

# Earl of Seacliff

## Christmas Surprise 2010

Featuring new works by:

Michael O'Leary (Godfather, Editor in Chief)

B. E. Turner (Technical Editor)

Mark Pirie (Friend of the Family)

F W Nielsen Wright (Friend of the Family)



**Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop**  
**Paekakariki**  
**2010**

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Michael O’Leary, B E Turner, Mark Pirie  
and F W Nielsen Wright

The cover shows a work entitled ‘What a scream’ from the Earl of Seacliff’s exhibition ‘A Helen Clark Retrospective’ held in 2002 at One Eye Gallery, Paekakariki. The Earl is seen holding an original Edward Munch painting signed by Helen Clark. The photograph appears courtesy of the Dominion newspaper.

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*You may be a boy and you may be a girl  
You may be bald or you may have a curl  
You may dance a jig, waltz, or do a twirl  
But wherever you are in the world  
It's Christmas Surprise from the Earl*

## *Michael O'Leary*

### **An introduction to an introduction: from — Alternative Small Press Publishing in New Zealand an introduction, with particular reference to the years 1969 - 1999.**

Many of the principal protagonists in this survey are getting to an age where other interests and responsibilities, loss of memory, or even mortality itself threatens to make such intimate details which emerge from the questionnaires almost impossible to recreate if future studies were to be attempted. Unlike past generations who left behind diaries and correspondence, the communications revolution in the twentieth century means that many details now go unrecorded. Where someone like Keats or Wordsworth may have written to a publisher in relation to aspects concerning publication of a new volume of poetry, nowadays a poet will probably do the same thing by telephone or other electronic form of communication. It is highly unlikely that future scholars will be able to trace such phone calls, and even e-mails may be considered too ephemeral for preservation by many.

The question of what constitutes an 'alternative small press' and why some publishers were chosen to answer the questionnaire is important. As this study is seen by its author as the beginning of further research, rather than a definitive academic treatise, much of its methodology is tentative. In fact it is more akin to an oral history project than a conventional English thesis, in that its primary aim is to

capture the thoughts and ideas of the participants. Its value may be seen in the light of the death of one of the founders of a press which it was hoped could be included in the study: Don McKenzie of Wai-te-ata Press died during the preparation of this. People such as Bob Gormack (Nag's Head), Niel Wright (Original Books), Bernard Gadd (Hallard Press), Oz and Ruth Kraus (Brick Row) — all people who have contributed to small press publication in this country over the past thirty years — are at an age where their motivations and ideals could be lost to the public record.

What is “alternative” publishing, and who are the “establishment” they are providing an alternative to? These questions are not easily answered and there appears to be many cross-overs between several of the publishers who responded. Broadly there is three types of perceived establishment publishers: commercial, literary and academic. Other factors influence such classifications. For example, Huia Publishers, who on the face of it seem to be straight commercial publishers, are alternative because they were established in the face of what was a perceived Pākehā establishment of publishers. As Robyn Bargh states, in the response to the first question about becoming involved in publishing, she “set up Huia Publishers in 1991 because I considered that New Zealand literature did not adequately represent the views, values and attitudes of Māori people I knew.” Thus it is quite fitting that Huia should be included in a work on alternative publishing; and with a kaupapa which states that works published by Huia Publishers “have to contribute in some way to the development of Māori writers

or literary thought” her fight against the Pākehā ‘establishment’ seems set to continue.

Another form of alternative versus establishment publishing can be seen in the presses founded during the drive in the seventies for equality between men and women by members of the women’s liberation movement. Wendy Harrex of the New Womens Press was a prime mover in this field. Another important woman in the struggle to have women’s work taken seriously is poet Heather McPherson of the Spiral Collective. Early on in her career she realised that she would have to take up the fight against the male establishment when she told Leo Bensemann, then editor of *Landfall*, that she had a collection of poetry and would he look at them. “I mentioned that I had become a feminist. He said that Rita Cook - Rita Angus - had become a feminist ‘but it didn’t do her any good either.’”

Traditionally, however, when speaking about established versus alternative publishing, definitions need to be addressed. This is difficult, especially when talking about small press publishing in a diminutive market such as New Zealand. Two major categories emerge from the questionnaire respondents. Firstly, presses such as Alan Loney’s Hawk Press are dedicated to a type of production of literature using aesthetics as a guiding force for both presentation and selection of material. Loney states that “there was worthwhile poetry being written that was not getting published, and that books that were being published could be better designed and produced than was the case at the time.” This type of operation is often seen as the genuine expression of a “small

press” as their production methods include hand-setting of text and art house design standards.

Secondly, there are what is termed non-commercial presses such as One-Eyed Press and Amphedesma Press. These often arise out of situations where someone knows of a piece of writing that they think should be published but is unlikely to be touched by any commercial operation. These presses employ whatever technology is expedient to get the job done, hopefully at the lowest cost.

C.E.G. Moisa’s One-Eyed Press illustrates this. Moisa recalls “Mark [Williams] one day [saying] that he would have liked me to illustrate a book of poems that he was hoping to publish.” After looking around at options Moisa decided on approaching “a fast print place (IMPRINT) down where the bus depot is in down town Auckland.” He got a quote, published *Abecedary* and One-Eyed Press was born.

Meanwhile, at the same time twelve thousand miles away, Bill Manhire and Kevin Cunningham were engaged in similar activities establishing Amphedesma Press. Manhire explains how they used “office facilities (mostly the electric typewriters) to prepare photo-ready texts, and took them off to a local fast copy shop (these were just getting in London in the early 70’s). We bought our own cover card - mostly in the Tottenham Court Road at a place called Paperchase.”

I have tried to allude to a few of the many ‘alternatives’ in NZ publishing in this short introduction. Whether it be alternatives in technology, philosophy or literary taste and judgement it is hoped that the present document will provide a starting point for further study and discussion on the field of alternative publishing within the wider world of publishing



and writing produced in this country. The fact that I have chosen to present this material as a university thesis may appear incongruous to some. The main reason for doing this work within an academic framework is to have the endeavours of all these small press publishers recorded as part of a public archive.

The full text of this survey is available in book form from Steele Roberts (published in 2007) or it can be downloaded as a pdf at <http://www.earlofseacliff.co.nz>

## ***B E Turner***

### **Crossings**

Set: A table in a café.

Cast: JILL: Attractive and young.

JACK: Likewise.

FRANCISCO: A waiter.

*(Jack is sitting at the table with quark cheese and crackers. Jill enters. Jack rises and moves to adjust her chair.)*

JACK: I'm glad you came.

JILL: I'm quite capable of sitting without your assistance

Jack. *(Jack defers. Jill sits.)* You know how I feel about equality.

JACK: Of course. *(Pause)* Have some cheese, it's quite nice.

JILL: *(Picks up plate.)* What sort of cheese is this?

JACK: It's a cream cheese. Francisco recommended it.

JILL: Well that doesn't tell me what kind it is.

JACK: I don't know the name. All he said was that it was made from duck's milk. A cheese by any name would taste as sweet.

JILL: I didn't come here to listen to your ridiculous jokes. I don't want any cheese that comes from a duck. Coffee will do.

JACK: I've already ordered.

JILL: How do you know what I want?

JACK: Your usual. Latte with cinnamon.

JILL: Things have changed. I don't feel like latte today. Order me a small black.

JACK: You can have mine. *(Francisco arrives with coffees on a tray.)* I'll have the latte Francisco. Jill will have the black.

FRANCISCO: As you wish signor. (*Serves*) It is most pleasing to see you again Signorina. It is some time since you graced our establishment.

JILL: Things change Francisco.

FRANCISCO: Sadly. (*Goes*)

(*Silence*)

JILL: So. I'm here. Are we going to talk?

JACK: Talk? Yes. Have you been getting on all right?

JILL: Of course.

JACK: You don't miss me?

JILL: Would I miss you? (*Pause*) I've been getting back in touch with old friends.

JACK: So have I. I spent the weekend in the country.

JILL: How nice for you.

JACK: At the Levershams. Their animal farm.

JILL: A cut above you aren't they. I hear they train the ducks to say quark instead of quack.

JACK: Very droll.

(*Silence*)

JILL: Well are we going to talk?

JACK: We are. Chatting.

JILL: I didn't come here to chat. I thought you had something you wanted to talk about.

JACK: Not in particular.

JILL: Well what's the point in my coming here then?

JACK: I mean we have really broken up have we? There's no chance of us getting back together?

JILL: So that's why you asked... No I don't think there is. If that's what you're thinking of you're wasting your time. I had a relationship with you. I thought we might be together for life. That's all ended. My trust was betrayed. What more is there to know?!

JACK: I thought... it might be possible... to make a new start.

JILL: I don't want to make a new start. I don't want to live with a man who chases after every stray piece of skirt that he sees and then denies that he ever did it.

JACK: I told you I didn't chase after a stray piece...

JILL: No. You chased after my best friend. Penelope. And you never had the gumption to tell me the truth about the affair.

JACK: No. Penelope had the gumption.

JILL: I don't blame Penelope. Two pink gins and she's putty in any man's hands. You knew that full well and you took advantage of it.

JACK: I tell you, it never happened.

JILL: One thing I know is Penelope would never lie to me. But that's men for you. You men have been cheating on women since time began. Well now we are starting to stick up for ourselves and give you back what you deserve.

JACK: But I didn't do it.

JILL: *(A tremor of the voice)* It was the ultimate betrayal.

JACK: I... I...

JILL: How could I live with someone I could never trust? *(Takes out her handkerchief)* Excuse me. You've upset me. *(She goes – to the toilet – the opposite direction from her entry. Jack puts cheese on a cracker. Francisco comes to the table.)*

FRANCISCO: Signorina has a mote in her eye?

JACK: A veritable mote.

FRANCISCO: It is sad, is it not, when young lovers have a tiff.

JACK: Not a tiff Francisco. A termination.

FRANCISCO: Ah, you make me sad. But confide in me. Perhaps I can offer advice.

JACK: Advice from my waiter?

FRANCISCO: We waiters are eternal observers of the passing show.

JACK: Perhaps you are (*Pause*) Penelope told Jill that I'd gone to bed with her.

FRANCISCO: And you denied it?

JACK: Of course.

FRANCISCO: You should admit to your sin.

JACK: But I didn't go to bed with Penelope. I couldn't possibly live with her, she wears pink satin knickers.

FRANCISCO: Pink satin knickers are an anathema. But how does signor know that she wears them?

JACK: We had a fling. But it was after Jill and I broke up.

FRANCISCO: Signorina Penelope is fond of you?

JACK: She was. I didn't reciprocate. I told her to shove off.

FRANCISCO: Why do you think then that Penelope told your Jill a lie?

JACK: I don't know. I hadn't thought about it. I was so fuked out with the break up.

FRANCISCO: I believe I see a resolution in this. Do you think that Miss Penelope might want you for herself? Perhaps she was hoping to destroy your friendship with Signorina?

JACK: My God. The double-crossing bitch. That's why she plied me with Scotch whisky and cigars.

FRANCISCO: You see. If you look at the situation with equanimity you will find the answer.

JACK: Indeed.

FRANCISCO: And you now know what to do?

JACK: Yes. That is clear. I have to tell Jill a lie. So she will trust me forever.

FRANCISCO: But it is not really a lie.

JACK: No. (*Pause*) How do I do this?

FRANCISCO: I'm sure signor will find the answer.

*(Francisco goes. Jill returns.)*

JILL: I have to go.

JACK: Will you stay a moment? I have a confession.

JILL: You have a confession? Make it quick. *(Sits)*  
JACK: I want to admit that I went to bed with Penelope.  
JILL: So at last you tell the truth.  
JACK: I can't offer any explanation and I don't expect you to forgive me. I did something that was completely wrong. Completely outside the bounds of acceptable behaviour. If I ever fall in love again I shall never be unfaithful because I know what I have lost. All I can do is treasure memories now.  
JILL: Do you expect me to fall for that pile of crap?  
JACK: But it's what you wanted to hear.  
JILL: When you talk like that you are always telling a lie.  
JACK: So you know all about me do you?  
JILL: Enough. You never went to bed with Penelope at all.  
JACK: Oh yes I did. She lured me in with Scotch whisky and a cigar. You know what I'm like when I've had a couple of scotches. I'm putty in any woman's hands.  
JILL: The bitch.  
JACK: She's your best friend.  
JILL: She's a double-crossing bitch.  
JACK: How can you talk about Penelope like that?  
JILL: *(Pause)* Will you exchange coffees?  
JACK: I'll order fresh latte.  
JILL: And I'd like to try some of that cheese.

THE END

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Performed *Kapiti Players 2006*

Director: Irene Pearson  
Jack: Shay Evans  
Jill: Amanda Gatfield  
Francisco: John Walley

## *Mark Pirie*

### **Comedy**

At New Year,  
I often flick between  
cricket and Best Albums  
lists on Amazon.

In Comedy's Top 10  
Bob Dylan's listed  
for his first ever  
Christmas album.

Despite good intentions  
to feed the multitude,  
even at Christmas time,  
it seems the critics

won't let it pass  
them by. *Dylan?*  
*Christmas sing-along?*  
*What's he doing?*

The great can't  
escape the carping.  
But the poor, the struggling  
do escape starving.

## 10 Popigrams

### **WILD CHILD**

Iggy Pop deserves his name;  
Now he's in the Hall of Fame.

### **OBSERVATION II**

Lady Ga Ga drives them wild  
In tights, she's to be admired.

### **TOPS**

Katy Perry tops the Maxim One Hundred;  
Her bust leaves them all astounded.

### **DEFINITELY MAYBE**

The Oasis brothers have split now and then;  
But now these Beatle lovers won't play again.

### **BA(N)D NEWS**

John Frusciante breaks the Chili Peppers;  
Cracks them hard, where it matters.



## **PEACE MATES (ONLY)**

Ringo Starr references Lennon  
Remembering a former bed-in.

## **GLAMOUR GIRLS**

Courtney Love is nobody's daughter  
And so is Marie Antoinette.

## **I O U 2**

Bono's back costs the band 150 million;  
But what's money to them.

## **ON MADNESS**

J D Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*  
Was why John Lennon *had* to die.

## **TOPS III**

Katy Perry dressed up as a "candy whore"  
Sped to her flight; changing's such a bore.

## At the New Zealand Cricket Museum

i

Watching a video of Bevan Congdon;  
Then stepping outside I actually see him.

ii

Older in suit and tie, he isn't batting.  
But what chance this my sole meeting.

iii

Against India he'd looked in command.  
Powerful strokes, best when he captained.

iv

Oh age is what breaks a cricketer,  
Now playing days are for the younger.

*NZ v. India, Test Match, Basin Reserve, 2009*

## **Sonnet for Simon Elliott**

Watching Simon Elliott play Slovakia, Italy and Paraguay, now the veteran at 36, makes me remember old school days. Once after school I trained with the First XI, with Simon holding the ball up. I ran in to try and tackle him but couldn't get near the ball. A sign of unusual skill even then. I followed his career closely, saw him upset Australia as he helped take the All Whites to the Confederations Cup. After American MLS medals he moved on to London club Fulham. He was at the forefront of most midfields he partnered, whether for club or country. In his career he's done it all. Seeing him and his team-mates make history was magical.

*F W Nielsen Wright*

**ODE TO ROMANCE**

What future for a princess young ?  
    In a world of shifting yin and yang,  
Survival as much as disaster  
    As with her mother's elder sister.

So asked poet expert and old ;  
    Half guessing ; what he might behold  
Thereafter ; as affairs turn nasty  
    For the Ptolemaic dynasty.

So Moschus wrote of Physkon's daughter :  
    Selene : child of old aged doter,  
Moschus himself in age a poet  
    With only dreams : to occupy it ;

How far Selene might yet roam  
    Lands of romance, with Julia Rome  
With Specularius Meroe  
    And his companion : doughty Heroe ;

Lately arrived in Alexandria  
From regions further south and drier ;  
The prince accompanying tutor,  
Through Egypt Nubia few astuter.

Philosopher, princess and prince  
High mounted ; might to glory prance ;  
A threesome destined : to conjoin  
Line of descent for Prester John.

Such a romance feeds mystery,  
Concomitant with history.

## LOVE CHILD

In half brother of mine : love child  
Of our father invincible  
I see my only shelter, shield.

For half brother of mine : love child  
Our father's love remained : unchilled  
Through action without principle.

Was half brother of mine : love child  
Of our father invincible.

## CHANNEL

In Phrygia ancient Europe lies ;  
As origin and oracle  
To queries gives primal replies.  
In Phrygia ancient Europe lies.  
Twixt us and pasts so distant plies  
The seaways open coracle.

In Phrygia ancient Europe lies,  
As origin and oracle.

## WELL MIGHT

As viceroy was Physkon empowered :  
    In Cyrenaica to embed  
A regime permanently stable

    As viceroy was Physkon empowered :  
Gainst pirates and desert marauders  
To guard the coast ; and fix the borders.

    As viceroy was Physkon empowered ;  
To stabilise the watertable.

To Apion : his son he passed  
    Office for life : the viceroy's post.  
The model colony was seen  
    Thus Cyrenaica under sun.  
Well might Selene : namely moon  
    Find refuge in so far domain.

## BY NAME

From Cyrenaica : by name  
    Pentapolis, Thaisa came ;  
    Whose fate was overcome  
In Shakespeare by enorm  
    A storm of birth uncalm.  
Byname such as the moon's :  
    To send a poet loony,  
    Maybe was hers : Selene :  
The princess of romance.

## EXUL AFER

Where Marius at Carthage  
    Amid the ruins sat ;  
So desolate the site  
    Not even sheep trace path edge.

Once Marius at Carthage  
    Shared ruin without pathage  
Across an empire's seat ;  
    Wiped utterly from sight.

So Marius at Carthage  
    Amid the ruins sat.