

Mark their words

The latest UTS writers' anthology aims to give aspiring authors a wide audience. **Report Shaun Ellis**

Making Tracks, the 2006 writers' anthology of creative works by students at University of Technology Sydney, will be launched as part of the Sydney Writers' Festival on May 27.

The collection contains short fiction, poetry, experimental narrative and scripts by 29 budding writers.

Melissa Bruce from Watson's Bay, who is currently working toward a Masters degree in Professional Writing at UTS, was one of seven student editors who selected the works from more than 300 submitted.

"It's really competitive within the university," she said. "In the last couple of years [the anthology] has become quite a professional piece that's read by a lot of publishers and has a national readership."

"It's a real launching pad," Ms Bruce said, which in the past has produced "a lot of writers who've been published and won awards."

Ms Bruce said the exposure granted to the emerging writers who were selected "gives them tremendous encouragement and a great deal of hope."

For the first time, the book is being published by ABC Books, which Ms Bruce hopes will give the compilation a wider readership. "They're really not esoteric pieces at all," she said. "They're really accessible, quite dynamic. It's not just an in-house anthology."

Dr Catherine Cole, the anthology's supervisor, said the book had become increasingly professional and popular over its 20-plus-year history. "This is terrific for the students who are published because it gets a wider readership. The anthology gets reviewed and their work gets read, which is perhaps the most important thing," she said. "It's a wonderful vehicle to showcase the quality of writing at UTS."

One of the selected authors, Jenny Robertson from Waverley, took creative



UTS writing lecturer Catherine Cole with Jennifer Robertson and Melissa Bruce.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALAN PLACE

writing classes as part of her undergraduate degree in journalism, and has since decided to focus on fiction over fact.

"I love the news and current affairs analysis in journalism," she said, "but sometimes you can be more honest in fiction than you can be when writing the news."

Robertson also regularly submits her work for publication in the other major university press literary journals, *Soutberly* in Sydney and *Meanjin* in Melbourne. She

said such outlets for aspiring authors "really are the best place for young writers to get their stuff published".

Robertson's story, *An Anarchist and a Mother*, concerns a young girl and her relationship with her politically-active, left-wing, hippie mother, "with some teen angst and sex thrown in for good measure".

At the official launch, contributors to *Making Tracks* will read highlights from their pieces and be available for signings. ☒