



TheatreFest

Create - Perform - Grow

Bring NCEA to life through TheatreFest

Community and Youth Theatre Three-Tier Festivals - Schools are invited to enter!
Perform at your Local Festival with the chance to advance to your Regional Festival
- or even get selected to perform at the culmination National event - ShowCase



New Plymouth Boys' High School - Recipients of the prestigious 'Golden Koru' at ShowCase 2024

Photo: Courtesy of Kerry Blakeney-Williams

Why Choose TheatreFest?

NCEA Aligned:

Integrates with Level 1, 2, and 3 Drama standards, including scriptwriting and directing.

Hands-On Learning:

Real-world experience in acting, directing, scriptwriting, and production.

Community and Growth:

Connect with peers and professionals nationwide.

Technical Skills:

Perfect for Entertainment and Event Technologies standards.



Auckland, Northland



Gisborne, Hawkes Bay,
Manawatu, Whanganui



Waikato, Bay of Plenty,
Taranaki



Wellington, Wairarapa,
Horowhenua



Nelson, Marlborough,
Tasman



Canterbury,
Buller West Coast



Otago, Southland



Youth

TheatreFest is open to all community and school theatre groups, offering a nationwide three-tier system for theatrical presentations and development. The process commences with groups participating in adjudicated performances at the **LOCAL** level. Here, they share, observe, and learn from experienced community practitioners and one another. Each Performance is provided with constructive and valuable feedback for the development of the work and the artists performing in it. Selected performances advance to the next level, participating in one of the four **REGIONAL** TheatreFest events. From these four Regional TheatreFest gatherings, 5-8 outstanding performances, from across the country, are chosen to be showcased at TheatreFest **NATIONAL ShowCase**. This final event aims to celebrate the excellence of community and youth theatre for any given year.

This document advocates for using TheatreFest as a platform for NCEA teaching, learning and Assessment.

TheatreFest provides a unique opportunity to integrate NCEA standards into a dynamic and practical learning environment. By participating in the festival, students gain hands-on experience in various aspects of theatre production, from collaboration, devising and acting to scriptwriting, directing and technical design. This experiential approach not only enhances their understanding of the subject matter but also allows them to apply their skills in a real-world context.

The new **Level 1** NCEA Drama standards (AS91941, AS91942, AS91943) align perfectly with TheatreFest's creative and performance opportunities. **AS91941** allows students to engage in creative strategies to develop original material, making it an ideal fit for those writing and devising plays for the festival. **AS91942** focuses on performing a scripted role, providing a natural extension into rehearsals and live performances during the festival. **AS91943** enhances students' ability to critically respond to theatre, which can be applied by attending and analysing the diverse range of performances seen at TheatreFest events. This blend of creative participation, performance, and critical engagement complements the festival's dynamic environment.

Involvement in TheatreFest also aligns seamlessly with Level 2 and 3 NCEA Drama standards. At **Level 2**, standards like **AS91213** (applying drama techniques) and **AS91218** (performing a substantial acting role) are enhanced as students refine their skills through rehearsal and live performance. At **Level 3**, standards such as **AS91512** (interpreting scripted text) and **AS91517** (performing a substantial role) enable students to tackle advanced projects. The festival's emphasis on live theatre experiences naturally complements **AS91518** (understanding live drama) and **AS91520** (directing a full performance), offering Level 3 students the chance to apply their learning in a public forum.

Across all three levels, TheatreFest facilitates a practical and immersive learning environment, allowing students to develop, test, and showcase their abilities. Many schools and teachers already utilise TheatreFest in their programmes, and Theatre New Zealand is well-positioned to offer guidance and support on how this integration can be achieved in any school setting. This makes the festival an invaluable tool for hands-on theatre education at every level.

Furthermore, TheatreFest provides an ideal context for students across all levels to develop their scriptwriting and directing skills. With standards at **Level 1** encouraging participation in creative drama, students can start exploring basic scripting and performance roles, while **Level 2** and **Level 3** students deepen their engagement through complex scene writing, directing, and substantial performance roles. This progression ensures that as students move from Level 1 to Level 3, they can refine their techniques and push creative boundaries, building a strong foundation for scriptwriting and directing within a collaborative and practical environment.



UCOL/Tapa Academy 2024

Scriptwriting (2.8/3.8):

TheatreFest is an excellent platform for students to develop their scriptwriting skills. For Level 3 students, the festival provides the opportunity to craft an entire play, while Level 2 students can focus on writing individual scenes. The rehearsal process is invaluable for students as it allows them to see their work in action, identifying what works and what doesn't, which is critical for the revision and editing stages. The feedback received from the adjudication complements the internal marking and moderation process, encouraging students to refine their scripts with a more critical eye, knowing their work will be evaluated by someone unfamiliar with their ideas.

Directing (2.9/3.9):

TheatreFest also serves as a powerful tool for developing directing skills, particularly for Level 3 students who can work on more extended scenes. The festival setting provides a real-world deadline, pushing students to hone their directing abilities while receiving external feedback. This experience is crucial for students interested in the broader aspects of theatre, allowing them to experiment with innovative staging, including movement sequences, lighting, and special effects. The feedback from the festival can be incorporated into their portfolio, enriching their overall reflection and providing a foundation for further improvement, especially for those who advance to higher levels of competition.

Entertainment and Event Technologies:

TheatreFest is an exceptional platform for delivering Levels 1, 2, and 3 Entertainment and Event Technologies Unit Standards, with a significant portion of the learning occurring within the school during the development phase and rehearsals. This phase allows students to explore and refine their technical skills in areas such as lighting, sound, makeup, costume, props/scenic elements, and production/operations roles.

At Level 1 (Unit Standards 26686-26691), introduce students to foundational knowledge and basic practical skills. During rehearsals, students apply these basics, setting the stage for more advanced work. When performances begin during TheatreFest, these skills are tested, allowing students to see the impact of their work in a live setting.

At Level 2 (Unit Standards 27699-27704), the standards delve deeper into design, development, and technical execution. Much of this learning occurs as students develop their ideas and collaborate on more complex aspects of production. TheatreFest performances challenge these students to refine their designs and solve real-time issues, providing valuable feedback for continued learning.



Kuranui College 2024

At Level 3 (Unit Standards 32366-32375), students engage in advanced design and realization, pushing the boundaries of their technical expertise. The development phase involves leading projects, innovating in technical roles, and preparing for the festival. During TheatreFest, their work is put to the ultimate test, as they manage sophisticated setups and respond to live performance dynamics.

This approach ensures that TheatreFest not only supports but enhances the

NCEA learning objectives across all levels, providing a rich context for students to develop, test, and realize their ideas in a live performance environment.

Broader Educational Benefits:

The most significant advantage of participating in TheatreFest is the opportunity it provides for a wide range of students to engage in meaningful performance experiences. Unlike full school productions, TheatreFest allows more students to take on significant roles, whether on stage or behind the scenes. This inclusive approach gives students a deeper understanding of production processes and the challenges of bringing a show to life. They develop essential skills such as time management, project coordination, and effective communication with both peers and theatre professionals.

Community Building and Networking:

The regional and national festivals offer students the chance to connect with like-minded peers from across the country, fostering a sense of community and belonging. For students from rural or smaller schools, this interaction with students from larger or urban schools broadens their perspectives and reinforces their connection to the wider theatre community. Additionally, meeting adults and



Kuranui College 2024

theatre companies during the festival helps students build networks that can lead to future opportunities in community theatre and beyond.

In conclusion, TheatreFest is more than just a performance opportunity; it is a comprehensive learning experience that supports NCEA standards while fostering personal and professional growth in students.

Engage Youth Today and Build Tomorrow's Audience

2025 Dates *NB: These are guidelines only at this stage*

Local Festivals

26th July 2025

R1 -

R2 Taranaki
Hamilton

R3 Hawkes Bay

R4 Wairarapa

R5 Marlborough

R6 Canterbury

R7 Southland

2nd August 2025

Auckland

Tauranga

Manawatu

Wellington

Nelson

South Canterbury

Central Otago

9th August 2025

Northland

Central

Gisborne

Kapiti Coast

-

West Coast

Otago

Two week break to regionals

4 Regionals

23rd August 2025

Auckland

Palmerston North

Nelson

Dunedin

Then a four week break to ShowCase to enable travel arrangements

ShowCase 2025



13/14th or 20th/21st September
Hamilton



Theatre New Zealand uses adjudication services provided by the independent Association of New Zealand Drama Adjudicators.

The adjudication process is in essence informative and educational - for the players, directors, technicians, and the audience.

The Essence of Adjudication is:

- Knowledge and Understanding of the Medium Used
- Objectivity – Detachment – Growth – Education – Evaluation - Improvement

The Process of Adjudication is to:

- Assess objectively
- Give constructive evaluation
- Inform the audience, performers, directors, and production team

The Outcome of Adjudication is to:

- Encourage performers, directors, and production teams
- Affirm positive aspects of the work presented
- Foster audience appreciation
- Give constructive pointers for improvement

The Ethical Premise of an Adjudicator is to:

- Assess with objectivity, integrity and without prejudice or bias and to conduct themselves in a professional manner

The Adjudicator

- The Adjudicator expresses their opinion of excellence, based on specialised educational training and practical experience.
- The assessment **framework** used, considers the following aspects - **design/concept, direction, acting, and overall impression**. This brings an objective view to the Adjudicator's thoughts.
- Their responsibility is to offer a detached and impersonal view of the overall success and unity of the production. This can be confirming and/or dis-confirming.

The Adjudication Package

On-Stage Adjudication:

- Its main purpose is to enlighten the audience about the production coupled with immediate constructive feed-back to the players.
- This helps the audience understand what they have just witnessed. Particularly if it is outside their own theatrical experience. Audiences sometimes like to see if they agree with the Adjudicator, as performances can be seen differently by audience members.
- The Adjudicator also addresses what the supports and challenges of the play/production were and how they were met. These often become the points for further discussion with the teams.

Green Room Discussion:

- The Green Room discussion gives the adjudicator and the teams the opportunity to clarify the comments made from the stage.
- This is a discussion time, so teams should contribute, to make it a two-way process. They can seek clarification of terms used by the Adjudicator.
- It is a time for the Adjudicator to fully explain and discuss with the team more deeply what worked and what seemed not to work.

The Written Report:

- The written report is set out with the assessment framework headings giving the Adjudicator a guide towards a balance in their comments on the production.
- It is where topics raised and discussed previously can be expanded and given in greater detail.
- It also gives teams time, to digest and process those comments.

It is also here that an Adjudicator's personal strengths and style of approach, may enhance their comments.



Tama Smith - Education and Youth

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Tama is a practicing Performing Arts educator with twenty years of classroom experience. He held the position of Head of Dance and Drama at Hutt Valley High for fourteen years, developed and managed all aspects of the large Performance Arts programmes, while producing well over 50 productions at all year levels. He is an active advocate for Progressive Arts Education that is centered on healthy, well supported practitioners, and holds the position of Wellington Representative on Drama NZ (the Drama subject association).

He has an Education Degree from Otago University (with a Theatre Major), Diploma in Technical Theatre Production from Toi Whakaari, and a Masters in Theatre Arts with a thesis focused on the staging and touring of community-oriented theatre. This study and subsequent employment has allowed him to establish and build skills, confidence, experience and knowledge in a wide range of Performing Arts roles and contexts, such as mentor, independent theatre director, designer and technician, facilitator of educational programmes for touring companies and writer and producer of plays, movies and documentaries.

His recent appointment as Arts Co-ordinator at Wellington High School allows him to continue to explore and test how Arts, in its broadest most inclusive scope, can be central to the spirit, health and growth of diverse educational communities.

Tama remains personally and professionally passionate about how Performing Arts can facilitate creative, social and emotional development in participants, and is particularly interested in the way performance events, in all their forms, can engage, celebrate and empower.

Contact the Regional Executive in Your Area

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The Playhouse
Te Tihi o Maru/Timaru

January 5th – 11th 2025
Full Time for the week. Bliss!

Summer Theatre Intensive

For five days and six nights you will live, breathe, eat, practise your craft, net-work, revitalise, 'get away from it all' and focus on YOU.



Do you, a Theatre Practitioner or Tutor need a booster! Maybe re-energise and refocus on your own Professional Development? Want to expand your horizons or even change direction. Then this week-long intensive, is for you. Theatre craft is experiential. You need to learn it, then practice it. Re-incentivise yourself this summer – to incentivise others!

Directing:

Lara Macgregor: Former Artistic Director of Fortune Theatre, Dunedin and Associate Director of The Court Theatre, Christchurch. Nationally acclaimed free-lance Director/Actor/Tutor in film and theatre.

Acting:

Bryan Aitken: Former Associate Director of The Court Theatre, Christchurch, working in musical and straight theatre. Australasian free-lance Director/Actor/Tutor/Writer.

Designing Holistically:

Peter King: Peter has been designing for all theatre genres for the past thirty-five years, and was also Resident Designer and Workshop Manager for Fortune Theatre, Dunedin, for sixteen years.

PLUS:

- **Finding Your Voice:** Deborah Percy
- **Lighting Creatively:** Grant Robertson
- **Coping with Intimacy:** Kim Te Pairi Garrett

Work with Court Theatre Professionals

Past Attendees Say:

"This Intensive was my change-maker: opening my mind, validating my passion, endorsing and growing my confidence and competence, completely changing my teaching career! It changed my life – and I would not have it any other way"

"Highly experienced tutors, accessible and very switched on"

Early Bird Fee \$495.00
Closes November 1st 2024
Enrol now!

Applications and more information to Course Director:
summerschool@theatrenewzealand.co.nz