



# Backchat

News from **Theatre New Zealand**  
Fostering Community Theatre in Aotearoa



The T-Birds and Pink Ladies from Theatre Hawke's Bay's production of *Grease*, by Warren Jacobs & Jim Casey. AUG 7-23



## In The Spotlight...

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The Pollitt Family gathers to celebrate Big Daddy's birthday in Stagecraft's forthcoming production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* by Tennessee Williams. AUG 5-16



Some of the cast who featured in Putaruru Theatre Players' *Remember the ANZACS, Our Tribute* by Tina Ward and Yvonne Carter. Read about their society on pg 7.

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[www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz](http://www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz)

## President



The state of community theatre in Aotearoa/ New Zealand is as lively as ever. Theatre New Zealand represents a massive body of societies around the country with an investment of property and buildings running into several million dollars, and many secondary schools also

use their infra-structure for accessing professional tutors for a wide range of workshops, or for participating in TheatreFest. This Festival is the flagship of our enterprise. One of the most satisfying elements of its existence is the number of new plays that emerge each year written especially for TheatreFest. They are adjudicated separately and acknowledged accordingly. This is an inestimable forum for new playwrights to explore and develop their talents.

The flow-through from community to professional on all levels of theatre has always been strong in this country, the training and groundwork being inspired at grass-roots level feeds tertiary training and the profession in so many ways. The 'new playwrights' category of TheatreFest is now feeding into the community, developing new writers who can also then enter their plays in the Adam Playwriting Competition.

The number of New Zealand plays by well-known and developing playwrights being staged now is heart-warming. The kiwi story and kiwi voice is being heard in practically every sector of our country at last. But how many societies won't take the risk of staging a new New Zealand work because "the playwright isn't known" and yet they will mount a production of an English Farce (playwright unknown to audiences) because of its perceived mana, overlooking a work of a similar nature, reflecting us! It's all in the marketing and imagery presented on posters and flyers. These help to substantiate the kiwi flavour, if the author is 'unknown'. But how will our writers' work become known if the societies mounting their plays don't promote the playwright's name in the billing!

I believe theatres have a big responsibility to promote the playwright alongside the play; they go hand-in-hand. I have seen some recent promotional material where no credit is given to the author at all. Surely this is a breach of Performance Rights. Public education on who has written what is as important as staging the play itself. Theatre New Zealand is proudly pro-active in helping new playwrights find their feet and consider this aspect of their raison d'être as important as any other in supporting and developing theatre in New Zealand and New Zealand in the theatre.

Bryan Aitken  
National President

## Welcome!

A warm welcome to the following groups who have joined Theatre New Zealand and will be taking part in TheatreFest: **Avonside Girls' High School, Papanui High School, Riverlea Stagecraft Hamilton, St Peter's School Cambridge, Southland Girls' High School and Wakatipu High School.** Break a leg!

Notice is given that the **44th Annual General Meeting** of The New Zealand Theatre Federation Inc will be held at Te Whaea: National Dance and Drama Centre 11 Hutchison Road, Newtown Wellington on Saturday 13th September at 9.30am.

**Nominations for Officers** (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary) and **National Executive** (6 members) are called for. Forms for photocopying are enclosed or attached and should be returned to Wellington District's **Box 22 249 Wellington 6441 by Friday 5 September.**

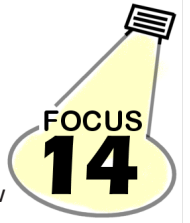
Other enclosures with this Backchat are the **National Conference Registration** form and entry forms for **poster and programme competitions** - up to 2 entries for each from productions over the last twelve months. All are due back at **Box 22 249 Wellington 6441 Friday 5 September.**

A reminder that nomination forms sent with the June Backchat for **Meritorious Service** and the **David Brockett Backstage Achievement Award** are due in the Christchurch box **Friday 15 August.** All these forms can be copied from the website - see Downloads.



# TheatreFest

## Local Festivals



### Northland

Held 9/10 May ADJUDICATOR LINDSAY NASH

- Dargaville Little Theatre** *The Memoirs* written and directed by Deborah Steele  
**Otamatea Repertory** *Change of Heart* by Maura Flower. Dir. Peter Flower  
*Keep Calm and Carry On* by CA Lovell. Dir. Carolynne Andrew  
*Over My Dead Body* by Pat Baker. Dir. Dylan Hansen

### Waikato

Held 19/20 July ADJUDICATOR MICHAEL SWITZER

- St Peter's School** *Nobody Famous* by DM Lawson. Dir. Charlotte Foreman  
**Riverlea Stagecraft** *The Princess and the Pea* by Dennis Ralph. Dir. Annah Jacobs

### Bay of Plenty

Held 1/2 August ADJUDICATOR GABRIELLE THURSTON

- Rotorua Little Theatre** *Bonking James Bond* by April Phillips. Dir. Alison Young  
*Sacking Time* by Ian Weir. Dir. Liz Carrington

### Hawke's Bay

Held 1/2 August ADJUDICATOR LISA-JANE EASTER

- HaBYT** *Behind Closed Doors* devised by company. Dir. Andrea Brigden  
**Napier Boys'H.S.** *13 Ways to Screw Up Your College Interview* by Ian McWethy.  
Dir. Emma Smith  
**Napier Rep. Players** *Bang, You're Dead* by Paul Reakes. Dir. the cast  
*Snap Time* by John Cocking. Dir. Sharyn Hildreth  
*What If?* written and directed by Will Couper  
**Theatre Hawke's Bay** *Something Special* written and directed by Charles Harter

### Manawatu

Held 1 August ADJUDICATOR SHERIDAN HICKEY

- FAHS Feilding HS** *Daughters of Heaven* by Michelanne Forster. Dir. Karla Crofts  
**Newlands College, Wgtn** *Follow, Follow, Follow* by Angie Farrow. Dir. Jo Matheson  
**Wanganui High School** *The Audition* by Don Zolidis. Dir. Colin Hedivan

### Wairarapa/ Wellington

Held 19 July ADJUDICATOR LINDSEY RUSLING

- Greytown Little Theatre** *Late Entry* by David Tristram. Dir. Margaret Jesson  
*The Guilt Card* by Jean McConnell. Dir. Diana Boulton  
**Limelight Theatre** *The Dumb Waiter* by Harold Pinter. Dir. Lynn Bushell  
**Porirua Little Theatre** *Act Without Words* by Samuel Beckett. Dir. Robert Ormsby

### Top of the South

Held 2 August ADJUDICATOR HEATHER JAMESON

- Havelock Theatre Co.** *Saint Anthony's Fire* by Rick Edmonds.  
Dir. Rick Edmonds & Shalom DelMonte Aberhart

### Canterbury

Held 2/3 August ADJUDICATOR HILARY NORRIS

- Avonside Girls'High** *Cracked* devised and directed by the actors  
*Everything is Fine* devised and directed by the actors  
**Elmwood Players** *Child's Play* by TJ Ramsay. Dir. Sarah Coursey  
*The 73rd Day* by B Hannan. Dir. Tom Hart  
*Verbatim* by William Brandt/Miranda Harcourt. Dir. Susan Cameron  
**Keeping Good Company** *Shedding Tears* by David Winfield. Dir. Ravil Atlas  
**Linwood College** *Love Babe* by Christina Stachurski.  
Dirs. Olivia Rodwell and Chantelle Collins  
*Spin* by Conrad Newport. Dir. Tyler Bartlett & Poppy Marriott  
*The Pin Striped Suit* by Barbara Else. Dir. Erica Hyde  
**Papanui High School** *Arcadian Nights* by Philip Braithwaite. Dir. Blair Findlay  
**Riccarton Players** *Airborne* by Laura Jacquin. Dir. Simon Henderson  
*Swallowing is a Very Private Thing* by Ailsa Mathieson. Dir. Doug Clarke

### Southland/Otago

Held 1/2 August ADJUDICATOR LAWRENCE WISEMAN

- Invercargill Repertory Soc.** *Garbage* by Helen Wyngard. Dir. Gussie Johnson  
*Ruby of Elsinore* by Bruce Kane. Dir. David Pottinger  
*The Rise and Fall of Shylock* by Shakespeare. Dir. David Pottinger  
**Wakatipu High School** *Shudder* by Pip Hall. Dir. Kate Moetaua



# TheatreFest

NORTH ISLAND REGIONAL FESTIVALS with Adjudicator Steven Arnold ANZDA  
Otamatea Repertory Theatre 16 August and Feilding Little Theatre 22/23 August

SOUTH ISLAND REGIONAL FESTIVALS with Adjudicator Phil Peleton ANZDA  
NASDA Studio, Madras St. Christchurch 16/17 August and Athenaeum Hall, Arrowtown 23 August

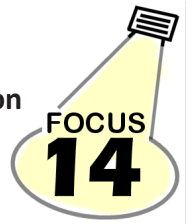
## Focus 14 TheatreFest National Final and Conference

Adjudicator David Chambers ANZDA

12/13 September

Te Whaea: National Dance & Drama Centre, 11 Hutchison Rd, Newtown, Wellington

### Programme



#### Friday, 12 September

- Noon Registration desk opens in the Plaza
- 1.30pm National Executive Meeting
- 6.30pm Bar facilities open in Plaza and are available throughout the evening.
- 7.30pm Opening of Focus 14 TheatreFest by our Patron Ray Henwood ONZM

#### Saturday, 13 September

- 9.30am Theatre New Zealand Annual General Meeting.
- 10 - 12 Nola Millar Library open for browsing by conference attendees
- 11.30am Key note speaker: Dave Armstrong, assessor of Olga E Harding playwriting award, on Playwriting in Aotearoa Today - A Personal Perspective
- 12.30pm Pre-ordered lunch available.  
ANZDA Annual General Meeting
- 1.30pm Workshops till 3pm A1, B1, C1, D1 - choose one
- 3pm Afternoon Tea Break
- 3.30pm Workshops till 5pm A2, B2, C2, D2 - choose one
- 6.30pm Bar facilities open
- 7.30pm Second night of Focus Fourteen TheatreFest  
Supper in the Plaza while adjudicator David Chambers makes his decisions.  
Presentation of awards

### Workshop Choices from 1.30pm - 5pm Saturday 13 September

- A1, A2** **Whoosh, Bang Wallop:** Pyrotechnics in a small venue with Graeme Anderson, General Manager, Brimstone Pyrotechnics.
- B1, B2** **Bums on Seats:** Marketing and Publicity for not-for-profit organisations with Megan Williams, Marketing and Communications Manager NZ Festival.
- C1, C2** **Watch This Space:** Directing and the relationship of audience to performance space with Peter Hambleton, free lance actor and director.
- D1, D2** **Physicalising Your Performance:** Enhancing an actor's performance through physical theatre with Carmel McGlone, actor, actor-tutor and director.

**NB Accommodation:** Unfortunately there's an All Blacks v South Africa game 13 September so beds are scarce. Try the internet and see what's available: Southgate Motor Inn in Newtown, Carillion Motel in Thompson St. or 747 Motel Kilbirnie or B&B: Manley Tce Villas, Newtown sleeps 8. There are many cafes/restaurants in Riddiford St for evening meals

# Top of the South Directors' Course

Subsidised by Theatre New Zealand

## Report from Tutor Pam Logan ANZDA, Past Nat. President, Life Member

It was thrilling to have 14 enrolments for this course in May held in Blenheim. They ranged from College students who had been involved with the Sheilah Winn festival to drama teachers from schools, a playwright, a number of folk considering directing or just wanting to know more, and an actress who travelled from Takaka to hone her skills to take that next step into directing.

The first day was spent mainly exploring preparation for directing – from a simple graph to show which characters are in each scene, to more detailed analysis of the circumstances and then breaking the text down into objectives, units of action and beats. There were lots of questions and discussions as well as interactive work in twos or threes. We also looked at genre and the world of the play, along with gathering a team and the audition process and the rehearsal schedule.

Day two put the focus on teamwork, working with the actors, 'to block or not to block', freeing the actors and helping them relate with each other - and to connect with the audience. We explored some games to play with actors to free them up, to develop skills or to problem solve. There was also opportunity to get hands on experience in setting a small segment of a play and to problem solve and discuss as issues or problems arose.

A challenging course to run with participants who had such a wide range of experiences, however, the enthusiasm of all involved made it totally worthwhile. Thank you Theatre New Zealand for the opportunity to pass on some of the knowledge I have gleaned through working in various festivals and workshops with Theatre New Zealand over the years.

Some feedback:

"Now I feel like I know where to start...how to organize myself as a director...and am confident I can help actors to bring out their best work."

"Pam is very inclusive and encouraging and she modelled well for us how to get a team of people 'on your side'. Quite a challenging group as we came from very different backgrounds in terms of experience."

"I thoroughly enjoyed the course and discovered there is very little directing as in 'do this, do that' involved, rather finding ways of drawing out the talents of the actors and crew and working together in the 'world of the play.' I particularly appreciated the tips on analysing the play before rehearsals start."

## Daytime Vaudeville in Hamilton

Material from Lorna Ashton, Nat Exec.

In May Riverlea Theatre and Arts Centre celebrated 30 years of entertainment with a Vaudeville tribute to founding members. They honoured audience members who no longer wished to go out at night, meaning performers too had to be free to perform in the daytime so mainly retired or semi-retired actors, some of whom had performed in the original 1980's Vaudeville shows at the Riverlea came together to entertain with separate acts, sing alongs, a musical trio and a melodrama. A great time was had by all.





This month we bring you a listing of the shows most licensed to community theatre groups over the last three years. If any of these plays interest you we can email you the script, FREE, unless otherwise noted. If you have any particular requirements we can also make other suggestions - please contact [clientpromotion@playmarket.org.nz](mailto:clientpromotion@playmarket.org.nz) with your queries.

**STIFF** by April Phillips (4w 3m)

Angel Delight, inherits the family funeral parlour when her father dies. But the will stipulates that she has to continue to run it as a funeral parlour for a further five years. Angel knows nothing about the funeral business but she knows a lot about prostitution. She sets up an undercover massage parlour in the funeral home keeping up appearances despite the prying of disgruntled former employee Mr R. Swipe. Suspenders, death by misadventure and unorthodox embalming techniques feature in this hilarious, quick-fire comedy. Rude not crude, cheeky not vulgar – it's a modern farce with great characters.

**Death & Taxe\$** by April Phillips (4w 4m)

A madcap financial farce set in the world of insurance, investments and KiwiSaver! Featuring dodgy deals, a potty psychic, a fishy tax inspector, a nutty cop, murder, mayhem and a hairy yak! Gareth Burke, Destiny Life's top agent, wants to win the trip to Hawaii and take gorgeous receptionist Tiffany with him. But Lucille Potts, is determined to be the first female agent to top the sales figures and has a supernatural plan to ensure victory. Before he can take the prize, Gareth must overcome an overbearing wife, a manic-depressive corporate motivator, the police, the IRD, and even his own untimely death.

**Four Flat Whites in Italy** by Roger Hall (3w, 3m)

Venice! Rome! Tuscany! With a copy of Lonely Planet in one hand and an Italian phrase book in the other, Alison and Adrian are about to embark on their dream holiday. Travelling with your nearest and dearest is difficult enough...but with a couple you've only just met? This is OE for the over-fifties, when tensions can arise from sharing everything from the bathroom to the bill. With events from the past looming over their lives, and new excitements possibly just around the corner, the journey does indeed turn out to be the trip of a lifetime.

**Badjelly The Witch** Adapted by Alannah O'Sullivan from the book by Spike Milligan (2-4w, 2-4m)

Searching in the great black forest for their cow Lucy, Tim and Rose are captured by Badjelly - who likes

nothing more than turning children into sausages or chopping them up to make boy-girl soup! Will Binklebonk the tree goblin, Mudwiggle the worm, Silly Sausage the grasshopper or Dinglemouse and his friend Jim, the giant eagle, rescue them from the oldest, smelliest and wickedest witch in the world?

**Footrot Flats** Book by Roger Hall, music by Philip Norman, lyrics by A K Grant, based on original characters created by Murray Ball (4-9w, 4-9m)

Farmer Wal Footrot is enamoured with Cheeky Hobson, a hairdresser in a nearby town. When Cheeky tries to persuade Wal to move into town with her, the animals, led by Wal's faithful Dog, do their best to undermine the move. The classic comic strip comes to life with fantastic songs and all the old familiar characters!

**Lashings of Whipped Cream** by Fiona Samuel (1w)

For a very special hour, the theatre becomes a Bondage and Discipline dungeon, and the audience a block of prospective clients as 'Mistress Dominique' shares the dirty secrets of her profession. Hilarious, sexy and surprisingly tender, this is a theatrical close encounter. Available from our bookshop for \$20.

**The Motor Camp** by Dave Armstrong (3w, 3m)

Two couples, two caravans, two teenagers arrive at a motor camp and have to park next to each other. As both families try to enjoy their holiday and keep their hormonal teenagers apart, a hilarious series of events unfolds. A glorious celebration of our annual Kiwi camping rituals.

**Ugly Customers** by Joe Musaphia (3w, 3m)

Harold and Laura have had enough! Enough of filling out forms, of waiting in lines, of being put on hold, of voicemail, of being ignored, of being treated like they're old - they want it like it was in their day...lovely! So they've grabbed a zimmer frame and a shotgun and are headed to the bank with steel in their hearts and revenge on their minds. What happens next is a series of events that will change their lives and the lives of the bank tellers, manager and some poor customer trapped in a situation that would be called a nightmare if it weren't so funny.

**A Shortcut to Happiness** by Roger Hall (5w, 3m)

The beautiful Natasha, a recent immigrant from Russia, teaches folk dancing in order to supplement her income, meet Kiwis, and improve her English. Those who turn up to learn are the desperately-seeking Coral, golfing friends Laura and Janet, U3A know-it-all Bev, and her hen-pecked husband Ray. There's also the recently widowed Ned, a favourable catch for the ladies. Everyone learns a great deal more than dance moves in this kiwi comedy filled with Hall's usual trademarks of acute observation, compassion, and plenty of humour.

# What's On in August and September

(Consult society websites on [www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz/links](http://www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz/links) for more details)

<b>Phoenix Theatre</b>	<i>Murder on the Nile</i> by Agatha Christie	September 4 - 13
<b>Avondale College</b>	<i>Fame - the Musical</i> by David de Silva	September 15 - 20
<b>Titirangi Theatre</b>	<i>Fawlty Towers</i> by John Cleese & Connie Booth	September 2 - 13
<b>Ellerslie Theatrical Society</b>	<i>I Hate Hamlet</i> by Paul Rudnick	August 21 - 30
<b>Dolphin Theatre</b>	<i>That Woman</i> by Jo Denver	August 2 - 23
	<i>Ruthless! The Musical</i> by Joel Paley /Marvin Laird	Aug 13,16 & 17
<b>Howick Little Theatre</b>	<i>The Understudy</i> by Theresa Rebeck	August 6 - 9
	<i>Two Fish 'n'a Scoop</i> by Carl Nixon	Sept 13 - Oct 4
<b>Hunua Theatre Club</b>	<i>Cash on Delivery</i> by Michael Cooney	August 14 - 23
<b>Artworks Waiheke Island</b>	<i>Ladies for Hire</i> by Alison Quigan	August 14 - 23
	<i>Lover: Winners and Losers</i> by Brian Friel	September 11 - 23
<b>Riverlea Stagecraft, Hamilton</b>	<i>Stagecraft Showcase (Youth)</i>	September 22-27
<b>16th Avenue Theatre, Tauranga (Youth)</b>	<i>A Twist in the Tale!</i> by Sam Martin	August 12 - 17
	<i>Skin Tight</i> by Gary Henderson	Aug 27 - Sept 6
<b>Detour Theatre, Tauranga</b>	<i>Macbeth</i> by William Shakespeare	Sept 20 - 30
<b>Putaruru Theatre Players</b>	Four One Act Plays	August 5 - 9
<b>On-Stage Te Kuiti</b>	<i>Heaven Help Us!</i> by Tim Hambleton	September 2 - 6
<b>Theatre Hawke's Bay</b>	<i>Grease</i> by Warren Jacobs and Jim Casey	August 7 - 23
<b>Levin Little Theatre</b>	<i>Dead of Night</i> by Peter Whalley	August 6 - 16
<b>Kapiti Playhouse</b>	<i>Kiwifruits</i> by Carl Nixon and Craig Cooper	August 6 - 16
<b>Mana Little Theatre</b>	<i>Martha, Josie and the Chinese Elvis</i> by Charlotte Jones	Sept 24 - Oct 4
<b>Tawa Community Theatre</b>	<i>MMP-More Murder Please</i> by 4M Productions	Aug 28 - Sept 6
<b>Stagecraft Theatre, Wellington</b>	<i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> by Tennessee Williams	August 5 - 16
	<i>Boys</i> by Ellis Hickson	Sept 17 - 27
<b>Drama Christi, Wellington</b>	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> by William Shakespeare	August 15-24
<b>Hutt Repertory</b>	<i>Lovers</i> by Gary Langford	August 27 - 30
<b>Heretaunga Players</b>	<i>The Old People are Revolting!</i> by Devon Williamson	August 7 - 17
<b>Havelock Theatre</b>	<i>St Anthony's Fire</i> by Rick Edmonds	August 2 - 8
<b>Marlborough Girls' College</b>	<i>High School Musical-Disney</i> by Peter Barsocchini	August 5 - 9
<b>Marlborough Repertory</b>	<i>The Motor Camp</i> by Dave Armstrong	September 10 - 20
<b>Elmwood Players</b>	<i>Toru - 3 NZ Short Plays</i>	August 5- 9
<b>Riccarton Players</b>	<i>Love, Loss, and What I Wore</i> by Nora & Delia Ephron	September 10 - 20
<b>South Canterbury Drama League</b>	<i>Grease</i> by Warren Jacobs and Jim Casey	September 12 - 20

Do you send your newsletters by email? Please add Backchat editor [info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz](mailto:info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz)

## Putaruru Theatre Players

Material supplied by President John McLean

Built on the site of an old garage in the 1970s, Kensington Theatre, a small building seating 70, is home to Putaruru Theatre Players. We enjoy strong membership and are in a good financial situation. Every second year we produce a youth production with school age children only. From this initiative we have young members involved in most productions. We are always thinking of ways to get new patrons through the door so having youngsters on stage is one way to achieve this.

Each year we aim to produce three shows: two musicals and one "play" or as in this year a season of one act plays. Following on from *Remember the ANZACS, Our Tribute* which was very well received in April and featured a cast of 23, we will have four plays performed 5-9 August. As we had 21 people keen to take part, we searched and found plays to cater for all and one of the plays will feature 10 to 15 year olds. That's the way we do it!!

## For Sale

### THEATRE BLACKS

Four, black, heavy duty, professionally made fire-proof stage curtains, in as-new condition.

Each curtain is 5.6 metres wide and almost 3 metres in length (with a 18cm hem). The tops are pleated to 4.100 and have safety ties attached.

For sale at \$250 each or best offer! Freight paid anywhere in New Zealand.

Phone Phil Saxby New Players Theatre Company, Wellington 021 069 4542

**WANTED - MANNEQUIN: SOFT OR BLOWUP**  
Hunua Theatre Club urgently require a mannequin. Preferably about 1.8m. Any help please contact [marylou@ingle.co.nz](mailto:marylou@ingle.co.nz)

## Drama Development Trust

Seeding grants are available for individuals group or district activities and capital improvements.

Applicants must be members of TNZ.

Send for details [margaret@vodafone.co.nz](mailto:margaret@vodafone.co.nz) or  
Drama Development Trust  
Box 22 249 Wellington 6441



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Deadline for October Backchat

**September 14th 2014**

Send Theatre New Zealand communications to

[info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz](mailto:info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz)

or

or PO Box 2585 Christchurch 8140