnCE POSTGRAdUATE INFO EVENING
Upgrade your qualifications and expand your career opportunities
5.30pm to 7pm / Building 4, level 2, room 34
nicole.eng@uts.edu.au

16
UTS: LIBRARY AUTHOR TALK – ANTHONY MACRIS
Discussing his book When Horse Became Saw: A family’s journey through autism
12 noon to 1pm / Blake Library, City campus, level 3 learning commons

TRANSFORMING CuLTures LUnCHTiME SEssIOnAL SEssIOnSERIES
The fabrication of a respectable Italian identity in a field of tensions
12.30pm to 1.30pm / Building 10, level 5, TfC Bagel, room 219
transforming.cultures@uts.edu.au

22
UTS: LIBRARY AUTHOR TALK – RiCHARD JAMES ALLEn
Discussing his latest book Kamikaze Mind
12 noon to 1pm / Blake Library, City campus, level 3 learning commons

JURIS DOCTOR POSTGRAdUATE INFO SEssION
Enhance your professional qualifications and knowledge through further legal education
5.30pm to 7.30pm / Building 5B
wenee.yap@uts.edu.au

23
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS’ INFORmAtION DAgE
Discuss your study options with faculty staff and apply to study on the day
11am to 2pm / Tower building, level 4 foyer
uts.edu.au/international/infoday

24
PuBLIC TALK: THE NEw GLOBal ECOnOMY AND new DIRECTION OF CHInA’S URBANISATION
Exploring the impact of the new global economy on China’s economic restructuring
5.30pm to 8pm / Building 5B, level 1, room 12
claire.moore@uts.edu.au

28
UTS: LIBRARY AUTHOR TALK – KIrSTEN TRAnTER
Discussing her latest book A Common Loss
12 noon to 1pm / Blake Library, City campus, level 3 learning commons

Email your events for June 2012 to u@uts.edu.au by 8 May, 2012.

ArT & u

William Kentridge, Office Love, mohair tapestry, on loan from the collection of Gene and Brian Sherman AM

One of the more unusual and striking artworks currently on the wall behind the Tower lifts on level 4 is a tapestry designed by South African artist William Kentridge.

Office Love is one in a series of tapestries created by Kentridge from his original collage drawings, enlarged and translated into tapestry by weavers in Johannesburg using locally sourced mohair. The image is slightly surreal: a portly figure with a typewriter for a head strides across the scene, approaching a long-legged writing desk topped by a curvaceous blotter. Although the desk drawers are opened invitingly, there are signs the path to love may not be smooth; even if typewriter-man bypasses the chair barricade, a pair of oversize scissors lends a sense of foreboding.

As a backdrop, an old map of Johannesburg sets the scene for this vignette of modernisation, a continuation of the artist’s commentary on the transition of his home town to a post-apartheid society.

Kentridge’s art practice has its roots in theatre and a puppetry workshop where he worked as an actor, writer and stage designer. He found international acclaim after his participation in the Johannesburg biennials, which aimed to restore the dialog between South Africa and the international art scene following the dismantling of the country’s apartheid system. Kentridge is now a regular at international venues exhibiting his drawings, sculptures, prints, films and tapestries.

For more news and stories about the UTS Art Collection, visit their blog: utsartcollection.wordpress.com

Janet oliveou
UTS Art Collection

Art & U profiles a piece of work from the UTS Art Collection every issue.
Photographer and UTS visual communication graduate Anna Zhu has lived in Sydney’s western suburb of Campsie for the last 20 years and is still fascinated by its growth.

“My family moved there in the early 90s when it was predominantly filled with Caucasian, Greek and Lebanese residents. The last decade has seen a steady stream of Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and African immigrants settle, bringing with them a distinctive flair in food, culture and clothing. The Campsie Food Festival, an annual event which draws 20 000 visitors, is a celebration of the suburb’s diverse community.”

Photographer: Anna Zhu