

From the Editor

AN ISSUE OUT OF TIME

This issue goes to press ten months into the year of living with COVID-19, which is nearly a full year after the date on the volume's cover. Part of me wanted to be coy about this delay, simply elide the disjunction between the published date and the actual publication. But to tell the truth, it seems more important to acknowledge where we are and how we are. *Antipodes* has been running behind schedule for the past few issues, and the patience of our contributors and subscribers has been much appreciated. The delays have yielded some fortuitous timing, such as the publication of Soren Tae Smith's thoughtful piece on the mosque bombing in Christchurch in the June 2019 issue, apparently just a few months later than the event (although actually a year delayed). "This Is a Difficult Piece to Write" was both a timely and an atemporal reflection on the literal and figurative tragedy of a world that seems increasingly divided at the same time that it finds unity in disasters, naturally and humanly induced. So perhaps it is fitting that *Antipodes* lags behind time, for now, offering an opportunity to reflect on the present in the past.

The feature of this issue is a special section that is also both timely and out of time. Weihsin Gui and Cheryl Narumi Naruse have curated a wide-ranging selection of essays about the Southeast Asian diaspora in Australia and also New Zealand. This special topic emerged from a 2020 MLA cosponsored session between the American Association for Australasian Literary Studies (the sponsor of *Antipodes*) and the Southeast Asia and Southeast Asia Diasporic Forum of MLA. In January 2020, Seattle was quiet, rainy (of course), and, well, mundanely normal. MLA was vibrant, interactive, busy . . . maskless. Little did we know how much these worlds would change—within a matter of weeks as COVID-19 descended on that very city and within a matter of months with the ascent of demands for social justice. Both of these issues are global in scope, both timely and temporally transcendent.

While none of the essays here deal with illness, several address dis-ease. Chi Vu's reflection on the practical politics of theater in Australia is a timely commentary on the struggle to represent difference, the challenge of being perceived as different, the only partially true claims of diversity. The artist Vaughan Rapatahana brings a Māori voice to *Antipodes* in both poetry and prose. His "Ngā Whānau" offers a hopeful but real glimpse of a potential for unity as a family comes to recognize itself. A new section dubbed "From All Over . . . About Down Under" provides a space for timely events of the past brought into the presence of our readers, and it also represents a future direction for the journal, which has a distinctly international readership. As editor, I have been amazed at the submissions from every region of the world, from scholars attracted to literature and culture that is, for most of us, a different time of year and, for many of us, a different day quite literally.

Antipodes has always prided itself on its hybrid structure and content, and this will not change. The journal will offer rigorous scholarship, creative content, book reviews of poetry, prose, nonfiction, and scholarship, and always a work of visual art on the cover. The sponsoring organization, AAALS, shares this identity with the journal it supports, with annual conferences that include a space for the creative work of our members in conjunction with the communities where we meet as well as an intellectual forum for engagement on current events in our shared area of interest and new directions in scholarship. The journal will also evolve. This issue includes abstracts for the academic articles, so that *Antipodes* will gain recognition with international indices and so that subscribers and readers can get a deeper look at the content of upcoming issues. The creative prose is now in its own section, while the poetry will remain a verbal *amuse bouche* appearing throughout the volume. The new (or perhaps renewed) section of short pieces curated by the editor, “From All Over ... About Down Under,” is an experiment and work-in-progress that provides an opportunity to connect globally and locally through the journal. *Antipodes* is increasing its online and social media presence. Watch this space for more developments.

In a world full of ideas vying for attention, *Antipodes* benefits from “clicks” in the academic databases. If you have access to JSTOR, Project MUSE, or EBSCO, and an article is of interest, click on it! These data are collected, and the editors will use these data to focus the work of the journal. Readers are encouraged to become members of the *Antipodes* website for more frequent updates about the journal (<https://www.antipodesjournal.org/>) and even consider joining AAALS, to become part of this worldwide academic community, based in the United States. *Antipodes* also benefits from the support of the University of Hawai‘i West O‘ahu in editing this journal.

In closing the opening of this issue, I acknowledge the traditional keepers of the lands in Australia and in Aotearoa and the Indigenous peoples on whose land we live and work around the world, the kānaka maoli of Hawaii, the First Nations peoples of North America, and all elders, past, present, and emerging.

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