

Beattie's Book Blog

Saturday, August 16, 2008

UNITY BOOKS

Unity Books has two branches, in Auckland at 19 High Street and in Wellington at 57 Willis Street. They are superb bookstores by world standards, have helpful, knowledgeable staff and have several times won the NZ Best Independent Bookshop Award.

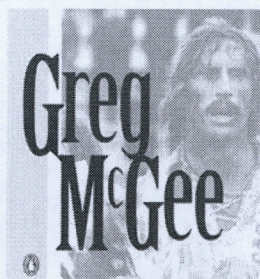
Their quarterly newsletter arrived in my post box today and I spent the next hour perusing the 58 titles they are promoting by way of brief reviews.

I like Jo McColl's introduction which starts:

Books for Brainy Blokes is the general theme of the first half of this newsletter. With Father's Day fast approaching, lots of great ideas couldn't be more perfectly timed. I'm picking that Greg McGee and Hamish Keith will be winners with everyone – with Murakami not far behind.

Nice to see Unity promoting titles with a bit of intellectual grunt such as these rather than the usual sports biographies.

The three titles Jo McColl is referring to are:



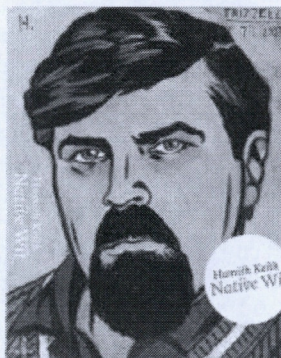
Tall Tales (Some True)
memoirs of an unlikely writer

TALL TALES (SOME TRUE)

Greg McGee – Penguin – \$37

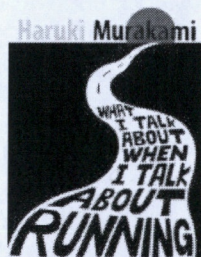
McGee was a Junior All Black while at Otago University and after completing his law degree went on to write the acclaimed stage play Foreskin's Lament in 1980. Since then he's travelled the world, worked at a variety of jobs and met a great variety of well-known

characters. His book is a subjective account of some of that journey and it is hugely entertaining.



NATIVE WIT
Hamish Keith – Random House - \$45

Legendary art commentator, and straight shooting guy, Hamish Keith gives us a witty revealing insight into his immensely varied life. Note publication not until September. I reckon this book will cause quite a stir in art and literary circles and will be a big seller right through to Christmas.



WHAT I TALK ABOUT WHEN I TALK ABOUT RUNNING
Haruki Murakami – Harvill Secker - \$37

I haven't seen this title but here is the Unity Books comment: Masterful, brilliant novelist Murakami reflects upon the influence that running has had on his life, and more importantly on his running. Equal parts training log, travelogue and reminiscence, this revealing memoir covers his preparation for the 2005 New York Marathon and races in Tokyo, Athens and Boston. Funny, sobering, playful, and philosophical – genius actually.

And if you would like to receive Unity's newsletter in full colour send them an e-mail. Put "Newsletter" in the subject line, write your name and address in the body of the e-mail and prepare to receive.