

Backchat

News from The New Zealand Theatre Federation Inc

February 2013 Volume 36 Issue 1

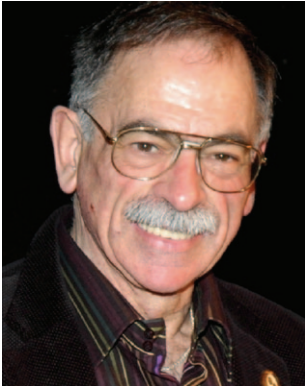
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Butterfly Creek Theatre Troup continue their outdoor tradition with *What You WILL*, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. In the picture (left to right) Theo Nettleton (Sir Andrew Aguecheek), Emanuel Garcia (Malvolio), John Marwick (Sir Toby Belch), Rhiannon Bertaud-Gandar (Fabia). Read about open air productions on page 4.

President



Wishing all members and those associated with NZ Theatre Federation a Happy New Year. The year is under way and most theatre groups will have made plans for what is hoped will be a very stimulating year.

The NZTF National Executive has had its first executive meeting and what an exciting one it was too. After much discussion major changes were agreed to that, we hope, will move the Theatre Federation forward, and create an image of a modern forward-thinking Theatre Federation. While rebranding to enhance one's image can be a bit of a cliché it is nevertheless very much the key to the success of many organisations and the National Executive has decided to rebrand. This doesn't entail a name change; we are still The New Zealand Theatre Federation Inc but our brand is to be Theatre New Zealand with the by line *Fostering Community Theatre in Aotearoa*. And the Festival of Community Theatre is changed to TheatreFest. We hope these name changes will give a new impetus to the Federation that all our members will support.

Festivals have many purposes and while the work involved in putting together a presentation for TheatreFest can be as much work as a major production for a theatre group, the benefit derived from participating, from the adjudications and from interactions with other groups is enormous and so it is hoped that many groups will take part in this year's TheatreFest. TheatreFest is also a great opportunity for playwrights to get their works performed as well as receive assessment through the Olga E Harding NZ Playwriting Award for New Scripts. And the National Final and Conference in Wellington in September will be a great weekend of theatre which it is hoped many theatre people will attend.

So as well as the many theatre activities groups will be organising for their own members NZTF also has an exciting year ahead for its members which we hope many of you will be part of.

Ewen D Coleman
National President

Denise Walsh MNZM

National President
1995 - 1999, 2005 - 2008

We send warmest congratulations to Denise Walsh on being made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit, a well deserved award for her work for Youth Theatre. Denise is a respected playwright as well as director and as a Playmarket client has 24 of her scripts held by them. She has had a long career at Logan Park High School, Dunedin.

Denise writes:

I was very flattered to be recognised with an honour for doing what I love and am very grateful to those who nominated - there are obviously secret drama squirrels all over the place! Seriously, I am really thrilled and also pleased that the arts are recognised and that it is considered valuable to work in the area of youth drama.



It has been a long, interesting journey and I have learnt a lot on the way. Theatre Federation has been a large part of my life and all my students who have become professionals have participated in Festivals.

I started writing because there wasn't anything much at that stage that related to young people. I can still see the audience in America when we performed *Spirals of the Mind* about anorexia - the girls all had their heads down and just looked up to peak through their fingers. It really hit home.

So now I've retired I'm back at school as my replacement has not yet got her visa (she is English and very qualified) and I will have to start things off. It will be nice to catch up with classes but I hope it doesn't last too long.

When I started out there were no drama programmes in the state system so it has been a long journey fighting to get it in and it is wonderful how strong it is in High Schools now and to see other schools doing so well in Festivals.

I wish everyone a satisfying year in their drama activities.

Report from National Executive

Your Executive met face to face in January and made some exciting decisions to take NZTF into the future.

1. We welcomed Laurence Wiseman, co-opted youth representative to the National Executive. Read about him on page 5.
2. The New Zealand Theatre Federation Inc is and will remain our legal name but we recognised that the 'Federation' part of our name is stultifying. We agreed that as an organisation we need a new brand name. Theatre New Zealand was chosen with the by-line *Fostering Community Theatre in Aotearoa*. This ties in with current email and website addresses: info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz and www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz
3. The Festival of Community Theatre has been the official name of our flagship activity for many years now. From this year on it will be called TheatreFest, a sharp, punchy name that coupled with our Theatre New Zealand brand name will stand out in the crowd.
4. All the documents relating to TheatreFest were gone through and streamlined. Apart from entry into the Olga E Harding script writing award, all entry forms, monies and scripts will be collected by local festival organisers. And only 2 original scripts (not 3) are being asked for.
5. Anne Corney will be this year's TheatreFest National Administrator and she can be contacted on theatrefest@theatrenewzealand.co.nz
6. The NZTF National Finals weekend will be promoted as Theatre New Zealand's National Conference.
7. A designer is being engaged to develop a new house style for all our paperwork.
8. Further down the track when finances allow we aim to produce an A5 booklet about our activities. This will be useful in theatre foyers, drama departments and cultural destinations.

So what do you think?

Visit www.facebook.com/theatreNZ and tell us!

Theatre New Zealand National Conference 13/14 September 2013

performances - workshops - speakers

Let's celebrate our chosen craft! You are invited to come to Te Whaea, the National Dance and Drama Centre in Newtown, Wellington for a weekend of participating and sharing, learning and communicating, responding and growing in understanding.

TheatreFest finalists will be adjudicated by **Claire Marsh** FTCL, Acc Adj SCA, ANZDA accredited. Read about her on page 4. Stimulating workshops will challenge you Saturday pm and keynote speakers will follow the AGM in the morning. The total package will be brought to you by Wellington District members who so successfully organised our 40th national finals weekend in 2010.

Entry forms to TheatreFest will be available on line and as a hard copy in March and registrations for the National Conference will open later.

Adjudicators at Regional Level

We are pleased to announce that **Sheridan Hickey** BA, TTC, LTCL, LSB(CT), LSB (S&D) Acc Adj SCA, RTSCA, ANZDA accredited. will adjudicate the two North Island Regionals of TheatreFest and **Dale Hendry** LTCL, TTC, Adv Dip Tchg, ANZDA accredited. will adjudicate in the South Island.

North Island with Sheridan Hickey
Rotorua, Shambles Theatre 16/17 August
Masterton Mats Theatre 23/24 August

South Island with Dale Hendry
Otago venue tbc 16/17 August
Blenheim Boathouse Theatre 23/24 August

Local Festivals

Will your group organise one? Help available at theatrefest@theatrenewzealand.co.nz

TheatreFest National Adjudicator



Claire Marsh

Claire's passion for live performance is at the heart of all her work. She works across New Zealand as teacher, business trainer, and voice coach.

She has specialist expertise in theatre, public speaking, communication skills, and poetry. Recently she pioneered a performance poetry business training programme that she piloted in London and

subsequently developed into business communication training workshops.

She takes every opportunity to see plays performed around New Zealand and over the last decade has been able to make regular trips to London. What is abundantly clear is that theatre continues to be alive and well, despite an economy of scarcity, and is enjoying an explosion of new energies and possibility around what theatre can be and can do.

The NZTF Festival of Community Theatre offers a wide open invitation for Drama Societies to explore, invent, create and perform theatre from a wide spectrum of possibilities. There are no boundaries, the main challenge being to connect with the audience in telling stories.

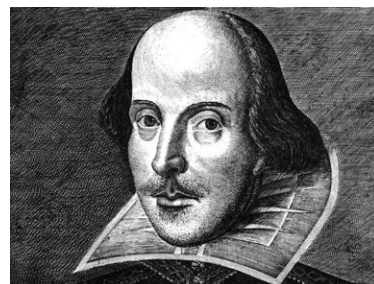
Claire brings to the NZTF Finals her immense love and excitement for imaginative theatre that wants to use its inventiveness to reach out, connect and make rich storytelling experiences with audiences, whether using highly sophisticated or powerfully simple performance approaches.

Summer is Here - Outdoor Theatre

Performing Shakespeare outdoors is a long standing tradition, practised here by Butterfly Creek Theatre Troupe in Eastbourne and Top Dog Theatre in Christchurch. *Twelfth Night* is the choice of both this year's directors, John Marwick, Butterfly Creek - their 14th outdoor production and Derek Doddington, Top Dog who are working their way through the comedies.

Derek says his actors love the open air - mic'd for sound - and their costumes look especially good in the natural setting, with the audience sitting on grass behind a rope. John's Troupe perform under a shade cloth covered school courtyard and he says if they get a balmy wind-free night it is an experience to marvel at, seated in chairs with a glass of wine listening to Shakespeare's amazing language and watching the most human of dramas gradually unfold before you as the evening light fades and the three - sided thrust stage takes your focus. 7.30pm starts require a basic lighting rig and cubes usually set the scene.

Minimal sets, mic'd actors, wide open spaces are also the province of Khandallah Arts Theatre, Wellington who are onto their 13th 'play the park' production for children, aged 3 - 9 years. See What's On. Director Mary Collie-Holmes says there's a relaxed atmosphere when the audience are spread out on rugs and she enjoys their participation in the action. However there are challenges for actors and crew. Rehearsing in a public space ahead of time is difficult so actors have to adapt quickly and bring increased energy to the open air. Sets have to be robust enough to withstand the elements and measured to fit into a covered trailer that's moved daily off site.



Profile Otamatea Repertory Theatre

Material supplied by Maura Flower

Otamatea Repertory Theatre is based in Maungaturoto, Northland with many members coming from other districts. We have a small adult membership of only 30 or so, but we are committed and enthusiastic with a great 'can-do' attitude.

2012, our fiftieth year was a huge year for us with an unprecedented number of events and projects. First up was a Youth Theatre workshop with a swashbuckling performance, called *Ocean Commotion*. In February we marked the 50th anniversary and in March hosted a One-Act Play Festival involving Otamatea High School and Kerikeri Players. Many of our members had the chance to write and direct their own plays. for this.

In April we had auditions for *Oliver!* and then made a reciprocal visit to Kerikeri with three plays. In May we produced our annual Variety Show. 'ORT on Tour' followed in June, and we travelled to Whangarei, Mangawhai and Dargaville with *The Play*, *Coupon Fiesta*, *The Open Window* and *Time Flies*. Two of the venues required full stage, curtain and lighting set-up!



Here Jill Bishara and Peter Matheson are a couple of mayflies in the comedy *Time Flies*

Oliver! ran from July into August - very well-received with packed houses. This was immediately followed by a trip to the Festival of Community Theatre Regional in Whakatane with *Coupon Fiesta*, a play written and directed by Maura Flower that had won Best Overall Play and Best Original Script at the local level. Attendance at the festival was disappointing but we had fun.

Our pantomime, *Three Little Pigs* had auditions in September while many of our members were involved in another production - an historic play *Allen Adair*, based on Jane Mander's novel. It ran for a season of four performances in October with critical acclaim.

Three Little Pigs, with a cast of over 40, ran for six shows in November. Many of the rehearsals and opening night were filmed by Greenstone TV as part of their 'Showtime' documentary.

2012 ended with December auditions for Roger Hall's *Dirty Weekends* - to open mid-March.

(An amazingly busy year for such a small group! - Editor)

New Member of National Executive

Laurence Wiseman

Laurence hails from Cambridge, but moved to Christchurch to study musical theatre at NASDA in 2002. After completing his degree Laurence studied teaching and is currently the Director of Theatre Academy and HOD Drama at Aranui High School.



Laurence has performed in numerous musicals and plays over the years including playing Caiaphas for Showbiz Christchurch *Jesus Christ Superstar* and Monsier D'arque in *Beauty and the Beast*. He is currently in rehearsal for *Oliver!* with North Canterbury Musical Society playing the role of Bill Sykes.

While Laurence loves performing, his passion lies in directing and teaching acting through directing. Over the years he has directed a wide range of plays and musicals, highlights include *Cabaret*, *West Side Story*, *Guys 'n' Dolls*, *Kiss me Kate*, *Anything Goes*, *The Wiz*, *The Laramie Project*, *The Shape of things* and *Bent*.

Laurence has been involved with Theatre New Zealand since 2008 and is delighted to be part of the Executive Committee. He looks forward to working with Theatre New Zealand to ensure its continued development and success for the future.

If any of these plays interest you we can email you the script, FREE - and if you have any particular requirements

we can also make other suggestions - please contact scripts@playmarket.org.nz

A Man Walks into a Bar

By David Geary (1w 1m)

Two stand up comedians, a man and a woman, battle it out onstage. Their weapons? Jokes based on the classic form, "A man walks into a bar...". They duel and drink, occasionally breaking out to do mini-scenes. The dialogue is fast-paced and action gets wilder as the play goes on. (30-40 min)

Carol & Nev *By Phil Ormsby (2w 1m)*

It's the great kiwi road trip. Straight down the Island, cross Cook Strait and on to the Bach. Five toilet stops, lunch on the road, sleep on the Ferry and straight on till morning, Carol & Nev are on the road, taking the family campervan to their daughters wedding at the bay. Only catch is Carol died in 1984. Carol & Nev is the journey of a life time. He must convince her she's dead, she must convince him he's alive! (30-35 min)

Hotel (6 short plays)

By Thomas Sainsbury (2-8w 1-4m)

Six short plays set in and around a hotel. Six tales about the lonely, the desperate and the feeble. Graeme, the cleaner, thinks he's being ousted by an influx of new, cheaper immigrants. Obsessive Arina's dream has come true when she wins a date with her pop star idol. Conservative Nancy has hired a prostitute as an anniversary gift for her husband. Highly strung concierge, Vicente, is pestered by a lonely Russian guest. Best friends from Manchester, Tannis and Lisa, almost break up. And receptionist, Annie, and bellboy, Joshua, fall in love, live out their relationship, and break up in the space of ten minutes. (45-50 min)

Indiscretions *By Kathryn Van Beek (3w)*

Three young women grapple with aging, sexuality, mothers. men, murder, contraception and stuffed dogs. A bloodthirsty fairytale with a rich vein of dark humour from one of the winners of the New Zealand Young Playwrights' Competition 2001. (20-25 min)

Published by PLAYMARKET in the New Zealand Play Series 2011 No. 8 Wire 8 plays/8 decades

Paper Cut *By Richard Huber (4w 1m)*

Present day - a theatre, a bar and a beach: a poetic, absurd, elegantly funny piece examining life, the universe and everything to, Chopin's Nocturne #1 in G Minor. Op.37. (20 - 25 min)

Memento *By Angie Farrow (2w 1m)*

This short piece of physical theatre is about a couple's last moments before the separation of death. A woman begins by dying and ends by being born and in this backward journey, stories from the couple's lives are unveiled and truths revealed. This is a poetic and highly theatrical work about the existential aspects of relationships. (25-30 min)

Rabbits *By Violet Targuse (3w 1m)*

Prizewinning one act play about a lonely woman enduring a drab, isolated existence in south Canterbury, in the early 1930s - with her perfectly contented husband. Hopes for a lifechanging move to the big city illustrate how wasted her potential has been, buried in this deserted place - but finally, all her plans are dashed. A very moving early feminist play. (20 - 25 min)

Published by PLAYMARKET in the New Zealand Play Series 2011 No. 8 Wire 8 plays/8 decades

Stuff: A Play on Words

By Patrick Evans (2w 3m)

When Carol and Alan arrive for a Saturday night suburban dinner and the lights are out and nobody appears to be home, their comfortable and unthinking routine is thrown into complete disarray. They are joined by other couples and together find that language is running their lives. (40 - 45 min)

Ujaj *By Craig Thaine (2w)*

When her cousin Nadia returns from Sydney, Ellie is suspicious of her arrival.. Does Nadia really want buy a flat? And where is her husband Ahmed? The stalemate between the two women forces them to dig down into their shared past. They find a need to understand the young girls they once were in light of the women they have become. Their pasts are haunted by ujaj, bitter water, which still forms a gulf between them. Ujaj asks to what extent we create ourselves from fate and to what extent the twists of fate form us as individuals. The more these women reveal about themselves, the more they hurt each other. (45 - 50 min)

It's In Your Own Hands

By Denise Walsh (7w 7m)

A play about suicide from the point of view of those who have. They are being joined by some who are trying. The play won Best Youth and Best Overall at the Otago Southland Festival in 2002. It also won Best Youth and Best Overall in the South Island Finals. (25-30 min)

What's On in February & March

• Otamatea Repertory Theatre	<i>Dirty Weekends</i> by Roger Hall	Mar 15 - 24
• Titirangi Theatre	<i>Sweeney Todd</i> (the play) by Austin Rosser	Mar 12 - 23
• Ellerslie Theatrical Society	AUDITION: <i>On Golden Pond</i> by Ernest Thompson	Mar 24@ 1.30pm
• Papakura Theatre	<i>Present Laughter</i> by Noel Coward	Mar 14 - 23
• Howick Little Theatre	<i>Blackadder Goes Forth</i> by Richard Curtis & Ben Elton	Feb 16 - Mar 2
• Tauranga Repertory Society	<i>Love Letters</i> by AR Gurney	Feb 14 - 16
• Te Puke Repertory Society	<i>A Shortcut to Happiness</i> by Roger Hall	Mar 2 - 23
• Napier Repertory Players	<i>The Cat's Meow</i> by Steven Peros	Mar 6 - 23
• Theatre Hawke's Bay	<i>Social Climbers</i> by Roger Hall	Mar 5 - 16
• Limelight Theatre, Carterton	<i>I'll Leave it to You</i> by Noel Coward	Feb 14 - 23
• Hawera Repertory Society	<i>Calendar Girls</i> by Tim Firth	Mar 7 - 23
• Wanganui Repertory Theatre	<i>Calendar Girls</i> by Tim Firth	Mar 13 - 23
• Kapiti Playhouse	<i>Harrisment 3</i> one acts by Richard Harris	Mar 2 - 9
• Mana Little Theatre	<i>The Beverly Hillbillies</i> by Glen Cameron	Mar 1 - 9
• Porirua Little Theatre	<i>Ladies a Plate</i> two musicians on Kiwi culture	Feb 21
• New Players	AUDITION: <i>Cinderella a Girl of Today</i> by Julia Barnes	Feb 10
• Khandallah Arts Theatre	<i>Ugly Customers</i> by Joe Musaphia	Mar 14 - 30
• Stagecraft Theatre	AUDITION: <i>Nana's Naughty Knickers</i> by Katherine DiSavino	Mar 24@4pm
• Hutt Repertory Theatre	<i>Kiwiman</i> by Jessica Doube	Feb 16 - 24
• Butterfly Creek, Eastbourne	<i>Cosi</i> by Louis Nowra	Mar 13 - 23
• Nelson Repertory	AUDITION: <i>The Mousetrap</i> by Agatha Christie	Feb 24 @ 7.30pm
• Top Dog Theatre	<i>What You WILL (Twelfth Night)</i> by William Shakespeare	Feb 26 - Mar 2
• SC Drama League	AUDITION: <i>Cinderella the Pantomime</i> by David Swan	Mar 23 - 24
	<i>Erogenous Zones</i> by Frank Vickery	Mar 7 - 16
	<i>Twelfth Night</i> by William Shakespeare	Feb 7 - 17
	<i>Guards, Guards</i> adapted by Stephen Briggs	Mar 8 - 16

Do you send your newsletters by email? Include Backchat Editor info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz



Dash Tickets

Dash is Australasia's most vibrant young event ticketing company, specialising in innovative online solutions and robust, secure patron access technology. Over the last three years Dash has grown from feisty start-up to challenging the well-known multi-national ticketing providers for major entertainment venue contracts, performing arts festivals and sporting franchises.

At Dash, we don't believe in charging twice for the same ticket sold and the customer is at the center of all we do. Our aim is to open up multiple sales channels and make it as easy and cost-effective as possible for a customer to buy a ticket to your event.

For more information regarding the Dash service offering and our pricing structure please contact Lewis Richardson by email via lewis@dashtickets.co.nz or by phone on 021 037 6323

Insurance Stop Press!

Has your group considered the necessity for
Public Liability Insurance?

A flyer about an exclusive offer to NZTF
members was enclosed with the December
Backchat and a separate email before that sent
to all presidents. Did your treasurer get to see
it? Have you compared the figures?

Sign up before April 1st to take advantage of
this excellent offer. You can negotiate an exit
with your current provider

Wanted!

Seats and Blacks

Harlequin Theatre, Masterton need 80 comfortable
seats in good condition for their theatre. They also
need blacks. Can you help?

Contact harlequintheatre61@gmail.co.nz

Facebook Fan Pages

Want to know how to set up a fan page for your
group? Go to <http://blog.kissmetrics.com/facebook-fan-pages-guide/>

This could be your answer to setting up a Facebook
fan page!



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Deadline for next issue of Backchat

March 20 2013

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