



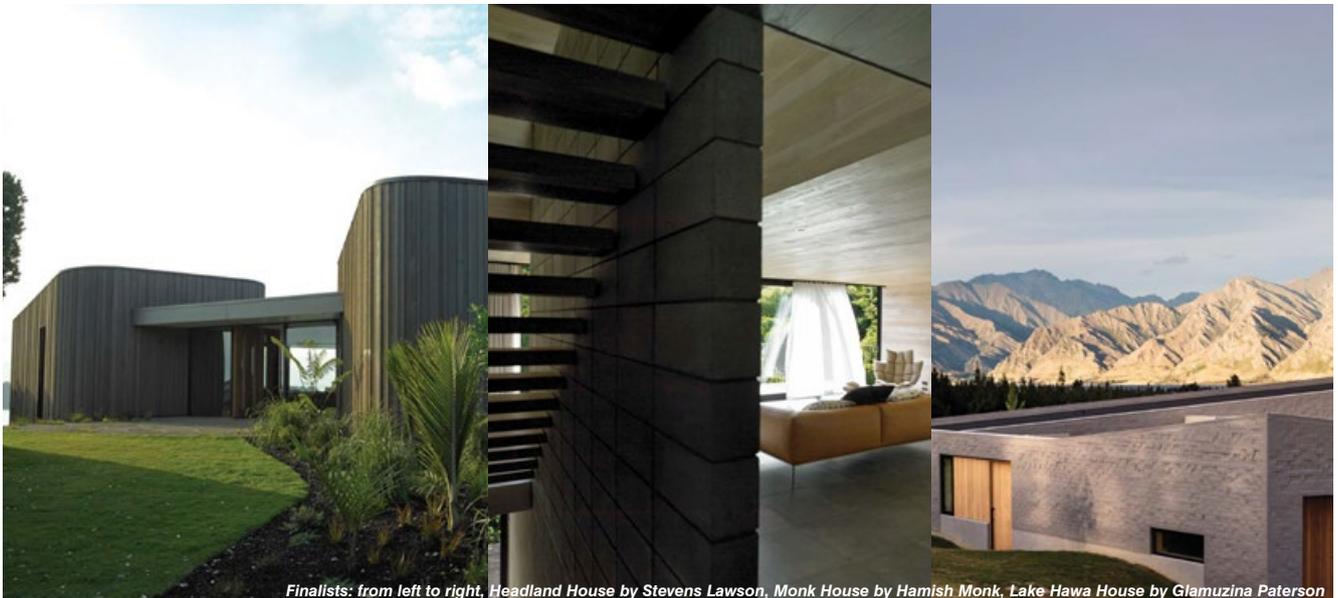
04 2013

THE BROADSHEET OF THE AUCKLAND BRANCH OF THE NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

BLOCK

Together Again

From Student Digs to Home of the Year



Finalists: from left to right, Headland House by Stevens Lawson, Monk House by Hamish Monk, Lake Hawa House by Glamuzina Paterson

Gary Lawson, Hamish Monk and Dominic Glamuzina were three of this year's Home of the Year finalists. Some fifteen-odd years ago, the talented trio could have been found sharing a coffee in the studios of the then newly established school of architecture at Unitec. Lawson was part of the first student cohort, Monk the second, and Glamuzina the third. Years later, they're producing some of New Zealand's best homes. Block sat down with all three to reflect on the early years and their current practice. What follows is a shortened transcript of that conversation.

What did it mean to be in a new school of architecture, starting from scratch?

G.L. Being part of the first intake was an interesting experience. Every year we were the "senior year," and the difficulty of that was we had nothing ahead of us. There was nothing to benchmark or reference yourself to. We used to go over to Auckland University to see what was happening there and often got asked to leave. In the early days it felt like the others didn't really embrace the idea that Unitec was teaching architecture. It was as if we were from a technical course while those at university were part of an artistic endeavour. We really didn't know what the hell we were doing and we had no one in front of us showing the way. The good thing was we had really good tutors and support, and somehow we made it work. It was definitely better and better as each year passed and more people came in and dialogue and interaction made its way

down through the school. But it was always kind of weird having nothing ahead of us.

H.M. And there was a pretty big cull from year to year, so you were conscious of being part of something small. And given the place was, in its prior life, a mental asylum it felt like just a handful of people rattling around in the corridors.

I think that being in a new course it was like we had something to prove. And there was a sense that some of us were misfits, that for one reason or another we hadn't gotten into university and that we were finding our own way as rogue traders. And we were lucky to be involved in an institute before a lot of hard and fast institutional rules came into play. It was pretty gung-ho.

D.G. My first year at Unitec was the School's third intake and still it felt strangely empty. It was never that big. And there was constant revision of the programme and a working through of teething issues. One year, say a large number of students would fail a structural engineering paper on account of us trying to learn the same things as a third year engineering student. And then the next year they decided "we can't do that anymore", so the lecturer just disappeared and suddenly it was a lot easier. We used to look at each other and wonder what the hell was going on, but it was just the reality of everyone – including those in charge – trying to understand what a school of architecture was.

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Together Again Continued from p.1...

Can you share some thoughts about your ways of working, maybe in regards to the Home of the Year entries?

G.L. Our way of working is messy and I don't think we really have an approach to architecture. We tease things out. Sometimes it's more drawing based, sometimes it's more model based, often it's both, scrambling between everything that's available, trying to sort something out.

With this year's Home of the Year, we started by thinking about how to occupy a headland site in what we thought was a sensitive manner. And the views were so massive we felt we needed to break them down into appreciable elements, to create some intimacy that would help us occupy the headland in a delicate way.

Coupled with this were other motivations, such as trying to do something interesting with the planning, to plan the house in a more unusual way than we had in the past. We have tried to do this for a long time, but with a lot of schemes that have ended up in the drawer.

This ambition is, in part, inspired by the likes of the overseas guests that Andrew Barrie brings in; the people who make you feel like a beginner. It makes us realise we need to get serious about doing something properly different.

But this urge intersects with the client's wants and what we think they are able to handle when it comes to departing from convention. You can go right out on a limb with a client and just get a straight "no", so it's a tricky process. The trick though is to not get too comfortable with what you do. That is a fate worse than death in architecture.

H.M. I'm not overly concerned where things start. It's about picking a lane and then taking an idea, whatever it may be, as far as you can push it. And then it's important to deal with all the complexities of a building that emerge during that process. But you try to not let them push you off-course.

With my parent's house for Home for the Year, the challenge was to confront a lot of inherent complexities and to try and find a distilled solution to a complex problem. It can be quite easy to keep adding things to solve new problems, but for me it's about trying to find a common solution to those myriad of challenges.

Working on your own, you have to get comfortable with the way you do things. I don't have trouble generating ideas, the difficulty is the filtering process. It's always good to talk to people when I can. I don't always ask other people's opinions though. And with rigid deadlines, I've learnt that I have to be decisive and working on my own gives me the opportunity to be decisive. I think that a lot of design is intuitive and you naturally know the answer to your own questions. I think our sub-conscious minds are very intelligent and are to be relied upon.

D.G. One thing that Aaron and I try and achieve is a sense of going sideways from convention. We try to make sure that every project has a different beginning. Rightly or wrongly, we talk about spending the whole project fee on the idea at the beginning, really working that idea from scratch. We hate the idea of doing the same project over and over again. We're keen on always finding a new beginning.

We also have little obsessions that keep coming up in projects. A current one that influenced our Home of the Year entry was trying to get over the laborious task of controlling everything in a project. Despite what people think when they see our buildings, we're trying to find a looseness in what we do. This came to the fore with the Home of the Year project where we had very forthright clients – they actually built a model of a courtyard house and gave it to us.

They had a caravan on site for ten years so knew it really well. So, with being presented with a model and knowledgeable clients we had to let go of some sense of control, but this freed us to go in search of the project's oddities – like fulfilling their requirements for a music room and a quiet room. Great things seem to occur when we tend to loosen up and almost have a building that we can't control.

How do you work through this messy process? How do you bring and keep client's on-board, even as you try to challenge conventions, make things that are unusual?

G.L. The easiest way for us to be successful is to work hard and go into a meeting with clients carrying along something we really love. And if they can't get their heads around it and really like it, then at least we've tried our absolute best and done something that we're proud of. That's our motto really. I think clients know when they've got something special, when you've worked really hard for them.

With regards to the messiness that may surround a project's beginning, we tend not to reveal any of this to the client. We tend not to reveal our process at all. Clients would be shocked to see there were ten models leading up to the one we want to show them. What we give them is, in some respects, a 'Eureka' moment. They get a beautiful plan and an exquisite model. I think our residential clients are interested in the house they're going to get, not really the turmoil that went into getting there. We believe clients are coming to us as professionals and looking to us to give them a solution. That's our role, to say that we've evaluated all the possible options and we've settled on this one for these reasons. I think there is a group of clients who could lose faith in the architect if you revealed how tumultuous the process of making can be.

If you've got logic to decisions, it's possible to draw people through a project, sometimes not even drawing attention to the more unusual aspects of it, such as the planning of the Headland house. The decisions underlying unusual things can be pragmatic, logical and well-reasoned, so it's a completely sincere approach to how to occupy a site and meet client needs and have something in it for us as architects.

H.M. Some clients really like to get into the project and its development. It can depend on a lot of things, like how complex the brief is, how large the client body is, how concerned they are with meeting weekly to see progress. It's a different process for every job. If you have a client who knows what they want and who gives you a clear brief, it's easy enough to go away and design to those parameters. Conversely, it's an iterative process when the client's coming to things cold, not knowing what it is they want.

D.G. When it comes to revealing process, we tend to choose our battles. We have some projects where we feel we have to get the client to buy in and keep them really engaged. We do though tend to present some options at the outset of a project. And sometimes an engaged client can enrich a project, particularly when there's a bit of negotiation involved. On other occasions, we only show people what they are going to get. *Gary Lawson, Hamish Monk and Dominic Glamuzina interviewed by Sean Flanagan and Michael Milojevic*

The Fine Print: April

CHAIR'S REPORT: Richard Goldie

It's April already - the 4th month. In the words of that Aussie 'environmentalist' Steve 'stingray cuddler' Irwin - "Crikey!" Continuing with Australian metaphors, the impression I have is that the long drought may be over. I hear anecdotally that practices are busier, but a new appreciation of the value of a dollar has settled in. To suggest that 'things returning to normal' meaning returning to how things were pre-GFC is, I believe, delusional. That said, the catastrophic collapse has probably cleared the ground for new ideas, new ways. Good!

AGM and Elections: The committee have been returned, plus Mike Middlebrook who will get into the TIG or PIG roles. No voting was necessary - strong endorsement for the current committee-well done.

At the AGM Teena Pennington, the new CEO, mentioned that we need to coordinate the NZIA's views on the most salient issues for her to leverage her existing Wellington relationships. At this time I'm unsure of the process for determining which are the hot topics, but will report more. Joint and several liability will be one, affordable housing another.

NZIA Council Elections: Tim Melville has been returned. Congrats to Tim, and commiserations to Ross Brown. It's good to have these positions contested.

Continued on p.4...

Collaborative Craft

An Introduction to Bijoy Jain and Studio Mumbai



Here in New Zealand, as in much of the west, there has been a severe erosion of craft skills within the construction industry. The reasons for this are many: increases in labour costs relative to material costs; the rise of sheet materials and industrialized building systems; shifting tastes. In the length of one or two working careers, ways of building that were relatively accessible and affordable - stone masonry, carving, casting, sophisticated plasterwork, and other labour intensive and regionally inflected construction techniques – are now limited largely to high-end heritage restoration projects.

In India, traditional building skills have not yet been lost and a different balance of material and labour costs means architecture can be produced in ways and using techniques largely impossible in the so-called “developed economies”. Making positive use of India’s unique social and economic conditions Studio Mumbai operates as a workshop in which carpenters, masons, electricians, plumbers, architects, and engineers all share the same workspace. The 100-strong team designs and constructs every aspect of their buildings, down to door handles and hinges. Their buildings make particular use of traditional construction techniques, including labour-intensive plastering methods and polished concrete.

The Studio Mumbai’s approach, however, goes beyond simply exploiting locally available skills. Studio founder Bijoy Jain, who describes himself as “the conductor of an orchestra”, has developed a unique methodology in which every member of the team contributes ideas and drawings to the design. Carpenters, masons and electricians carry sketchbooks in which to develop proposals and refine details. Following an iterative process and employing open communication, ideas are explored through the production of sketches, drawings, material studies, and large-scale mock-ups.

Studio Mumbai’s buildings emerge from face-to-face interaction and ongoing sharing of knowledge between all the people and elements that contribute to the firm’s projects– site, designers, consultants, materials, clients, climate, and craftspeople. Exhibitions of the firm’s work, such as their prize-winning installation at the 2010 Venice Biennale, reflect this philosophy and show not the architecture they have created but their method of working. Rather than the typical display of model and photos of completed buildings, they transport their workshop to the exhibition space, showing tools, material samples, maquettes, building components, and full-scale mock-ups.

An architectural practice almost unique in the world, Studio Mumbai redefines the construction process not as a collection of techniques or skills that can be retained, developed or lost, but as a process that is relational, entrepreneurial, open-ended and empowering. *Andrew Barrie*

Lecture details on p.4...

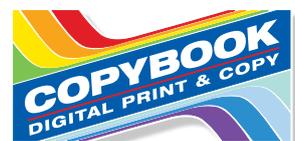
The funny stuff aside . . .

“Thank You”

Since opening our doors 27 years ago (almost) we have enjoyed a close relationship with many of you in the architectural community. Some of you even started coming to us while still at university and now have your own successful practices.

In searching for a way to say “Thank You” we were given the opportunity to print the “BLOCK” which we grabbed with both hands. We happily continue to do so in appreciation for the support shown to us by those of you who use Copybook.

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The Fine Print Continued from p.2...

Auckland Council Liaison and Legislative Input: The New Year is well and truly underway, and so it's time to reignite the flame of discontent with Council's process. One idea from those who have expressed concern has been received. I will convene a meeting of the agitators and put the pressure on.

Building Consents: Again more follow up needed. This is a passion for Mike Middlebrook so his energy will be appreciated.

Unitary Plan: Discussion at tomorrow's committee meeting will focus on the Draft Unitary Plan. Barry's report will no doubt outline the Branch's next actions in his report. Barry did an excellent job shepherding a commentary by the Branch on the Unitary plan to the press in good time, and at the same time invited the press to look to us for future comment. Well done.

New NZIA Premises: The formal opening of the new National offices, and this will take place the evening of April 29th. Invites of the great and the good have been circulated. We will organize an informal 'meet your new premises' soon at the Auckland Branch 'Clubrooms'. Watch this space.

Local Awards: Finding a venue is hard, especially an affordable one. But Daryne's on it.

Architecture Week: Courtney Kitchen, the A+W liaison, will report separately on progress here.

Squirrel Fund: Got a worthy cause with a compelling story - please share. Andrew Barrie has a pretty good template for an application. Please contact him or me. a.barrie@auckland.ac.nz or richard@peddlethorp.co.nz.

Fellows: We have received some proposals for Fellowship – please send more in. An outline of the candidate's worthiness is required. As a reminder, the rules are: Council may admit as a Fellow any Architect Member or Retired Architect Member who has: achieved a high standing in the profession or obtained a degree of eminence therein; or given meritorious service to the profession of architecture or to the Institute; and been engaged in the practice of architecture in any capacity or sphere of endeavour for a period of at least seven years. We invite everyone to please submit nominees for fellowship to the Branch, together with a brief summary of their 'seven years'. Note that fellows must be approved by Council quarterly so the sooner the better please.

COMMITTEE FOR AUCKLAND FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAMME:

Alexandra Lee

Marae Project Weekend: Twenty-eight program participants spent an intensive weekend at Ngati Whatua's Orakei marae on March 15-17 to develop further the four pilot projects that will be delivered by Oct '13.

Guerrilla Playspaces: design/build of at least 4 temporary, interactive playspaces for people of all ages in the Auckland city, to improve connectedness and community engagement, and to catalyze long-term mindset change in the built environment by introducing one temporary urban intervention at a time

Lifelong Fun in the Moana: a fun family day at the beach to promote water safety and the use of lifejackets for Maori & Pacific Island community in South Auckland

Bees Alive: Campaign to increase the number of beehives at secondary schools across Auckland and to raise awareness of the ecological and health benefit of bees in urban environments/ dispelling myths about its dangers

Angel Landlords: to be the broker of free short-term leases of vacant central city office spaces to young start-ups, non-profits, and community organizations. To support innovation and community development by providing important service / high cap-ex item.

Guerrilla Playspaces (GPS) Update: The 8 members of GPS will be working in pairs on 4 streams:

Installations: Partnership with AUT creative technologies students who have committed to producing 3 installations. GPS has set the assessment criteria and will provide guidance for initial prototypes. Resourcing – GPS has acquired \$2.5k sponsorship from Committee for Auckland towards cap-ex; Awaiting outcome from Auckland Council board members for \$5k.

Connections: Continuing talks with Auckland Council, Architecture for Humanity, Architecture + Women, AUT and UoA students

Operations: Develop a legacy document & website – a go-to online place for the creative sector and community groups to access information and resources on how to do guerrilla play spaces

URBAN ISSUES GROUP: Barry Copeland

Unitary Plan: After the launch of the draft Unitary Plan on 15 March

LECTURE

BIJOY JAIN / STUDIO MUMBAI

6:30pm, Wednesday 8th May

**Engineering Lecture Theatre 439, University of Auckland
20 Symonds St, Auckland**

As part of the University of Auckland's annual Communiqué lecture series, and The 5th Auckland Triennial, Bijoy Jian will be presenting a lecture in Auckland on May 8th.
www.creative.auckland.ac.nz/communique

Artist profile: Bijoy Jain was born in Mumbai, India in 1965. He studied in the United States and gained his master's degree in architecture at Washington University in St. Louis in 1990. He worked in Los Angeles and London and then spent some time travelling before returning to live and work in Mumbai, beginning independent practice in 1995. Studio Mumbai was formed under his direction as a collaborative team of architects, engineers, and skilled craftspeople who design and construct buildings directly.

THE 5TH AUCKLAND TRIENNIAL

Teams of local architects, academics and students have been invited to participate in the upcoming 5th Auckland Triennial, themed *If you were to live here...* by its international curator, Hou Hanru. Teams of academics, students, and architects will contribute to The Lab, a design-based open laboratory offering a unique opportunity to develop Auckland's architectural culture. Described as 'the brain' of the Triennial, The Lab is a joint project of the architecture and spatial design faculties of The University of Auckland, AUT, and UNITEC.

The goal of The Lab is to bring the energy and flexibility of the architectural design process into the gallery, and it will unfold throughout the Triennial as a series of rolling exhibitions and a roster of related events at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. The teams will present interdisciplinary design projects that respond to the challenges posed by Hanru's theme. Kathy Waghorn will work with American architect-academic Teddy Cruz to develop proposals for the rejuvenation of the Whau River area in Avondale. Sarosh Mulla, School of Architecture & Planning PhD student and one of the founders of design collective Oh.No.Sumo, will direct specially designed installations exploring the Kiwi 'quarter-acre dream'. Rau Hoskins, working with artist Carin Wilson, will lead a UNITEC team to design a Te Paparewa Teitei stage: a temporary and often massive Maori feast structure not constructed in 150 years. Albert Refiti and Elvon Young will lead a team from AUT exploring socio-political-cultural 'problematics' within and around Auckland. Andrew Barrie will consider the long-term affects of disasters on our cities, in particular how the rebuilding of destroyed churches can contribute to the recovery of Christchurch.

Designed by SoAP Deputy Head Mike Davis and PhD student Sara Lee, the physical space of The Lab in the Chartwell Gallery at the Auckland Art Gallery is a flexible system allowing quick and easy transition between exhibition and event modes. The Triennial opens on 9 May and runs through to 11 August. www.aucklandtriennial.com

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and UIG's subsequent meeting on 19 March, a letter was sent to the Herald but wasn't published – obviously it's not a very newsworthy tack to sound generally supportive of the direction being taken by the Unitary Plan.

The nitty-gritty of how it is all supposed to work is daunting in scale and hard to get into. Not many of us so far have had the time to pedantically pick over the proposed new rulebook in detail. This task perhaps needs to be shared by a small group of enthusiasts. There is also a case that we should focus on more strategic or opportunistic comments that will position us in the debate. These might be on key issues such as the affordability of housing, expanding living space upwards as well as outwards, and the importance of integrating the Transport Plan with the Land use Plan. The next session of the Group is on 16 Apr. The direction of our considered and collective response needs to be agreed then.

TECHNICAL ISSUES GROUP: Mark Mismash

The TIG speaker this month is Rick Ehelrt. Rick is a Structural Engineer specializing in the design of earthquake resistant structures. Rick has international experience assisting in recovery efforts in areas affected by earthquake. A short bio and lecture brief will be distributed shortly. Rick's presentation will be held Tuesday April 30 at 12:30 in Unitec's Department of Architecture lecture theatre.

HERITAGE PORTFOLIO: Adam Wild

The Unitary Plan: I provided a brief briefing to Christina Van Bohemen and Barry Copeland ahead of the launch of the Unitary Plan. A tension between intensification, special character, and heritage appears unresolved in the document released for consultation.

URM & Heritage: IPENZ is holding a conference in Wellington at the end of this month focusing on earthquake strengthening. As a precursor to the conference Wellington City Council and others are hosting a trade expo over the weekend of the 27-28th of April and have asked me to present a seminar on earthquake prone heritage.

National Heritage Policy Statement: In the light of further reviews of the RMA by Central Government I am currently drafting a national heritage policy statement. It seems to me strange that, as a matter of national importance (Section 6 of the RMA), heritage has no national policy statement. I am being assisted by a wide range of planners and environment court barristers from around the country.

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND STUDENT REPORT: Adam Hunt

The first quarter of the semester has gone past quickly, with design well under way working towards the mid-semester critique in the weeks to come. The arrangements for the School's technical staff are currently under review, and many students are preparing a written response to the proposed change from school technicians to faculty technicians.

This semester has been very exciting with a lecture from Mark Burry, Professor of Innovation and Director of the spatial information Architecture Laboratory. Mark Burry is also executive architect and researcher at the Temple Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Spain.

The second half of the semester brings some exciting events including an exhibition of studio work at the 5th Auckland Triennial LAB at the Auckland Art Gallery and the arrival of visiting international tutor Teddy Cruz of research-based practice Estudio Teddy Cruz.

Reasonably standard and short lived beginning to the semester. The

pace, as always, will pick up as soon as the semester kicks off again on April 22nd.

UNITEC REPORT: Tony van Raat

Recent guests in the School have included James O'Connor from Moore Yudell Rudell in LA who spoke about the work his firm is doing around the world. Currently we have Nick Zangwill, Professor of Philosophy from the University of Durham talking about aesthetics as far as it affects architects, which seems to be going down well in studio. Next quarter Alberto Foyo from Colombia (the University that is) and Caterina Steiner from Siena (the city) will be with us running studio projects. Caterina will be running the New Zealand arm of an international project to build a Community Centre for the (substantial) Chinese population of the Tuscan City of Prate. This will also be worked on by students from China and Italy, with a presentation in the Palazzo of the Provincia in July.

I have prepared some information on the consequences of the withdrawal of Student Allowances from post-graduate students. It is as yet unclear exactly what these will be on architecture students in their last two years of study except the obvious one that it makes a career in architecture more difficult for the children of low-income families. There's no reason to be pleased about this.

The Studio 19 House Build project from last year for Vision West in West Auckland draws to a close with the 2-bedroom and 4-bedroom houses in Forrest Hill Road, Henderson, being handed over in a week or two. The project, using SIP panel construction and ply interior linings was extremely successful apart from the fact that it almost killed Dave Strachan.

Dave Mitchell and Julie Stout are working with a group of recent grads on a substantial school project in Christchurch that we hope will be built. The NZRAB is soon to release the decision of the first case brought under the Architect's Act.

The NZ Architectural Publications Trust in collaboration with Random House/Penguin has a book in hand on the architecture of Gummer and Ford.

UNITEC STUDENT REPORT: Stu Penno

With mid-semester break one week away, the year is well and truly underway for Unitec students. Crits for First and Second year Bachelor students are being held this week, while 2nd year Masters crits will be held the week beginning the April 29, the first week after mid-semester break.

While the First year Bachelor intake for 2013 is similar to that of previous years, the 2013 intake for First year Masters is noticeably down. This is likely due to the restructuring of the student allowance scheme.

Construction of the *Nano Whare*, the 2012 Maori Studio with Rau Hoskins is well underway on campus. At approximately 25sqm, the one-bedroom open plan home is based around nanotechnology with the design intent and typology of traditional Maori architecture. Built on-site at Unitec, students are working at all levels of its construction, with Waiheke Island being its final destination.

Professor Nick Zangwill has spent three weeks at Unitec running a graduate course on aesthetics.

Laura Hughes and Campbell McNeill, second year Master of Architecture students at Unitec, have won the team award in the student design competition in the 2013 Dunedin Heritage Awards. The annual awards and competition is held by the Dunedin City Council.

NZIA Calender: May

Mon, 6th	6:30 – 7:30 p.m.	Teddy Cruz Engineering Lecture Theatre 439, Building 401, 20 Symonds Street
Wed, 8th	6:30 – 7:30 p.m.	Bijoy Jain, Studio Mumbai Engineering Lecture Theatre 439, Building 401, 20 Symonds Street
	12:35 - 1:30 p.m.	Scala Series: Thomas Stini, Urban Reconditioning Building 1, Room 2075, Unitec Institute of Technology
Tue, 14th	12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Mark Davey Auckland Art Gallery, Chartwell Gallery
Tue, 21st	12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Natalie Robertson Auckland Art Gallery Auditorium
Wed, 22nd	12:35 – 1:35 p.m.	Scala Series: Joel Cayford, Auckland's Regenerating Waterfront Building 1, Room 2075, Unitec Institute of Technology
Thu, 23rd	5:00 – 7:30 p.m.	Babbage CPD Seminar: Micro Urbanism and Environmental Ethics Babbage, Beach Road, Auckland
Fri, 24th	1:00 – 4:30 p.m.	NZIA Jacobsen Practice Series 2013 Stamford Plaza, 22-26 Albert Street