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The surgeon who operates with words

Suzanne Carbone

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PADDY Dewan wields the scalpel as a pediatric surgeon, but in his down time he opts instead for a pen to write poetry. In his third collection, *Nandana and Irises*, the irises are an ode to his family history after discovering that his great-grandmother planted the flowers in the Woolshed Valley, near Beechworth, in the 1860s. When Paddy married **Padma** at the site five years ago, they commissioned a painting by **Todd Whisson**, *Ellen's Irises*, and it features on the cover of the book. With the heat on Paddy over his reprimand from the Medical Practitioners Board, poetry is his outlet and he first put pen to paper in 1988. The book is launched on February 4 at Melbourne Central's Fashion Incubator, an event merging poetry, art and fashion. Surgery and poetry go hand in hand, says Paddy: "When you look at what surgeons do, it's common they have hobbies related to hand-eye coordination. Surgery is quite an artistic expression of medical practice and there's a similarity between putting words together for a poem."

It's a wild ride

BEST of luck to **Martin Pakula** in sorting out the myki mess, though he has an ally in media adviser **Stephen Moynihan**: both have appeared on *Sale of the Century*. Passengers are having a ball registering fake myki names like Mr Fare Evasion and The Doctor, and one woman pushed more buttons with an offensive name that can't be printed. **Chris** from South Yarra is amused that myki machines on trams, which aren't in use, say "Out of service - try another". And **Gary** from Caulfield was surprised that he couldn't top up his card at the "myki discovery centre" at Southern Cross Station and had to trek to the other side of the station. He discovered the machine was broken, turning myki into mire-ki.

Different frequency

DENIS Walter has accepted the challenge: to busk outside Flinders Street Station on February 11 at 10am if 500 people sign up on Facebook. It's the idea of 3AW website guru **Ben Wise**, and a permit is being sought from the Melbourne City Council because money thrown into the hat will go to beyond-blue. Grandmas will be shocked to learn that Denis will not serenade pedestrians with sweet ballads but something possibly called punk rock. Think Sex Pistols. Think Denis the sex symbol. Flinders Street will never be the same again.

Burning desire

FUNNY girl **Julia Zemiro** is maintaining the rage over the VCA, appealing to federal Arts Minister **Peter Garrett** to fund the school autonomously like NIDA. "Why not bring **John Brumby** on board as well," Zemiro says, with those pleading eyes, in a YouTube video. "It can't really be an arts state without the artists." Zemiro, a VCA graduate, says: "John, you're invited, too, even though you can't sing *Beds are Burning*." The Premier could try a duet with new Arts Minister **Peter Batchelor** to test him out in the portfolio.

This story was found at: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/melbourne-life/the-surgeon-who-operates-with-words-20100121-mo9u.html>