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MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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MESSAGE
FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

The University of Melbourne has always been an exciting centre for the life of the mind. Across every profession and discipline, great scholars, great teachers and great researchers have created a community that shapes the thinking of those who come to learn.

In future years the University hopes to stand out even more in the Australian higher education landscape. Put simply, we seek to offer the best professional education in the country, at graduate level, and outstanding undergraduate degrees, based on multidisciplinary learning.

Meanwhile our research community, tightly woven in with this major teaching effort, is forging ahead and continues to position us as number one among research universities nationwide.

In so many ways, these are exciting times. New research infrastructure and teaching precincts are emerging across the University, while innovative research partnerships are being formed to solve real-world problems.

Perhaps even more importantly, our sense of community grows. Melbourne alumni from past generations are increasingly networked and in touch with us, around the globe. Last year I met with alumni at events in London, China, Malaysia and Singapore, and many locations around Australia. More formally, the inaugural Alumni Council was elected to give our graduates a further, ongoing voice in our community’s affairs.

Today, amid a changing institutional landscape, the University of Melbourne remains devoted to intellectual excellence. As we seek to become even better at all we do, our past students have a vital and continuing role to play as part of our community. As Vice-Chancellor, I am deeply grateful for your continuing interest, involvement and enthusiasm.

Glyn Davis
Vice-Chancellor
Greetings to all from wintry Melbourne! I am delighted to serve as the inaugural President of the Alumni Council and pursue our quest to strengthening the links and level of engagement between alumni and our university. We look forward to harnessing our collective skills, to advocating for alumni and working to assist the University to achieve its goals. I’m pleased to introduce my fellow Alumni Council members to you, along with their story about what the University of Melbourne means to them. As a Council we will lead by example in sharing our thinking, networks, and resources to benefit the Melbourne community, comprising students, staff and alumni.

Enrolling at the University in 1960 was probably the most longed-for and exciting experience of my life to that point – a kind of liberation. Aside from the enriching content of academic subjects, exposure to the highest standards of scholarship provided inspiration that has guided my life and work.

David Hill, AO (BA 1964, MA 1975, PhD 1985)

Throwing paper airplanes off the Old Engineering building; packing into the MCG on a Friday night; trams that ran on time and trains that didn’t; St Kilda Rd littered with leaves in autumn; buskers competing for your loose change at Bourke St mall.

James Brooks (BE 2005)

Happy memories of laughter in North Court and students lazing on the south lawn; cheers from the oval; eccentric professors; stunning grounds and buildings with a sense of history; a desire to learn and endless hours in the Bailleul Library; and most of all, life-long friendships.

Clare Cummins (BCom 1985)

Melbourne Uni helped shape my life. The friendships within my close-knit course endure, and fellow students across different faculties are still central to my personal and professional networks and supports today. And I met my future wife at Melbourne. So, much to be thankful for.

Joseph Doyle (MBBS 2002, BA(Hons) 2005)

Higher education and research are public goods. Along with other tertiary institutions, the University of Melbourne continues to encourage intellectual enquiry, and so contributes to the health and growth of our society. I hope as alumni we can advocate for high quality tertiary education, available to all members of society.

Michael Symons (LLB(Hons), BCom, DipArts(Hist) 2006, LLM 2011)

The excitement of signing up for tutorials at the beginning of the year followed by days spent at the Bailleul Library studying for exams; the peaceful daily walk along Royal Parade from International House. The university was a great multi-cultural place to meet and foster friendships which I keep till today.

Rachel K Teo (BCom 1991, PGDipEco 1992)

To gain a better understanding of your needs, we are pleased to launch the 2012 Alumni Preferences Survey. This important survey gives you an opportunity to tell us what matters to you. The more you tell us, the better we can serve your interests. What’s more, you could win one of three iPads along the way!

Using your feedback, the Council will be working, together with the Alumni Relations team to keep you informed and create an exciting suite of alumni benefits, services and activities. I encourage you to complete the survey before 1 September 2012.

With best wishes
Ros Otzen (BA(Hons) 1967, GDipEd 1969, PhD 1987)

PS Learn more about the Council and its activities online at alumni.unimelb.edu.au/get-involved/alumni-council
YOUR ALUMNI COMMUNITY

This time last year we were forming the Alumni Council, a body ready to respond to the challenge of representing a large and diverse alumni network.

The August elections were a success, with over 6,000 votes cast for 42 candidates. The Council ushers in a new era of alumni representation, with a talented, ambitious and dedicated group already beginning to explore how it can serve the alumni community.

2012 marks several significant milestones including the Melbourne Medical School’s 150th anniversary, the 40th anniversaries of the Ian Potter Museum of Art and the Victorian College of the Arts, and the 10th anniversary of the School of Film and Television. It has never been easier to be part of your alumni community, with over 150 events planned this year alone including lectures, exhibitions, career development opportunities, alumni forums, and social, arts and sporting activities (find out more on page 6). There are loads of podcasts and video presentations available to watch online, opportunities to mentor and host students, and alumni groups to join. The Vice-Chancellor invites your contributions to his blog (vcblog.unimelb.edu.au) and the Alumni Relations team is keen to hear from you (details are on the back cover).

Congratulations to all the alumni who have achieved great things during the past 12 months. From Olympians and Australia Day and Queen’s Birthday honours recipients; to recipients of major awards and scholarships across science, technology, medical research, architecture, the arts and the humanities; your contributions make us proud, and reinforce the immense talent and impact that the University community continues to exert over time.

Finally, my thanks to all who have contributed time, stories and expertise to this edition.

I hope you enjoy what’s inside – you’ll find expanded versions of some stories in the online edition at mag.alumni.unimelb.edu.au

Leonie Boxtel
Director, Alumni Relations & Communications

Melbourne University helped shape my career, many of my friendships and professional relationships and my legal sector work in Asia. As an alumnus, I have the opportunity to be part of the University’s global network and its ambitious future, together with three of my children who are also graduates.

David Laidlaw (LLB 1975)

Melbourne is where creativity merges with cultural diversity and innovation. It is also a place of possibilities and achievement, where after a morning row along the Yarra, I would head over to John Medley to fill my head with information, then meet with classmates over a world-class coffee in the evening.

Niki Calastas (MA 2004)

Nine of the best years of my life were spent studying at the University of Melbourne, a thriving metropolis with a dynamic community and culture of its own. My time at Cambridge also taught me how important alumni are to the continued growth of a university’s community.

Misty Jenkins (BSc(Hons) 2001, PhD 2007)

Melbourne University is about learning and exploring, whether it’s talking with a lecturer, or up on the stage of the Union House Theatre, the choices for inspiration are limitless. What Melbourne means to me is a lifestyle worth living, and most importantly, friends and family for life.

Mike Yang (BCom 2005)

University opened the door to my career as an educator, and to lifelong friendships and connections. Always in love with learning, I saturated myself in knowledge in several fields, especially Australian history. I thank Geoffrey Blainey and Lloyd Robson for inspiring a thirst for our own stories, which I still indulge in exploring.

Ros Otzen (BA(Hons) 1967, GDipEd 1969, PhD 1987)

Exciting academic stimulation, college life, a rich clinical learning environment and the development of lifelong friendships define what Melbourne means to me. A career in predominately clinical private practice was set-up by my Melbourne experience and my connection continues and evolves.

Jennifer Stillman (BVSc(Hons) 1984, MVSc 1992)

alumni.unimelb.edu.au
The University has a rich history of pioneering research and technological development and we remain at the forefront of innovation in Australia.

In 2011 the University confirmed its position as a research leader both nationally and in the global arena. Early in 2011 the Excellence in Research for Australia results rated over 99 per cent of Melbourne’s research as at or above world standard. The University of Melbourne’s research was found to account for an astonishing 18 per cent of all Australian research output classified as well above world standard.

Higher education institutions around the world are coming to the realisation that many of society’s most difficult problems cannot be addressed within single fields of endeavour. The depth of talented researchers across the sciences, arts, and social sciences is one of the globally recognised strengths of this University, as are our strong and valued affiliations with external research, community, industry and government organisations, each of which brings additional richness to our research community.

Research at this University takes many different forms and impacts on lives in many different ways: from breakthrough discoveries in immunology and astrophysics to authoritative evidence-based contributions to government policy in fields such as law, education, economics; partnership-applied research with commercial and industry partners; and creative contributions to the national cultural sphere.

The sheer quantity of life-sciences research facilities, institutes, researchers, fellows and postgraduate students in the Parkville Precinct and surrounds, and the comprehensive breadth of bioscience disciplines, are without parallel in the southern hemisphere and one of the very few such concentrations of research excellence worldwide. Complementing the Parkville Precinct are emerging new precincts in the physical sciences, the social sciences, and the creative and performing arts in the strategically located Southbank arts hub.

The University expended $767.5 million on research activities in 2010, with approximately $355 million of this coming from various external funding sources, including state and federal government, industry, donor and international support. We received the highest amount nationally from the Australian Research Council (ARC) in Discovery Project Grants ($37.6 million), and the second highest nationally in National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Project Grants ($52.6 million).

Excellence in research forms a key part of our identity and competitive edge in the higher education sector, and this is reflected also in the achievements of our affiliated institutions. Maintaining this tradition, and further lifting our research quality, is a major aspiration for the University.

2011 marked a major milestone for the University and graduate education in Australia. We welcomed the first intake of students to new masters-level programs designed for entry into professional fields.

New degrees in Medicine, Dental Surgery, Optometry, Physiotherapy, Veterinary Medicine and Engineering joined masters-level programs in Law, Teaching, Architecture and other professional fields. As anticipated, over 60 per cent of the 2010 graduates of the new bachelor degrees proceeded to further study in 2011. A number of the new programs have already gained important forms of national and international accreditation, and in 2011 the Engineering program gained EUR-ACE accreditation at Masters level, offering recognition for graduates as professional engineers throughout continental Europe.

New developments in higher education are emerging at a rapid rate, and the 2011 Provost Summit provided an opportunity for new Director of eLearning Associate Professor Gregor Kennedy to lead a vigorous discussion with academic staff on emerging trends and possibilities in the use of technology in higher education.

The Leaders in Medical Education (LIME) Network project was awarded the inaugural Rio Tinto Innovation and Excellence Award in recognition of its exceptional support of Indigenous curriculum development and teaching, and the Vice-Chancellor’s Colloquium celebrated outstanding teaching staff recognised by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council.

It was heartening to observe the growth and success of the Alumni Welcome to Melbourne program, which, in its third year has experienced a five-fold increase in the number of students and hosts wanting to take part. The program aims to enrich the Melbourne experience for newly arrived AusAID scholarship students by pairing them with an alumnus host for a home-cooked meal.

Our students continue to embrace opportunities to enrich communities near and far. In January Engineering student Marita Cheng was named the 2012 Young Australian of the Year for her work on Robogals, and in 2011 the Photoholics Photography Club in collaboration with the Student Ambassador Leadership Program (SALP) showed their support for the Loddon Shire in Victoria, which was devastated by flooding in early 2011.

Back on campus, the redevelopment of the Baillieu and Giblin Eunson libraries and the creation of new student centres and learning spaces transformed the look and feel of the University. These improvements will equip our future students with the tools and environment to achieve their best in years to come.
Recently I have witnessed some of the most remarkable, impactful and transformational activities taking place across the University in teaching and learning, research and engagement. Activities that continue to attract excellent students, produce globally aware citizens and contribute positively to the community: activities which, in 2011, helped the University to extend and develop its international outlook.

Global interest in our new generation degrees grew, with a 24 per cent increase in international graduate coursework students accepting a place at the University and a 27 per cent increase in international research higher degree students. Among these, 85 different nationalities were represented, seven more than in 2010.

At the same time, we continued to be a leader in outbound mobility, sending more students to study abroad than any other Australian university. The development of innovative programs such as Travelling Studios and the Global Business Practicums coupled with enhanced opportunities in existing programs resulted in a 41 per cent increase in student participation. And while inbound study abroad and exchange remained steady, we saw an increase in numbers of students from Asia and Europe.

Meanwhile, back on campus, students were treated to a number of multicultural events including the launch of the Global Interdependence Movement and the Global Perspectives Summit. The wider community was invited to participate in the second biannual Festival of Ideas. Investigating the theme ‘The Pursuit of Identity’, the Festival recorded 8,000 attendees with a further 6,000 streaming online from 15 countries.

The Australia India Institute (AII) presented two successful international conferences for the year; the first in Melbourne and the second in Kolkata, India. Both featured prominent speakers including Indian Parliamentarian the Hon. Dr Shashi Tharoor, and Justice Markandey Katju from the Indian Press Council.

Still in India, the India-Australia Collaboration in Community Mental Health was established, to address the current treatment gap in mental illness. The project will draw on technical expertise from Asia-Australia Mental Health, a consortium of the University’s Department of Psychiatry, Asialink and St Vincent’s Health, and delivered in partnership with the AII.

These examples provide a mere glimpse of the impressive work coming out of the University in 2011.

To find out more, I invite you to visit the Engagement website at engagement.unimelb.edu.au
GETTING INVOLVED

EXPLORE THE WONDERS OF ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA – ON US!

The Melbourne Museum’s latest exhibition brings together stunning artefacts from one of the world’s great ancient civilisations. The Wonders of Ancient Mesopotamia explores an era of extraordinary invention and innovation, and features many pieces from the world famous Middle East collection of the British Museum. On Sunday 26 August from 8.30 - 10.30am, alumni receive free and exclusive entry to the exhibition and themed activities. Secure your tickets at alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/MuseumVicAug2012 or call the Alumni Relations team on +61 3 8344 1746

UNIVERSITY OPEN DAY

For alumni with school-aged children or those considering further study themselves, Open Day on Sunday 19 August is a great way to explore what’s on offer in 2013. A visit to the Parkville and Southbank campuses will also highlight the many upgrades to facilities. More information online at openday.unimelb.edu.au

ALUMNI REUNIONS – WHEN’S YOURS?

Reconnect with friends and staff, revisit your old campus, and get an up-close look at how the University has changed since you left. To see if you have a reunion coming up or to get involved, visit alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/reunions or call the Alumni Relations team on +61 3 8344 1746

What Matters?
Your views matter to us. Complete the alumni survey at survey.alumni.unimelb.edu.au You could win an iPad too.

Worldwide network
Of the 288,000+ alumni worldwide, 36,000 live and work overseas, spread over more than 140 countries.

FULL EVENTS
100s of events, worldwide, year-round. View the full listing at alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au

EXPAND YOUR NETWORK
Engage with fellow alumni through the Alumni Facebook page or build your professional network by joining one of our LinkedIn groups (including North America and Asia-Pacific region groups). Start networking at alumni.unimelb.edu.au/my-network/social-media
ALUMNI WELCOME TO MELBOURNE PROGRAM

If you’ve ever started life in a new city, or just passed through on your travels, you’ll know the impact a local connection can have on your experience: the difference between scratching the surface of a new city and feeling at home in the community.

Many alumni have signed-up to host an international AusAID student and help them get settled in their new surrounds. All you need to do is ask them over for dinner – it’s a small amount of effort, but it means a lot to new students.

Take part at alumni.unimelb.edu.au/get-involved/volunteering/welcome-melbourne or call the Alumni Relations team on +61 3 8344 1746

18,000 Get involved
18,000 alumni got involved between 2011-12.

A LITTLE CAN GO A LONG WAY

Your time, talent or treasure can have an impact on others, wherever in the world you might be. Get involved by mentoring students, joining your local alumni association, or by briefing new international students in your home country. Get involved at alumni.unimelb.edu.au/get-involved/welcome-melbourne

ILLUMINATE YOUR INTELLECT

Continue learning at the University of Melbourne. Access thousands of online journals and databases, view lecture podcasts, listen to audio interviews and enrol in discounted single subject study.

Find everything you need to know at alumni.unimelb.edu.au/benefits-services

FAST-TRACK YOUR CAREER

Network with like-minded people, establish industry connections and map your career opportunities.

Visit unimelb.edu.au/alumni/leadershipseries to find out about events held in Melbourne, Beijing, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Shanghai and Singapore.

A SMALL AMOUNT OF EFFORT...
**BOOKS**

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AUSTRALIAN ARCHITECTURE
EDITED BY PROFESSOR PHILIP GOAD AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JULIE WILLIS (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2012)

Professor Goad (BArch(Hons) 1984, PhD 1993) and Associate Professor Willis (BPD 1989, BArch(Hons) 1992, BPD(Arch) 1992, PhD 1997) bring together a wealth of new scholarship on the history of Australian architecture.

ENGINEER TO MARVELLOUS MELBOURNE: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF WILLIAM THWAITES BY DR ROBERT D LA NAUZE (AUSTRALIAN SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING, 2012)

Dr La Nauze (BE(ChemEng) 1968, PhD 1973) provides a compelling account of the evolution of Melbourne’s water and sewerage systems, focusing on the life of engineer William Thwaites.

KINGLAKE-350 BY ADRIAN HYLAND (TEXT PUBLISHING, 2011)

Three years after the worst bushfire disaster in Australian history, Adrian Hyland (BA 1976) has woven together events from Black Saturday to explore the consequences of a terrifying event on family, community and country life.

ALL THAT I AM BY ANNA FUNDER (PENGUIN AUS. 2011)

Based on real people and real events, Anna Funder’s (BA(Hons) 1988, LLB(Hons) 1991, MA(CrWrtg) 2002) first novel is a moving account of the risks and sacrifices people make for the sake of their beliefs. All That I Am was named the ABA Book of the Year 2012, winner of the Barbara Jefferis Award 2012, and shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Award 2012.

**THEATRE & DANCE**

THE HISTRIONIC, BY DANIEL SCHLUSER

Director Daniel Schlusser (MDramArt Direction 2011) shaped this wry drama at the Malthouse around the protean genius of Billie Brown, while the inimitable Barry Otto’s beleaguered inkeeper attempts to meet some absurd demands.

KAGE PHYSICAL THEATRE – SUNDOWNER, BY KATE DENBOROUGH AND GERARD VAN DYCK

KAGE creative directors Kate Denborough (BDance 1994) and Gerard van Dyck (BDance 1995) produced a major work combining dance, drama and original composition to reflect the experiences and frustrations of younger onset dementia.

**Film & Television**

LEMONADE STAND, BY ALETHEA JONES

This year’s winning Tropfest film was directed by Alethea Jones (BFTV 2007), written by and starred Tim Potter (BA 2004, BDramArt 2007), and produced by alumnus Julian Costanzo.

PARTISAN, BY ARIEL KLEIMAN

Alumnus Ariel Kleiman has been honoured with a Mahindra Global Filmmaking Award for his feature screenplay Partisan, as part of the 2012 Sundance Film Festival. To be produced by Warp Film under Kleiman’s direction.

‘BIG IDEAS’, BY WALEED ALY

Waleed Aly (BEChemEng(Hons), LLB(Hons) 2002) hosts ‘Big Ideas’, which debates intellectual, political, cultural and economic issues in Australia on ABC1 and ABC News 24.

**Music**

AFFECTIONATE, BY ANDREA KELLER

Andrea Keller (BMus Perff(Hons) 2001) composed the winner of the Jazz Work of the Year category at the 2012 Art Music Awards.

GARDENER OF TIME (TOKI NO ENTEI), BY PROFESSOR BARRY CONYNGHAM

Professor Conyngham’s (DMus 1979) symphonic tribute to Hiroyuki Iwaki (1932-2006) had its World Premiere when performed by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra at the Melbourne Town Hall in November 2011.

**SYMPHONY NO. 2 – DOUBLE PLANET, BY DR STUART GREENBAUM**

Dr Stuart Greenbaum’s (BMus(Hons) 1988, MMus 1992, PhD 2000) symphony received its premiere when performed by the University of Melbourne Orchestra at the Melbourne Recital Centre in May 2012.

**Art**

THE KNITTED WORKS 2004-2011, BY KATE JUST

Artist and VCA lecturer Kate Just’s (BFA 2002) tactile sculptures and installations were exhibited at the Ararat Regional Art Gallery throughout Winter 2012.

FAIRY TALES, MONSTERS AND THE GENETIC IMAGINATION, BY PATRICIA PICCININI

VCA alumna Patricia Piccinini contributed works depicting humanlike, animal or hybrid creatures to this North American exhibition, which was inspired by the lore, psychology, ethics and visions of the future of science and science fiction.

**Fashion**

ALUMNUS BECOMES NEW QANTAS FASHION DESIGNER

Paris-based fashion designer and alumnus Martin Grant will design the new Qantas uniforms. He is one of only two Australian members in the Federation Française de la Couture – the French fashion industry governing body.
Few recent drama graduates could boast receiving an invitation to audition from legendary Australian director Baz Luhrmann. Even fewer could lay claim to being cast for the part. For 21-year-old Melbourne actress and Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) alumna Elizabeth Debicki, it’s an experience that she is unlikely to forget.

Indeed, cast in the role of Jordan Baker for Luhrmann’s Hollywood remake of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby in early 2011 – alongside Leonardo DiCaprio, Tobey Maguire, Carry Mulligan and fellow Australians Joel Edgerton and Isla Fischer – Debicki’s rise to film’s biggest stage has been more rapid than even she could have imagined.

“I sent in a tape from Australia and, as with most auditions, tried not to think about it after that,” she recalls. “I received a phone call about a month later, telling me that Baz would like me to test for the part of Jordan. I flew to LA and auditioned in the flesh, and flew home straight after. “It was very, very surreal, and with the amount of adrenaline pumping through my veins I’m surprised I remember any of it at all.”

Currently based in Los Angeles, Debicki describes the experience as a ‘whirlwind’ befitting a ‘more than ample learning curve. “You cannot prepare for the unknown,” she says. “You can work on technical things as an actor – dialect, research of the period – but that is all textbook stuff in a way. When you get on set, it all sort of flies away and you learn to be in the moment and work with whatever comes your way, whatever is required of you to make the scene work, to tell the story.”

Debicki’s love for acting runs deep. Her enrolment at the VCA in 2008 – where she was awarded the Richard Pratt Bursary for outstanding acting students in the second year of study in 2009 – followed a childhood marked by a love of theatre, dance and music.

Born in Paris, she moved with her family to Australia when she was five. She learnt to dance from a young age and fell in love with the stories of classical ballet, which she cites as having a profound effect on her as a person and an actor. She recalls going to see The Australian Ballet’s performance of Giselle, which would become a favourite. “I was obsessed with the performers who danced the part of the Willis, the dead lovers who have died from broken hearts. I suppose that’s a little macabre but it’s a brilliant, epic idea made manifest in white tutus.”

Being onstage “always felt natural and the most inspiring place”, but as she matured, Debicki’s interest shifted increasingly toward the theatre and the power of the live performance. “There is nothing like the electricity that can be generated in the theatre,” she urges.

She recalls her time at the VCA with great fondness and credits the teaching staff with nurturing and shaping her career in a positive direction. “VCA drama was my home for three years,” she says. “I was taught by some incredible teachers, experienced so many varied styles of theatre training. I was surrounded by amazing, interesting people and took in so much new information every day. It was a very solid, diverse training, I am very grateful for my experiences at VCA.

“As Tanya Gerstle (MDramArt 2008) said to my company early on in our training, everything is information, everything and everyone has an effect on you when you are in a state of learning and training.”

It’s a mantra she has applied to her short but extremely active career since. Whether it was making her filmic debut in the role of Maureen in the Australian-British comedy A Few Best Men (2012), or working alongside DiCaprio, Maguire and the like in The Great Gatsby (to be released internationally late this year), it has all been part of a wider education.

“Oh of course, I had never worked on anything of that scale before Gatsby,” she says. “It was an incredible learning experience and there was a lot of wisdom to be reaped from everybody I worked with on the film.”

“I was very blessed to work and spend time with such an incredible cast.”

But while acquiring knowledge at large is fundamental to any field or craft, her advice to fellow VCA students centres on an area a little closer to home.

“Nobody can be you, think like you, sound or dance like you,” she urges. “Sometimes I think as students we can get caught up trying to emulate…but the most powerful thing you have to offer your art form is your individual self.”

The Great Gatsby is released internationally in late 2012 and will debut in Australia in 2013.

Watch the trailer online at mag.alumni.unimelb.edu.au
WORKING IN HARMONY
Tim Adam sits in the sun-filled dining room of his home in Melbourne’s leafy east, slowly explaining the connection between singing and learning how to speak again. Talking still requires some concentration, but his voice is clear and – for the most part – he gets his point across. His wife Julie sits beside him, politely offering extra information when Tim falters.

Twenty-two months ago, Tim – a personal injury lawyer who specialised in cases of acquired brain injury – had a stroke. In his gentle, accepting manner, he acknowledges the irony. “For the first few days, it was touch and go,” he explains. He survived; his speech didn’t. After more than a year of perseverance, Tim managed to regain considerable speaking ability. “Nothing like he is now,” says Julie. “More like, individual words.”

Last year, through a friend, he heard of a study by PhD candidate Dawn Merrett. It involved a singing program for patients with specific types of speech loss – or aphasia. Tim signed up. As well as regularly meeting with Dawn to go through specially designed singing exercises, Tim also diligently practised for one hour a night. Within just eight weeks, Tim had already experienced a measurable improvement in his speech. And his brain scans – taken before and after the therapy – had started to ‘light up’ in areas more associated with speech patterns in a ‘normal’ brain.

Unlike the image of a man painfully struggling to make small gains, for Tim singing therapy seems to offer a genuinely uplifting experience. He now sings as part of the Aphasic Choir, who meet – and sing – every week. Skill levels vary among the participants: some can sing, but can’t speak. Those who can’t do either still try to hum along.

Not only does singing help with his speech, Tim really enjoys the choir, and seems animated when he discusses it. Even remembering the song lyrics doesn’t present a problem. To demonstrate, he sings a phrase from the Everly Brothers ‘Bye, Bye, Love’ – “It’s all there in my vast knowledge of ... songs,” he says.

Julie laughs, “Of course, a lot of the songs [the choir sings] are all very well known.” But, she says, contrary to expectation, choir members have also shown they can learn new songs.

And while scientists have known since the 1970s that singing can help in the recovery of language after a stroke, how or why such ‘neuroplastic’ change happens is what Merrett, under the supervision of Associate Professor Sarah Wilson, is examining. Tim Adam has become one of a number of people caught up in a revolutionary new way of looking at the intersection of music, neuroscience and social science. The project is a truly interdisciplinary collaboration between the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, the School of Psychological Sciences and the Melbourne Neuroscience Institute at the University of Melbourne.

It’s known simply as Music, Mind and Wellbeing.

Music is a very good way to look after your mental health ... And it’s a very natural way of doing it.

Notes From a Pioneer In the late 1970s, Veronica Cosgrove (BMus(Perf) 1982) found herself at the leading edge of a new area of study: Music Therapy. Read about her experience online at mag.alumni.unimelb.edu.au
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SARAH WILSON HAD ALWAYS DREAMED OF USING SCIENCE TO HELP MUSICIANS IMPROVE THEIR CRAFT.

“How can we use science to inform high-calibre musicians to practise better and play better and perform better?” Wilson explains.

At first the professor in clinical neuropsychology – now director of Music, Mind and Wellbeing – envisaged something like a musical equivalent of the Australian Institute of Sport. But after working with Associate Professor Neil McLachlan, Wilson’s vision of this ‘institute’ began to broaden. McLachlan, a scientist and musician who had spent many years working in various community settings, was also interested in the scientific approach to music. But McLachlan didn’t just want to help great musicians get better; his dream was to make music accessible to everyone.

The ball was rolling. Pretty soon the idea had become visionary. Why not try to extend an understanding of the value of music throughout society.

Wilson has another parallel from the sports arena: “You know if you think about the Auskick model … the families go down to the oval, the kids play, but everyone’s down there and everyone’s involved, and they’re involved from a young age …

And just as sport is a nuanced activity, so too is music. There is much benefit to be gained from a musical society. Not least in terms of general wellbeing. “Music is a very good way to look after your mental health,” says Wilson. “And it’s a very natural way of doing it.”

The next crucial step in the project’s evolution was the appointment of Professor Gary McPherson as head of the Conservatorium. McPherson happens to have a social-science background, so the idea of a meeting of minds across disciplines was not a foreign concept.

So the fledgling group – whose founding members also include the Head of the National Music Therapy Research Institute Professor Denise Grocke (MMus 1987, PhD 1999) and Dr Katrina McFerran (BMus (Hons) 1993, PhD 2002) from the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music – applied for, and won, an interdisciplinary research grant. Music, Mind and Wellbeing was born.

Now, the Music, Mind and Wellbeing initiative is examining things as diverse as how music can help kids do better academically, how music can be taught so that more people want to learn it, how elite musicians can overcome performance anxiety, and more broadly, why is music central to human life?

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR NEIL MCLAUCHLAN IS REHABILITATING THE IMAGE OF THE HUMBLE PERCUSSION INSTRUMENT.

In 2001, McLachlan, along with Anton Hassel, launched a unique art installation. Dubbed ‘the Federation Bells’, it’s a sound-sculpture/carillon comprising 39 large, upturned bells played with computer-controlled hammers. But the bells are much more than mere novelty; they are the first percussive instruments to have harmonic overtones.

McLachlan has since extrapolated the idea of harmonic bells to some new instrument prototypes. The benefit? Anyone should find these easy to play. Moreover, these instruments can allow beginner musicians to skip straight to one of the more enjoyable musical experiences: playing as part of a harmonious ensemble; something that with more complicated instruments and music notation would take years of practice.

McLachlan’s ideas on shaking up how music is taught come in part from the fact that he has always been an “outsider” in the musical world. As a self-taught musician, he became interested in different – non-Western – approaches to learning music.

After graduating with a PhD (in physics) he became involved in a music and dance ensemble that borrowed Indonesian, African and Indian performance practices – but developed their own instruments and content. At the same time the troupe was applying the latest theories about harmony and ‘music cognition’.

“We were exploring the potential of music based on science … as a way of integrating a range of different musical cultures,” McLachlan explains.

“Over that period of time I refined a series of approaches to music education, which are very different from the traditional music education system. Because in all of those countries, particularly in Indonesia and Africa, you have really high engagement levels in music making in the community. And that’s what the music’s about.”

Because this music is based on percussion, says McLachlan, you don’t need the fine motor skills to play it straight away.

McLachlan has now patented a number of instruments, and one has even found its place in pop culture. “Gotye actually has one of my instruments,” he reveals. But he continues to work on funding to get the instruments into broader circulation.

In collaboration with Associate Professor Wilson, McLachlan has also worked on a neuroscience study into the recognition of pitch. In the study, Western trained musicians unfamiliar with the instrument were asked to find the pitch of an Indonesian gamelan, which sounds dissonant to Western ears. Western musicians trained in gamelan were also asked to gauge the pitch.

The results? The gamelan trained musicians found the pitch accurately, the musicians unfamiliar with the instrument could not. It proved that pitch was not ‘innate’. It was learned.

McLachlan explains: “What we are actually finding from our neuroscience research is that, unless people actually engage with making music, they don’t understand music … We’re presenting a very radical new understanding of how Western music works.”

For more information about the Music, Mind and Wellbeing initiative visit cmmw.unimelb.edu.au
The walls of the lounges are covered in a markable surface so that two researchers talking about their work can jot their thoughts down without having to interrupt the flow by hunting for pen and pencil. Every Tuesday, an auditorium hosts a series of seminars where researchers update their colleagues of their findings. Lectures from visiting researchers are held from time to time, as are seminars for the public.

Of course, collaboration in medicine is nothing new. The teaching side of medicine has long been characterised by collaboration between universities and teaching hospitals. Medical students go to university to learn the theory, but the practical side of a medical student’s training has long been provided by large teaching hospitals. The three major hospitals in the Parkville Precinct – the Royal Melbourne, the Royal Women’s and the Royal Children’s – are all teaching hospitals, as is nearby St Vincent’s. But research has traditionally been conducted by university departments and institutes – including internationally recognised institutes such as the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute and the Howard Florey Institute – working in isolation from one another. This has tended to ‘siló’ research findings for a time, limiting the capacity for cross-fertilisation of ideas and learnings.

Opened in October 2011, the Melbourne Brain Centre embodies this new way of promoting innovation in research. The Centre, dedicated to neurological research, is the first of three landmark additions to Melbourne’s biomedical cluster known as the Parkville Precinct. The Peter Doherty Institute will open in 2014 and specialise in immunological research, while the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre will open in 2016. Then there’s the Bio21 Molecular Science and Biotechnology Institute, which opened in 2005 and consists of 21 member organisations. All of these research institutes have been and are being developed with collaboration in mind.

The Melbourne Brain Centre, also known as the Kenneth Myer Building, takes the aim of capturing the spontaneous good idea to lengths rarely seen in the architecture of the University. The design principles that have gone into the building champion qualities such as openness and collaboration: there are tearooms, cafés and lounges positioned throughout the building, while laboratories are no longer the partitioned rabbit warrens of years gone by but wide open spaces where equipment and conversation can be shared. According to Design Director Neil Appleton, from architecture firm Lyons, “The idea that staff can easily bump into each other during the usual course of the work day has been considered deeply in the design. Locating shared facilities centrally, as well as near circulation stairs, ensures that staff from different areas within the building can access each other either formally or informally – lots of interaction is promoted by the design.”

Above, Negative of the University and surrounding section from James Kearney’s 1855 Map of Melbourne and Suburbs, Lands Department roll plan 18 (University of Melbourne, 2012)
The Parkville Precinct is part of a new wave of thinking about research and innovation that pushes collaboration to a whole new level. The Melbourne Brain Centre brings together student and postgraduate researchers from the University of Melbourne, the Howard Florey Institute and the Mental Health Research Institute. They work on their own projects, but it’s hoped that by sharing equipment and laboratory space the work each team does will connect with those of other teams, leading to breakthroughs that would not have been possible if teams were working in isolation.

Dr Ben Emery (BSc 2000, PhD 2005) is a senior research fellow at the Melbourne Brain Centre. He leads a team of half a dozen researchers, part of a larger team of about 30 researchers deepening our understanding of multiple sclerosis. He sees the benefits of the new building’s design over previous designs. “In previous labs that I’ve been in,” he says, “you’d typically be in small, isolated rooms that might contain these two benches, and maybe a little bit of equipment … now we’re sharing a lot more equipment … but also we’re a lot more aware of what everyone else is doing.”

It’s all part of a wave of new thinking on how innovation works best. In his book Where Good Ideas Come From, Steven Johnson studies the history of great innovations in nature and in human endeavours, concluding that, when it comes to taking great strides forward, “openness and connectivity” are more important contributing factors than competition. Johnson emphasises the importance of environment in the formation of new ideas. “Certain environments,” he writes, “enhance the brain’s natural capacity to make new links of association.”

Johnson’s analysis of innovative thinking highlights the importance of creating the best possible conditions for an idea to hatch. Sometimes, he says, the idea is decades in the making, and emerges as the result of a combination of intuitive and serendipitous forces – even, as in the case of the University of Melbourne graduate and Nobel laureate Sir John Eccles (MBBS 1925, LLD 1965), in the form of a dream. “In 1947,” Eccles was later to remember, “I developed an electrical theory of synaptic inhibitory action which conformed with all the available experimental evidence. Incidentally this theory came to me in a dream. On awakening … I kept myself awake for an hour or so going over every aspect of the dream, and found it fitted all experimental evidence.” Johnson explains this highly intuitive kind of innovation is influencing architects and designers: “This is why a growing number of large organisations – businesses, nonprofits, schools, government agencies – have begun experimenting with work environments that encourage the architecture of serendipity.”

The “architecture of serendipity” is a long way from the University’s founding architectural principles. While the University positions itself nowadays as a key part of the city’s geographic and intellectual fabric, it began as an architecture of serenity. When Melbourne University was founded in 1853, the University grounds fell outside the northern urban boundary of the young city, then in the first full flush of the Gold Rush, one of the most spectacular mining booms the world had seen. The University of Melbourne’s first building, now known as the Old Arts Building, was based on English university architecture and built with teaching, not research, in mind. The scholastic tradition inherited from Britain was itself derived from the medieval monastic tradition. The emphasis was on creating a peaceful environment where learning could proceed unhindered by the distractions of the city.

As its name suggests, the modern-day suburb of Parkville was initially entirely reserved for parkland in 1854. But the booming city soon put paid to that notion. A map of the period shows the location of today’s Royal Melbourne Hospital to have been a market for horses, pigs, cattle, hay and corn.

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By the time the School of Medicine was founded in 1862, modern medicine was still in its infancy. Poor open-drain sewage meant cities were plagued by diseases like cholera. While in a few other cities the first comprehensive urban sewer systems were built in the mid-19th century, leading to drastic cuts in mortality, Melbourne had to wait until the 1890s. In the meantime, the city earned the nickname 'Marvellous Smellbourne'. Affluent Melburnians favoured the less odorous hilltops, and the advent of trams and trains encouraged a flight to the suburbs. Little wonder, then, that the city's major hospitals were built where the need was greatest – in the city centre.

Originally opened in 1848 in the city, the Melbourne Hospital quickly ran into capacity problems. Relocating the hospital to the site of the old horse market in Parkville was suggested as early as the 19th century – even then, the city’s administrators saw the benefits of locating Melbourne's major hospital of the time near the city's only medical faculty. But construction on the Parkville campus of Royal Melbourne Hospital didn't begin until 1941, and the hospital's first years were given over to the war effort. When the US 4th Army left the hospital in early 1944 – having treated 35,000 patients – the new Royal Melbourne Hospital began operating, thus laying the seed of a future precinct.

Now one of three medical clusters in Melbourne (the others are centred around Monash University and the Alfred Hospital), the Precinct has already built an impressive résumé, including the first cochlear implant in 1978 and two Nobel Prizes, to Sir Frank Macfarlane Burnet (MBBS 1922, PhD 1924, LLD 1962) in 1960 and Professor Peter Doherty AC in 1966. The opening in 2016 of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Institute, incorporating the Peter MacCallum Institute, will mark the close of the latest growth spurt in the history of the Parkville Precinct. This will create a biocluster of global stature, according to Professor Jim McCluskey, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research at the University of Melbourne:

“The Parkville Precinct is now internationally recognised and beginning to attain a scale resembling what we see in places like London, Boston, Tokyo, and what’s happening to some degree in Singapore.”

The University of Melbourne plays a central role in the precinct, providing education, research and research training. Other medical research organisations in Parkville include the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, Murdoch Childrens Research Institute, Howard Florey Institute, the CSIRO, and Monash University’s Victorian College of Pharmacy. The healthcare and clinical research organisations include the Royal Melbourne Hospital, the recently relocated Royal Women's Hospital and the newly refurbished Royal Children’s Hospital. Nearby are St Vincent’s Hospital, the Cancer Council of Victoria, and CSL, Australia’s largest biotech company.

The stated aim of building a cluster of this importance is to integrate healthcare, training and research, without compromising the independence of participating organisations. The hope is that, in so doing, partners will see gains in economies of scale and cross-fertilisation of ideas. As Dr Emery explains, “The large difficulty was we didn’t necessarily know what people were doing within the different organisations. So now that everyone’s basically in the same space, we’re all using the tearoom, there’s now joint seminars, and you’re catching a lift with people. It’s much more likely that you’re aware of what someone else in the next institute is doing, and you can say, ‘Hang on, you’re using techniques that I can use in my research’.”
Above, John Brack The Queen, 1988, 137 x 106.5 cm, oil on canvas (University of Melbourne Art Collection, 2012) Gift of Helen Brack, 2012
A painting by one of Australia’s finest artists has finally found its place in the Ian Potter Museum of Art. By Katherine Loftus.

Though it might only dawn on us once years or decades have passed, university is about more than creating a career; it is a place that slows you down. It is a place where you can be curious. It is where wonder and contemplation are encouraged.

And this is what Helen Brack (VCA, 1977) had in mind when in May this year, she gave her late husband John Brack’s 1988 painting The Queen to the University’s Ian Potter Museum of Art. The gift was to commemorate the Potter’s 40th anniversary, which coincided with the 40th of another Melbourne cultural institution, the Victorian College of the Arts.

An artwork by one of Australia’s finest artists has finally found its place in the Ian Potter Museum of Art. By Katherine Loftus.

“Art is in the wondering,” Helen says, explaining her decision to give the graphic, complex work, which comprises a portrait of Elizabeth I cut into 16 postcards and scattered against a mirror.

“When you look at it, on one hand you see the queen. On the other hand, you see the primitive face,” Helen explains. “I thought it was a very good picture for exploration.”

In the Potter’s commemorative book Visions Past and Present: Celebrating 40 years, Helen reveals that the work is a comment on mankind’s ability to achieve the most noble feats, as well as the most barbaric. And the very manner in which the portrait of Elizabeth I has been sliced and scattered is a critique of “our own sterilised present where art has lost its value.”

The Queen tests and tricks the eye, toying with depth and dimension to almost engross the viewer, altering spatial awareness and thwarting a sense of physical logic. Are the scissors supporting the mirror? Is the marble table inside or outside the frame? And finally, am I, the viewer, inside or outside the frame?

These tactics are something Helen attributes to John’s intention to overcome the “oversimplification” of his earlier works, such as the paintings which depicted iconic Melbourne scenes like the Collins St rush hour and “the six o’clock swill.”

“Many people look at it as though they are looking at a real thing – they don’t focus on this and that. The dimensions of it are so multiple and so beautifully, seamlessly put together,” she says.

“I thought it was a good picture for a university to have.”

Described by Potter Acting Director Christopher Menz as “the most significant donation” to the University of Melbourne art collection in several decades, The Queen complements the Potter’s existing John Brack collection, which includes prints, drawings and oils spanning his career from the 1940s to the 1980s.

A reminder that The Queen is on display at the Potter until Sunday August 26.

Above, a guest at the Potter’s 40th celebrations. (Jodie Hutchinson, 2012)

Artwork: Pat Brassington
The Best Move, 2008, pigment print (University of Melbourne Art Collection, 2012)
Purchased by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, 2010

Did you know? John Brack was the Head of the National Gallery of Victoria Art School from 1962-68. The School became the Victorian College of the Arts in 1973. For more history and stories, visit the VCA 40th Anniversary Blog blog.vca.unimelb.edu.au
Three academics took a salary cut so the colony could have its much-needed medical school. The first ever class consisted of three students at a chemistry lecture given by Dr John Macadam in his own laboratory using his own materials. In its first decade of operation, just 23 doctors graduated from the school. Today, the school produces about 250 graduates a year.

The Walter and Eliza Hall Trust Fund was established by Eliza Rowden Hall in memory of her husband, a successful transport, livestock and mining pioneer. It led to the establishment of the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Research in Pathology and Medicine. The vision was for an institute that ‘will be the birthplace of discoveries rendering signal service to mankind in the prevention and removal of disease and the mitigation of suffering.’

They came to be known as the ‘famous seven’: Clara Stone, Margaret Whyte, Grace Vale, Annie and Elizabeth O’Hara, Helen Sexton and Lilian Alexander. Some of these women, and those who followed, were instrumental in the founding in 1896 of the Victoria Hospital for Women and Children, later known as the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital, one of only three hospitals in the world at the time founded, managed and staffed by women, for women.

James George Beaney, a.k.a. ‘Diamond Jim’ or ‘Champagne Jimmy’ was a larger-than-life character in colonial Victorian medicine and the medical school’s first benefactor. He lectured at the Melbourne Medical School annually, distributing free champagne after every session. Upon his death, Beaney bequeathed the fledgling university scholarships in pathology and surgery.

The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Research in Pathology and Medicine, 1915 (Medical History Museum, 2012)

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Figure of James George Beaney from the collection of the Medical History Museum, gift of the Estate of Dr RL Fulton, 1966 (Medical History Museum, 2012)

The first seven women to enter the Melbourne Medical School, 1887 (Medical History Museum, 2012)
Arguably the most distinguished class in the Medical School’s history, the 1922 class of 75 graduates produced one Nobel laureate, three knights, two dames and no less than 16 Who’s Who luminaries – many of whom would never have graduated without the help of scholarships. The class included the future dames of the Royal Children’s Hospital, Jean Macnamara, honoured for her work on poliomyelitis, and paediatrician Kate Campbell who discovered the link between high concentrations of oxygen given to premature babies and acquired retrolental fibroplasia.

Two School of Medicine graduates have been honoured by the Nobel committee: immunologist Sir Macfarlane Burnet (a joint winner in 1960 for his elaboration of acquired immunological tolerance) and neuroscientist John Eccles (in 1963, for his groundbreaking work on brain synapses).

Rod Saunders was the first patient to receive the Australian prototype bionic ear. Professor Graeme Clark A.C., then Foundation Professor of the University’s Department of Otolaryngology, led the development team. October 2005 marked another milestone: the first of three recipients was implanted with Cochlear’s TIKI device. By December 2010, more than 220,000 people suffering from hearing loss across the world had received a cochlear implant.

Regular Mapping of the speech processor is required to optimise a person’s hearing (Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital and the University of Melbourne, 2012)

Together with Swiss colleague Rolf Zinkernagel, Laureate Professor Peter Doherty won the Nobel Prize for their work describing how the body’s immune cells protect against viruses. Professor Doherty AC currently works in the University’s Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Melbourne.

Nobel prize winner Sir John Eccles as a medical student (Medical History Museum, 2012)

Queen Elizabeth II might have been forgiven if she suffered a bout of déjà vu when, in October 2011, she opened the Royal Children’s Hospital in Melbourne’s Parkville Precinct. After all, she’d opened the hospital’s previous incarnation, adjacent to the new hospital, on her second royal tour of Australia in 1963. The new hospital can treat an additional 35,000 patients every year, incorporates a variety of world-leading technologies and is hoped to achieve an overall 45% reduction in attributable greenhouse gas emissions.

Main Street at the new Royal Children’s Hospital, 2011 (University of Melbourne, 2011)
Hong Yi with her portrait of Chinese basketballer Yao Ming, which she painted using a basketball (Hong Yi, 2012)
Something of the entrepreneurial spirit is taking hold on campus, as graduates strike out on their own, across a range of fields. Kulja Coulston reports.

The volatile job market and advances in technology have generated unprecedented opportunities for innovative and enterprising individuals to turn their big ideas into big business. “Companies are downsizing and that’s going to continue … so young, energetic people are simply, unfortunately, being let go,” explains Professor Danny Samson from the Department of Management and Marketing in the Faculty of Business and Economics. “As a result there are a lot of bright young people looking to start a career who don’t necessarily want that to happen again in a corporate environment, and they want to be their own boss.”

A linear career path is no longer guaranteed, or even desired. “It’s not part of the younger students’ mindset that they’re going to work for someone for years and years. They create their own opportunity and they don’t necessarily think that a career pathway is from one employer to another,” says Brooke Young (PGDip Arts 1995; MEntrep 2007), Director of Marketing and Community Engagement also within the Faculty of Business and Economics.

When Simon Griffiths (BEElecEng(Hons) 2007, Bcom 2007) was at University, ‘entrepreneur’ was a dirty word and starting out on your own was not a common goal. “Nowadays, if you tell someone you’re an entrepreneur they don’t instantly assume you’re a dropkick trying to figure out what you want to do with your life.”

“It’s not part of the younger students’ mindset that they’re always going to work for someone else.”

In 2010, Griffiths founded Shebeen, a socially minded hospitality enterprise with a unique business structure. “What I do is run a for-profit company that is profit maximising, but we choose to donate the profits which is what makes it a non-profit company.”

Earlier this year Shebeen raised the requisite $250,000 to open its first venue in Melbourne after trading as a pop-up bar and selling products in other venues. From this month, the first standalone Shebeen bar will sell exotic beers from developing countries with profits channelled back to development projects in the country of origin. Ongoing patron support is expected to see the business generate profits, plus social and creative capital, which Griffiths finds immensely satisfying. “I really rarely wake up and not want to start working - it’s really fun,” he says.

Social enterprises fall under the general rubric of entrepreneurship and, according to Professor Samson, they are growing in visibility and appeal: “There are more and more people realising there’s a need to do good and that it’s actually possible to do well by doing good. You can actually build a business, where the heart of that business is benefiting society, and you can get a living out of it as well!”

Some of us are more open to taking risks than others, and educators are readily investigating ways to better equip and encourage students to pursue their own ventures. It is something Mark Danaro (BSc 1997, PGDipTeach 2011) is passionate about, in particular the process of introducing certain aspects of business and life skills into the curriculum, starting with primary school. “Entrepreneurs need to have a level of resilience, dedication and commitment. They are not things you can necessarily teach, but you can introduce them to a child at a relatively young age.”

Danaro decided to undertake a Master of Teaching after a decade-long career at IBM during which time he also spent five years volunteering with Young Achievement Australia. The Mechai Viravaidya Foundation Master of Teaching Scholarship recipient’s research interests have taken him to Thailand where he lives in a resort with his family. Danaro holds the Deputy Director role at the renowned Mechai Pattana School, which educates disadvantaged children in rural Thailand, while working across the community to improve health and environmental outcomes. “There’s no good creating enterprising or entrepreneurial students if all they think about is themselves. We need to develop a new approach, which accommodates, incorporates and promotes philanthropy; a level of giving back and helping, which develops community growth.”

While the Mechai Pattana School sits at one end of the educational spectrum, universities are also reviewing their role at the other. “The self-made man or woman often implied succeeding in business, but failing at university” says Joeri Mol, lecturer in Management (Organisation Studies) at the University of Melbourne. “The contemporary university experience sees graduates many years and years. They create their own opportunity and they want to be their own boss.”

Universities around the world are beginning to establish courses which nurture the skills required to be an entrepreneur. One such course is the University of Melbourne’s Master of Enterprise. “You come here (to study the Master of Enterprise) with some predisposition, and you leave here to pursue your dreams and ideas, perhaps in a corporate environment, perhaps out on your own,” says Professor Samson. “There are some things you can be born with but nobody’s born with an understanding of financial management and accounting, are they? Nobody’s born with the knowledge of what a balance sheet or a debit or credit is.”

Having a vision or idea is important, but Simon Griffiths believes these can be drawn from anywhere, what matters is taking them through to execution and ensuring their success along the way. “Every time you pitch to an investor they are assessing whether you have that skill set,” Griffiths explains.
On campus, student-driven organisations like Agents of Change and the social enterprise focused SIFE (Students In Free Enterprise) are providing opportunities to practise and develop these skills. Twice a year, Agents of Change selects a group of students to help get their profit and non-profit start-ups off the ground. Advice ranges from how to refine an idea, launch a website and even to recruiting a board. Throughout the year the group runs events with guest speakers, as well as the annual Start-up Hackathon, Idea Pitch and Entrepreneurs Week events.

However, Brooke Young acknowledges there’s still room for the University to do more in developing entrepreneurial passions. “Our students get snapped-up by private sector, government and not-for-profits, so they haven’t needed to start their own businesses.”

In 2004, Tao Peng (PhDEng 2004) won the prestigious Melbourne University Entrepreneurs Challenge (MUEC) for a software product that protects computer networks from malicious internet attacks. “If there was no Melbourne Uni entrepreneur challenge it would have been very hard for me to get into the entrepreneur field,” Tao says, adding that he is grateful for the financial support and access to expertise he received as part of the award.

Since then, Beijing-based Peng has built his own business in partnership with friend and venture capitalist Perry Pu (BCom 2004). Tao and Perry first met five years ago at a University alumni event in Beijing, and before building his own business, Tao was working for one of China’s largest mobile phone companies. “I had a strong feeling ‘now is the opportunity of a lifetime.’ Smartphones are a revolutionary change, and I thought, something big can happen here.”

China has one of the world’s fastest-growing markets for art, and by selecting her subjects carefully, and filming and blogging her work, Red has deftly used social media to find a global audience – something that would have been less likely prior to the advent of social media. “For the first time in human history it’s possible to start something up and if you get it right, get the attention of a lot of people,” says Professor Samson.

Simon Griffiths sums it up nicely, and encourages anyone with an entrepreneurial inclination to go for it. “One of the really important things to understand is that it’s not an art, it’s a real science and it’s something you can do, if you figure out how to do it.”

Choreographer Jade Duffy’s (B dance 1996) Bodyelectricdance Studio fits this category. Her studio caters for adults with little to no dance experience, and started small with a weekly class for her sister and some friends who “wanted to get physical”. It became clear Duffy had tapped into an undercurrent of unmet need, and against the trend, one class became two, then three, and now she teaches over 200 students a week from her Fitzroy studios.

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**DID YOU KNOW ...**
The Mechai Pattana School was founded by Melbourne alumnus and former Thai Government Minister Mechai Viravaidya AO (Bcom 1965, LLD 1993). Viravaidya wanted underprivileged rural students to receive an education emphasising creativity, rather than rote learning. Mechai Pattana School students help choose and evaluate their teachers, select the Year 7 intake and run businesses in the local community. Some of the business profits then support primary scholarships.
With the help of some robots, 2012 Young Australian of the Year Marita Cheng has inspired many young women to think differently about engineering. By Chris Weaver (BA, LLB 2006).

Her energy strikes you immediately. Marita Cheng swivels on the chair, one foot perched precariously on the seat, while a photographer, a mystery phone caller and I all compete for her attention.

The 2012 Young Australian of the Year is in demand.

She draws breath, settles and tells me about a conversation she had with staff member Professor Jamie Evans (ME 1996, PhD 1998) back in 2008.

“I was building a robot with some of my friends when Professor Evans approached us. He mentioned he was looking for female engineering students to go to Lauriston (a private girls’ school in Melbourne) and teach the Year 6 girls a robotics class,” she recalls.

“I went away (from the discussion) and thought about ideas for my own leadership program that could influence more than one school. I wanted to influence the number of women doing engineering.”

The topic had long troubled Marita, who was alarmed at how few women seemed to be studying engineering.

“There were very few girls studying maths and sciences when I started,” she explains.

“I was really surprised by the lack of females. I thought Melbourne would be a Mecca for people studying engineering and was shocked to find that was not the case.”

The conversation with Professor Evans inspired her. She spent much of June that year constructing a plan to bring volunteers into schools, signing up her college friends as the first recruits. Professor Evans meanwhile provided the robots and a classroom.

Designing the robotics lessons quickly became the program’s centrepiece – interactive lessons that illustrated to young girls the possibilities arising from maths and applied sciences. Marita had a target demographic.

“Girls aged 10 to 14 can still be engaged in engineering. They haven’t chosen their senior subjects and are not jaded about trying new things,” she says.

Marita spent three months organising the program, which she later named Robogals. Marita’s target audience was soon captivated by Robogals’ hands-on approach which emphasised the creativity behind robotics while deciphering the technicalities of programming and working with robots.

“Engineers don’t become school teachers, and girls aren’t taught engineering in the same way they are taught English, maths and science. We tell girls about the possibilities engineering careers can lead to,” Marita explains.

“We try to inspire them because if they can see the light at the end of the tunnel, then they will be more likely to do maths and the ‘hard’ sciences.”

Marita was attracted to gadgetry and robots at an early age and the obsession has never waned. Born and raised in Far North Queensland, she completed high school in 2006, receiving outstanding grades through her ability to marry a ferocious work ethic to a prodigious intellect. While the decision to study engineering was easy enough, the choice of institution was more demanding. Marita’s ambitions were linked to lifestyle as well as study.

“I read about all the Queensland and Victoria engineering courses, but I wanted to do more with my life than just finishing my degree in the shortest time possible,” she says. “I wanted to go somewhere that was enjoyable to live.”

“Marita settled on the University of Melbourne and college at Janet Clarke Hall. It was a bold move, uprooting Marita from her family and home state.

“When I moved to Melbourne, I didn’t have enough money to live in college for a year and pay my other living expenses,” she recalls.

“I worked over summer to save up and had a couple of existing scholarships, but they were small.”

Marita applied for the newly established Paterson Scholarship, dedicated to Engineering undergraduates. The Scholarship provided more than financial relief.

“Getting the Paterson Scholarship allowed me to follow my own learning pathways,” she says.

“The students that have come through have been a shining light. It helps keep me a bit younger meeting all these bright young people!” Donor Bob Paterson describes his experience as a donor in the Impact of Giving or online at mag.alumni.unimelb.edu.au
National borders are barely an issue as more careers become globalised and our networks bulge to the ends of the earth. But as Kulja Coulston discovers, curiosity and a current passport only get you so far – an international career demands an international outlook.

Several months of job-seeking and a series of dead-ends were enough to drive Urban Design graduate Daniels Langeberg (PGDipUD 2010) to seek greener pastures. But it was the casual tip-off from an old uni lecturer which provided the spark he needed to kickstart his international career.

Within a fortnight of contacting the Shanghai firm his lecturer had recommended, he’d been offered a job out of town. “A month later, after selling all my worldly possessions, I was living in Shanghai with my own apartment, job and bicycle to get around,” he recalls.

Since 1985, the number of Australians heading overseas to live and work has more than doubled, and at last count, the Australian diaspora comprised over 1 million people at any one time.

In hindsight, Langeberg’s move to Shanghai was easier than his original move from Adelaide to Melbourne. “It took me nearly three months to find an apartment in Melbourne. In Shanghai it took me less than a week.” While it was necessity that saw him look to China for work, Langeberg had previously visited the country as part of his Urban Design degree, so he knew something of the city before relocating.

“Increasingly, skilled people are moving or will tend to have international careers,” explains Brooke Young (PGDip Arts 1995, MEnterp 2007), Director of Marketing and Community Engagement in the Faculty of Business Economics. “We’re in a global environment and really good graduates go to where the opportunities lie.”

Cases like Langeberg’s however, are still the exception. Australians have always travelled for holidays, work and study but it seems few yet see their education or career in a truly international light. On average, just under seven per cent of Australian students participated in an outgoing international study experience (such as an exchange, study abroad or short-term program), a fact that is generating ripples of concern throughout the higher education community.

“We are not equipping our young people for their highly mobile lives if we don’t assist them to gain the attributes that will be required to harness the opportunities of the Asian Century and the 21st century,” explains Kathe Kirby (BA 1973, DipEd 1974), Executive Director of the Asia Education Foundation.

“Australian students don’t have a mindset which says that, as part of our education, we have to go out and live in another part of the world and study within another language and another culture. And yet there is a growing proportion – a much greater proportion – of other young people in the world who see that as an essential capability,” she adds.
“We now have the largest mobility program in the country, including full semester exchanges and study abroad.”

The Colombo Plan, founded in 1950 and best remembered for sponsoring thousands of Asian-born students to study at Australian universities, is lauded for strengthening ties between Australia and Asia. Since then, the numbers of international students in Australian universities have grown to around 28 per cent of total students enrolled. This serves to enrich campuses here, but to date, the road seems to go only one way.

The University of Melbourne is trying to turn this around, through actively encouraging Australian students to travel as part of their degrees. “We now have the largest mobility program in the country, including full semester exchanges and study abroad as well as short-term exchanges,” says Stuart Hibberd, Manager, Education Abroad Student Programs at the University. “There’s a real push to get people out there,” he says.

Studying or living outside of Australia is seen as a modus operandi for developing vital skills, such as multilingualism, diplomacy and leadership. According to Kathe Kirby, even students whose careers will remain wholly within Australia require such understanding and abilities. “Increasingly, they are going to be servicing people in other countries, as well as their own country. Working in global teams and on global enterprises has enabled that.”

Ensuring degrees are internationally recognised is a key tenet for a successful global career, and many University courses now meet international professional accreditation standards. While Michael Shaw’s undergraduate degrees were recognised, he believes current University offerings are superior. “Juris Doctors (JD) are increasingly looked at in a favourable light. I wish, rather than having done a double degree, I’d started studying at Melbourne Uni later on, once they started the JD program. I think it’s a fantastic course.”

For those with the interest and motivation, the opportunities are there for the taking. Michael Shaw (BA, LLB 2011) undertook two overseas study experiences. He spent a year in Lyon, and then in Geneva as part of a University program. The latter piqued his interest in international humanitarian law and development. He is now based in Afghanistan and works as a management consultant for conflict zones, for clients including the British Government, AusAid and US Aid.

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“I was always interested in international relations at university, but I didn’t even know private development consulting existed as profession when I was a student – hardly anybody did,” he says. After one year in Afghanistan, Michael is hooked. “It’s a fantastic environment. The work is extremely diverse and you cover so many different areas of what you’ve learnt academically or just practical skills learnt through work or personal travel.”

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“I volunteered in Sri Lanka following the Indian Ocean tsunami at the end of 2004 and I also lived and worked in the Budumburam Liberian Refugee Camp in West Africa in 2008. I definitely used that experience to my advantage in my job applications!”

Dr Verné Dove (BAnimSc 2002, BVSc(Hons) 2004) started her international career six years ago as a Volunteer for International Development (ViDA). Now an established professional, she lives and works in Colombia, where she is a wildlife veterinarian researching and trying to improve the plight of endangered river dolphins. The move to Colombia followed several years working with Cambodia’s famous Irrawaddy dolphins. Compared to a career in Australia, Dove said the professional route she’s taken has been more challenging, especially operating in other languages and cultural environments.

“Working in Cambodia was very difficult as I faced numerous political obstacles with the dolphin work. It was extremely controversial and sensitive, and some of my work even made it onto Wikileaks.” But it is now paying off. “I ended up managing a cafe in the Marais instead of working at the Louvre.” McInnes is now “totally invigorated” by her work managing a contemporary art gallery in London, and has some sage advice for anyone starting out. “I think that people have to be prepared to take a step back before they can get forward. Take a less senior role or a pay cut or perhaps not the ideal job first off.”

Daniels Langeberg says his biggest challenge was the mental process of letting go of life in Australia. “Shaking off the comfort of certainty and saying goodbye to the things and people that you know. Once in that mindset, anything is possible.”

Global Mobility Have you ever wanted to live and study overseas? The Global Mobility unit runs semester-long and short-term exchanges, single-subject programs and internship opportunities. It’s never too late to take the leap. Visit mobility.unimelb.edu.au to find out more.
This year’s London Olympics marks the 100th anniversary of Australian women competing at the Olympic Games. Chris Weaver spoke to two Melbourne alumnae with unique Olympic experiences.

**LOST IN TRANSLATION AT THE SUMMER OLYMPICS**

Technology limited global coverage of the 1960 Rome Olympic Games.

Yet Melbourne alumna Patricia Petch (née Pugh) (S/G Diploma Journalism 1967, BA 1976) went to the Rome Games as an interpreter and administrative assistant. “I was working at The Sun at the time. They had a press team going to Rome and wanted someone who could speak Italian,” Patricia recalls.

“I planned to go overseas and said I could do the job. I had six months to learn Italian!” Messages were relayed around the world by teleprinter, relying on a staff of local journalists. Patricia’s language skills helped when Australian sprinter Betty Cuthbert’s leg injury was misreported.

“The two men working on the teleprinters couldn’t speak English, so they kept making mistakes. They sent a message around the world saying Betty had injured her shit-bone!” she says. “Those workers were sacked and I was asked to take over.”

Patricia’s Rome experience was a stepping-stone in her journalistic career. “I wrote a couple of stories and as soon as I came back, I was put on the staff as a journalist,” she says. Patricia later worked and studied at the University of Melbourne, where she established the Press Office.

“I asked the University about establishing a Press Office. They said to see how I went and two years later I became the Press Liaison Officer. I stayed there for 13 years!”

Patricia’s Roman working holiday was the perfect platform for a pioneering career.

**ALL-ROUNDER RISES TO OLYMPIC CHALLENGE**

The modern pentathlon is a unique challenge, combining five very different sports – shooting, fencing, swimming, equestrian (show jumping) and running. Modern pentathlete Angie Darby’s (BArch, 2010) preparation for the Beijing Olympics was thrown into disarray six weeks before the Games, when she found herself at the centre of a qualification storm.

“There are two lists through which modern pentathletes can qualify for the Olympic Games – zones and world rankings,” she explains. “It recognises that the Olympics are about having global representation as well as the best athletes.”

Angie had qualified thanks to her zone performance at the 2007 Oceanian Championship, making her Australia’s sole representative in the women’s event. Drama occurred when a Greek competitor, Donna Vakalis, claimed Angie had not qualified through a recognised international event. The appeal meant a stressful flight to Lausanne, where Angie and her team represented their case to the Court of Arbitration for Sport. “She was the reserve on the world ranking list and her lawyer claimed that I wasn’t eligible to compete at the Games,” Angie says.

The lawyer had already successfully argued to have Australia’s male representative, Alex Parygin, replaced by a British athlete. Angie won her appeal, resulting in a desperate return dash to Beijing. “They fast-tracked the case. I flew to Lausanne and went to court on the Wednesday, before arriving back in Beijing on the Friday.

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I arrived in the Athletes’ Village just 45 minutes before the Opening Ceremony!”

Luck escaped Angie in Beijing. Her goggles slipped off during her swimming heat, forcing her into second last place in the competition – a position she held, despite a strong performance in the show jumping.

Late last year Angie was awarded an Australia at Large Rhodes Scholarship. While study commitments preclude London participation, Angie has ambitions to compete in 2016 (Rio de Janeiro) as a fencer. “I’ve been competing in the épée and started on the international circuit last year,” she says. “It’s a sport I love and it’s going very well.”

Above, Angie Darby (BArch, 2010)
As 10 Southeast Asian leaders prepare to form an EU-like community in 2015, what challenges do the region’s media face in managing this change? Alumnus Panu Wongcha-Um BA(Hons)(2005) reports from Thailand.

It is certainly an exciting time in Southeast Asia as the region is counting down towards forming a community under the banner of ASEAN; the acronym of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. From 2015, 10 Southeast Asian countries aim to form the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in phases, eventually creating a common framework in the areas of economic, political-security, and socio-cultural; the so-called three pillars of the ASEAN Community.

Amid all this, in 2009 the Thai government initiated ASEAN TV; an English language satellite television channel designed to be a broadcast media platform for the region, and a channel that I have been working for since its beginning. Despite being quite junior in my profession, I have been able through ASEAN TV in the last couple of years to cover a variety of stories, meet interesting individuals and travel to fascinating places across Southeast Asia and beyond: from crisscrossing northern Indochina, to meeting Islamic hardliners in Jakarta; from covering street protests in Bangkok, to the mass exodus of refugees on the Thai-Myanmar border.

As I write this article I am on the road, covering Aung San Suu Kyi’s historic trip to Thailand; her first overseas trip in two decades after unprecedented and sudden changes in the political landscape of the country formerly known as Burma.

Along with the ASEAN integration push, the rate of economic growth elsewhere across Asia in places like China and India has generated lots of interesting stories. When interviewed, many regional ‘movers and shakers’ constantly talk about the continent’s new economic and political clout. All seem to agree that Asia needs to forge closer connectivity in all areas in order to harness and share the benefits of its economic prosperity.

But this isn’t to say that domestic and international political issues have been resolved. Asian governments and individuals are still coming to terms with globalisation and the idea of ‘Asian regionalism,’ if such a thing exists. Recent tensions in the Korean Peninsula and the South China Sea are testament to this uneasiness and in many cases, the nationalism generated by decades of propaganda has become the real obstacle to peace and understanding in this part of the world.

Spreading cross-cultural understanding is another part of our job at ASEAN TV and its parent company MCOT – the oldest media conglomerate in Thailand. At the Southeast Asian level we intended to forge alliances with regional media organisations in order to create a regional network, enabling ASEAN TV to be a real platform in broadcasting news and programs from all 10 ASEAN member countries.

But this has proven to be a trickier task than our regional news production. The first obstacle is the capability and technology gap that exists among broadcast media in the region. Broadcast media in Southeast Asia, barring Singapore, still has a long way to go and will require a large amount of investment in equipment and training.

Markets and audiences for regional content are also another challenge, as our experience has shown very few viewers to be interested in a broad regional spread of news and television programs in English. Most people in the region seem to be enjoying television content based on their local concerns and trends, broadcast in their respective mother tongues.

Beyond ASEAN, MCOT is also part of a UNESCO-initiated press alliance known as the Organisation of Asia-Pacific News Agencies (OANA). Formed 50 years ago in Bangkok, the alliance was intended to be a platform for news exchange between news agencies across the Asia-Pacific. Currently there are over 44 members, some of whom are highly reputable globally. Nevertheless it has not been as successful in disseminating news compared to the likes of AP or Reuters. As with problems we have encountered with ASEAN TV, OANA covers too broad a market and audiences. Stories from one corner of Asia may have eager audiences at home, but less so in other parts.
Economic expansion in the last few decades has resulted in the expansion of Asia’s media industry, but so far the boom has been felt in patches. Baring Aljazeera, Korean Pop, and India’s Bollywood, the Asian media industry has had limited success on the global or even regional stage.

While I may be relatively new in this profession, my experience so far has taught me that the talk of the ‘Asian century’ is devoid of much meaning beyond economic growth. Certainly many countries in East Asia and Southeast Asia are growing and changing rapidly compared to a few decades ago, but most of this growth has happened disregarding the push for more regionalism by the governments. Like the market expansion for Asia’s media industry, Asia’s economic growth has occurred within the boundaries of different nation-states.

For Southeast Asia, perhaps the increase in connectivity between the people of this culturally diverse place will help integrate ASEAN in fields beyond the economy, but this process may take many decades more. For Asia, this may take generations or perhaps it will never happen at all.

Like the creation of ASEAN TV, many projects with the goal of regionalism in Asia were born too prematurely for their own good. Of course camaraderie and friendship existed but perhaps Asia is a place that is too diverse and too extreme for it to be considered as one. And for those who know it, this is certainly part of its charm.

Panu Wongcha-um (BA(Hons) 2005) is a broadcast journalist at the Southeast Asian desk, Thai News Agency, MCOT Public Company Ltd (Thailand). Follow Panu on Twitter @panuw

As I write this article I am on the road, covering Aung San Suu Kyi’s historic trip to Thailand.
Experience and ‘wisdom’ has been undervalued in Western economies.

In research conducted last year, the Harvard Law School found that while the average age of CEOs in US and Japan was the same – 60 years – CEOs in the US had assumed executive-level positions at a younger age than their Japanese counterparts.

But according to Dr Peter Verhezen, Principal Fellow and Visiting Associate Professor (Global Corporate Governance) at the Graduate School of Management of Economics and Business and Associate at the Melbourne Business School, the extra years of experience do matter. Racing to the top of the corporate ladder is riskier, it would seem, than slowly stepping up each rung.

“Just as a rule of thumb, for any person to become a master in something, to become an expert with experience – be it a piano player, soccer player, or philosopher – takes on average seven to ten years of full-time dedication,” he says. “Mere academic or scientific knowledge won’t do the job in helping someone become a wise manager. They need to learn by application.”

Dr Verhezen is explaining ‘managerial wisdom’, a concept he describes as “an amalgam of knowledge, integrity, continuous learning and experience,” and something he believes has been undervalued by organisations throughout Australia, Europe and North America.

“Business practices are driven by financial incentives, within boundaries of rules and regulations. But much of what can be described as ‘good behaviour’ among employees is driven by values and management behaviour,” Pecuniary incentives are hygiene motivators whereas an inspiring vision and mission of a company, underpinned by strong values within an organisational culture, are the real motivators of high performing employees and managers. Moreover, these often misguided incentives and formal regulations can easily ‘crowd out’ the seeds for managerial wisdom.

As Principal of Verhezen and Associates, a consulting company focusing on reputation risk and good governance, Dr Verhezen has worked with boards and top executives worldwide to find ways to improve overall performance beyond just accounting profits.

“Employees often look at how top management will execute the so-called ‘mission’ and ‘vision’ statements, which are always lofty and nice,” he says. “However not many companies really apply them and that’s what bothers people within the organisation.”

Dr Verhezen believes these missions – often expressed through an organisation’s corporate social responsibility (CSR) commitments – have a profound effect on corporate reputation, which in turn affects profitability and success. It is all a far cry from the beliefs of Milton Friedman, who believed a corporation was answerable to its shareholders alone.

“Business ethics and the focus on good corporate governance are often the consequence of crisis,” he says. “Accountability and responsibility matter, not just immediate profits.”
Asian companies acknowledge the importance of relationship-building and trust

“Often in Western organisations, there is a reliance on fiduciary duties to control obligations towards shareholders and stakeholders (such as employees and clients),” Dr Verhezen explains, adding that there is some distinction between the way business managers and employers behave in Asian economies such as China and Indonesia, compared with their Western counterparts.

“Asian companies acknowledge the importance of relationship-building and trust underpinning those relationships, as there is sometimes an institutional void that means rules are not always enforced.”

So how should companies in Western nations improve their corporate and social responsibility and managerial wisdom? This process requires what Dr Verhezen has termed ‘phronèsis’, or practical wisdom. Enshrined within a more holistic approach to leadership and management, practical wisdom - like any process of innovation or progress - requires trial and error. Experience guided by ethical principles and values counts for much, but is often unregarded in formal procedures or processes.

“Unfortunately, not many young executives have achieved the amalgam necessary for managerial wisdom and authentic leadership,” he says. “This is why formal accountability and responsibility matter so much for many Western organisations. We should find a balance between informal forms of trusting relationships and formal governance rules and regulations, leading to phronèsis.”

There are dozens of reasons for you to attend the University of Melbourne Cultural Treasures Festival, from 28-29 July. Here is a small taste of what is on offer;

12 guided tours, each with a special theme, including the Botanical tour, taking visitors to the University Herbarium and the System Garden, the Medical Discovery tour, the Musical tour, and the tour of Decorative Arts.

Two family history seminars will be held in the Baillieu Library, exploring how genealogical gems at the University of Melbourne Archives can assist your own family history research.

A special exhibition of plans, photos and documents of some of Melbourne’s iconic buildings, including the Melbourne City Baths, Scots Church, The Shrine of Remembrance and Trades Hall.

Cultural treasures festival

Banksia saxicola, collected from Wilsons Promontory National Park, 1993. University of Melbourne Herbarium

Mad Max and the Renaissance print display by Albrecht Dürer and others created during the reign of Emperor Maximilian I (1459-1519). An illustrated talk comparing Maximilian’s prints to Australian cult movie Mad Max, followed by a procession to the South Car Park which appeared in the film.

More than 12 exhibitions drawn from the cultural collections. These include Knowledge through Print: a Melbourne Perspective, celebrating Melbourne’s rich cultural history and the British Museum’s Printing and the Mind of Man, exploring some of the world’s most influential books.

A Med Student’s Life; memories, ephemera and photographs of students days collected from Melbourne medical graduates from the 1860s to today.

The rhino, in The Historie of Foure-footed Beastes ..., by Edward Topsell, London, 1607. Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne

The Rialto, detail of third and fourth stories, c.1889, William Pitt, 1977.0115, University of Melbourne Archives

The Parkville campus will also host the Melbourne Rare Books Fair in Wilson Hall, and Open House Melbourne program, accessing fascinating University of Melbourne buildings.

Bring a copy of this magazine to any of the participating coffee vendors during the festival to receive a free hot drink.

www.unimelb.edu.au/culturalcollections/treasuresdays/
Oprah and Billy Crystal contribute to the internship of Daniel Burt (BA Media & Comm 2005).

It was with the assistance of Melbourne University that I was able to intern in the writing department of The Late Show with David Letterman. The life-changing experience was my final scholarly undertaking before graduation.

Airfare and accommodation came out of my own pocket and there was no guarantee of attaining the position. Despite a gutsy effort at self-sabotage, I had a successful interview and so flew home to prepare for my return.

The ground shifted. While I had never personally met the comedian Wil Anderson, he got in touch to pay for my plane ticket. I appeared in newspapers and TV bulletins and was interviewed by Bert Newton and John-Michael Howson on Good Morning Australia. The placement hadn’t even started, so I found myself on camera discussing the unforeseeable and answering questions I couldn’t possibly know the answer to. In other words, I was getting good training to be a talking head on TV.

The internship was unpaid and my visa forbade me from earning money during the stay. Nevertheless, I was optimistic and decided even on my first day that ruining my dad’s retirement was totally worth it.

Sometime after lunch, but before the tutorial on sexual harassment, I opened a wrong door and set off the fire alarm for the entire building. As I witnessed staff prepare to evacuate, I knew that I had broken at least one tenet of How to Win Friends and Influence People.

My reputation gradually healed and I immersed myself in the deep end of showbusiness. Sharing a room’s oxygen with such people as Billy Crystal and Oprah has seen me not easily intimidated by international celebrities. I’ve managed to hold myself together when interviewing Mark Wahlberg’s less famous brother, Donnie, and didn’t burst into tears when Kim Kardashian called me cruel. (I had asked her fans in the studio audience if they wanted a photograph with Kim and when they screamed ‘Yes!’ I told them it wouldn’t happen.)

Not all opportunities are stellar. One of my gigs upon returning to Australia was to adapt US formats for Australian audiences, which sounds lofty until you realise it meant writing for The Biggest Loser. On my first day, the host told me that my writing was ‘Shakespearean’. When I thanked her for saying so, she made an effort to explain that she meant it as an insult.

Another such experience was adapting the National Bingo Night franchise for Australia. This program combined all the drama of our numerical system with all the excitement of watching people play bingo. It was axed after episode six, which was a real shame as I had my money on legs-eleven.

I’ve also written for the Japanese-via-UK concept Hole in the Wall, a game show where celebrity contestants, wearing hard hats and spandex, contorted their bodies so as to fit through holes in a polystyrene wall that slowly moved towards them. This was not even a career highlight for the wall.

The lessons learned at university continue to shape my life as an alumnus. My writing, acting and stand-up career was launched during my studies, and winning the Campus Comedy competition supplemented formal qualifications. Melbourne University opened doors for me.

Daniel Burt is a writer and comedian. Catch him in The Age Green Guide or online at danielburt.tumblr.com and @trubnad.
Dr James George Beaney (a.k.a. ‘Diamond Jim’ or ‘Champagne Jimmy’) was a prominent Victorian-era surgeon and the Medical School’s first benefactor.

A bon vivant with a penchant for diamond jewellery, Beaney commonly prescribed alcohol – preferably champagne. In his dotage, he lectured annually at the medical school, where he was widely known – and celebrated – for serving his favourite drink after each lecture.

Upon his death in 1891 he bequeathed the University graduate scholarships in pathology and surgery. The scholarships ensured Beaney’s legacy lived on through the medical students whose lives he transformed through his generosity.

This is just one of the many bequests that have enabled the University of Melbourne and all those who make up the community, to be truly extraordinary.

To find out more about University of Melbourne bequests, visit unimelb.edu.au/alumni/giving/bequests/ or call +61 3 8344 1056
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