THE ART OF SCIENCE
Transforming climate science into art

FLIPPED FUTURES
Engaging with new possibilities in learning

ADVENTURE TIME!
Exploring the benefits of riskier play
What do you most want to achieve in 2014?
2014 has been a good year so far. We have record numbers of international student enrolments at UTS – almost 10,000 this year – so I’m very confident of meeting our overall load targets. I think we will also achieve our mobility targets and come close to sending 20 per cent of our undergraduate students overseas as part of their studies at UTS. So what I’m really hoping to achieve still in 2014 is at least one principal gift of $5 million or more.

There are a couple of excellent projects we’re working on with potential donors – one research-oriented and one scholarship-oriented – and I am very hopeful we can bring at least one of them to a gift this year. If we could get both of them up it would be even better! Major philanthropy has the potential to transform the university’s research performance and standing.

Is there an event that changed your life?
When I was 18, I won a Mitsui Education Foundation Scholarship to Japan. I’d always been interested in Japan since I had a Japanese penfriend as a young boy. The four-week study tour really grew my interest in Japan, led me to learn Japanese, later do postgraduate study in Japan and eventually spend a number of years as a Professor at the University of Tokyo. Most of my academic career has been spent as a Japan scholar, researching on Japanese business and especially on Japanese multinational enterprises. In 2008, Mitsui appointed me to the board of the Mitsui Education Foundation where it all began for me.

What’s your fridge?
At work, some fruit and a protein drink. At home, mostly fresh vegetables, some chicken and a few eggs. Definitely no soft drink, pizza or processed food. Because I have to eat out for work so often I try to only have healthy food at home. Not very exciting I’m afraid.

What’s something staff would be surprised to learn about you?
I play the piano. I learnt for quite a number of years up until I was about 17. Then I really didn’t play a lot for many years. A few years ago I took the piano up again and have tried to play a lot more. At the moment I’m working on a couple of Chopin sonatas, which I hope to eventually master.
FEATURES

Flipped futures
How the Flipped Learning Action Group helps academics harness technology to boost student learning

Adventure time!
New Australian playground safety standards will challenge kids with more risk and excitement

The art of science
Bringing climate science to life through collaborative art

REGULARS

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NEXT ISSUE
The next issue will be released on 29 August 2014.
All U: articles are available to read online via newsroom.uts.edu.au
Send your story ideas, opinions, events to u@uts.edu.au

Coccolithophore Emiliania huxleyi 01 by Lisa Roberts
“Everywhere we go, we’re increasingly leaving traces of our behaviour – a sort of digital shadow that reflects what’s going on in the physical world,” says Professor Simon Buckingham Shum.

For educators, he says, this represents an exciting opportunity. “The question is, ‘Can we use the technology to create more effective learners – not just people who can pass exams and master skills, but who are also keen on learning, able to be creative and curious?’”

Buckingham Shum is the Director of the newly established Connected Intelligence Centre – or CIC (‘kick’) – where he will lead UTS’s approach to data analytics.

His particular area is learning analytics, which aims to utilise data about learners and their contexts to optimise the student experience across the spectrum – from assisting students who may be struggling, to high achievers who could benefit from additional challenge.

It allows smarter use of digital information as a formative tool, engaging students to learn effectively throughout the course of their studies – and beyond.

“For instance, there’s now a whole armoury of technologies able to process language,” says Buckingham Shum. “This could enable personalised feedback on the rigour and relevance of student conversations.

“Knowing how to engage in a community’s discourse is part of what it means to become a professional. So how you engage in conversation and debate within your subjects is an important indicator of the progress you’re making as a student.”

Ensuring an ethical approach to data privacy is vital, and CIC will engage with the challenge of ensuring students can give ‘informed consent’ in the context of a fast-moving technological world.

Buckingham Shum sees potential to involve them in co-designing the new tools and technologies they’ll be asked to use.

“What would it mean to invite students into the conversation about how analytics will be used in their course? We want to create learners who take responsibility for their learning, and for whom analytics become a tool they trust.

“We all know if you give people technologies that are supposed to be tracking them, and they have no confidence in them, they’ll disengage from the system or try to game it.”

Having worked at the Open University in the United Kingdom for nearly 19 years, Buckingham Shum was ready for a new context, and the fact many of the foremost practitioners in learning analytics are in Australia was a major attraction for him to come to UTS.

“Professor Shirley Alexander – who instigated CIC – is regarded internationally as one of the strategic thought leaders on the role of data analytics, so when she opened the conversation about the new centre, it was very exciting. It was a great honour to be invited.”

He says, “There are many opportunities to cross-fertilise ideas and move the whole sector forward in a way that’s intelligent.”

Buckingham Shum emphasises the importance of applying technology strategically rather than allowing it to drive the agenda.

“We have the opportunity to think deeply about the kinds of learning we care about, and figure out how to harness the technology to help us create that kind of learning – as opposed to analytics based merely on counting what computers find it easiest to count.”

Rachael Quigley
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photograph supplied by: Simon Buckingham Shum
Image: Thinkstock

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UTS:NEWSROOM
More than a home to the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology (FEIT) and gateway to the UTS City campus, Building 11 represents one half of an exciting new precinct humming with opportunities to socialise, relax and connect.

An undercover, tree-lined arcade running from Jones Street to Wattle Street seamlessly connects the new FEIT Building to neighbouring Building 10, with a series of bridge links providing further connections across four levels.

The arcade, which will soon boast a dramatic entry off Jones Street with the completion of an 11-metre high ‘green wall’ on Building 10, serves as a public thoroughfare as well as a meeting place for staff and students.

“In the evening, the arcade looks amazing all lit up. It has a real Melbourne laneway feel about it,” says café owner Dean Mamo who co-runs Penny Lane – one of the main attractions of this new precinct – with business partner Natalie Nguyen.

The new arcade strengthens UTS’s links with the local community and adds to the ‘campus feel’ of the university by physically connecting two buildings and the faculties within.

“It’s all part of the vision to create a more connected campus, physically as well as culturally,” explains UTS Senior Project Manager Heather Riddell, who is overseeing a range of construction works in Building 10.

“The idea is you can walk off Broadway straight into Building 11, through the building into the arcade and straight into Building 10 and the new student centre. The constant flow of people from one building to another and through the arcade will really activate this part of campus.”

As well as the refurbished student centre, a range of new facilities have recently opened in Building 10.

“We’ve added 288 bicycle spaces on level one as well as 28 showers and 260 lockers,” says Riddell. “It will not only benefit cyclists in Buildings 10 and 11 but across UTS, helping to improve the university’s environmental footprint.”

Plans to further connect the City campus are underway, including a proposal to transform Jones Street into a pedestrian mall from 2018.

“The campus is constantly evolving,” says Riddell. “It’s exciting to see a whole lot of new facilities open, ready for the start of semester, that will make UTS an even better place to work and study.”

Step inside the FEIT building for tours, pop-talks, demos, hands-on activities and research in action. Behind the Screens – Thursday 4 September, 10am to 3pm.

Penny Lane café is open Mondays to Wednesdays, 7am to 7pm and to 10pm on Thursdays and Fridays.

Celia Britton
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Penny Lane artist’s impressions: Giant Designs

Comment on this article at
UTS:NEWSROOM
The wealth of facilities and technologies being unveiled at UTS is opening up new possibilities for teaching and learning. The Flipped Learning Action Group supports academics developing innovative teaching, learning and assessment approaches using the strengths of flipped learning.

“Flipped learning has really captured people’s imaginations,” says Senior Lecturer in the Institute for Interactive Media Peter Kandlbinder. “It’s something academics want to find out more about and be involved in.”

Flipped learning is a shift from traditional approaches in that it encourages students to engage with materials covering basic concepts before class. Valuable face-to-face time with academics is then used to tackle higher level tasks like project-based inquiry and collaborative problem-solving. The approach promotes active learning, offering students a deeper understanding of the subject.

It’s also an opportunity to harness the possibilities offered by the array of new learning spaces and technologies coming online across the campus. But for academics, developing and integrating activities that make best use of the flipped approach can involve some trial and error.

UTS’s Flipped Learning Action Group (FLAG) is a new learning community providing a supportive forum where academics can share ideas, resources and experiences about flipping their classrooms.

“Academics were already meeting to discuss flipped learning last year,” explains Lecturer and FLAG co-convenor Jenny Pizzica. “The community received a little funding to help facilitate these sessions through the Learning2014 initiative, which is how FLAG got started.”

Pizzica works with fellow FLAG co-convenor Kandlbinder to coordinate the monthly meetings where academics discuss strategies to engage students, explore new technology like video-editing software and ask questions of experts.

“We run group activities and generate ideas about what the community would like to learn,” says Pizzica. “Academics often have questions like, ‘How do you engage students in flipped learning?’ or, ‘How do we best evaluate flipped learning?’ So we look at running further sessions to explore the answers to questions that come up.”

FLAG is open to all UTS academics who want to learn more about flipped learning. The program includes talks from external experts, workshops in new teaching spaces, training sessions with new technology and the occasional mini grant awarded to academics to implement new projects.

Momentum in the group is gaining, thanks to the project-based approach. The FLAG community decides which projects are most viable and academics are encouraged to put them in to practise, which in turn generates valuable case studies for other members of FLAG to review and adapt to their own context.

Senior Lecturer and Learning2014 Fellow Anne Gardner is part of the FLAG community. As the subject coordinator of a compulsory first-year engineering subject, Gardner wanted to invigorate the course and help students on their path as developing professionals.

“I was looking for something that would get me away from the front of the classroom,” says Gardner. “Flipping gave me the opportunity to approximate the feeling of working in a small group, but with a very large lecture theatre.”

Gardner has successfully used video content and short recorded lectures to engage students before they enter the classroom.

“If they prepare before class, we don’t have to cover the ideas everyone understands when we all come together. We can go straight to the stuff students are having problems with – usually the areas that integrate a few topics together – and look at more real-world problems.

“I don’t think students ever really learnt well in lecture theatres,” she says. “‘Doing’ is so much better than ‘telling.’ And when
you go to work, the problems don’t come to you neatly explained and packaged; flipping creates a far more realistic system."

Health lecturers Allison Cummins, Rosemarie Hogan and Fiona Orr have also used flipped learning to prepare students for the realities of the workplace. They observed that nursing and midwifery students returning from clinical placements at times reported negative experiences dealing with patients and registered hospital staff, saying they felt ill-equipped to handle unpleasant and difficult workplace experiences.

“We needed to work with our students to facilitate building resilience when faced with challenging situations,” says Cummins.

The three academics recently completed a trial semester using videos and role-playing in the classroom to build students’ skills and resilience in clinical settings.

The videos depict scenarios where students might become stressed or overwhelmed, incorporating alternative endings where the best and worst outcomes are shown. Students watch the videos in their own time and are then encouraged to work through a set of questions before participating in in-depth role-play during class.

“Role-playing rather than just talking about these issues is vital,” says Cummins. “Using a combination of multimedia and face-to-face debriefing with the students to explore challenging ideas and scenarios is non-traditional but it’s effective.”

While much of the flipped learning at UTS focuses on making use of the new learning environments being delivered by the City Campus Master Plan, Senior Lecturer in the School of the Built Environment Pernille Christensen is using new technologies to capture and preserve content currently offered through traditional lectures.

Christensen is one of the most recent beneficiaries of a small FLAG grant to help bring flipped learning to her core foundational postgraduate subjects – and time is of the essence.

“We’re really fortunate to have some amazing guest speakers in these subjects,” she explains. “Some of these people are the best in their field but several are preparing to retire. They bring such a valuable breadth and depth of information that will be hard to replace.

“I plan to create mini lectures to capture topics guest speakers would normally present to students. This way we can create an online library of information that’s not likely to change significantly, and supplement that with practical exercises and presentations on current developments in class.”

The ease with which academics can now produce multimedia content is something Kandlbinder believes has made flipped learning so accessible. “Anyone can produce a little video or an audio podcast now; the technical barrier is reduced, so it’s opened up possibilities.”

Students are also far more likely to have ubiquitous access to materials through their own mobile devices. But it’s not just about creating online resources and leaving students to work it out.

“We have to think about integrating new technology with the activities to be done in class and then embedding the assessment in that,” says Gardner. “If it’s not integrated, it’s not going to achieve what flipped learning aims to do.”

Developing integrated strategies with flipped learning is a work-in-progress for most classrooms, and engaging with the FLAG community gives academics the chance to test their ideas and share exciting solutions.

“We hope FLAG empowers and encourages academics to go off in new directions and learn new things,” says Kandlbinder.

Hannah Jenkins
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer (J Pizzica and P Kandlbinder): Hannah Jenkins.
Photographer [students]: Anna Zhu
Adventure time!
Keeping children safe is a front-of-mind concern for parents, policymakers and manufacturers alike. But it’s also crucial for kids to have a healthy exposure to risk, says Engineering Associate Professor David Eager. Risk in play not only has an important developmental role for children – it’s life’s training for the unexpected.

Risk-taking is an essential feature of play and healthy childhood development. It builds physical ability, promotes discovery, fosters self-confidence and independence, and helps children master important learning skills such as judging what activities are safe.

While 60 per cent of Australian parents fear for their children’s safety in the playground, evidence from Europe proves that allowing equipment designers the opportunity to provide more exciting and challenging play experiences does not increase the likelihood or severity of accidents.

In contrast, children who are exposed to too little challenge often take on inappropriate risks, where the chance of injury is high, because they lack both the ability to judge the level of risk and the strategies and skills to tackle it effectively.

Successfully navigating risk in childhood can also have long-term benefits for the individual, and society as a whole. It allows children to develop risk management skills they will use across a host of settings in adulthood, including the ability to assess unfamiliar situations, recognise their own strengths and limitations, and gauge when to exercise caution.

From negotiating potentially risky physical tasks – such as driving a car in new environments and conditions – to social situations and professional decision-making, the groundwork for our ability to deal with the unexpected is laid in childhood.

So it’s vital we give children opportunities to explore and experiment in environments that provide a degree of managed risk.

Yet, all too often we see school and council playgrounds either populated with unimaginative and undemanding equipment or removed altogether, in the interest of maintaining children’s safety.

The release of a new Australian Standard for playground equipment and surfacing offers the opportunity to turn this around. Based on the existing European Standard, it enshrines risk-taking as an essential feature of play, which must be balanced with “the need to keep children safe from serious harm”.

Through the introduction of skill-based categories of equipment with an increased allowable fall height for more skilful climbers, the new standard will allow Australian children of all ages and abilities to experience risk and excitement.

The standard identifies three distinct categories of playground equipment: equipment that is easily accessible to all ages and abilities; equipment that is not easily accessible; and equipment for supervised early childhood settings. Each type of equipment will offer challenges and protections appropriate to the way it’s used.

For early childhood settings, there are separate safety provisions to public play spaces since they are staffed by trained childcare professionals who act as the primary safety intervention. This allows for less onerous technical safety interventions and the use of equipment that is banned in the public play space, such as movable play equipment.

In public play spaces where anybody can use the equipment, the rationale is to apply an ability filter, providing greater levels of safety to children who require increased protection, while exposing those with more ability to more risk.

For example, small children and children with disabilities can easily access equipment that is fitted with barriers that prevent falling, while more skilled children can gain access to equipment that exposes them to much higher falls.

This is the most obvious change from the previous standard – an increase in the free height of fall from 2.5 metres to 3 metres.

Realistically, kids will fall – they fall all the time. And 3 metres sounds like a long way for a child to fall – particularly to a parent. But there’s compelling evidence that this increased risk of falling will not translate to increased injuries.

With the greater fall height, the surface is now critical because it’s the system that protects children when they do fall. In all cases, the standard requires that children be protected by an impact-attenuating surface that has performance characteristics that exceed the maximum fall height of the equipment.

The new standard is also based on decades of data on injury and accident patterns that have been observed in child populations around the world. The European Playground Standard has allowed these more lenient fall heights for 15 years, and to date there is no evidence that these ‘more risky’ exposures have led to either a greater number of injuries or more severe injuries.

In 2009, I had the pleasure of being involved in the creation of a rather remarkable playground. I was invited by Bovis Lend Lease and Aspect Studios to be the playground ‘safety’ engineer on the Darling Quarter redevelopment project.

I recall the initial briefing session: “You want to install a playground that’s exciting for kids of all ages? Sure – but there’s a catch.” My job was to ensure it complied with the Australian playground safety standard.

To most people, these risk and safety guidelines are 180 degrees out-of-phase. To me, this was a challenge I couldn’t resist – to prove to all the naysayers that it could be done.

If you visit Darling Harbour today, you’ll see a playground that’s exciting and challenging for toddlers, teens and adults. It has the highest 3D net play-structure in Australia, waterplay with an Archimedes screw and pumps, weirs and dams, a 21 metre flying fox, a huge 8 metre long by 3 metre high mound slide, climbing ropes, an exhilarating 3D swing and more. And best of all, it’s free!

Little wonder the Darling Quarter playground is the most visited one in Australia and is internationally recognised as a top Sydney attraction for overseas visitors.

This playground was built to comply with the old standard, but as part of a well-funded commercial venture, it was a feat of the imagination made possible by resources the public sector could only dream of. The new standard opens up possibilities for designers and engineers to create more inspiring playgrounds regardless of context.

With the passage of time, playgrounds across the country will become more challenging as older equipment is retired, removed and replaced with equipment that meets the new standard.

Children will perceive they are taking greater risks, and in so doing test and stretch their limits. This is great news for Australian kids and, ultimately, Australia as a nation.

David Eager
Associate Professor in the School of Electrical, Mechanical and Mechatronic Systems
Photographer: Joanne Saad

Comment on this article at
UTS:NEWSROOM
newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2014/08/adventure-time
Among scientists, there is little dispute that human-caused global warming is a real and current problem, yet ambivalence and scepticism dominate public discussion. The complexity of frontier research only makes it harder to engage people’s attention. Could transforming the information into striking visual art be the key to bringing data to life and sparking important conversations?

The research behind climate science is often conducted on a microscopic level, involving complex ecological systems and tongue-twisting jargon. Discoveries are then published in such a narrow range of academic journals that essential information is hardly ever accessed by the wider community. Artist Lisa Roberts remembers the exact moment she realised this needed to change.

In 2002, a voyage to Antarctica brought her face to face with evidence of climate change, from the giant cracks forming in the Amery Ice Shelf to the miniscule and endangered Antarctic krill. “I felt the change intensely,” she says. “Antarctica is a place where many people have this realisation. I became completely aware of being a very small part of a very big process and I knew I had to do something.”

As an artist working in animation, Roberts now uses her skills to transform scientific data into moving demonstrations of climate change. She’s captured the swirling, hypnotic movements of water currents in our Southern Oceans and even transformed the mating sequence of the Antarctic krill into an accurate and whimsical dance-like animation.

Roberts’s initial project developed into a PhD and has continued to grow into a global conversation between artists and scientists intent on getting the climate change message out there in an engaging and accessible way. The community of artists Roberts has cultivated over the years uses scientific data and imagery to create jewellery, sculptures, videos and site-specific installations with the goal of communicating the beauty and importance of our natural world.

Now UTS’s Climate Change Cluster (C3) has awarded Roberts their first Creative Fellowship in recognition of her work. The year-long fellowship will see Roberts collaborate with climate scientists, researchers, artists and the broader community for the Living Data exhibition starting this September at UTS.

Associate Professor Martina Doblin proposed the Creative Fellowship following successful collaborations with Roberts in the past. She says, “Awarding this Creative Fellowship says something about the confidence of C3 to affiliate themselves with people who communicate in different ways.”

Encouraging scientists to adopt a more creative and outward-looking approach when articulating their research is something Doblin and others in C3 consider more important than ever.

Marine ecologist So Kawaguchi has first-hand experience of how important an artistic perspective can be when communicating with the public. As a researcher at the Australian Antarctic Division, Kawaguchi has been collaborating with Roberts since her first voyage to Antarctica a decade ago. “Scientists often make quite exciting discoveries and the information is really relevant to the public but it can be hard to transmit those messages,” he says. “Lisa is able to tease the important elements out of my work because she sees things in a different way to scientists. Combining these two different ways of thinking is how we can get to the next stage in our research.”

Roberts’s drive to communicate climate science through both scientific and artistic means has led to collaborations with artists and scientists internationally. “My passion is to engage as many people as possible with climate science. It’s such a huge issue and none of us can solve it alone.”
Associate Fellow of the School of Environment Anita Marosszeky agrees. "The Living Data exhibition is an interesting model for forging collaborations between disciplines that aren’t tied to one specific faculty. It’s more productive for us to work together and share the resources we have."

Marosszeky and Roberts will co-curate the Living Data exhibition, showcasing works in the Tower exhibition space and the Living Data Atrium in Building 4. The artworks in both spaces are interactive – designed to evolve and change, creating an immersive and thought-provoking experience for visitors.

"The Tower exhibition will incorporate a way for people to physically write questions and responses on the surfaces of the works," explains Roberts. "Then, every week during the exhibition, scientists and artists involved in the Living Data exhibition will meet and examine the feedback, which may in turn spark even more conversations and collaborations."

Independent artist Leanne Thompson, a contributor to Living Data, is excited by the exhibition’s potential to evolve and have ongoing impact.

"I think the space will be a lot more fluid and interesting by the time we take it down. We’re trying to establish an area where people can interact with scientists and each other, which will then be documented and become part of the art itself."

"That’s the whole point of Living Data," says Roberts. "We’re putting established artists on an equal plane with people who wouldn’t consider themselves artists, who create purely to express connection to the natural world."

"We are an incredibly creative community at UTS and here’s an opportunity to reveal that spirit."

That creative spirit is clear in Doblin’s approach to the Living Data exhibition. "I don’t see the world as partitioned into rational people versus creative people," she says.

"Many scientists like the fact that the organisms they work on have some fundamental basis of beauty and that can be a very inspiring thing even to the general public."

She hopes to contribute her own art to the exhibition.

"The scientists are really keen," says Production Manager Jason Benedek. "They have a will to create; they’re ready to engage and offer up their own art."

Benedek, on the other hand, doesn’t have a scientific background but sees the importance of science to the planet. "Lisa shows that I can approach this and contribute from my perspective with my skill set," he says.

"One of the great things about an artistic exhibition is we can communicate in a direct and unmediated way, where people are free to engage with the environment however they like. Hopefully we can offer visitors such a beautiful experience they lose their fear of science."

The collaboration has provided valuable experiences to professionals from myriad fields and Roberts anticipates this is only the beginning.

"I see Living Data continuing a relationship with UTS and C3 in particular," she says. "If we can make art that has meaning to people and contribute to changing their minds about climate science, then we’ve succeeded."

The Living Data exhibition will be opened by Bem Le Hunte on Wednesday 3 September at 6pm, to coincide with National Science Week and the Ultimo Science Festival.

Learn more about Living Data at LivingData.net.au

Hannah Jenkins
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Artworks: video still from Oceanic Living Data by Lisa Roberts with Bill Gladstone (underwater), Barbara Cuckson and Vikki Quill (gestures) and Jason Benedek (motion capture), and Above ground hydrological map of the Liverpool Plains by Carina Lee

Comment on this article at
UTS:NEWSROOM
newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2014/08/the-art-of-science
Katrina Schlunke is an expansive conversationalist, approaching every topic with curiosity, insight and enthusiasm. She invites the listener to share in her musings and offer their own perspectives. And when she laughs, it’s with her whole body.

The Associate Professor of Cultural Studies is discussing the ongoing evolution of the communication program at UTS. “I’m wondering what we do in the future,” she says, “because it’s not just the technologies that are converging, but the skills as well.

“The thinking used to be: we’re making a journalist or a filmmaker or a person who will do advertising or someone who will write creatively... now that’s all going to be in one person.

“We’ve got to skill students up so they can be a junior sound, film or picture person and a writer.”

Schlunke has just returned from filming an episode of the Coast documentary series on Possession Island with writer, scientist and explorer Professor Tim Flannery. She says the crew for the trip comprised just four people, responsible for the entire production process for eight shows of ‘television quality’.

The island was where Captain Cook claimed British ownership of the east coast of Australia – a pivotal event for Schlunke’s research.

“One of my key interests is understanding how non-Indigenous Australians come to be ‘at home’ both culturally and institutionally in Australia, given there is enduring Aboriginal sovereignty over the country.”

These research themes took on personal significance for Schlunke when the Blue Mountains home she shared with her partner was destroyed in the bushfires last year.

Although she says she was homeless for a “tiny moment”, it’s a strong point of connection with other people who’ve experienced “a complete ‘loss of stuff’” through fire, relationship breakup, violence or other factors.

“Because it’s more than ‘stuff’ – it’s how you’ve put it together and built that place in your relationship,” she says.

“There’s also a connection between that and being interested in possession for so long – what possessions are and what it is to possess something – because that moment of dispossession in Australia, that’s what happened. People’s homes were taken.”

The experience also gave her new insights into the workings of the media.

“Here we are teaching about moral panics and what media does, but it’s the very same media frenzy that produces people’s knowledge about the event and results in enormous outpourings of generosity.

“So I can only say it’s paradoxical.”

This ability to engage with the world in critical and adaptive ways is something Schlunke hopes to pass on to her students.

“All of the training for that kind of broad thinking goes on in the core of the communication degree: How does the past work? How do we make sense of language? Why do we think that about those people?

“I teach the core subject Language and Discourse, and I value having a hand in passing on that passion.”

Schlunke is also the Director of the Transforming Cultures Research Centre, and reflects on the challenges for humanities research in a climate that emphasises impact.

“We don’t have a single project that would immediately attract commercial funding. We’re not solving cancer, but we are ameliorating racism, we are looking for alternatives to rabid nationalism. And we create a culture that excites people about their research and lets them know how it can grow in the world.”

Rachael Quigley
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer (K Schlunke): Hannah Jenkins
Photographer (burnt objects): Katrina Schlunke
Photographer (Possession Island): Matt Davis

Comment on this article at
UTS:NEWSROOM
newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2014/08/sparking-transformation
For his honours year project in 2012, Chenoweth combined animation with his other passion: fashion.

His choice wasn’t conventional – it’s quite rare, says Chenoweth, to use animation techniques for a fashion film. Neither was it the best choice for getting top marks – he lost a few because his project didn’t speak directly to all of the set criteria.

But marks weren’t Chenoweth’s prime motivation. “I wanted to impress myself, I wanted to impress my peers and I wanted to impress my lecturers.”

His lecturers were impressed by the originality of his work – they weren’t the only ones.

At his graduate show, the design manager of a company called XYZ Networks offered him a job as a junior broadcast designer. “It just sort of went on from there.” Chenoweth is now a broadcast designer for pay TV music station Channel V Australia, where he has co-produced animations and worked on a complete redesign of pop-culture, entertainment-news program The Riff.

In an industry where juniors usually only change words on promos, Chenoweth’s portfolio – which can be viewed on Vimeo – stood out to the judges of the 2014 Ron Scalera Rocket Award. The international citation recognises a producer, marketer or designer with two years’ experience or less who is already creating outstanding work.

Chenoweth received the award at the PromaxBDA North America and Global Excellence Awards in New York in June.

The 2012 winner, Leo Nguyen (also a UTS graduate), is now working as a senior designer in New York. “He’s an inspiration,” says Chenoweth.

Chenoweth also hopes to work in New York – not only because he sees it as a great city, full of opportunities, but because it’s home to his partner who is preparing to present at New York Fashion Week next month. “Ultimately, I’d love to work in a studio and art direct, maybe even music videos or films.”

Frances Morgan
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad

Comment on this article at
UTS:NEWSROOM
newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2014/08/designing-big-dreams
Paying it forward
Bachelor of Business/Bachelor of Medical Science student Cathleen Phimdert is a Uf@Uni equity ambassador working with high school students in Sydney’s southwest. She met Anthony Ladewig through the program when he was a student at Fairfield High School. Ladewig earned a place in UTS’s Bachelor of Engineering this year and is now helping build aspiration in other students from under-represented communities.

CATHLEEN PHIMDERT

When the opportunity came up to become a mentor and help students from southwest Sydney, I thought, ‘Yep, I definitely want to jump on board for this!’ As part of the HSC Tutorial Scheme I’ve been tutoring and facilitating groups out at Fairfield, Canley Vale, Bankstown and Belmore. We work one-on-one and in small groups with students in Years 11 and 12 to give them help with exam preparation, essay writing, homework tasks and assignments. We also act as positive mentors for them and provide insight into what university life is like.

Each school is different, and some students struggle to grasp the concepts they’re being taught. It’s not that the students don’t want to learn, but they don’t often get the time and attention they need to go through it more thoroughly. We’re just reinforcing what the teachers are teaching and going through it on a level they understand.

It wasn’t until I came to uni that I realised there was a bit of a stigma around western Sydney. I grew up around Miller’s Point and attended St Johns Park High School in Greenfield Park. There really wasn’t that much of a difference between the two areas in terms of ability. Any ‘disadvantage’ is more of a self-perception ingrained in the minds of students based on what’s reported in the news. Sure, there are disadvantages in terms of language barriers and financial situations, but the students have the same willingness to learn. All they need is the opportunity and some support.

I graduated in 2011, and a lot of the high school students are surprised to find out I’m so close to their own age group. I think it helps them to relate and trust me. I did the same subjects I’m tutoring in and I’m able to explain the theory in a more digestible way. The sessions are less formal than a normal class, but the students get a lot out of it. One term, I recognised my biology students were flat lining and had lost motivation and enthusiasm. So we came up with a biology game that was a mix between Pictionary and Taboo and played that for an hour and a half. The following week their enthusiasm was back up. You need to find ways to keep it interesting.

At first Anthony was pretty quiet and reluctant to do the writing. I tutored him in English Advanced for two terms. He was creative and good at the actual content, but he wrote too slowly. By practising the flow of his essays, he began to improve and he could see clearly how they needed to be structured to bring his ideas into line in the allocated time. His essays used to be about a page and a half, but by the end he could easily write two to three pages.

Going back to high school to tutor is a bit of a flipped role. As well as helping students, we’re developing our own skills around communicating effectively, problem-solving, critical thinking, time management and leadership. They’re all attributes that will transfer well into a workplace when we graduate.

ANTHONY LADEWIG

A lot of high school kids don’t get the opportunity to come into the city, let alone visit a university. For a lot of them, university isn’t even an option they’d think about. I remember coming onto campus for the Summer School program and meeting a lot of students from other high schools in my area. I didn’t expect them to be so similar to me and my mates. The science summer class I did for the two weeks in Year 11 had only one other person from my school, so we were forced to mix. It was really good.

I was lucky enough to be selected for the HSC Tutorial Scheme in Year 12. With Cathleen, the tutoring sessions were definitely fun and engaging – she created a less serious atmosphere and made us feel at ease. She would empathise and explain things in simpler terms than my English teachers would, and she was straight to the point whenever I had a question. As a result, my essay writing skills developed greatly and I went to the HSC English exam stress-free. Cathleen also made university sound so interesting and not as hard or scary as I thought.

Many students wouldn’t even consider university as a realistic option. TAFE always sounded easier for some reason, but once you’re exposed to university life, you realise it’s doable. Summer School and the reunion days afterwards helped us figure out which way we wanted our lives to go and which pathway to pursue. It’s such a big decision to make at a young age, but it gets you thinking. I was initially interested in science but realised I like understanding how things work, so I was drawn to engineering instead.

So far my first year studying engineering has been full-on. It’s only been one semester and I’ve had more assignments than I would have had by this time in high school. But I’ve enjoyed working on team projects and being introduced to interesting engineering concepts. The social part of uni is fun too – coming into the city and meeting friends on the weekdays – however you really need to balance it with getting your coursework done.

After my last Summer School reunion I actually felt sad that it had come to an end – so this year I’m working as an equity ambassador. It’s an opportunity to give something back and to improve my communication and leadership skills. I help run the Summer School reunion workshops on managing the HSC and setting future goals, and provide insight to students wanting to know more about university. As a recent ex-high school student I can definitely empathise with how they’re feeling. Even if they don’t want to go to university, I hope I’m helping them decide on their future path.

Comment on this article at UTS:NEWSROOM
newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2014/08/paying-it-forward

Katia Sanfilippo
Equity & Diversity Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
As with many successful entrepreneurs before her, Emma Earley’s brainchild PovoChef was born out of a desire to improve her situation. The website offers low-cost recipes, shopping tips and reviews for students on a tight (‘povo’) budget.

The Bachelor of Laws student knows all too well the challenges facing many students living out of home. Having moved out of her parents’ house during her first year of university, she found herself struggling to balance work and study commitments while trying to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle on a fixed budget.

“When I was grocery shopping, I would calculate everything to the cent to prevent the embarrassment of having to remove something at the checkout,” says Earley. “At the end of my first year of university, I knew something had to change.”

A self-described cooking enthusiast, Earley started to experiment with the creation of cheap and tasty meals using her friends as guinea pigs. It wasn’t long before she realised her love of food and cooking combined with her budgeting experience made up a unique skill set that could help others, too.

“It’s encouraging when my friends rave about dishes that I know cost less than a dollar per serve!”

Earley’s aim in creating PovoChef was to teach young people – and anyone else on a tight budget – to cook amazing food.

Launched in September 2013, the website now attracts nearly 2000 unique visitors per month, solicits contributions from other foodies and continues to expand.

“At the moment, I’m working on a YouTube cooking channel, a food app, and the first of a series of PovoChef low budget cookbooks,” says Earley.

“I want to build an online food community and I hope to have a bricks-and-mortar cooking school in the future.”

As Earley paves her way to a successful future in law, the prospects for PovoChef are also looking bright. “I’ve been asked to contribute to the Food Porn website and I’m negotiating what could be a huge partnership with an online discount fashion retailer.”

In addition, Earley is currently working on her first self-published cookbook – “slowly” she laughs. “I’m working with a professional food stylist and food photographer to ensure the final product is high quality and amazing value.”

The cookbooks will be available in the normal colour edition and the ‘povo’ edition in black and white, without photographs.

Earley also plans to hold the inaugural Uni Student Cooking Challenge in partnership with the UTS Students’ Association this coming semester.

Despite the intensity of her work-life-study balance, Earley is thriving. “I’m studying law full time, which is challenging on its own. I’m also working three days a week in a fine dining restaurant, as well as learning French.

“But I really enjoy working on PovoChef, so it doesn’t feel like a chore. Like anything in life, you need to find your passion and your purpose, then you’ll be excited to work on it until 2am!”

Avalon Dennis
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Writing and Cultural Studies)/Bachelor of International Studies
Photographer (E Earley): Joanne Saad
Photographer (food): Emma Earley
**UTS IN PRINT**

**BEAMS FALLING**
**BY:** PM Newton
**PUBLISHER:** Penguin

*Beams Falling* is PM Newton’s follow-up to her award-winning debut novel, *The Old School*. The story opens with young Vietnamese-Australian police detective Nhu (Ned) Kelly recovering from the psychic and physical wounds of being shot by a corrupt fellow officer. Ned returns to work suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and promptly begins to unravel. Set in Cabramatta in the 1990s as the Independent Commission Against Corruption and Wood Royal Commission expose decades of police corruption, the novel explores and interrogates Australia’s recent past. Being led by a character with PTSD makes for an interesting and, at times, problematic journey as the reader finds himself stymied by Ned’s inability to act, while her narrative world demands pressing action. However, Newton has a rare and compelling ability to capture character, time and place with understated poeticism and authenticity. As a writer, she refuses to be limited by formulaic genre conventions, instead seeing crime fiction as “a wonderful vehicle to engage readers with a strong story that takes them on a trip through this maelstrom of social, cultural and political turmoil”. It’s a trip well worth taking but make sure you go for a spin with *The Old School* first.

Rachael Quigley
Marketing and Communication Unit

PM Newton is a UTS Librarian and Master of Arts in Writing (Research) graduate. She spent 13 years in the NSW police force, with over a decade as a Sydney detective. Her published work includes short stories, critical essays and two novels. Her first novel, *The Old School*, won the Sisters in Crime Davitt and Asher Literary awards.

**CAPITAL, VOLUME ONE**
**BY:** Anthony Macris
**PUBLISHER:** UWA Publishing

Re-released late last year, Anthony Macris’ 1997 debut novel is at once a stunning masterclass in the art of literary point of view and a bitter rumination on the commodification of the image in contemporary capitalism. The novel transitions back and forth between London and Brisbane, present and past, charting a series of moments in the life of a Brisbane boy and a few hours in the space of a London tube station, recorded with icy precision by Macris’ DeLillo-esque camera-eye prose. In line with the novel’s fetishisation of advertising signs and commodities, there is an eerie, disconcerting exchangeability between every scene as literary units-cum-commodities. The seamlessness of the exchange between points of view within and across locations and temporalities – the narrative transitions between the perspectives of a young woman, a man in a movie poster, and a pregnant mouse, for example – as well as the apparent arbitrariness of events, lays bare Macris’ vision of the ‘Society of the Spectacle’. The book is written with a world-historical (and aesthetic) sensibility – and ambition – rare in Australian fiction. Committed to the conceptual, Macris resists the satisfaction of every scene as literary units-cum-commodities. The breadth and beauty of the short fiction, memoirs, poetry and scriptwriting from 31 fresh writers offer us a glimpse into something unique, and more importantly – new possibilities of exploring the world through the craft of their writing.

Izanda Ford
Marketing and Communication Unit

Anthony Macris is a writer, literary critic and an Associate Professor in the Creative Writing Program at UTS. He was a joint winner of *The Sydney Morning Herald* Best Young Australian Novelist in 1998. He recently published his second novel in the Capital series – *Great Western Highway: A Love Story*.

**SIGHT LINES**
**BY:** UTS Students
**PUBLISHER:** XOUM

With great excitement I thumbed the pages of *Sight Lines* – the 28th edition of the annual UTS student anthology – looking for the right place to begin. It started with an awkward date. In *Ikea*, in his erratic but charming style, HT Hack explores the impact of a failed relationship through the TV consoles, stuffed toys and sofas of the DIY giant. Next, I sank into ‘Not the Sea’. Beautiful and a vast leap in subject and style from ‘Date w/ Ikea’, Ashleigh Synnott’s story takes us on a dream-like passage through the life of Himal de Silva – mute juice seller, survivor of persecution and of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami. Noni Cowan provides humorous and insightful moments with her call-and-response dialogue between a young man looking for a beginning to his future and an old storeowner holding tight to the past in her short script ‘A simple transaction’. The breadth and beauty of the short fiction, memoirs, poetry and scriptwriting from 31 fresh writers offer us a new perspective on the world through the craft of their writing.

Sight Lines is the 2014 UTS Writers’ Anthology. Written and edited entirely by UTS students, the UTS anthology is one of the longest running collections of new writing in Australia, and has helped launch the careers of numerous Australian authors.

**U:BOOKWORMS**

During August, the Co-op on Broadway is offering Co-op members a 20 per cent discount on the three books reviewed in this issue. Mention U: magazine when you purchase any of these books instore.
CELEBRATING SOCIAL JUSTICE

Freedom of thought, religion, opinion, expression. Access to education, water and sanitation. It’s difficult to imagine our lives without such fundamental human rights. Yet billions of people around the world go without basics we take for granted each day.

Since 1999, the UTS Human Rights Awards have showcased and honoured the contributions being made by UTS staff and students towards creating a more equitable university and society.

Research Director for the Institute of Sustainable Futures (ISF) Juliet Willetts won the Vice-Chancellor’s Social Justice/Human Rights Award in 2012 for her contribution to meeting the water and sanitation needs of developing countries.

Willetts co-founded the Australian Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Reference Group whose work convinced the Australian Government to allocate $300 million to water sanitation and developing countries in 2008 to 2011. Following sustained efforts in advocacy and improving aid policy in this area, the Gillard government committed an additional $433 million in 2011, taking the budget to $1 billion for the following four years.

Since then, Willetts' efforts have taken her everywhere from eastern Indonesia, where she evaluated Australian aid program support of large-scale water and sanitation programs, to Bangladesh, where she has been involved in understanding the best methods to motivate community members to build toilets to improve public health.

Willetts says receiving an award made her realise how valuable recognition is, both as a personal motivator and in garnering support for her work.

"I was surprised to be nominated, but it was great for my confidence, and for my standing externally,” she says.

“When people hear you’ve won an award they think you must have something valuable to offer. ISF have to continually bring in income and new projects and clients, so the way we are perceived by others is important.”

There are seven categories in the awards covering equity, social inclusion, sexual and gender diversity, outcomes for women, Indigenous reconciliation, student community contribution and a creative media award for a project exploring social justice and human rights themes. Student awardees receive a prize of $500 in addition to the award.

Race Discrimination Commissioner for the Australian Human Rights Commission Dr Tim Soutphommasane will be attending this year’s awards ceremony as a special guest speaker. He will also announce UTS’s signed support for the ‘Racism. It Stops With Me’ campaign, which aims to encourage all Australians to reflect on how they can counter racism.

Through her leadership role in WASH, Willetts continues to engage with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade around the new aid policy and how water and sanitation sit within it. She believes that celebrating the UTS community’s commitment and dedication to human rights and social justice through the bi-annual awards is inspiring and encourages collaboration.

"I've been looking at ways to recognise other staff I work with, through awards or other means, because I realise how motivational it can be," says Willetts.

"Advocating for human rights often means working against the status quo and challenging power relations. It takes a lot of commitment and isn't necessarily a job you leave behind once you leave the office, because you care.”

The Human Rights Awards will be held Thursday 4 September, 4.30pm to 6.30pm, in the Great Hall. All welcome.

Katia Sanfilippo
Equity & Diversity Unit
Photographs (West Timor): supplied by Juliet Willetts
Main image: Willetts meets with locals to evaluate an Australian aid program to support large-scale water and sanitation initiatives.

Comment on this article at
UTS:NEWSROOM
Email your events for October to uart@uts.edu.au by 15 September.

ART & U

Marion Borgelt, Liquid Light: 32 Degrees, 2004

Australian artist Marion Borgelt’s paintings first achieved recognition in the 1980s with their bold, organic forms. After receiving the Moet & Chandon Art Fellowship, she moved to France for several years, where her practice shifted to a reductive, less painterly style that took on sculptural elements.

Liquid Light: 32 Degrees is part of an ongoing series of incised and twisted canvases by Borgelt, which appear to shift and change with the viewer’s movements, evoking the natural rhythms of tide and time. Literally turned inside out, these canvases play out shifts and collisions of light and shade reminiscent of the work of James Turrell and Bridget Riley.

The artist describes the optical effect in these paintings as being “just like the changing light from morning to nightfall of any day... each one opening and closing like the pupil of an eye”.

Liquid Light is currently on display in the Scholars’ Room of the Blake Library. An example of Borgelt’s earlier work, which is part of the ActivateUTS art collection, can be viewed above the Towers Café on level 3 of Building 1.

Check out art.uts.edu.au for more news and highlights from the UTS Art Collection.

LEARN

This year’s Casual Academics Conference explores Learning 2014 with keynote speakers, workshops and networking opportunities in the exciting new learning spaces of Building 11. Paid professional development opportunities are available for UTS casual academics.

Building 11, level 4
Anemonefish can always be found living in their host. The anemones help protect the fish from potential predators, such as larger fish, which are vulnerable to their sting, while anemonefish themselves are immune. This relationship is known as mutual symbiosis, as both creatures benefit from the relationship. Harasti took this photo of an Orange-finned Anemonefish hiding in a rarely seen red anemone while diving in Palau in June 2014.

Harasti recently submitted his PhD thesis at UTS, which looks at the biology and ecology of White’s Seahorse, a species found only in New South Wales. He works as a marine scientist at the NSW Department of Primary Industries and continues to use underwater photography for his research.

Photographer: Dave Harasti