

# TOWER

UTS: ALUMNI

Issue 3: Spring 2010



UNIVERSITY OF  
TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

## THE XO HAS LANDED

CHANGING OUR  
EDUCATIONAL  
LANDSCAPE

Luminaries Issue

### JOURNALISM FRONT LINE

TALES OF THE  
UNEXPECTED  
FROM WORLD  
HOTSPOTS

### CAMPAIGN FOR FREEDOM

FIGHTING SLAVERY  
IN AUSTRALIA

### BRIGHT IDEAS GREEN LIGHTING

MAMA AFRICA  
DEFYING MALARIA,  
DEPRESSION AND  
ARMED REBELS  
FOR THE KIDS

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TOWER is published twice a year for alumni and friends of UTS. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the University. It is produced by the UTS: Alumni Relations Office.

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Contact the UTS: Alumni Relations Office above.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

If you wish to be added to the subscription list, please contact the UTS: Alumni Relations Office.

**CIRCULATION**

Member of the Circulations Audit Board (CAB): audited circulation is 113,739.

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PHOTO BY: CHRIS BENNETT

## UTS LUMINARIES INSPIRE

Welcome to the luminaries issue of *TOWER*. We are proud of the achievements of all our graduates, but some of our alumni really shine. In this issue you'll hear from ABC Indonesia Correspondent Matt Brown, filmmaker Claire McCarthy whose recent release *The Waiting City* was filmed in India, and Uganda-based Irene Gleeson who cares for more than 10,000 children through her charity Childcare Kitgum Servants. Our cover features 26-year-old Rangan Srikhanta, Executive Director of One Laptop per Child Australia. Rangan's commitment to the education of children living in rural and remote areas is inspiring and we are very pleased to share his story.

In June, UTS announced a \$25 million gift from Chinese business leader Dr Chau Chak Wing to support the Frank Gehry-designed Faculty of Business building, due to be completed in 2013, as well as an endowment fund for student scholarships. Dr Chau's \$25 million gift is equally the largest philanthropic gift in living memory to an Australian university. I was honoured to receive this gift on behalf of UTS and I look forward to seeing this exciting building take shape over the next three years.

In June, it was also announced that UTS will receive \$50 million from the Australian Government's Education Investment Fund to assist with construction of the new Faculty of Engineering and IT building. These major financial contributions are vitally important to us in achieving the goals we established in our City Campus Master Plan.

As UTS graduates, you are important stakeholders in this process of growth. We value your input and your loyalty. Enjoy the magazine, stay connected, and be part of this journey with us.

Professor Ross Milbourne  
Vice-Chancellor



PHOTO BY: MATTHEW DUCHESNE  
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## CELEBRATING OUR HIGH-ACHIEVERS

We hope you enjoy this luminaries edition of *TOWER*, in which we profile graduates who have achieved some very special things, in sometimes very challenging circumstances.

In October, we held our annual Alumni Awards Ceremony to honour the contributions made by UTS alumni to the University, and Australian and international communities. Kim McKay AO was the deserving recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence. We also launched the 2010 alumni exhibition *Aspire*, which celebrated the achievements of more inspiring and dynamic alumni.

At the same time, graduation ceremonies were taking place in the Tower Building, and it was wonderful to see so many new alumni and their families take in the exhibition afterwards. We look forward to hearing about the adventures and achievements of this cohort of graduates as they make their way in the world.

I am delighted to be managing the Alumni Relations program at UTS while Amy Brooks is on parental leave.

These are exciting times for the University and I encourage you to make the most of the learning and networking opportunities open to you as alumni. There are more than 150,000 UTS alumni working towards, and achieving, their dreams around the world. Whether you're a new graduate, or have been part of the alumni community for some time, please keep your contact details up to date so we can keep you informed.

Jane Miller  
Manager, Alumni Relations

## CONTENTS



'Children do not lack capability, but there is a lack of equality in our developed nation'

The XO has landed, p3



**03**

### COVER STORY

The XO has landed

**06**

### NEWSBITES

An icon is born, a new advisory board, and changing the world

**08**

### TECHNOLOGY AND THE LAW

Dean of Law Professor Jill McKeough on our fluid communications environment

**14**

### MOVING ON WITH TRANSPORT

Transport expert Dr Garry Glazebrook on sustainable travel

**16**

### CAMPAIGN FOR FREEDOM

The war on slavery continues

**18**

### FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

ABC reporter Matt Brown takes us to the journalism front line

**22**

### BUILDING ON SUCCESS

Meet the women engineers who are creating a better future in the built environment

**26**

### CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATOR

Footprints specialist Jennifer Raymond discusses murder scenes and crime TV

**27**

### BALANCING ACT

No challenge is too great for filmmaker Claire McCarthy, who managed a cast of thousands and five languages on set

**30**

### OPENING MINDS THROUGH LITERATURE

The Australian Centre for Child and Youth: Culture and Wellbeing; and the notion of literacy

**32**

### INSIDE MAN

Ajoy Ghosh forensically examines the contents of computers, phones and GPS systems to help solve some of our most high-profile criminal cases

**33**

### COOKING UP A NEW CAREER

Former IT consultant Jonathan Daddia chases a future in food

**34**

### DESIGN CULTURE

A unique ethos drives an architecture and interior design firm to international stardom

**36**

### MAMA AFRICA

Irene Gleeson AO lives without power, stands up to armed rebels, and changes the lives of thousands of children

**40**

### ON ART... WITH MIRIAM CABELLO

Awards, inspiration and making the most of opportunities

**41**

### LOCK IT IN

Reunions galore, and your chance to speak your mind

'It is a difficult balance between commerce and art to really execute a film'

Claire McCarthy, p27



**09**

### IN YOUR FACE

Dan Phillips - marathon runner, executive director, philanthropist

**10**

### TOWERING TEN

Esteemed alumni leading the way in law, the arts, education, technology and more

**20**

### GETTING THE GREEN LIGHT

Bright ideas on eco-friendly lighting from the Green Lighting Research team

**21**

### THE SCIENCE OF BEAUTY

Nadine Ismiel-Nash progressed from guinea pig to health and beauty pioneer

#### COVER:

Rangan Srikhanta,  
One Laptop per Child  
Australia;  
Photography by  
Flora Sacco



## CONTRIBUTORS



UTS alumnus **MATT BROWN** is the ABC's Indonesia Correspondent, based in Jakarta. With more than 15 years' experience as a journalist, he has worked as the ABC's National Security Correspondent, and reported on the wars in Iraq, Lebanon, the Gaza Strip and Georgia during his four years as Middle East Correspondent. In 2007, Brown won Australia's highest award for journalism, a Walkley, for his story on an Islamic Jihad terror cell on the West Bank. Read about Brown's incredible life on [p18](#).



**ANNA WATANABE** is in her second year of a B. Communication (Journalism), B. International Studies (Japan) at UTS. She has written for *The Canberra Times*, *Reportage Online* and *Hills Shire Times*. With plans to work in television and documentaries, Anna also volunteers at community television station TVS and works at news.com.au. For this issue, Watanabe uncovers how eco-friendly lighting can reduce greenhouse emissions ([p20](#)).



**DR GARRY GLAZEBROOK** is one of Sydney's leading transport and land-use planners, and works as Transport Policy Manager for the City of Sydney. He is also a Senior Lecturer at the UTS School of the Built Environment and specialises in the areas of sustainable transport and urban development. He has had articles published in *Urban Policy and Research* and other journals, and authored a 30-year public transport plan for Sydney in 2009. See [p14](#) for Glazebrook's insights into Sydney's transportation challenges.



**CAROLINE JENKINS** is a writing and communications specialist with more than a decade working in media and marketing-communications. A successful journalist, Jenkins has written and sub-edited for *The Times* in London and various other high-profile British and Australian titles. Her skills have been utilised by organisations such as Qantas, the Queensland Commission for Children and Red Cross. Jenkins is the guest Editor of this edition of *TOWER*.



### FAREWELL TO CHRISSA

*TOWER*'s Founding Editor Chrissa Favaloro has said goodbye. After two years working as Communications Coordinator in Alumni Relations, she has moved to a new position. Chrissa will be greatly missed and we wish her well in her new job. She is pictured here with Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International and Development) Professor Bill Purcell. Chrissa wrote *Inside Man* ([p32](#)) and *Mama Africa* ([p36](#)).





# THE ~~XO~~ HAS LANDED

From Cape York and Arnhem Land, to the Great Sandy Desert in Western Australia, **Rangan Srikhanta** and his team at One Laptop per Child Australia are working with isolated communities to change the educational landscape of the nation. Caroline Jenkins reports

When he left UTS just four years ago with a double-degree in business and computing and took a graduate role with Deloitte, Rangan Srikhanta's career path had seemed mapped out in front of him: chief information officer of a leading corporation had been his goal.

Instead, Srikhanta, recipient of the Elizabeth Hastings Memorial Award for Community Service, made it all the way to Executive Director – much faster than most. His targets are as ambitious as the most veteran of CEOs, and he is as determined to reach them.

The difference is Srikhanta, 26, didn't stay in the corporate sector. He surrendered his healthy salary to establish the Australian branch of One Laptop per Child (OLPC). His mission: to arm

With knowledge comes power to make change – not just for people close to you, but for the broader community

every one of Australia's 400,000 children aged four to 15, who live in remote communities, with an XO Laptop by 2014.

Srikhanta sees the XO – a pint-sized computer built especially for children – as a tool to unlock their potential. Learning, teacher and student engagement and, ultimately, broader community development are just a few of its purposes. Computer literacy is a by-product.

"Children do not lack capability, but there is a lack of equality in our developed nation," says Srikhanta, who fled war-torn Sri Lanka with his family as a child. He became interested in community development after volunteering with the United Nations Association of Australia during his time at UTS.

When former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and technology pioneer Nicholas Negroponte launched OLPC, with the support of News Corporation and Google, at the World Economic Forum in 2005, Srikhanta set his sights on establishing an Australian chapter.

He quietly toiled and learned lessons as he went, finally leaving his job after one-and-a-half years to work fulltime on OLPC Australia – in the midst of the global financial crisis.

"I couldn't stomach becoming a banker or a consultant and earning a lot of money when I knew that money wouldn't necessarily lead to me being happier."

In December 2008, Srikhanta received an email from the office of Commonwealth Bank Chief Information

Officer Michael Harte asking how the bank could get involved. OLPC Australia was born.

"How do you respond to something like that?" gushes Srikhanta, who once aspired to emulate Harte's success as CIO. The bank donated \$150,000, enabling the first deployment of 400 laptops to three remote communities.

By May 2009, OLPC Australia had been launched officially, and the number of employees was growing. UTS alumni Kelly McJannett and Penelope Bowden (both BA in Communication, 2009) now respectively manage communications and marketing. The one-year anniversary of OLPC Australia was marked with a gala dinner at Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art, attended by then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, who granted

Deductible Gift Recipient status to the organisation.

By September this year, \$4 million had been raised and 4000 laptops distributed.

"It isn't enough," says a more sombre Srikhanta, who aims to have 15,000 in use by next June. "Hopefully we will blow that out of the water."

Globally, more than one billion children in developing communities do not have access to adequate education. This includes Australian children. According to the National Assessment Program: Literature & Numeracy (NAPLAN, 2008), whereas almost 80 per cent of Year 9 metropolitan students are above the national reading standard, only 33 per cent of their peers in 'very remote communities' are at the same level.

OLPC Australia's belief is that the more remote children are, the more their performance in standardised exams drops. They do not lack ability, but the system of teaching used in metropolitan areas does not suit remote children and their teachers.

While the 100 'apps' for the XO do tackle literacy and numeracy, the laptop also aims to contribute to student and teacher engagement, and community development.

"Children who are involved in the program are more engaged, but in many of these remote communities, teachers last about eight or nine months. The children just don't have the assumed level of knowledge teachers are taught at university, and this makes it difficult.





“We want to see the teachers using this laptop as often as possible. You hear stories of some children coming in early because they want to use the laptop”

But think of the implications on a child’s learning path when teachers are constantly leaving.”

OLPC Australia brings teachers in remote communities together for the XO Experts Program to show them how the laptop works and how to use it to engage and educate children.

“More than 90 per cent of the teachers who attended in Alice Springs said they strongly believed the laptop would help increase attendance,” says Srikhanta.

“We want to see the teachers using this laptop as often as possible. You hear stories of some children coming in early because they want to use the laptop.”

Srikhanta is optimistic about the future of communities whose children may be able to use the internet to create solutions for their community.

While they may not have the social support structures, many remote schools do have the resources to support the use of the laptops: power and internet; some classes are even linked fibre optically. But for the very remote schools, Srikhanta hopes the XOs will create a demand for better resources.

He refers to a community in East Arnhem Land. The closest shop is 200km away, but during the wet season it is inaccessible. “They do have a way of sustaining themselves – they pull roots out of the ground and eat them as they have done for thousands of years. So what happens if one of the kids says: ‘We can’t go on like this; let’s set up a little shop’? The teacher is working on that now. But if they leverage the internet and technology, they might be able to create a local economy. With the XOs in the community, there will become a demand for resources including the internet.

“Ten years ago, how much did we know about other societies and cultures? We were barely embracing the internet. Now everyone is connected. If we can combine education and connectivity, we’ve got the making of an environment that could have a major impact on how these communities sustain themselves in 10 or 20 years.

“With education comes opportunity to make a difference. With knowledge comes power to make change – not just for people close to you, but for the broader community.”

Indigenous Land Councils and community elders have played an important role in OLPC Australia’s success to date, ensuring that culture and values don’t suffer.

E-books and literacy exercises are being developed for the XO – this is how the Yolgnu language from East Arnhem Land will debut online.

“This is not just empowering children for the future, it is also helping to retain their culture.”

The laptop comes with a screen that is readable in sunlight, and is built to be fixed by the people who use it: children. It costs \$300, and is now used by 1.5 million children in 12 countries. In Uruguay, every primary school-age child was equipped with an XO within three years.

Each XO has different colours on its lid, and speaks to its ‘owner’.

“From the moment children receive the laptop, there’s a sense of personal ownership,” says Srikhanta. “They become the custodian of the machine.”

The XO, he says, is “their window into the fun process of learning”. It will also help close the “gap”.

“Why don’t we get to the children before the gap opens? The younger you start, the more positive the impact on a child’s development. We must do this in a way that is also innovative and cutting edge – we need to leapfrog the divide.” Visit [www.laptop.org.au](http://www.laptop.org.au)



PHOTOGRAPHY: FIORA SACCO (RANGAN SRIKHANTA);  
ISTOCKPHOTO.COM © ZHUIFENG (PALM FROND)





## CHANCELLOR'S AWARD WINNER

Few people can say they have changed the world. As an entrepreneurial marketer and one of the visionaries behind Clean Up Australia, Kim McKay is the recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence as part of the UTS Alumni Awards for 2010. In a stellar career spanning 30 years, McKay's tireless commitment to environmental and community causes has seen her work on every continent and become a regular commentator in the media.

McKay, who now runs Momentum2, a social and sustainability marketing and communications firm, completed a BA in Communication at UTS (1981). Awarded

an Order of Australia (AO) and named in *G Magazine's* Top 20 Eco Heroes list last year, McKay lends her skills to numerous not-for-profit organisations including the Sydney Institute of Marine Science, The EYE Foundation and is an ambassador for the 1 Million Women campaign, which is empowering women to reduce carbon emissions.

She attributes her successful career to a continual desire to do her best. "I've always been driven by wanting to make a positive difference and achieve a great result. If you really want something, then don't take 'no' for an answer and never give up."

Kim McKay AO at the UTS Alumni Awards



## INDUSTRY HEAVYWEIGHTS JOIN UTS

A powerhouse of CEOs and industry leaders has come together to form the Vice-Chancellor's Industry Advisory Board. The panel of experts will feed thinking at UTS and help make UTS innovation known to the world.

Chair Glen Boreham, CEO of IBM Australia, says it is a vital step towards closer collaboration between business and education to ensure students are

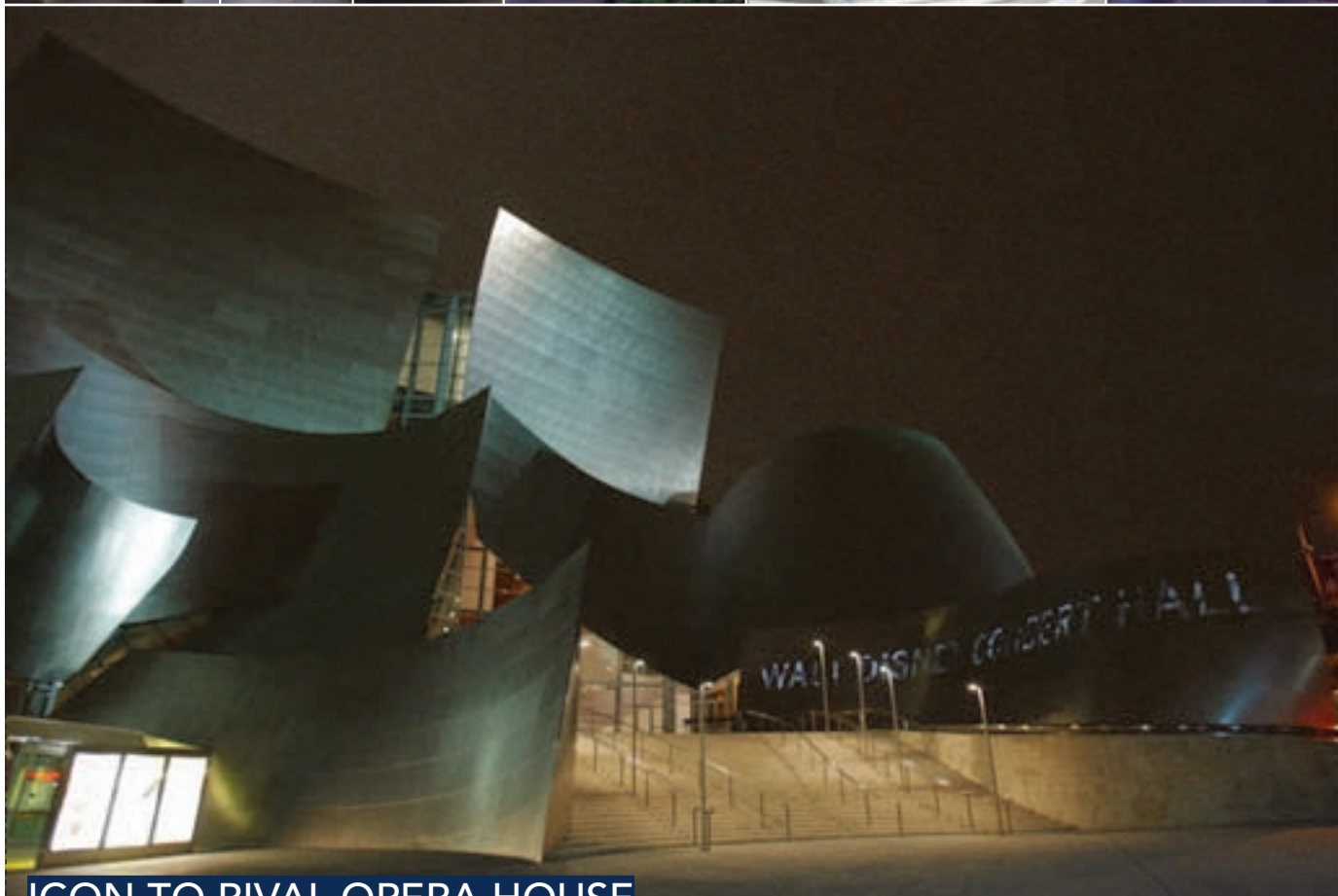
equipped with the right skills for the future. "Australian industry must roll up its sleeves to invest in the skills our nation needs to be competitive on the global stage."

The other members of the board are Cochlear CEO Chris Roberts; Deloitte Australia CEO Giam Swiegers; Animal Logic Director Greg Smith; SBS presenter Jenny Brockie; ABC Managing Director Mark Scott; Telstra Enterprise and

Industry Advisory Board: (L-R) Vice-Chancellor Ross Milbourne; Mark Scott; Jenny Brockie; Glen Boreham; Nerida Caesar; Greg Smith; Tracey Fellows; Giam Swiegers; Chris Roberts

Government Group Managing Director Nerida Caesar; Microsoft Australia Managing Director Tracey Fellows; Westpac Chief Operating Officer Paul Newham; Kimberly-Clark Australia Managing Director Mark Wynne; and Arup CEO Robert Care.

NEWSBITES



ICON TO RIVAL OPERA HOUSE



The architect responsible for world-renowned buildings such as the Guggenheim Museum in Spain and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in LA is creating an icon for UTS. Frank Gehry is to design the new Faculty of Business building as part of the \$900 million UTS City Campus Master Plan. Chancellor Vicki Sara says the design, which has yet to be released to the public, encapsulates the spirit of the University. "His proposal is bold, innovative and synthesises creativity and technology to create unique learning and research environments."

The project is able to go ahead following an extraordinary act of generosity by Chinese business leader Dr Chau Chak Wing who donated \$25 million to UTS. It is equally the largest philanthropic gift in living memory to an Australian university, with \$20 million going to the Faculty of Business building and \$5 million creating an endowment fund for student scholarships. In recognition of the gift, the new building will be called the Dr Chau Chak Wing Building.

PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY LA PHILHARMONIC (WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL) - TODD EBERLE (GEHRY), MATHEW IMAGING (NIGHT), MUSIC CENTER OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY (AERIAL), FEDERICO ZIGNANI (SKYLINE), INTERIOR, TOM BONNER (FRONT), MELISSA SMITH (WDCR EXTERIOR LEFT & BOTTOM-LEFT)

# TECHNOLOGY AND THE LAW



BY PROFESSOR JILL MCKEOUGH, DEAN OF LAW

What attributes should a faculty of law within a university of technology have? We have considered this question in the context of our strategy for the future, and part of the answer is: to be professionally relevant and connected with the external environment – to the benefit of our students and graduates. It is also: to be engaged with the changing environment of technology, and issues around the intersection of technology and law.

A striking example of this intersection is the debate on fast broadband, which both major parties recognise is essential to Australia's continuing development – albeit with quite divergent strategies for its introduction.

The uncertainty of the August 2010 election result underscored the different policy platforms for achieving that networked environment. However, even if the delivery mechanisms can be agreed upon, the regulatory and management issues will remain unresolved.

Fast broadband is different; it delivers data in a way that allows for almost 'real life' interaction. For a large country like Australia, fast broadband could include benefits ranging from availability of expert medical advice and treatment to remote areas, to high-quality educational experiences for a disseminated audience. People living in

the country could run businesses requiring high levels of data encryption, which, at present, is not possible with an unreliable satellite link.

A major issue for installing fast networked broadband is cost. Overseas experience shows that there are various models for getting this to the population – asking people to dig a trench through their garden (Norway); using local governments to deliver infrastructure (Sweden and France); public/private partnerships (Holland); central government investment (Korea). Increasingly, evidence is emerging about the type of environment that produces the best outcomes for consumers, and Australia is poised to make the most of this understanding in introducing and regulating its own fast network.

Telecommunications policy in Australia has always evolved in a rapidly changing context due to the inherent uncertainty about emerging technology, markets and optimal infrastructure. Contributing to an understanding of this fluid communications environment through research and relevant degrees is of great benefit to lawyers and others involved in these matters. Experience overseas shows research is needed into all aspects of the fast broadband environment, whether it be the best model for the infrastructure, how to educate consumers, or how businesses use the technology.

Our Communications Law Centre, shared between the Faculties of Law, and Arts and Social Sciences, and led by Professor Michael Fraser, demonstrates how UTS contributes to policy development that is timely, relevant and in the public interest. In conducting research and engaging with stakeholders, the centre provides a contemporary focus and practical insights for two new communications programs.

UTS is renowned for its outstanding communications courses. Building on this strength, the Faculty of Law is introducing a Master of Communications Law and a Graduate Certificate in Communications Law in 2011.

Professors Lesley Hitchens and Michael Fraser are leading the new programs and have a suite of subjects under development, which, in combination with the faculty's existing coverage of intellectual property and comparative telecommunications law, will introduce a distinctive new postgraduate qualification. For those with a non-law background, an overview subject will provide a framework for the unique interdisciplinary program. Students from both law and non-law backgrounds will gain an understanding of the complex regulatory structure underlying Twitter, Facebook, television and all manifestations of new media, and will find themselves well placed for employment in the emerging fast broadband environment. ■



# IN YOUR FACE

“ Everyone has a talent – they should nurture it and look for ways to use this talent to have a positive impact on others ”

**DAN PHILLIPS** doesn't shy away from a challenge. There are 5461 cobbled steps in the Great Wall of China Marathon, taking those brave enough up a trajectory so steep, it reduces many to climbing on all fours. Phillips has conquered them all – twice.

This same determination can be seen in Phillips' rise within global investment bank Macquarie. Just seven years after joining the business at the age of 25, after completing a B. Business at UTS (1987), Phillips was appointed as an executive director. In this role, he was responsible for setting up Macquarie's Malaysian operations and became the founder and head of Macquarie's Technology Principal Investment business.

Phillips invests his time partnering with entrepreneurs to help build market-leading businesses, and can claim a hand in the global success of employment website Seek, as well as oOh Media, Australia's leading regional outdoor media company.

In 2007, Phillips saw an opportunity for Macquarie to expand its investment business into China and relocated, along with his wife and three children, to Shanghai. Since then, one of the main focuses of Phillips' team has been developing the Chinese education sector. This has resulted in great opportunities for Australia-China relations,

and Phillips' efforts were recognised this year when he was nominated for an Australia China Alumni Award.

Throughout his career, Phillips has also held board positions, sharing his expertise with the Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce, the Federal Communications Minister's IT Advisory Board and not-for-profit organisation OzHarvest.

Giving back to the community is something else Phillips is passionate about. “Everyone has a talent – they should nurture it and look for ways to use this talent to have a positive impact on others.”

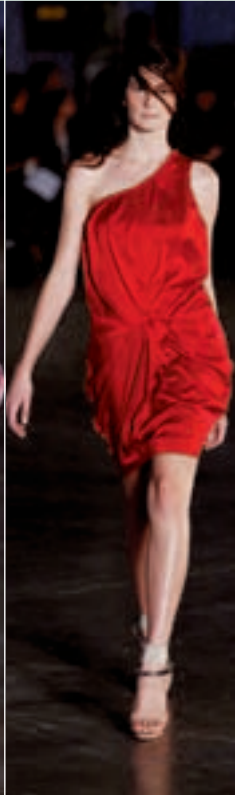
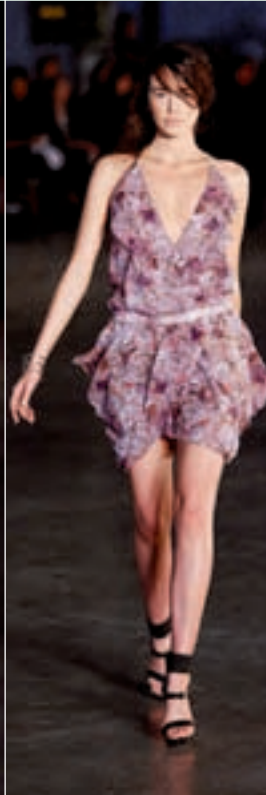
Known not only for his work with charities but also as a mentor for younger executives, it was this drive to make a difference that helped Phillips complete that gruelling 42km run along The Great Wall.

Phillips came an impressive fifth, and raised \$130,000 for UNICEF's relief effort following the Sichuan earthquake. In an effort to do more, Phillips and his team sponsored a primary school affected by the disaster, raising funds to construct a new playground.

Children's education is a cause to which Phillips is particularly committed – “they are the future,” he says. For his inspirational efforts, Macquarie awarded Phillips the title of Fundraiser of the Year. ■



# TOWERING 10



1

Her unique styles can be found in the high-end boutiques of the world's fashion capitals.

**THERESE RAWSTHORNE'S** designer label of the same name evokes sophisticated glamour with a subtle edge, and takes her to Paris and New York at least twice a year. But she still remembers running up designs on her bedroom floor as a teenager. Rawsthorne, 33, took off to London after graduating with a B. Design in Fashion and Textile Design in 2000, working in retail for Issey Miyake and Oswald Boateng. This experience, she says, is important for emerging designers. "To know how a product ends up in the store; to see customers pick it up and interact with it is invaluable." On returning to Australia, Rawsthorne launched Youth World, renaming the label Therese Rawsthorne in 2006. She was immediately picked up by Australian and international boutiques. The Sydney-based designer uses traditional and modern techniques to create her exclusive natural fibre lines.

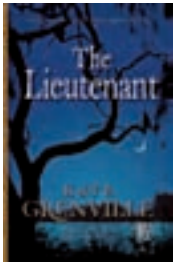
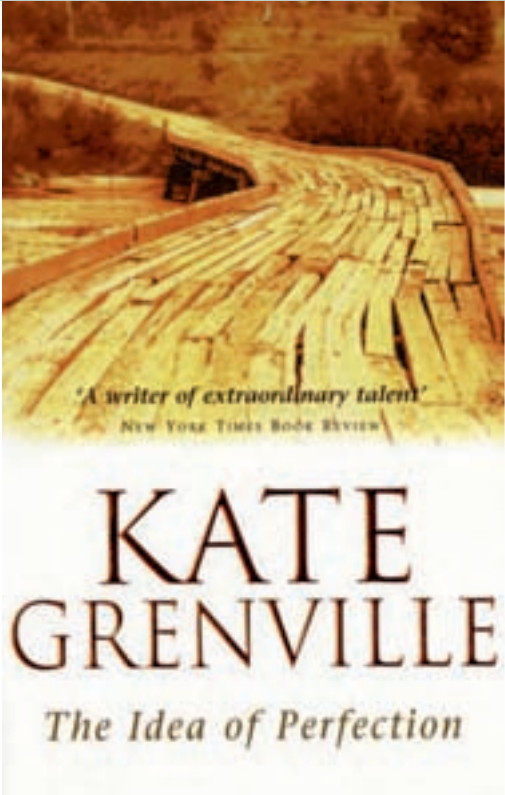
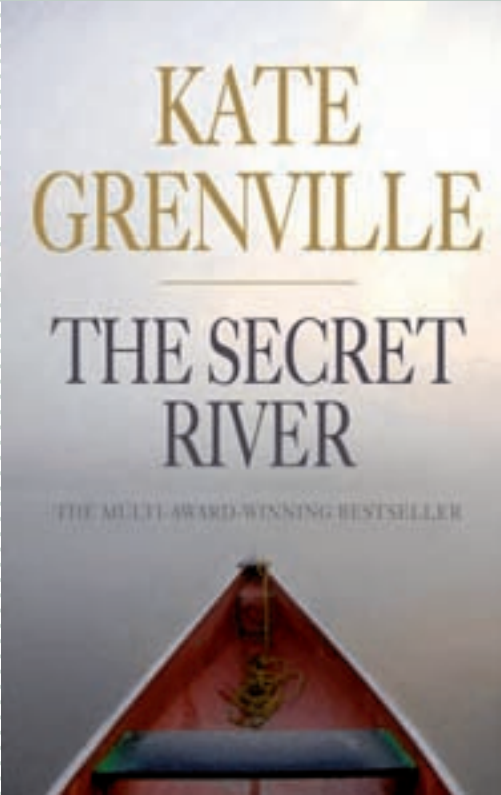
2

"I wake up each day and think to myself: 'Am I making the best of what I have been given?'"

**ROBERT CASTANEDA**, founder of world-leading business communications technology company CustomWare, is motivated by the "bravery" of his grandfather who moved to Australia from Malta after the Second World War, and his father who came from El Salvador in his 20s. "These guys were brave and true risk-takers." Castaneda (B. Science, 2001) established CustomWare while he was still studying his computing degree, and was named one of Australia's top-30 entrepreneurs under the age of 30 three times. This year, he represented Australia at the G20 Summit for Youth Entrepreneurship in Toronto. Castaneda, 31, now lives with his family in Silicon Valley, but returns to UTS as a guest Masters lecturer on systems integration. With more than 300 clients in 30 countries, and more than 80 staff, CustomWare has offices in the US, Sydney, Kuala Lumpur and Wellington.



From a Ming Dynasty watchtower, to the world’s fashion capitals, Silicon Valley and beyond, UTS’s esteemed alumni are leading the way in their respective fields



WORDS CAROLINE JENKINS, PHOTOGRAPHY MATTHEW DUCHESNE  
© MILK&HONEY PHOTOGRAPHY (TRICIA KAVANAGH)

**3** Not only did **KATE GRENVILLE**'s bestselling novel *The Secret River* earn her a Commonwealth Prize for Literature and a short-listing for the Man Booker Prize, a version of it was also the thesis for her Doctorate of Creative Arts (2005). The story of a convict family who settled on the Hawkesbury River early in the 19th century, it explores the conflict between colonial settlers and Indigenous people. It won many other prizes including the NSW Premier's Literary Award. Grenville, 60, has 12 books to her name: eight novels and four books about the writing process, including a memoir about the research and writing of *The Secret River* (*Searching for The Secret River*). Her work has been published all over the world, and *The Idea of Perfection* (2000) won Britain's Orange Prize. Grenville's most recent novel is *The Lieutenant*, inspired by the Gadigal notebooks of First Fleeter William Dawes. Her website includes notes for readers on all of her novels.

**4** The facilities at UTS have come a long way since the Honourable Justice **TRICIA KAVANAGH** was sitting in the "cold, wet" Anthony Hordens Building, where the University's first law classes were conducted. But "the lecturers were keen," she says, and her law degree (1981) and PhD (1998) were the keys to her professional life today. "The law school was a centre of excellence from its very beginnings," says the Industrial Court of NSW Judge, and Deputy President of the Industrial Relations Commission of NSW. Inspired, as a teacher, by the need for childcare for working women, Kavanagh went to work for a trade union but was soon appointed Commissioner of the interim Children's Commission in 1973. It wasn't until she conducted a case for a union colleague that she considered law. Seeing an advertisement for the new law school at the then Institute of Technology (UTS), she enrolled as a mature-age student. She graduated with honours in the first class of six.





5

"To quote JFK, 'you get a chance to exercise judgement on matters

of importance and fully use one's faculties along lines of excellence,'" says **MICHAEL COUTTS-TROTTER**, 45. The Director-General of the NSW Department of Education and Training and Managing Director of TAFE NSW says it is "a pleasure and a privilege" to work in the public service. "The policy and administrative problems... demand everything of your character and intelligence," he says. "But when you do something that makes a difference to the quality of schooling, it's really fulfilling." Coutts-Trotter (B. Arts, 1995) enrolled at UTS as a mature-age student, and at the same time helped businesses and lobby groups deal with the government. Within a year of graduating he started as Media Adviser to the NSW Treasurer, and eventually became Chief of Staff. He moved on to the NSW Department of Commerce before the Department of Education and Training. "The best part of the job is getting into schools."

6

She didn't want to be "just an architect's wife", so **PENELOPE SEIDLER**

became an architect, too. She is also an accountant and a patron of the arts. Seidler, who married the modernist architect Harry in 1958, worked with her husband to improve aesthetic values, preventing the demolition of modern architectural heritage and supporting Jørn Utzon for the Opera House. Their firm, Harry Seidler and Associates, is responsible for such "works of art" as Sydney's circular Australia Square, Wohnpark housing community in Vienna, and, more recently, the Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre in Sydney. However, it is the family home of which Seidler is most fond. Harry & Penelope Seidler House, overlooking Ku-ring-gai National Park, abides by the firm's principle of "aesthetic and physical longevity" – it has been lived in, unchanged, for 30 years. Seidler, who completed her B. Business in 1981 when their children went to school, worked as both an architect and accountant in the firm. Harry Seidler passed away in 2006.





7

"There is much that we can learn from the experiences of others, especially from someone who has made it good from scratch." So says Singapore's President SR Nathan in his foreword to **MOHAMED ISMAIL GAFOORE's** book *You Can Fly*. As a boy, Gafoore, 47, (B. Land Economics, 1999) helped his father deliver newspapers. As an officer in the Singapore Armed Forces, he relinquished a pension when he left after 13 years in 1996 to establish a real estate business. Nooris Consultants grew from six agents to 50 within six months. Gafoore now owns PropNex, Singapore's leading real estate firm with more than 6000 associates, and it is his integrity that underlies his success. A *Reader's Digest* Trusted Brand winner three years in a row, PropNex invests in 288 days of training for its employees each year; they know the company song and observe all of its values. For the past two years, PropNex and its employees have funded a school wing in Cambodia.



8

Just as they had been when he started his business in 1974, **GREG POCHE's** employees, customers and shareholders were his priority when he sold Star Track Express, Australia's most successful transport company, in 2003 for \$750 million. So loyal was Poche that he examined what was good for his people and the business before he sold. "On that test, the sale to Qantas and Australia Post was the best decision," he told *BRW*. Nine years earlier, Poche had broken up a cartel of Australia's biggest express freight companies. Now, he is best known for giving: in March, the world's largest melanoma treatment and research centre opened in North Sydney – thanks to a \$40 million donation. The B. Business graduate (1979), who left school aged 14 years and nine months, and completed his studies at night, received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence at the 2009 Alumni Awards Ceremony.



9

It is only recently that Chinese contemporary art emerged onto the world stage. But one Australian has had a front-row seat for its evolution, from one of the oldest contemporary art galleries in mainland China. Inspired by an exhibition at Beijing University in 1987, **BRIAN WALLACE** (B. Business, 1981) founded Red Gate Gallery four years later. Situated in a 600-year-old Ming Dynasty watchtower, it promotes Chinese artists, and facilitates cultural exchange through its residency program. Red Gate represents 18 artists, showcasing paintings, works-on-paper, graphics, sculpture, photography and installations. "It's not difficult for me to understand the world's sudden and intense interest in Chinese contemporary art," says Wallace, who moved to China to study the language. "With stylistic and technical options finally at their fingertips, the artists of contemporary China can respond with unbridled creative energy to the laboratory of progress that bustles around them."



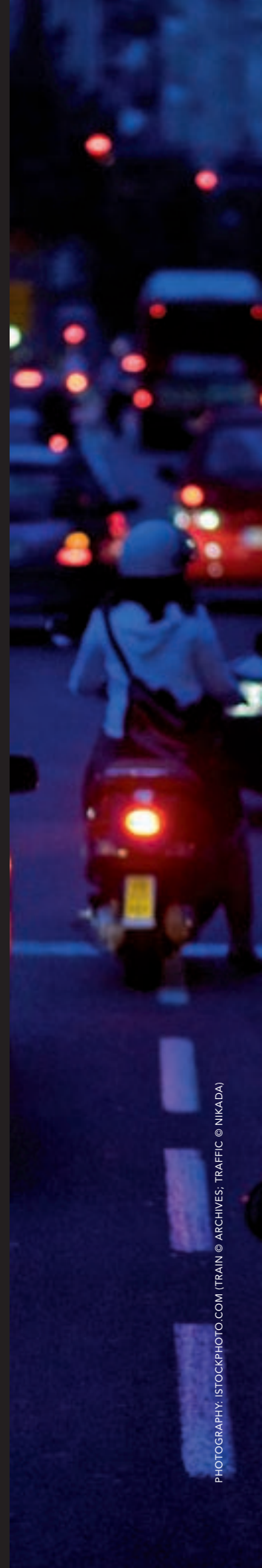
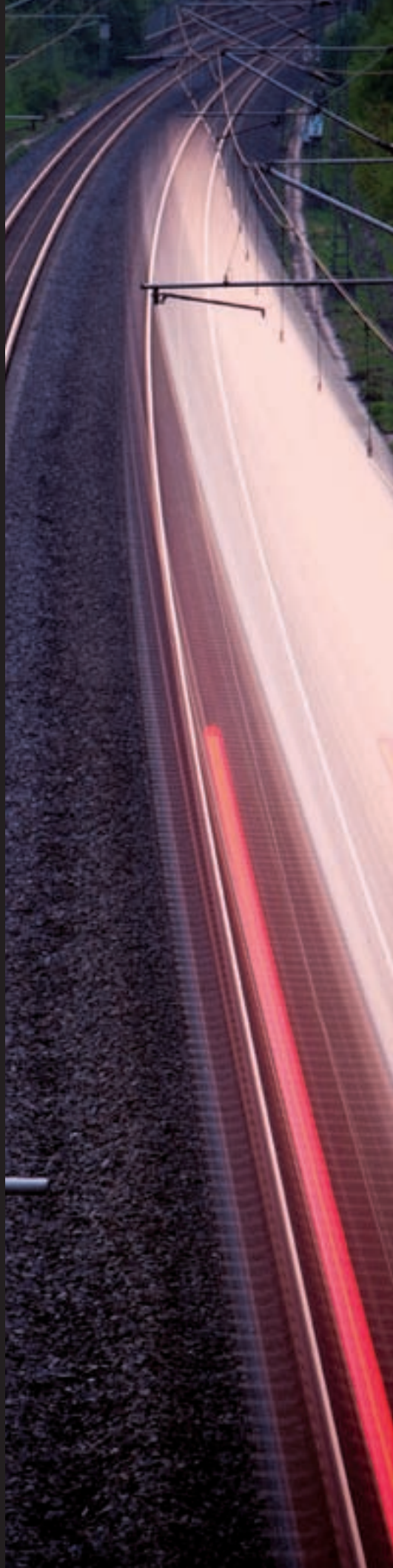
10

"A future in which humans and the planet thrive requires huge social and cultural changes – and we need to be taking the first steps now." **DR CHRIS RIEDY**, Research Director for UTS's Institute for Sustainable Futures, has dedicated his career to building a sustainable future, leading reviews and developing policy on climate change. Inspired by his childhood in the Blue Mountains, Riedy, 38, says it is critical we engage with environmental challenges. "While the political debate drags on, our impact on the Earth is increasing. We must find ways to live within ecological limits while promoting social justice and human wellbeing for all." Riedy (PhD, 2005) most recently recommended a suite of policies that will help the Queensland Government meet its household greenhouse gas reduction targets – cutting by one-third the state's carbon footprint by 2020. He is to develop the UTS Sustainability Strategy. ■



# MOVING ON WITH TRANSPORT

**Dr Garry Glazebrook,**  
Senior Lecturer at UTS's  
School of the Built Environment  
and Transport Policy Manager  
for City of Sydney, looks at  
the unique challenges facing  
Australia's busiest city



PHOTOGRAPHY: ISTOCKPHOTO.COM (TRAIN © ARCHIVES; TRAFFIC © NIKADA)



Cities around the world are grappling with how to move their citizens sustainably. More than half of the world's population now lives in cities; transport is almost totally based on oil; and oil is reaching its global peak (maximum rate of extraction). This is now an urgent and critical task.

Attitudes are changing. In the United States, public transport has been growing faster than car traffic for a decade, and the building of new urban freeways has essentially ended. Indeed, some inner-city freeways have been pulled down. Growing awareness of peak oil and the link between exercise, obesity and health means that the way in which transport dollars are spent is now seen in a wider context of strategic security and health budgets for the future.

In Australia, too, cycling and public transport use is growing much faster than car use, and all major cities are planning significant upgrades to their public transport systems and networks of cycleways. The Gold Coast is building a new light rail system; Brisbane has built extensive busways and "green bridges"; Melbourne is building new rail links; and Perth is planning an inner suburb light rail network to complement its successful suburban rail system. Brisbane will shortly follow Melbourne in introducing a public bicycle hire scheme, similar to those operating in European cities.

Greater Sydney is one of the world's more car-dependent cities, with high car ownership and a huge urban footprint. Cars currently account for 80 per cent of travel, with 15 per cent by public transport and the rest by walking or cycling. Reducing our reliance on cars will not be easy, and will require a change in individual behaviour patterns as well as a shift from road investment to public transport, footpaths and cycleways. It will also require our cities to become more pedestrian-friendly, with changes to the way we design and build our cities.

While Greater Sydney is highly dependent on cars, our historic city centre, with the biggest concentration of employment, educational, entertainment, cultural and other facilities in the country, is actually almost a model of sustainable transport. Three-quarters of peak-period trips to the city are by public transport, 11 per cent by walking and cycling, and only 14 per cent by car.

But the combination of streets laid out in convict times and a skyline increasingly resembling Manhattan gives rise to unique transport challenges. At present, more than 1000 buses converge on the city centre in the busiest hour each weekday, jostling for limited street space with pedestrians, cars, taxis, delivery vehicles and an increasing number of cyclists.

Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore's strategy *Sustainable Sydney 2030* draws on local and international experts, such as Danish urban designer Jan Gehl, and focuses on planning for people rather than for cars. Gehl's vision includes the transformation of George Street into a boulevard for pedestrians and light rail, connecting the Circular Quay precinct with a new square opposite Town Hall and a revitalised Central Station precinct.

Implementing the vision will mean redesigning bus routes, changing traffic signal priority to favour pedestrians, reducing speed limits across the city centre to 40kph and modifying traffic flows, all while maintaining the commercial viability of Australia's global city centre.

The recent *Transforming Sydney* memorandum of understanding between City of Sydney and the State Government outlines cooperative planning and implementation mechanisms between the two levels of government.

The complexity of the task is immense. For example, Sydney currently has 192 bus routes serving the city centre, with large volumes of buses running through the city on north-south streets such as York, George, Castlereagh and Elizabeth Streets. Despite the introduction of bus lanes, the sheer volume of buses causes long delays and contributes to congestion, while also impacting on the amenity for pedestrians. In addition, the need to layover buses between runs means much of the street space near Circular Quay is packed with buses.

Light rail can allow some buses to terminate at the edges of the city centre, and others to run through, by providing a convenient, legible and environmentally friendly means of travelling north-south through the city centre. It can also lay the foundation of an extended light rail network serving the inner suburbs. But to achieve this, re-routing and rationalising buses is necessary, as well as a fully integrated fare and ticketing system so people won't be deterred from transferring between trains, buses, ferries and light rail. It also requires installing the necessary underground pipelines for the city's tri-generation plants, which will provide electricity, heating and cooling to CBD buildings.

// WE HAVE LONG BEEN THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT CAPITAL OF THE COUNTRY. BUT WE CANNOT LIVE ON THAT LEGACY FOREVER //

Another example is the difficulty of catering for the growing band of cyclists approaching the city centre, which has increased two-and-a-half-fold in the past seven years. The City is installing a 200km network of cycle lanes throughout the local government area to accommodate this trend.

Car-sharing is also on the agenda, to reduce pressure on scarce on-street parking. In the past six years, more than 4500 people and businesses in the city have joined car-share schemes, which use less than 200 vehicles.

Major effort is also required on the metropolitan scale to double the number of people using public transport and quintuple the number of people cycling. If State Government targets are not met, Sydney is likely to grind to a halt. The option of simply building more roads is no longer viable. Space on the surface is at a premium, so most new roads have to be underground and the high costs of tunnelling and increasing user reluctance to pay ever greater tolls makes private finance for toll roads difficult.

In Sydney, the challenge now is to design the best integrated public transport systems, and then to fund them. We have been fortunate to live off the brilliance of Bradfield, who gave us the Harbour Bridge and underground rail system. As a consequence we have long been the public transport capital of the country. But we cannot live on that legacy forever.

In addition to meeting sustainability challenges, Sydney faces growing competition from other cities in Australia as well as the likes of Singapore and Hong Kong, which have extensive, modern and efficient mass transit systems. Surveys carried out for *The Sydney Morning Herald's* public inquiry by the UTS Centre for the Study of Choice found strong public support for a shift to sustainable transport solutions, and a willingness to fund this through carbon pricing, congestion charges on roads, higher fares and land-based taxes. The challenge now will be to convert changing public attitudes and behaviour into effective public investment strategies. ■

# FOR FREEDOM



Associate Professor Jennifer Burn,  
Director of the Anti-Slavery Project

**A small, but dedicated team of lawyers, researchers, social workers and law students is working to raise awareness about, and ultimately abolish, slavery in Australia**

**H**uman trafficking and slavery is a global issue, a business that reaps huge profits for the traffickers and misery for the trafficked.

Around 2.4 million people worldwide are in forced labour as a result of labour trafficking, according to the International Labour Organisation.

We might associate trafficking and slavery with developing countries, but it exists here in our own backyard.

Official figures don't exist due to its clandestine nature and a lack of research and reports made by victims, but human trafficking and slavery are seen by the Anti-Slavery Project, part of the UTS Law Faculty, as "a very real problem" in Australia.

"Many people would be surprised that the use of forced labour is becoming a serious problem, with consequences for local industries, workers and unions," says Associate Professor Jennifer Burn, Director of the Anti-Slavery Project.

And it is not limited to women or the sex industry.

marriage in Australia. "We don't yet have a specific offence for forced marriage."

Last year, Burn and her "incredibly vibrant and dynamic" team were responsible for major reforms to visa legislation, which "goes part of the way towards ensuring a fairer response to victims of trafficking in Australia".

Anyone identified as being trafficked by the Australian Federal Police will now be able to lawfully stay in Australia for 45 days. They will also have access to social support and have no obligation to assist police.

"They are given time to reflect, to get advice about their situation and make an informed decision about what they want to do in the future. And that's reflecting international best practice, which advises that a reflection period be part of any well-constructed response to trafficked people," says Burn.

Anyone who does assist police and is deemed to have made a contribution to an investigation or criminal prosecution, and is in fear of danger on return to their country of origin, may be offered a permanent visa. "But there's still a lot of work to be done."

Burn and her team are now advocating for reforms to criminal legislation.

An immigration lawyer, Burn established the Anti-Slavery Project in 2003 with the mission of eliminating all forms of human trafficking and slavery. She works alongside a small team of lawyers and law students, including Frances Simmons (B. Law, 2005), who volunteered on the project as a student. Simmons went on to complete her Master of Law at Columbia University, New York, and worked for the Australian Human Rights Commission before returning to work with Burn.

The centre researches patterns and practices of slavery and human trafficking; conducts practical training on slavery and human trafficking issues; provides outreach, education and media advocacy; and coordinates the Sydney Community Response Network to assist survivors.

Awareness, says Burn, is essential: "Unless we open our eyes and know the signs, we may miss opportunities to identify trafficked people and make sure they get help and advice. I am particularly concerned about the lack of public awareness about trafficking for forced labour outside the sex industry."

**"I would never have thought that my own relatives would force me into labour. But without any money, I felt I had to work to repay them for allowing me to stay with them"**

- Prishen

Would-be migrants can be lured to promising employment opportunities and living arrangements, with the prospect of sending money home to their family. In fact, they receive inadequate remuneration, unfair treatment and unacceptable living conditions. They may also be subjected to physical and emotional abuse. Often they cannot leave their employer for fear of retribution.

Human trafficking and slavery occur across the small business, hospitality, agriculture and sex industries. Victims are also trafficked out of Australia.

Forced marriage is a practice similar to slavery, according to the United Nations Supplementary Convention on Slavery. It is emerging as a major issue around the world and in Australia, says Burn, whose team is currently researching the prevalence of forced



**NAME: MARIA\***  
**AGE: 24**  
**COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: PHILIPPINES**  
**VISA TYPE: PROSPECTIVE SPOUSE**

Maria had worked in a factory earning \$10 a week in the Philippines. She had split with her husband and had to support her young son and mother. A friend said she would help Maria get work in a shop with her relatives in Australia. She would be enrolled in English classes. In return, she was to marry an Australian and give him some money for the visa and airfares.

When Maria arrived, her Australian fiancé took her passport and didn't enrol her in English classes. She had to work in the family shop seven days a week, for which she was given \$20 every fortnight or so. She was never paid a wage. In the evenings she wasn't allowed to leave the house when her fiancé was at work or out with his friends. She had to cook dinner for him, clean the house and do the gardening.

Maria feared that if she didn't do what they told her, they would hit her. Sometimes, they made vague threats about hurting her family in the Philippines. She had no money, and they told her that if she contacted her family or tried to go back to the Philippines, they would find her and hurt her. Maria didn't speak much English and she didn't know anyone else in Australia. She was trapped.

Because of the high degree of control exercised over Maria, as well as the threats of violence and lack of payment for her work, Maria may have been trafficked and enslaved under sections 271 and 270 of the Commonwealth Criminal Code.

"I was hoping to start a new life in Australia, earn money to send back to my family and grow to love my fiancé. But everything promised to me was a lie. I had no opportunities and no friends and no family to help me."

**NAME: PRISHEN\***  
**AGE: 43**  
**COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: INDIA**  
**VISA TYPE: THREE-MONTH HOLIDAY**

Prishen came to Australia to visit relatives and take a break from his successful restaurant in his village in India. His relatives operated a restaurant in Melbourne and offered to organise his visa, pay for his ticket and let him stay at their house if, in return, he agreed to help out at the restaurant.

The details of how much he would be required to help were vague, but he trusted his family. He did not realise he would be on a tourist visa, which did not allow him to work.

When Prishen arrived, he was told that he had to work in the restaurant every day to pay for the flight and help pay the rent. He worked every night from 5pm to 1am, without a break, and was given about \$50 a week to cover his expenses.

He was allowed to do what he wanted during his time off, but spent most of it sleeping. Prishen had thought he would be helping his family, but the situation was not what he had agreed to and soon became exploitative.

By working in the restaurant, Prishen had breached his holiday visa conditions – even though he was not paid for the work. Prishen's family was in breach of sections 245AA to 245AK of the Migration Act 1958 (Cth), which make it an offence to knowingly or recklessly employ or refer for work a person who does not have a valid visa or who is working in breach of their visa conditions.

It is unclear whether any of the trafficking offences in the Commonwealth Criminal Code would apply in Prishen's case. Establishing whether offences were committed would require a detailed analysis of exactly what Prishen had been told before he came to Australia, and what the intention of his family had been. It is unlikely that his family committed any slavery offences under the Code. The Code does not have a stand-alone offence of forced labour.

However, Prishen may be able to bring a civil action against his family to recover unpaid wages. His family could also face severe financial penalties or even imprisonment under the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth). ■

\* Not their real names



ABC Indonesia Correspondent **Matt Brown** offers a glimpse into the life of a broadcast journalist and tales of the unexpected from hotspots around the world

**H**e cocked his AK-47 and waved it at my head. I didn't know enough Arabic to understand everything he said – but enough to know the Hamas militiaman wanted me out of the car. We'd organised our visit with his local commander but he and his half-dozen comrades were out of the loop, with no radios and plenty of fear and suspicion. They'd heard a rumour that Israeli Special Forces were travelling around in a battered yellow, diesel, stretch-Mercedes taxi exactly like ours.

The militiamen grew more strident but our translator saved our skins. A Palestinian doppelganger for Danny DeVito, he was a brave, well-connected and tough local journalist who leapt out of the car and promptly dressed them down, talking sense with just the right mixture of indignation and entitlement: "These guys don't have M16s and, anyway, I know your boss!"

We moved on. When we found the local commander, we filmed militiamen laying roadside bombs, interviewed their boss, did a live cross to AM on ABC Radio and headed home. After we crossed the bridge linking north and south Gaza a bright flash from behind us lit up the darkened roadside as the Israelis blew a hole in it with a 500lb bomb.

It was a series of terribly close calls but, in that perverse way of foreign correspondents, I was exactly where I'd always hoped I'd be: the place I'd imagined through long lectures and tutorials high up in the Tower Building of UTS. My Communication degree at UTS was an immersion in the culture of journalism.

The arguments about great writing and tough interviewing, politics, injustice, bias and 'ways of seeing' the world swirled around the concrete walled halls and Formica tables. They infused the stale air in the dark, windowless basement of the Tower Building, sustaining us through midnight shifts on the overbooked editing gear – a purgatory of poor resourcing that would prepare me well for the month-on-month night shifts of the ABC and the hallucination-inducing rigours of a sleepless life on the road.

# FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT







Bearded and dread-locked, I was in my Radio Journalism class when I heard about the chance to work answering phones and making coffee on the Mike Carlton show on Sydney's radio 2GB. I'd been pumping out radio current affairs stories at 2SER for more than a year – a heady time I still consider the bedrock of my career – and figured I was ready for the challenge. I was just politic enough not to terrify the slightly whimsical executive producer with too much talk about 'alternative ways of framing the debate' and quick enough on the open-line panel to put the controversial and articulate callers to air, consigning cranks and mumblers to doom on hold. I didn't stop doing bar work but I felt like I might have made a crucial breakthrough.

A year or so later, thanks to recommendations from more than one caring tutor, I was working the night shift at ABC's Radio 2BL (702 Sydney), then freelancing documentaries for Radio National's *Background Briefing* and reading the news on Triple J.

It took another 13 years before I was appointed Middle East Correspondent. The job allowed me to escape the tightly controlled 'message of the day' world of modern media and really enjoy the basics of journalism: getting out of the office to talk to people doing extraordinary things. I quickly learned that, despite all the froth and bubble about the 'internet age', there is no substitute for 'being there' and seeing things for yourself.

That's what led me close to disaster more than once – the militiamen in Gaza were softies compared to the guy in Georgia who dragged me out of the car at gunpoint during Russia's invasion in 2008.

But I still count getting the chance to witness and interpret events first-hand as one of the great joys of this life. And, along with the dead bodies, kidnap fears and artillery, being a foreign correspondent brings real delights.

In Jerusalem I found the man doing the call to prayer at Al-Aqsa mosque, the third holiest site in Islam, and learned the job had been in his family for more than 500 years. His voice, at turns powerful, then tremulous, transformed that simple phrase, 'God is great', into something lyrical and transcendental as his words echoed out across the Old City and down the ancient, limestone valleys into East Jerusalem. He is now teaching his son the finer points of calling the faithful.

I also found living evidence of shared beliefs and mixed mythologies, the old world that fundamentalists of all hues have tried so hard to expunge. In a little church near Bethlehem I met Muslims who would come to receive miracles thanks to the saint Al Khader, also known to Christians as St George. The key to the church, turned in the mouth of one mute Muslim boy, had restored his power of speech. The sister of the Imam, who ran the mosque across the road, even managed to get pregnant after passing a sacred set of chains over her head.

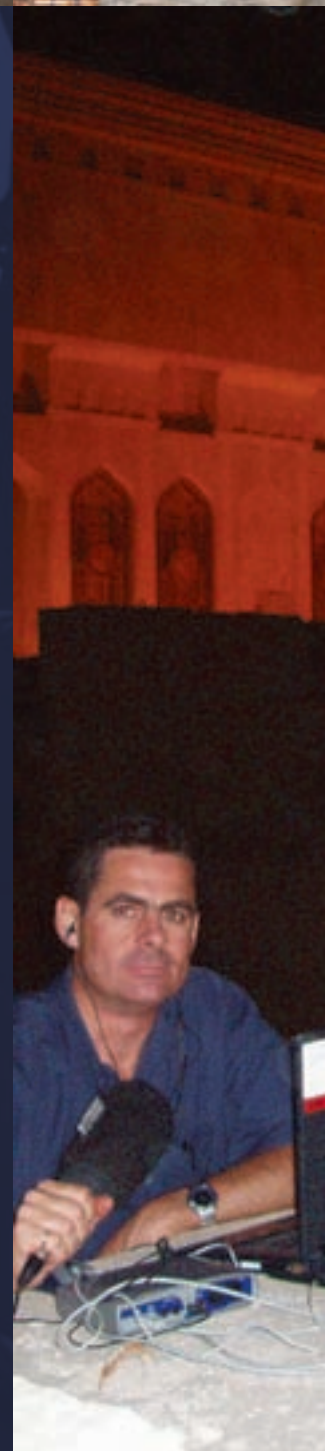
The land was rich with stories and a sort of faith that rarely makes it into the headlines. In the valley down the road, the arid hills falling away down to the Dead Sea, a tattooed Bedouin woman with a hundred grandchildren, told me of the giant, green bird dwelling in the gorge below that protected the Christian monastery from devastation in an earthquake.

Now in Indonesia, I'm still on the lookout for these tales of the unexpected. Of course, I've met the counter-terror cop who delivers a speech wearing desert combat boots with a suit. But I've already found the Hindu shrine shared by Buddhists, Christians and animist-Muslims alike.

In that grey tower on Broadway I could never have guessed at the remarkable lives I'd get to witness, and I'm still amazed that so many people – then and now – have given me the chance. ■■■

**photography: opposite page** – Matt Brown was there for the 2008 Russian invasion of Georgia

**this page (clockwise from top)** – live from Baghdad, 2007; the ABC's makeshift office in Saddam Hussein's old palace, 2006; ready for bed... beside piles of ammunition in western Iraq; reporting from Baghdad's Green Zone



# GETTING THE GREEN LIGHT

When it comes to eco-friendly lighting, the future looks bright. Anna Watanabe finds out how we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and take lighting to communities without power

**H**idden between the colourful, glass walls of the Microstructural Analysis Unit (MAU) at UTS sits a man whose half-dozen or so fish watch him work. Professor Matthew Phillips insists that the current in the fish tank flows in such a way that by swimming facing the glass "it's the fish-equivalent of putting your feet up".

But perhaps the fish just want to know what he's doing with all those lights.

Until their phase-out in February 2009, incandescent bulbs (globes with a wire filament) had been the light bulb of choice for homes around the world for 100 years.

While effective producers of light, incandescent bulbs are not efficient; almost 95 per cent of the energy put into them is lost in heat. And with 20 per cent of the world's electricity consumed in lighting, that's a lot of wasted energy.

// IN PRINCIPLE, YOU COULD ELIMINATE 10% OF THE WORLD'S ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION BY USING LED LIGHTS //

This is where Professor Matthew Phillips, Director of the MAU, and his Green Lighting Research (GLR) team come in.

"Green lighting is energy-efficient lighting," he explains. Phillips and the GLR team are working to improve light emitting diode (LED) technology so these lights can be used in homes.

The current replacement energy-efficient domestic light source is the compact fluorescent light (CFL). While CFLs are a vast improvement on incandescent lighting, they have some drawbacks: CFLs contain mercury which, when the light bulb is broken, is released into the atmosphere.

"CFLs contain about 4mg of mercury – that's enough to pollute 100,000 litres of water," says Phillips.

Already, LEDs are used in traffic lights, car brake lights, and as a replacement for domestic halogen down-lights.

All of these lights, however, have a spot focus and are therefore unable to light an entire room. Domestic bulb replacement LED lights are available now, but they are also very expensive – starting at \$60.

Phillips and his team are working to improve the quality of material in LEDs so the bulbs can emit more light and the price can decrease.

"We're trying to understand the formation of defects in the material, which reduce the amount of light that the semiconductor produces. So we're trying to understand how these defects form, how to minimise them and establish their role in the light emission process."

LEDs are about five times more efficient than incandescent bulbs and last for almost 100,000 hours – this is almost 10 times longer than CFL bulbs.

"This basically means that you have a domestic light source that, under normal circumstances, would last forever," says Phillips. "So the real question is, do you still need light sockets when you build a house?"

Greater energy efficiency means the introduction of domestic LED lighting will significantly reduce our reliance on coal power, and carbon emissions.

It is predicted that LED technology will reduce the world's greenhouse gas emissions by 10 gigatonnes of carbon (about 10 per cent of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions) over the next decade. The decrease in Australia alone is greater than 28 million tonnes of carbon – equivalent to taking 500,000 cars off the road.

"In principle you could eliminate 10 per cent of the world's electricity consumption by using LED lights," says Phillips. "And that has a dramatic impact on the economy. Energy rates are going up. In fact it is predicted that by 2050 global electricity consumption is going to double."

Phillips is also enthusiastic about the potential of combining LED technology with renewable energy resources such as solar and wind power, to make it a totally self-sufficient lighting source.

"In the future, it is entirely conceivable that all electric lighting will be taken off the electricity grid. This means that we can bring lighting to developing communities that don't have access to electricity."

Perhaps the most exciting part about Green Lighting Research is that "this technology is in its infancy". Who knows what will be lighting our homes in 10 years. ■



The Green Lighting Research team (from left): Richard Crendal, Christian Nenstiel, Dr Cuong Ton-That, Matthew Foley, Simon Niemes, Trent Hardy, Trevor Manning, Toby Shanley, Professor Matthew Phillips, Katie McBean, Mark Lockrey





# THE SCIENCE OF BEAUTY

Creating health and beauty products in her family business is a labour of love for biomedical science graduate **Nadine Ismiel-Nash**

**W**hile studying for her Bachelor of Science (2000), Nadine Ismiel-Nash chanced upon a scientific paper that would provide the basis for a life-changing product range.

"I discovered a clinical paper that showed topical vitamin B3 to be as effective as a topical prescription lotion for the treatment of acne. From a scientific view the paper was interesting; from a personal perspective it was captivating!"

Ismiel-Nash, 31, Research and Development Manager at Sue Ismiel and Daughters, suffered debilitating acne for 15 years. She tried everything from supermarket lotions and gels to harsh retinoid creams and other prescription medicines – nothing worked.

"I was a woman on a mission – I was determined to find a solution," she says. "I went to the lab and started experimenting; I used myself as a guinea pig."

A Master of Herbal Medicines solidified Ismiel-Nash's studies and she developed a natural supplement to take in conjunction with the Derma Cleanser and Acne Clearing Gel; in 2009 PuraSkin, the professional achievement most close to her heart, was launched.

When faced with a beauty or health problem, the Ismiel family has a habit of going back to basics and creating their own solution. Ismiel-Nash's mother Sue established the business in 1992 when she developed the Nad's hair-removal solution in her kitchen to help her middle daughter rid herself of unwanted body hair.

Today Sue Ismiel and Daughters is a major player in the Australian health and beauty industry. The success of Nad's Natural Hair Removal Gel was used as a platform to launch a range of depilatory and skincare products as well as head lice and acne lines. And business is booming. All of these products are developed by Ismiel-Nash, with the first one she created, Nad's Facial Wand, still the company's biggest seller.

In 2007, Sue Ismiel and Daughters opened its first laser clinic in western Sydney; four more quickly followed, and plans are underway to open another 30 clinics around Australia in the next three years.

"I remember being at the Flemington markets selling the product and demonstrating to people passing by. I never thought we'd grow to be a business selling around the world," says Ismiel-Nash.

The company is a family affair with mother Sue at the helm; Ismiel-Nash's younger sisters, Natalie and Naomi, respectively oversee marketing and graphic design.

"It works because we are in different areas; we need each other for different things," says Ismiel-Nash.

"But it's hard to separate work from home when you love what you do. It's natural to talk about work at dinner."

Ismiel-Nash also juggles motherhood with her demanding career – her daughter Amelia is 11 months old, and a regular at work.

"My office looks like a nursery with a port-a-cot and change table. Amelia comes to work with me every day."

The women also have strong philanthropic links, supporting the Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Association of Australia (POSAA), donating \$600,000 to the Jean Hailes Foundation to fund the Sue Ismiel International Study into Women's Health and Hormones, and sponsoring 101 children in Ethiopia.

Ismiel-Nash says her time at UTS equipped her with invaluable research techniques and the ability to appraise scientific papers, a "very important" part of her current role. ■



Nad's hair removal range



PuraSkin product range



# BUILDING **on** SUCCESS

A career in engineering provides an array of opportunities for those who think outside the square – from design and innovation, corporate design philosophy and green construction sites, to working with developing communities. Women in engineering are still a minority, but the tide is turning. We talk to three alumni whose passion for the industry is palpable

**A**s career development, work conditions and flexibility improve for women engineers, so should their retention and progression in industry and the profession.

However, while the demand for engineering talent is increasing, there is still some way to go.

"It has been the case that women left the engineering profession within 10 years, citing poor workplace conditions, culture and a lack of career opportunities as their reasons," says Bronwyn Holland, Director of the Women in Engineering & IT Program at UTS.

"Recently we have seen a number of women appointed to key national leadership roles in science, engineering and research, such as Chief Scientist for Australia and for New South Wales, Director of the CSIRO, and of the Australian Research Council. This is a great breakthrough, but the profile of their fields means there is a lack of depth in seniority behind them."

Australia ranks equal-first in terms of investment and years spent in formal education by women, but just 19th in terms of economic participation and opportunity, according to the World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Report* in 2009. Holland attributes Australia's poor ranking to a number of factors, including a lack of national paid parental leave up until now and persistence of inflexible working conditions and long-hours culture, particularly in non-traditional fields for women. This is capped by a striking gender pay gap that now stands at 18 per cent, she says.

Through outreach, mentoring and partnering strategies, the Women in Engineering & IT Program works to turn around the lower rate of female

participation in engineering and IT. This year, 3.4 per cent more women enrolled in undergraduate engineering at UTS.

"This is certainly something to celebrate," says Holland. "It seems that many students are connecting with engineering as a platform for a future in technology, design, sustainability and social justice."

With growing national investment in infrastructure, and new strategies for carbon reduction, engineers are in demand to plan and deliver more efficient and innovative systems including energy, water, transport and communications. Holland says now is a good time to be qualifying in engineering.

"We're seeing a focus on tackling barriers to women's participation at many different levels. In the 2008 *Engineers for the Future* report by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, four out of the six recommendations relate to diversifying the field and recruiting more women."

Scholarships are known to attract female enrolments. This year, the first full Women in Engineering Equity Scholarship (fees and living allowance for five years) was awarded.

"This kind of support can make a big difference for someone thinking about a long and demanding course of study," says Holland.

"Returning to university is also a career option. Engineers who return to the academic environment after working and achieving in their field, can bring opportunities for collaboration and new directions in research."

At UTS, this would mean being part of the move to a new Five Star, Green Star-rated address for the Faculty of Engineering and IT on Broadway.





# Alicia Maynard

## 29

**EMPLOYER:** MIRVAC

**ROLE:** SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER

Combine a love of maths, drawing, design and creative thinking, and you get an engineer passionate about efficient design

As she has progressed from civil to structural design and then sustainable engineering management, Alicia Maynard has always had one goal in mind: improving the design and functionality of buildings.

Thinking outside the square is crucial as she works across every design aspect to make the process – design and construction – sustainable.

Sustainability, in Maynard's world, is about efficient design – being "smart". Think: orientation, and how surrounding buildings cast their shadow; ventilation, and how the local environment affects it; lighting and energy; heating and cooling.

**“It's really refreshing to see that finance is no longer the primary driver for being a good business”**

“There's so much you can do purely on good site selection that can influence the foundation for a sustainable design,” says Maynard (B. Engineering, Dip Engineering Prac, 2003). “But it's not often you can choose the optimum site – our challenge is to get a design that suits the inherent conditions of the site.”

HomeHQ shopping centre, in Sydney's Artarmon, was one such challenge. The heritage-listed building is the first retail space in Australia to achieve a Green Star rating with the Retail Centre v1 rating 1 tool.

“It was technically challenging working with an existing building for which we had to retain certain elements,” says Maynard, who not only managed the sustainability component of the refurbishment and extension for client Charter Hall and previous employer St Hillers, but was also able to incorporate a massive rainwater tank used to flush toilets.

This is a new era: “Previously we've worked to make office buildings and homes sustainable, but this shopping centre is now sustainable,” she says. “It's really refreshing to see that finance is no longer the primary driver for being a good business.”

Maynard, Sustainability Manager at Mirvac, is all about “creating a better future in the built environment”, and says she is looking forward to seeing how the market embraces “smart, efficient design” in the coming years.

She also plans to start a family down the track, but doesn't see it impacting her career. “I can certainly see myself continuing to work in this profession. Many companies are embracing flexible working practices, giving the best solution for the business and employee.”

Also never an issue for Maynard: gender inequality. “We're all there to do the same thing,” she says. Although in the minority as an engineering student, Maynard, who received two scholarships and multiple awards at UTS, says girls considering engineering shouldn't be “limited by their perception”. She has since received several industry awards and has promoted engineering to girls at rural high schools.

“It is a highly rewarding career – you are really doing a community service by being able to think outside the square,” she says. “Engineering is such a diverse profession – you don't have to get your hands dirty onsite, but you can if you want to. If you are good at maths and science-based subjects, or like working outside or with people, engineering is a profession that allows you to do anything you want in any aspect of design or consulting.

“It can open so many doors internationally, and there are also many opportunities for engineers in Australia.”



# Natasha Connolly

## 34

**EMPLOYER: ARUP**

**ROLE: SENIOR SUSTAINABILITY CONSULTANT**

She's worked on the Dublin Port Tunnel and wind farms in Scotland, not to mention an eco-village in California and an eco-hotel in Hawaii, but never has Natasha Connolly been so busy

For Natasha Connolly, a career in engineering has meant travelling the world and climbing the career ladder. Ten years in the industry, and she has worked in Sydney, Scotland, Ireland and the United States.

"I've had the opportunity to bring and develop different skills to different parts of the world. I've expanded my skills base and enjoyed great lifestyle opportunities," says Connolly who was inspired to study engineering at UTS by an engineering graduate at a career presentation.

For now though, Connolly, 34, is tied up with projects closer to home. The Senior Sustainability Consultant at Arup is on maternity leave, looking after her new son Fraser.

**// It's a change of mindset. They are very supportive with flexible working arrangements. A day off is a day off //**

"It's grounding to go from working on huge international projects to playing with Play-Doh and cutting out crafts."

This isn't the first time she has taken maternity leave. After the birth of her first child, Charley Anne, in Seattle in 2007, she took four months off. This time, she is planning about nine months.

"It's a change of mindset. I've been very fortunate at Arup; they are very supportive with flexible working arrangements and they provide me with what I need to get the work done and also have time off. A day off is a day off."

Connolly (B. Engineering, Dip Engineering Prac, 2000), who received a BP-sponsored scholarship at UTS, did her final work experience placement with Arup in Dublin. Since then, she has steadily moved up the ranks of the multi-national engineering consulting firm.

The best part of engineering, she says, is the diversity and the fact it's "always evolving and isn't a stagnant career".

One of her more interesting projects was the planning and design of an eco-village in Napa Valley, expanding a university and providing services for the community and the college.

Connolly led the project team in setting the vision and sustainability strategies, and working with the client as well as architects, water engineers, other specialists and the community.

"We were integrating new developments within an existing neighbourhood – improving services, providing affordable accommodation, all while optimising the environmental and economic outcomes.

"It was challenging. When you're starting with a blank piece of paper it's easier to come up with great ideas.

When you're working within an existing community, there are a lot of constraints such as existing infrastructure," she says.

That wasn't the case in Hawaii, where she helped establish a Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) certified eco-hotel on Maui.

"I was working with Starwood Hotels, with certain standards and corporate image to abide by. It was really exciting to be able to change their philosophy and get further up the ladder and change how they approach design."

And being the only woman on a construction site? "As the only female onsite, everyone remembers your name," Connolly laughs.





# Emily Mudge

## 30

**EMPLOYER: BOVIS LEND LEASE**

**ROLE: DESIGN MANAGER**

Emily Mudge played a major role in one of the world's most successful sustainable development projects; now she is focused on using innovation to help developing communities become sustainable

In her short career, Emily Mudge has worked on all sorts of projects, from an Indian business unit, to an ACT prison, to metropolitan hospitals. She is currently working on a Royal Children's Hospital project in Melbourne.

But it is using innovation to develop sustainable communities about which she is most passionate.

Mudge, 30, was 'donated' by employer Bovis Lend Lease to Sri Lanka for a year, where she worked on one of the world's most successful sustainable development projects – the reconstruction of 6000 houses in 90 communities destroyed by the 2004 tsunami.

"It's very easy to build 100 houses in a community and do it in three months. The houses would all look the same, sometimes the same colour, and face the same direction. You would leave and actually think you've left a community of 100 houses.

The reality is this community had a culture and certain ideas about where they live and which way the windows and doors face.

"Our program went for 14 months to deliver between 40 and 100 houses in a community. We re-established their identity; community members drove the design of the houses, and were trained in the reconstruction process. We supported them technically and to maintain quality and budget."

With the knowledge gained in Sri Lanka, Mudge went on to start work with an Indigenous community in Queensland, to improve its community centre.

She is now focused on applying her knowledge to other Indigenous community projects, and is combining this with her own research on how innovation in Australia can be improved.

"For me, sustainable community building is about three things: partnerships, community empowerment or involvement, and innovation."

Innovation, she says, is something lacking in Australia. "We are actually considered quite a low innovator. The principle of how we can do things better is something that interests me, and often feeds into the projects I work on."

Japan, on the other hand, is at the top of the innovation scale, having successfully innovated technology and design to the benefit of the nation and the economy.

Japan is another of Mudge's passions. She studied the language, along with civil engineering at UTS (B. Engineering, BA in International Studies, Dip Engineering Prac, 2005), and has been on exchange there twice.

"UTS stood out because of the support and the structure of the course, and the exchange component meant I could combine engineering with my Japanese. The degree was very progressive and flexible."

Japan has a place in her career sights, too.

But until her next overseas posting, the former world karate champion – and multiple award and grant recipient – will be kept busy between her research, onsite peer sustainability group and "working out how we can keep doing things better".

"The 'best' of something is only relative to a point in time. There is always a way to make improvement – we just have to find the means. The idea of this is really exciting to me.

"I want to continually challenge myself as a person and employee, as well as the company and our sub-contractors – how we can work better, what's new and what we can gain from tapping into it.

"What continues to motivate me is the potential in the industry – what lies ahead in materials technology, sustainable design of services, water, waste and neutral carbon opportunities. We're at a point where we can apply those constraints to design and deliver buildings that have never been seen before." ■

# CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATOR



Forensics and footwear expert **Jennifer Raymond** puts her skills to use at crime scenes across the state

For someone who starts early in the morning and regularly attends murder scenes, Jennifer Raymond has a remarkably pleasant and enthusiastic demeanour.

"We are lucky in that we're not on the front line of the crime scene; when we get there the bodies are often removed," says Raymond. "I find I can handle dealing with dead people; it's the work of a counsellor that would be much tougher – having to inform families of murder victims would be awful."

Raymond works in the New South Wales Police Force's Specialist Location and Recovery Unit. Prior to her role there as Crime Scene Officer and Footwear Examiner, she worked as a Volume Crime Examiner, straight out of university with a B. Science (Hons) in Applied Chemistry – Forensic Science. She recently returned to UTS to complete her PhD.

The Specialist Location and Recovery Unit provides support for crime scenes around NSW, operating mostly at murder scenes, but also in counter-terrorism. It is based on a similar operation in Britain, which was set up to deal specifically with terrorism relating to the IRA campaign.

As a footwear examiner, Raymond recovers shoe marks from crime scenes and compares them to the footwear of suspects. She spends two-thirds of her time in the laboratory and the rest at crime scenes.

Raymond, who underwent special training for the role, and can often guess the model and size of shoes from their prints, also engages in research to solve problems encountered at the crime scene, such as obtaining fingerprints from difficult surfaces.

Raymond's PhD complements this. Her subject was *Usage of Trace DNA Evidence*, and looked at such issues as the duration and transfer of DNA – surprisingly, a little-researched area. Her lead supervisor was UTS Faculty of Science Professor Claude Roux.

"It took six-and-a-half years and I got several papers published. It was hard work but I developed good international forensic contacts," she says.

A usual work day for Raymond begins at 6am, and every few weeks she is on call at night. If a murder occurs somewhere in NSW, chances are she will be sent to the scene to recover evidence. She often stays at the location for up to a week.

Raymond investigates about 30 crime scenes a year – "low volume, but

intense". When she isn't investigating a crime, she is conducting lab work on "exhibits" – evidence from crime scenes.

"Exhibits need to be processed; we also have cold-case exhibits which need to be re-processed," she says. "Recently, we had a pile of garbage bags that had been holding a decomposed body."

Working in the police force had been Raymond's ambition since she was at high school in Canberra and a fan of television police shows. Her views on crime shows have now changed somewhat.

Difficulties with her job can arise from a misunderstanding of DNA evidence and what can be achieved with it, she says.

"DNA evidence is heavily relied upon; police want it all the time and juries expect DNA evidence everywhere – but there's not always a reason to test for it. These expectations can interfere with worthwhile work."

She says television shows such as *CSI* overplay the role of DNA evidence.

"People know it's cheesy. They [*CSI*] get the technical side right but they turn things around too fast and it seems one person does all the work. Of all the murder investigations we assist with, we might find crucial evidence in only a few; in others we find evidence that supports or refutes leads for detectives to follow up."

She says there is a need to educate the police, judiciary and public on what can be reasonably expected of forensic evidence.

But, admits Raymond, the show has generated attention for forensic science in police work, helping to increase funding and improve the quality of graduates. ■



# BALANCING ACT



**Claire McCarthy** is working hard to strike the fine balance between art, commerce and timing as she works on six films on both sides of the Pacific. She must also find time to bask in the success of her latest feature film *The Waiting City*. The writer, producer, director speaks to Caroline Jenkins

"Beauty and horror are side by side – an unashamed display of life in all forms. This is such a confronting thing for a Westerner."

Claire McCarthy fell in love with Kolkata (Calcutta) when she travelled there with her sister in 2002 to volunteer in orphanages run by the Sisters of Mother Teresa.

Four years later, her movie *The Waiting City* – the story of an Australian couple who journey to Kolkata to collect their adopted baby – has been screened in Australian cinemas and is awaiting release in America and India.

"I really wanted to bring across the sense of character of the city of Kolkata and her people – such a warm place, so hospitable, so contradictory," says McCarthy of her second feature film, the first Australian film to be shot entirely in India.

"India is such a beautiful place. We wanted an epic canvas for the film – for it to feel exotic, but also so people could relate to it and at times be pulled out of their comfort zone the same way

the characters are. We wanted the film to take us into emotions, a colour palette and textures that feel different to anything we've had the opportunity to experience here in Australia."

To achieve this, McCarthy and her crew never left the streets of Kolkata. In the tight-budgeted window of 32 filming days, they didn't enter a studio. Add five languages and a cast of thousands, and you get some idea of the logistics involved.

While bigger budgets are on her radar, McCarthy says "there's something rigorous" about being resourceful.

"It is a difficult balance between commerce and art to really execute a film and at the same time make sure people are treated well – that they are paid for their work and that the film reaches an audience and makes some money."

She says her first feature film *Cross Life* (2007), set in Sydney's King's Cross and nominated for an Inside Film Independent Spirit Award, proves that with the right mindset, anything is possible.



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Director Claire McCarthy and her crew in India

TOP Joel Edgerton and Radha Mitchell in McCarthy's *The Waiting City*

MIDDLE McCarthy and Cinematographer husband Denson Baker

BOTTOM McCarthy and Assistant Director Greg Cobain on set

"I think the leaner you are when you start out, the more resourceful you will end up being. I was able to use many of the techniques I explored then with *The Waiting City*."

She used decoy crews and hidden cameras when Australian actors Radha Mitchell, Joel Edgerton and Isabel Lucas were thrown among the melee. The decoys also helped divert the inquisitive gaze of locals – straight down the camera lens. The Australian crew of 10 was joined by a local contingent of 120.

"We had an eclectic mix – people I'd met on previous trips, actors who are revered in Kolkata, emerging actors, and people just playing themselves," says McCarthy.

"We had to work out a system that was graceful and honoured the contributions of everyone involved. We had to shoot everything the way the story required, and not be so attached to outcomes that we couldn't allow magic to happen. We had to relinquish some control."

The creative McCarthy – writer, director, producer – has put painting and singing aside for the time being (although she does feature as a vocalist in *The Waiting City*).

Since the film's premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival last year, she has picked up an American agent, in addition to her Australian one, and now has six projects on the go – three each in Australia and the US.

Adding to the film's success, Cinematographer Denson Baker, who McCarthy met at film school, proposed to her on completion of the shoot. They married a year ago.

"He said 'if we can get through this, we can get through anything,'" laughs the B. Design in Visual Communications graduate (1998). "Denson is incredibly talented and a wonderful artist and person."

McCarthy, who diversified from design into communications, credits her time at UTS with sparking her passion for film.

## // I THINK WHAT TIES US TOGETHER

"I was taken by film narrative and the way it integrated all the things I was passionate about – design, colour and art – but it was also the philosophy and storytelling, working with actors and a team. All these things presented themselves to me while I was at uni trying to do experimental films."

She moved on to the Australian Film TV and Radio School and cut her teeth on ads, and short dramas and documentaries.

"Filmmaking is an amazing process of being able to collaborate with other artists and see something happening in the moment. But glamour is an elusive concept!"





However, she says, it is a career accessible to anyone with drive: "People have access to cameras; you can edit on your laptop and distribute films via the internet and festivals. You've got to think big, about the audience and the story – and start making things, rather than just talking about it."

The key, she says, is humility. "You can't waltz into filmmaking. You've got to be prepared to do things for free."

McCarthy has done her hard yards. With her films and documentaries already "speaking" to a range of audiences, her next challenge is appealing to the American viewer.

"Films need to speak to audiences first," she says. "They need to find that strange intersection between the right timing and the message that will make an audience willing to listen to it."

This is something Australian independent film distributor Hopscotch felt McCarthy had achieved with *The Waiting City* when it picked up the film.

"The film covers a lot of salient issues," McCarthy says. "There is a bit of a zeitgeist at the moment with infertility, celebrity adoption and everyday people exploring new ways of putting families together."

As a filmmaker, she has to "sit on the fence" on the issue of international adoption. However, she says a child's life and rights should be central to any discussion about adoption.

"Taking a child away from their roots and culture is difficult in terms of longer term impact on their identity and how they integrate, how they understand themselves and their ideas of family and culture. But I do think that when there's no other option in that child's country, it's better to be in a family environment with people who are willing to love; to offer their lives to them. I think it's amazing that couples are willing to do that.

"The film really does explore both sides of the issue."

the situations that would result in them being relinquished by their parents. It also looked at international adoption. We met a lot of couples who were there to meet their child for the first time."

McCarthy became interested in their love stories and how they came to leave home, to reach out to a child from a completely different culture.

A common thread, she found, was the protracted process and the emotional strain it had on the relationship.

"That was interesting to me as a filmmaker – what happens in a relationship when the object of your desire won't appear. That seed was something I took back to Australia."

McCarthy continued to interview adoptive couples and went back to India several times to do more research.

India is one of many locations in which she has worked. Her latest short film *Little Hands* was shot in the once war-torn Bosnian town of Mostar. She says making films in different cultures can bring a "certain objectivity".

"There are things that are levelling human experiences – we're all emotional beings, all sexual beings; we have a strong sense of morality, judgement and ethics. I think what ties us together and what separates us is really interesting. How to tell something about another culture but also make it relevant to a universal audience is something that really interests me."

McCarthy also relishes becoming a part of the culture: "We decided early on that we wanted *The Waiting City* to feel more like a local film.

"A lot of foreign films take over; try to control the process like they would at home. But we felt honoured to have the opportunity to be with such an amazing crew. The Australian team wanted to keep a sense that we were guests."

McCarthy hopes *The Waiting City* marks a collaboration point between the two countries. "We both have such rich creative

## TOGETHER AND WHAT SEPARATES US IS REALLY INTERESTING //

McCarthy's fascination with India and international adoption was ignited when she volunteered in Kolkata's orphanages. Her sister had taken up a challenge by their mother that she would never survive a day in the slums of Kolkata.

"That first trip was quite extraordinary. I thought I was tagging along as the older sister, a surrogate mum, but the experience was really potent. I made a documentary called *Sisters*." It received some financial assistance from the ABC.

"It explored our relationship with India and our emotional responses to the work, as well as the lives of the children and

and technical ability. They make such amazing films in India. I think last year they made 2000 films. We made, I think, about 47."

In the meantime, as she juggles six films on both sides of the Pacific, McCarthy looks forward to finding that elusive life balance.

"I'd love to work out a balance of making films consistently and sustainably, while moving between projects. Like any other person, I just want the balance between the stuff I love and the people and things that I love." ■





# OPENING MINDS THROUGH LITERATURE

With the goal of making school relevant to all children, the Australian Centre for Child and Youth: Culture and Wellbeing is working on the notion of literacy – and how it can nurture the imagination, encourage respect and inspire dreams

literacy, to Professor Rosemary Johnston, is about more than reading and writing.

"There are many ways of being literate, but we all need to be able to participate in our own national community – everyone needs to be able to read, write, speak and listen. Literacy relates to, and is influenced by, health, parenting, communities, cultures of influence, and government policies."

It was less than two years ago that Johnston was inspired through her research on the Australian Research Council-funded project, *New Ways of Doing School*, by issues facing remote communities, which extended beyond her expertise in education. She set about establishing a multi-disciplinary group to tackle the issues together.

"I campaigned around the University for people who were interested, from nursing, law, business, design, all of whom, from their own different perspective, have some sort of passion for children and youth. Then we went for community support."

Just eight months later, in October last year, the UTS Australian Centre for Child and Youth: Culture and Wellbeing (ACCY) opened as part of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Thérèse Rein, wife of then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, launched its *Literate Australia* umbrella project. The centre integrates technology, research, teaching and practice.

"Our challenge is to make school appropriate to all the kids in Australian society," says Johnston, who is supported by a high-profile advisory board including Neil Jackson of Microsoft; David Gallop of the National Rugby League (NRL); Vicki Jack of Rio Tinto; and musician James Morrison.

"There are personal reasons, there are reasons for the individuals concerned, but there are also national reasons for engaging children in literacy," says Johnston.

If the percentage of young people completing Year 12 increased by 10 per cent (from 80 per cent), GDP would be \$1.8 billion higher in 2020 than it

would otherwise have been, according to a report by the Business Council of Australia (2003).

Furthermore, says Johnston, literacy has social implications. "According to the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, if young men completed Year 12, there would be a 15 per cent reduction in break, enter and steal over the year."

Under *Literate Australia*, a series of projects which explore what literacy means and should mean in Australia, and to modern-day Australians, ACCY is working with disadvantaged children in urban and remote communities.

*Dream, Believe, Achieve*, a joint project with the NRL and the centre's Dr Janet Currie, developed teaching resources to engage male high school students in action-oriented activities that would assist with personal and health development, and encourage them to build healthy lifestyles and achieve their dreams.

Following a successful pilot of *How Big Are Your Dreams*, law firm





Gilbert + Tobin has continued to support the Sydney project which targets Indigenous children who show promise of doing well at school, but are reluctant to continue.

Lawyer Jane Stratton, who conceived the idea of the project, has now left Gilbert + Tobin to work fulltime with ACCY as the *How Big Are Your Dreams* Project Officer.

"We mentor the students through that first year, set up peer relationships, use mobile technologies to network, take them on field trips, and encourage a sense of community through family

lives bound by our own presence and experience, or we can live much more openly. Literature is one way to open our minds to the thoughts of others; open our minds to those who lived hundreds of years – sometimes thousands of years – before us. It promotes an intergenerational and intercultural intimacy of minds."

Last month, ACCY hosted the inaugural Literate Australia National Forum at UTS. The event brought together key leaders from educational institutions, corporations, research, churches, and social service providers

to identify and develop gaps and goals, practices and strategies to address educational disadvantage and widen participation. Governor-General Quentin Bryce delivered the keynote address.

Johnston recently received the Affinity Award for Academic Contribution to Intercultural Understanding. ■

Literature is one way to open our minds to the thoughts of others; open our minds to those who lived hundreds of years – sometimes thousands of years – before us

barbecues and other shared events," says Johnston. "And we reach many more people who can encourage these kids to stay at school because we invite friends, siblings and family.

"It is very much in line with government initiatives to widen participation in education."

Stratton became part of a "deeply committed" ACCY team, which includes *New Ways of Doing School* Project Officer Robert Johnston and Centre Research Officer and UTS alumna Dr Rachel Perry (B. Education, 2000; PhD, 2006).

The small team may have four programs already on the go, and two in development, but the centre is also focused on starting an artists in residence program for children's writers and illustrators. It will take place in the cutting-edge learning studio called Atelier, established with the assistance of Microsoft. UTS students will be able to 'drop in' and learn from both creative experts and creative technology.

"The beautiful thing is that this will also be accessible to the kids we plan to bring in from disadvantaged schools," says Johnston.

A *Creative HSC* program is also about to involve UTS students and alumni, who took part in a previous, similar project, in the enactment of HSC material.

"It's not about doing a whole *Macbeth* – it will be a bit of *Macbeth* and how it relates thematically to, say, a bit of Emily Dickinson's poetry," explains Johnston, who believes we can "live more openly" through literature.

"I have a passion for literature and literacy. I believe that we can live narrow



## PROFESSOR ROSEMARY JOHNSTON'S THEORY OF DEEP LITERACY

Deep literacy sets up inner connections and grows minds.

We need to consider literacy both in terms of traditional definitions relating to the crucial skills and capacities required to participate and communicate fully and effectively in one's national community, and in terms of the idea of deep literacy.

Deep literacy generates imaginative understandings of relationships to others and relationships to difference that will profoundly influence personal and communal behaviours.

It nurtures the imaginations and minds that generate civil societies.

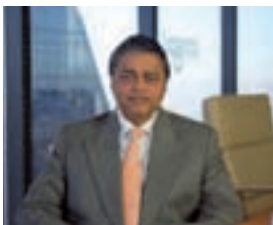
It encourages a generosity of spirit that is respectful of others.

Deep literacy connects. It considers options. It recognises, but negotiates, differences. It stretches imaginations and inspires dreams. It is change-making.





Ajoy Ghosh forensically examines the contents of hard drives, mobiles and GPS systems to help police solve some of the country's most high-profile cases. Recently, he was honoured as Australia's Senior Information Security Professional of the Year



"Logica is the only private forensic computer laboratory that works with the police in Australia. One of the biggest cases we have been involved with was against the James Hardie group (the manufacturer of products which, until the 1970s, contained asbestos).

"We examine all sorts of technical devices: video cameras, laptops, iPhones... Most people don't realise an iPhone sends a signal every five minutes that tracks the user's location. This information is then stored in the phone."

Most recently, Ajoy Ghosh was involved in examining evidence in the case of the missing child, Kiesha Abrahams. He also worked on the investigation of Sef Gonzales, the 20-year-old who murdered his mother, father and sister. "He tried to lay a false electronic trail," says Ghosh. The truth, of course, was revealed and Gonzales was sentenced to life imprisonment in May 2004.

"I spent my formative years as a sworn police officer where I learnt about the worst and best in people," says Ghosh, who is now the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) at Logica Australia. "I learnt that it's often an individual that makes the difference."

Back in the mid-nineties, Ghosh made the decision to enhance his UTS Masters of Engineering Management degree with a legal course. "Professor Sam Blay, then the UTS Dean of Law, told me the best way I could influence law and make a difference was to be an engineer that understood lawyers. And he was right."

His unique qualifications, combined with 15 years of IT and legal work experience, puts Ghosh in a strong position to lead new discoveries in the realm of information security and computer forensics.

"Information security has for too long been one of the 'black arts' of IT and my professional passion has been to turn specific bits into mainstream disciplines. Computer forensics is one of these 'bits'," says Ghosh.

"I've found that the best way I can influence computer forensics is by educating investigators, lawyers and the judiciary about how computer evidence can be used."

While there have been victories in the courtroom over the years, there have also been several morally-challenging cases buried amid complex layers of technical evidence.

"We spent three years examining evidence for one case... The result was a 15-minute spot on *Border Security*..."

In a separate case a few years ago, Ghosh was called upon to assist with a rather sensitive charge. "A lawyer called me and explained that his client was accused of downloading child pornography and wanted to plead guilty... It soon became apparent that it was actually the client's son that downloaded the pornography. The lawyer had a difficult time convincing the police and the court not to accept the guilty plea. Working through that case was a life lesson for me: it taught me to fight for what is right."

As technology pervades more and more of our daily lives, "people keep on doing bad things with it", says Ghosh. "I hope that in 10 years I can stand back and watch a new generation of computer forensic experts at work. Hopefully they'll still need me to coach them." ■





# COOKING UP A NEW CAREER

*MasterChef* may have catapulted him into our living rooms, but IT consultant Jonathan Daddia already had a firm hold on a future in food

His “unconventional career” has taken him from teenage entrepreneur in event management and production, to IT consultant and small business owner, to primetime television.

Now Jonathan Daddia is firmly focused on his new venture with award-winning Hunter Valley olive oil producer Pukara Estate – which, surprisingly, was not born entirely out of his *MasterChef* fame.

“It’s funny; we had been talking before *MasterChef* about consulting on processes and IT systems. Now we’re working with food – products, product development and recipes.”

In fact, Daddia, 33, is now testing and working out “processes” to get his products into our shopping baskets.

“I’m not just looking at the products,” he says. “I have to understand how they are going to be manufactured; where they come from; the supply chain process.”

It was during his previous life in IT with Westpac and, later, Sainsbury’s supermarket chain in the UK that he realised the importance of having the right business processes in place.

“It is interesting working with smaller business,” says Daddia, who set up consultancy firm Daddia & Co. “It is a lot harder to justify big decisions. You have to be very cautious and 100 per cent sure.”

One decision he is certain about is the move from the office into the kitchen. What started as having to learn to cook when he moved out of home, gradually revealed a creative side.

“For me, conventional art never worked. When I started cooking classes in London, I really discovered my creativity. I love the continual change, and thinking about how you do things and how you would do them differently. I’ve consumed my world with learning from many different people.”

Such became his appreciation for food that he volunteered his Saturdays in a Gordon Ramsay kitchen – 8am until 2am – to get a feel for cooking in a professional sense.

“They told me you get food deprivation and sleep deprivation, but that it’s such a great career. It was a great experience, especially given I’d been working in big companies – a very different environment to a kitchen with 14 chefs. It was completely different to anything I’d ever known.”

It was tutelage of a different kind that got Daddia on track as a business operator. After starting five different degrees in one-and-a-half years straight out of school, he returned to university with a wealth of practical experience after his time in London. He completed his Master of Business and IT Management at UTS last year, and credits some of his business ideals to the unconventional concepts of Associate Professor Ken Dovey.

“He’s from a psychology background – the way that he’d push you and make you think was really interesting. He has a very free idea of how companies should be run.”

It was “on the continent”, however, that Daddia developed his passion for food: “I became a bit of a Francophile when I was in London, so I took off to Bordeaux for a month to eat and drink wine.”

He also explored his Moroccan heritage, and the flavours and spices that were missing from his childhood in Bondi.

When he advanced from 8000 applicants into the top 50 in *MasterChef*, Daddia found himself living his food fantasy – his highlight, cooking in London with idol Heston Blumenthal.

For now, it is olive oil capturing Daddia’s attention, although a “cosy wine bar” in one of Sydney’s laneways may not be far off either. Stay tuned. ■

# design culture



CENTRELINK HQ



SYDNEY SHOOTING CENTRE



POOLE'S ROCK



CBA HQ



FIJI HILTON

Mark Sheldon barely managed to get into university; it was only through his persistence and the willingness of then Dean of Architecture Peter Middleton to give him a go, that he made it into UTS. He graduated with honours, without dropping a semester.

"I wasn't a great school student but I had the passion for architecture, so I went to see the Dean and asked him to give me a go," says Sheldon. "My maths was good and my understanding of drawing was good, so he let me in."

Sheldon is founder and Managing Director of GroupGSA, one of Australia's top-10 architecture and interior design firms. Last year, it celebrated its 30th anniversary.

The business has grown to 120 employees, but Sheldon is fixed on achieving a staff of 200-300 and establishing GroupGSA as a true Tier 1 firm in Australia.

He came close with the near-purchase of a Queensland-based firm that employed 60 staff, with offices in Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Melbourne, but the deal fell through.

"We still have an acquisition strategy, but larger firms are harder to get. Organic growth is more difficult as other markets [outside Sydney] are more parochial," he explains.

Sheldon says it can be easier to go offshore to find design opportunities of scale than stay in the highly competitive and small Australian market. And until

the global financial crisis hit, business had been booming in the US.

During the US real estate surge of the late 1990s, the firm had offices in Phoenix, Arizona and Sydney. US clients were willing to look to Australia due to the lower value of the Australian dollar.

What started with a \$500 million project for the Opryland Hotel Florida (renamed the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Centre), in partnership with Hnedak Bobo Group, expanded to work in Texas, Detroit, Milwaukee and other areas. In 2000, GroupGSA created an international alliance with four US firms.

In the decade since, as work in the US dried up, the global alliance expanded to include firms in India, China, United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Switzerland and New Zealand.

"Now with the Australian dollar so high, the US market doesn't work for us. But in China and India we are design leaders," says Sheldon.

The project that kicked off GroupGSA's foray into these burgeoning markets was the design of the Beijing Shooting Range Hall for the 2008 Olympic Games – the job came from an international design competition, and followed GroupGSA's work on the Sydney International Shooting Centre for the 2000 Games.

Such success in the sports arena led to work in India and has helped the firm onto the Olympic Park shortlist for the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro.

Breaking into international markets, for Sheldon, is simply a matter of going there, developing relationships and establishing trustworthy alliance partners. Relationships, he says, are the core of his business philosophy – for both clients and employees.

As Managing Director, he no longer actively initiates design concepts, although he does maintain a strong interest across all projects, particularly when he has a special relationship with the client, such as the Dominion development in Sydney's east. Sheldon readily admits there are better designers than him.

"We are always on the lookout for outstanding design talent to join GSA for the long-term. I know what I want to achieve in design, but running a business like this is as much about strategy, people and the workplace. My role is to move into new markets – 'talk the talk'.

"I spend at least 30 per cent of my time on people issues; a lot of it is about mentoring and the culture you create. Anyone, including the office juniors, can come into my office anytime. When staff leave, they inevitably say the people are the best thing about GSA."

Sheldon's management style was inspired by the book *Maverick: The Success Story Behind the World's Most Unusual Workplace* by Ricardo Semler. It is the story of a man who took over his father's business and, with a unique management style, transformed it into a global business with huge revenue.



World-class designs and a bullish acquisition strategy have seen international architecture and interior design firm **GroupGSA** flourish. But the best thing about this company? Its people



BEIJING SHOOTING CENTRE



AURORA



DOMINION

Now, when a new manager starts at GroupGSA, they are given a copy of the book so they can get a sense of the firm's philosophy and values.

Sheldon's unusual approach to management matches his own personality. From entry into university by the skin of his teeth, to giving up work with renowned Australian architect Harry Seidler to become a "ski bum" in Europe, Sheldon went on to establish Mark Sheldon & Associates in the late 1970s, aged 28. Six years later, it merged with a firm belonging to his former employer Don Gazzard to become Gazzard Sheldon Architects, before the birth of GroupGSA a decade later.

"Among the firm's many highlights, projects that stand out include Sydney's Aurora Place Tower (working with Renzo Piano), Dominion apartments and the Commonwealth Bank national headquarters (with Lend Lease design); Centrelink's national headquarters in Canberra; Fiji Hilton Resort & Spa; and Poole's Rock Restaurant in the Hunter Valley. High-profile projects currently underway are the refurbishment and upgrade of Sydney's Queens Square Law Courts (with Hassell), the Dominion apartments, South West Rail Link and the HMAS Albatross redevelopment.

Sheldon's interest in architecture began at high school when he chose technical drawing as a subject.

"At 14, I had the vision of owning an architecture business," he says. When he enrolled at UTS in its six-year,

part-time architecture course, he wrote to 1000 architects asking for work.

"I got an interview and a job with Stafford Moor & Farrington – it was then I came to understand good architecture and targeted who I would work for. Next it was with Ken Woolley, and then I gained an interview with Harry Seidler and he gave me a job, which is where I really learned about world architecture. I was with Harry Seidler for the last 18 months of the course – he gave me real work."

But as a young man starting out in his career, Sheldon wasn't ready to stay in an office in Sydney. Instead, he embarked on a 240-day trip around Europe, taking in the best vernacular and modern architecture – and sticking to a budget of \$10 a day.

"I can tell you that Ronchamp in France at sunset nearly brought me to tears."

Ronchamp is the location of Chapelle Notre-Dame-du-Haut, a chapel designed by renowned European architect Le Corbusier – Sheldon's idol.

It was about 20 years after his return to Australia that he attended an industry function and met his old Dean from UTS.

"Peter Middleton still remembered me. He said he had no doubt I'd make it, but he said 'you know, on the numbers, I shouldn't have let you in.'" ■



# MAMMA AFRICA

In 1991, **Irene Gleeson** AO left her life in Narrabeen for war-torn Uganda. Twenty years on, she's conquered malaria, typhoid, depression and armed rebels to build a community in Kitgum that educates and cares for more than 10,000 kids



"One night I woke up to hear a rustling outside. I could hear men talking, then it got louder and, finally, they broke down my caravan door and came barging in. I was lying in bed in my nightgown. I sat up to see double-barrelled shotguns pointing down at me. Time stood still. I remember thinking: 'They look like buffaloes' noses.'

"I'd heard about these men. They'd been on a rampage in villages, killing people, stealing... and I thought: 'My time's up. They're going to kill me.' Then above my bed, I read a verse from the *Bible* I'd taped up there: Be strong and courageous. Don't be afraid or terrified because of them, for your Lord goes with you. I thought: 'I'm not ready to go. They need to get out of my caravan!' I stood up, pushed their guns aside, and yelled at them, screaming for them to get out, and said: 'God is watching!'

"All of them left. Just like that. Maybe they took a radio, but I didn't die that night."

This is not the first attack Irene Gleeson AO has fought off during her time in Uganda, and it's unlikely to be her last. But it hasn't stopped her forging ahead with her charity, Childcare Kitgum Servants (CKS), through which she feeds, clothes and educates war-affected children across the unforgiving Ugandan countryside.

Asked about her toughest challenge, though, and her face falls as she recalls the days immediately following that attack.

"After that night, my second husband who was there said he needed a break. It wasn't the first time we'd seen that sort of violence. He said he needed some time in a big city, in civilisation, with running water... He packed his bags and left. I got a letter from him a few months later: he said he'd met someone else, an African woman, who was going to look after him and he wasn't coming back. I didn't have time to take care of him anymore, to cook for him, so he found a woman who could.

"That was the lowest point in my life. I remember thinking: 'What am I doing here? Sitting in the dirt, no electricity, on my own, living in a caravan...' I was battling with depression; I was really struggling to focus. I hit a low point there. But I made a decision to stay; I pulled myself up and kept going."

A mother of four children herself, Gleeson made the tough decision to leave them back in 1991 to set up her school in Africa. Her youngest daughter, Heidi, was just 21 at the time.

"I went over to Uganda a few years after Mum left – I was 23," says Heidi. "I was in shock for the three months I was there: Mum was living in a caravan, there were rebels around, the food was awful, there was no electricity. I had never experienced anything like it in my life."

So why would a woman in her mid-forties, living a comfortable life on the beach in Narrabeen, sell her house, leave her kids and grandkids, and ship a caravan to the middle of a war zone in Africa?

"I had a sponsored child in Ethiopia who I'd visited in 1988," says Gleeson. "I was moved by the children, by their plight. At the time, thousands of children were at risk of abduction and being forced to become child soldiers. They needed help."

Her decade of teaching experience – Gleeson graduated from UTS with a Diploma in Teaching in 1979 – prepared her for the challenge ahead, as did her own poverty-stricken upbringing.

**'God is definitely important in my life. But when I lived here, in Australia, I didn't need him as much. You just walk down to the shops and buy food. But there [in Uganda], you have to beg God for food'**

Her father, an American soldier, fled the country before she was born – "I remember being called a bastard as I was growing up" – and, over the years, she suffered at the hands of abusive stepfathers. At the age of 15, Gleeson was confronted with her mother's death; she found out when two men wheeled a coffin into the local church and she read her mother's name on top. The eldest of eight, she was left to raise her seven younger siblings.

In the late 1950s, she fled the family home and the burden of responsibilities to marry; she later had four children with her first husband.

It was her subsequent divorce in 1988 that sent her searching for answers: "It left me disillusioned and seeking a purpose," she says.



'YOU ARE  
NEVER  
LONELY IN  
AFRICA'





After selling her family home on Narrabeen beach to fund the start-up of her CKS charity, Gleeson sleeps in her daughter's garage when she comes back for visits. 'Sometimes I really miss the beach, but my place is in Africa now.'



'I've invested my money in people: beautiful people, amazing people'

Moved by the challenges facing children in Africa, Gleeson bought a caravan, shipped it across the Indian Ocean and drove overland to where the worst of the fighting was in Uganda.

"When I arrived in Kitgum in 1991, just south of the Sudan border, I was shocked. It was a community of aged widows and desperately hungry children trying to scratch food from a harsh land."

At first, Gleeson sat under a mango tree and taught a handful of children songs and basic lessons. Then she began reading and writing lessons, and providing food and basic medicines. Soon, her classes swelled to a thousand kids, with many walking for hours from their huts to attend her school.

Slowly, buildings were constructed, electricity was installed, teachers, nurses, counsellors and cooks were recruited and supplies were shipped to the far-flung town. Now, Gleeson oversees the operation of three schools, a 60-bed AIDS hospice, a radio station, non-denominational churches, a vocational college and a community centre that supports 10,000 children, many of them former child soldiers.

"My kids go home and sleep in mud huts on a dirt floor on a plastic bag. Insects come up through the dirt, bite them, and then go back down underground during the day. I can't afford to build

them houses, but at least they can come here, to a full day-care school, between 7.30 and 4.30; they get their water, they get their food, they get their medicine and they get an education," says Gleeson.

"We've got so many graduates now. One is studying medicine in Algeria; another has just got a degree in sports science – he's now employed in South Africa..."

"What drives me is pulling everybody up to their full potential."

Her latest mission is to establish a creative arts centre for art, literature, poetry, dance, music and drama.

"The kids have spent 20 years running from conflict, so nobody's been doing the arts – I love art. Decades of war has muted our children: I'm trying to cultivate their own expression."

One of her 'children', George Lubega – known by his stage name Exodus – recently won Uganda's top gospel artist award and has become a well-known personality in central Africa. He will be travelling to Australia with Gleeson in November to perform at the Schools Spectacular in Sydney.

"George was thrown out of home and called a bastard by his stepmother. He was only 10. That's what drove him to the streets. That's why his hit song is called *I Am Not a Bastard*. George is now encouraging former child soldiers to exchange guns for guitars – he's a real role model for the kids."





After decades of hard work and sacrifices, Gleeson was recently recognised by the Australian Government in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, as an Officer of the Order of Australia. She proudly displays the medal in its presentation box.

"When I was getting the medal, Don Burke from *Burke's Backyard* was there. I went up to him and said: 'You're my hero! I've been in Africa for 20 years; when I arrived, everyone was living in mud huts, now they're in four-storey buildings. I applied everything I'd learnt from *Burke's Backyard*!' She laughs.

Despite the honour, it is still a battle to source the funding required to run CKS. Operating costs exceed \$1.5 million per annum: the food bill alone is \$500,000. Most of her funds come from Australians who sponsor CKS children, donating \$35 a month.

She recalls a story of a Sydney-based sponsor who posted a soccer ball to their sponsored child.

"He was only a little boy," says Gleeson. "So the sponsor asked me to make sure none of the big boys took his ball. I had a talk to them, and made sure this wouldn't happen.

"Days later, the little boy came back and he was crying. I said: 'What's the matter? Did those big boys take your ball?' He said, sobbing: 'Can I share it with them? Please, can I share it with them?' He was so upset he wasn't allowed to share.

"Privacy, territory and possessions are all communal in Africa. There's no sense of ownership. They really think differently to us."

Volunteers are also of huge assistance to CKS operations. With a staff of around 400, many of whom are paid locals, CKS simply can't afford to pay for foreign expertise.

"I love self-motivated people with a lot of initiative," says Gleeson. "A 72-year-old Irish headmistress is coming over next month: she's been before. I just say, 'Go! On your way!' and she heads off to a school 30km away – she digs in, helps out, does whatever she can. When she comes back, she looks 10 years younger!"

Assistance is also set to come in the form of Mia Farrow, actress and humanitarian, who recently met Gleeson and some of her kids at the African Youth Forum. She's planning to return to Uganda to work with Gleeson and her team for two months.



Talking in her daughter's kitchen in North Ryde, Gleeson flits between the toaster, the bookshelf (digging around for CKS newsletters) and her laptop, where she's searching for Exodus' latest single. At the age of 65, it's clear her energy is not waning.

"Who'd want to retire? Sit around the house, watch telly and wait to die," she says. "How boring!"


Of course with four children in NSW, and 15 grandchildren, she does miss home – which draws her back for long visits each year. But, she says, her future lies in Africa, not Australia.

"Their respect for the elderly is much more beautiful in Africa than here [in Australia]. The kids fight over me. They say: 'You're going to live with me when you're old!' 'No, you're going to live with me!'

"I'm not living with anyone," she says, laughing. "I'm not going to depend on anybody. I'm just going to drop dead one day. When I'm 87. That'll be long enough."

To find out more about Irene Gleeson and her charity, visit [www.cks.org.au](http://www.cks.org.au). Gleeson is to be featured in an upcoming book, *Missionaries in Action*, published by Ark House Press. ■





# On Art... With Miriam Cabello

The internationally acclaimed artist talks about her famed paintings, accepting awards and making the most of opportunities when they are presented

As the summer heat reflected off Miami's Art Deco brilliance, I prepared to mingle with the lauded and hopeful at the American Institute of Architects (AIA) annual conference. Initially overwhelmed by the award I was about to receive, I transported myself back to the UTS 20th Year Anniversary Gala Dinner, where I learned a valuable lesson.

At that time, it had been an honour to be a highlighted alumna in such prestigious company. However when presented with the chance to introduce myself to, and potentially work with, a high-profile guest, I hesitated and missed the opportunity. I realised that knowing the outcome far outweighs never knowing. I vowed not to waste opportunities like this at the AIA awards in Miami. I put aside hesitation and acted: I actively approached and spoke to people. The results were overwhelming in terms of new opportunities and inspiration for my work.

**"The paintings resonate, as well as challenge and shift, people's ideals"**

I had always been encouraged to be creative. In 1971, my parents fled the impending coup and dictatorship of Chile. They arrived in Australia with just 50 cents, high hopes, aspirations of further education and a longing for avocados. I was four.

By my early teens I had discovered a symbiotic relationship with art. I forged a vision to embrace art, design and business, and undertook a postgraduate course in design at the Tower.

My graphic design business, which I developed with my brother Victor Cabello, was acknowledged at the 2002 Australian Micro Business Awards (Winner: NSW Creative Arts Category).

Over time, I was able to spend more time with my true companion, oil painting. Since 2005 I have dedicated myself fulltime to art, and recognition has followed with several awards, including winner at the Florence Biennale where art legend Christo presented the award.

In Miami, my nervousness drifted away as I received the international award for the painting installation *Station II: The Betrayal* on display in Sydney at the Uniting Church, Waterloo.

It is part of the *Stations of the Cross* series, a contemporary melange of master techniques and innate expression that elevates figures traditionally seen in art as 'other' to that of Christ and his disciples.

My art grows from a passion for the civil rights movement and I have found inspiring voices in the oral history of individuals such as Dave Sands, an Indigenous boxing legend. Painting a black boxer as Jesus empowers the artwork.


The paintings resonate, as well as challenge and shift, people's ideals.

I paint to add breath to the dialogue of social justice and to keep it in the foreground – views also held by the jury: "Exhibiting these paintings in a church invites interpretations that reflect the changing times and the social context. The work is thought-provoking and makes a powerful statement, recasting the *Stations of the Cross* as a contemporary and relevant experience."

The boxer also now informs *White Rope*, my new series exploring the robust male and how society has created and disarmed him. The emotive portraits use glazed transparent colours, applied in an innovative layered technique that I have developed over the years. The focus is on the individual and, like Michelangelo's David, physicality does not make the task ahead less daunting.

A challenge is something to embrace and I anticipate exporting the two series to New York. *White Rope (Series I)* has sold out in Sydney. *Series II* is now scheduled in Melbourne and Canberra, and then the Brooklyn Dumbo Arts Festival, 2011. I am currently in negotiations to exhibit the *Stations* series in two culturally significant galleries in Manhattan in 2012.

I am elated at the response from gallerists in New York. I will have stories from UTS's Broadway to Brooklyn, and as an alumna, commit to sharing my adventures. I am also excited at the prospect of UTS's inspiring Gehry transformation. ■



Miriam Cabello (Postgrad Dip. Design Studies, 1993) is artist and director of MLC Gallery & Design Studio. She has been a finalist in the Blake Prize and Mandorla Prize; and won awards at the Manhattan Arts International and Biennial of Contemporary Art in Florence. She was the first Australian to win the international Annual Religious Art and Architecture Design Awards, for *Stations of the Cross*.



# LOCK IT IN:



## NEW ALUMNI NETWORK IN SINGAPORE

**Y**ou are invited to the launch event for our new alumni network in Singapore. Join your fellow graduates for cocktails and canapés on 13 December and hear guest speaker and UTS alumnus Mohamed Ismail Gafoore, CEO of Singapore real estate firm PropNex.

Whether you're one of the 1000-plus UTS graduates currently living in the area or happen to be passing through in mid-December, come along and get to know your new network. All the details and how to register your attendance can be found under Events at [www.alumni.uts.edu.au](http://www.alumni.uts.edu.au).

You can also join the Singapore Network on Facebook by searching for 'University of Technology, Sydney – Singapore Alumni Chapter' or find the 'UTS: Singapore Alumni Group' on LinkedIn.

## DID YOU LIVE IN STUDENT ACCOMMODATION?



**S**ome of the best memories of university are created within the confines of student accommodation. We're calling out to everyone who used to be a UTS housing resident to be part of a new network to keep in touch. The UTS Housing Residents Alumni Network is your opportunity to stay informed about future events and reunions, as well as to reconnect with old friends. You never know who may be asking after you or eagerly waiting to reunite with you. If you would like to join or if you think we may not have your correct details, please email [housing.service@uts.edu.au](mailto:housing.service@uts.edu.au) or call (02) 9514 1529 during business hours.

## 2000–2010 EMBA/MBA ALUMNI REUNION

**G**raduates of the UTS EMBA and MBA programs between 2000 and 2010 are invited to this year's Alumni Reunion, hosted by the Faculty of Business. Refresh your thinking during an afternoon of learning with some of our leading faculty and re-connect with fellow alumni and classmates.

Guest speaker during the afternoon will be Phil Ruthven, Chairman IBISWorld, who will be discussing 'Business Success in a Fast-Changing New Century'.

The Reunion will be held at The Establishment on 24 November

in Sydney. For more info and to register for the event, go to [business.uts.edu.au/alumnireunion](http://business.uts.edu.au/alumnireunion).

Festivities will continue in the evening with the annual Dean's Christmas Celebration at 6pm, which will follow on from the Reunion at The Establishment. All UTS: Business alumni are invited to attend, with all the details at [business.uts.edu.au/alumnichristmas](http://business.uts.edu.au/alumnichristmas).



## HAVE YOUR SAY

The value of your UTS education does not end when you graduate. The Alumni team is committed to offering lifelong learning opportunities for all UTS graduates – so we want to know what's important to you. Do you want more events, more opportunities to knowledge-share or are you interested in catching up with your old classmates? This is your chance to tell us what matters most to you. Early in 2011, we will be conducting the very first all-alumni survey.

To voice your opinion, make sure we have your correct email address. If you think your details might be out of date, please contact us at [alumni@uts.edu.au](mailto:alumni@uts.edu.au).



# TOWER

