

J.H. Michell Medal awarded to Dr Carlo Laing

Larry Forbes*

The Committee for the ANZIAM Outstanding New Researchers Award — the J.H. Michell Medal — is pleased to announce that the 2008 Medal has been presented to Dr Carlo Laing of Massey University in New Zealand. The award was announced at the Conference Dinner of the 2008 ANZIAM Conference at Katoomba NSW. The Committee is impressed by the breadth and depth of Dr Laing's achievements, and in addition it is particularly pleasing that the Michell Medal is being awarded for the first time to a mathematician in New Zealand.



Figure 1. Carlo Laing (right) receives the J.H. Michell Medal from Larry Forbes (left). Photo by Mark McGuinness.

Carlo Laing did his schooling and undergraduate degrees in Auckland, and received his BSc degree in 1991. He took a Masters' Degree in Mathematics and Physics from the University of Auckland in 1994, and a PhD degree from Cambridge University (DAMTP) in 1998. He has held postdoctoral and visiting positions in Cambridge, Surrey, Pittsburgh and Ottawa before taking up a lecturing position at Massey University in Auckland, New Zealand in 2002. He is currently a senior lecturer in Mathematics at that University.

Carlo has already an extensive publication record, containing some 32 journal papers and two book chapters. The broad theme of his work is in the area of dynamical systems, which he has applied to a variety of problems in wave propagation and the analysis of mathematical models of neuronal activity. His work has appeared in prestigious journals in the field, such as *Physica D* and *Dynamics and Stability of Systems*, the *SIAM* journals, *Nonlinearity* and others. He has also published with leading international researchers in the area, such as Glendinning, Troy, Ermentrout, Kevrekidis, Coombes and numerous others. A couple of these international figures volunteered their opinions on Carlo Laing's work, pointing

*Department of Mathematics, University of Tasmania, GPO Box 252-37, Hobart, TAS 7001.
E-mail: Larry.Forbes@utas.edu.au

out that he has developed many of the tools in the area of neuronal modelling, and that his work is beautiful, deep and original.

In addition to his deep research work, Carlo has been an active teacher at all levels, from service subjects for business majors to undergraduate calculus and specialist graduate courses in mathematical methods and neuroscience modelling. He won a distinguished teaching award from Massey University in 2006. He has given talks to a mathematics teachers' evening and a university open-day activity, in addition to a large number of technical seminars at conferences and in universities around the world. He is a regular contributor to ANZIAM conferences and Mathematics meetings in New Zealand. He has held a Marsden Fund grant and is currently the Chair of the New Zealand branch of ANZIAM.

The Committee strongly commends Dr Carlo Laing as the 2008 Michell Medal winner. He has proved himself to be a leader in research as well as a capable and enthusiastic expositor of Applied Mathematics on a wide variety of levels, and will doubtless continue to make strong contributions to our subject well into the future.

The committee consisted of Larry Forbes (Chair, University of Tasmania), Andrew Bassom (University of Western Australia) and Mick Roberts (Massey University).