

News from Theatre New Zealand

# BackChat

Te Pūtoi Whakaari o Aotearoa

Vol. 44 - Issue 5



NEW ZEALAND PLAYWRIGHTS  
**PLAYMARKET**.ORG.NZ  
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# Message from the President

The 2020/2021 Year In Retrospect

Trying to assess the last Financial Year, is like trying to remember how the weather was.

Covid-19 all but obliterated theatre in our country, at all levels, for almost an entire year.

Primary and Secondary Schools, Tertiary Institutions, Community Theatre and Professional Theatre across the board, staggered from National Lockdown Level 4, to levels of varying degrees depending on where in the country you lived. There was no 'one size fits all', as outbreaks continued to fester around the country.

When we finally did emerge into summer, after the cancellation of TheatreFest for 2020 and holding our first ever Zoom Annual General Meeting, the Executive focused its efforts on our re-branded 2020+1 Celebrations.

We were determined to bring the membership, workshop tutors of the best practice we could garner and, a National Hui to help address the rising concerns of inter-cultural inclusion and practice, gender and sexuality issues, being written about in new plays and presentations.

Some members of the Executive, who are accredited members of ANZDA also attended their workshop, (February 2020) on gender identity and gender fluidity in casting.

Gone are the days when you could hear the sound of seats being slammed back, as the odd patron huffed and puffed their way up the aisles to the exits, because of a simple swear-word. Or the 'under-currents' of a play's subject matter!

The opportunity and forum that TheatreFest provides, is at last I feel, starting to feature home-grown stories of depth and complexity, not solely featuring playwrights works from outside of our country.

The corollary effect of this forum has a flow-on effect into theatre and society across the board.

But as next year's Annual Report will address, TheatreFest was not be be – again!

At least we got Round One off the ground.

We find some groups are mounting their own 'Short New Plays or One-Act Festivals.' Admirable for Theatre in general. But, we do in-fact offer something that other organisations don't. The excellence of Adjudication, as you pass through the rounds. Wooing these groups into our festivals is ongoing.

TheatreFest is, at the heart of it, a teaching and learning experience for theatre practitioners, in all areas of creativity. This is its reason for existence.

And for those who do participate, we garner their excited energies, and they the rewards of participation.

Although our main event did not happen, we have not been idle.

Throughout last year, and into the beginning of this year, the National Executive have been addressing the ongoing issues of keeping our organisation active and 'relevant' in supporting our membership.

Guiding on OSH and theatre-practice safety concerns. Holding workshops and mentoring sessions. Refreshing our website.

Steering inquiries from the website on to the experienced practitioner, to address the many questions raised.

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I personally visited Buller/West Coast five times between the Lockdowns. Tutoring and helping to re-incentivise theatre practice, from Hokitika to Nelson. Also Timaru. Human contact – you can't beat it. And isn't that what theatre is about?

As with self-assessment of any kind, we must occasionally reflect on our own practices too.

This year I intend to create task-forces, to look at our governance, strategies and operational processes.

The question I raise after fifty years of Theatre New Zealand's existence for the incoming Executive is:

Is Theatre New Zealand fit for purpose, in the 2020 decade?

Bryan Aitken  
National President

## Our Patrons

Rawiri Paratene  
ONZM



Jennifer Ward-Lealand  
CNZM Te Atamira



# The Drama Development Trust

DDT helping you to the next step!

The DDT has earmarked an amount of money for groups who want to hold workshops for members to learn new skills or expand on what they already know. Here's your chance to receive a grant of up to \$500. You will need to find a tutor (getting advice from TNZ National Executive or the secretary of ANZDA, Ewen Coleman [edcoleman@xtra.co.nz](mailto:edcoleman@xtra.co.nz) is suggested). Fill in the form attached to this newsletter email, supply a detailed budget and return both before 31st March 2022. Gather in members from other groups too to make your venture really worthwhile. The Drama Development Trust is looking forward to helping theatre people take a step up in the new year.

# The 51st Annual General Meeting of Theatre New Zealand

Once again our AGM had to be held on Zoom. Twenty two members consisting of group representatives, individuals and life members were present and apologies were also received.

The following leadership was confirmed for 2021/2022

## Officers

President: Bryan Aitken of Christchurch  
Vice President: Paul Percy of Masterton  
Treasurer: Lyn Dondiff of Westport  
Secretary: Margaret Robertson of Wellington

## Executive

Steven Arnold of Auckland  
David Chambers of Canterbury  
Jake Hansen of Otago  
Adrienne Hurley of Hawke's Bay  
Tama Smith of Wellington  
Deborah Steele of Northland

Biographies of new members have already been circulated. The Executive will co-opt more people for specific roles at its first meeting.

During the AGM special thanks were given to Ewen Coleman for his leadership organising our nationwide TheatreFest which this year attracted 52 entries from 15 societies and 12 schools. 48% scripts were NZ in origin and 35% of those were new scripts.

Patrons Jennifer Ward-Lealand and Rawiri Paratene were thanked for their support and will be asked to continue in this role.

At a National Executive meeting held the day before the AGM thanks were expressed to those stepping down. David Cox was thanked for his sterling job on the finances. Lorna Ashton was thanked for her solid contribution and Sam Lewis, our most youthful member was wished well for the acting career he aspires to.

**T h e a t r e   N e w   Z e a l a n d**

***T e   P ū t o i   W h a k a a r i   o   A o t e a r o a***



# Awards

The Olga E Harding Award for New New Zealand Playwriting adjudicated by Angie Farrow and sponsored by Playmarket was announced: the winner was Ellen Curnow who wrote *The Denniston Rose* for Onstage Productions of Westport, performed at their local TheatreFest. Ellen receives prize money, a certificate and the engraved trophy. There were 8 entries altogether this year and all received written feedback.



Runners Up: *What Would Jesus Do?* by Wayne Doyle for South Canterbury Drama League and *Stitches/Punotinoti* by James Cabot for Riccarton Players.

The David Brockett Memorial Award for outstanding contribution to backstage work over the past year was announced and the trophy was sent to Zane Doyle, who was nominated by SCDL for his work on their TheatreFest entry *What Would Jesus Do?* Zane had control of the audio effects but did so much more, using his initiative when other issues arose. He would seek solutions and quietly and seamlessly implement them. The nomination said that he is one of those crucial “invisible” behind-the-scenes people who are happy to make everyone else look their best while they maintain a low profile in the background.



# New Awards

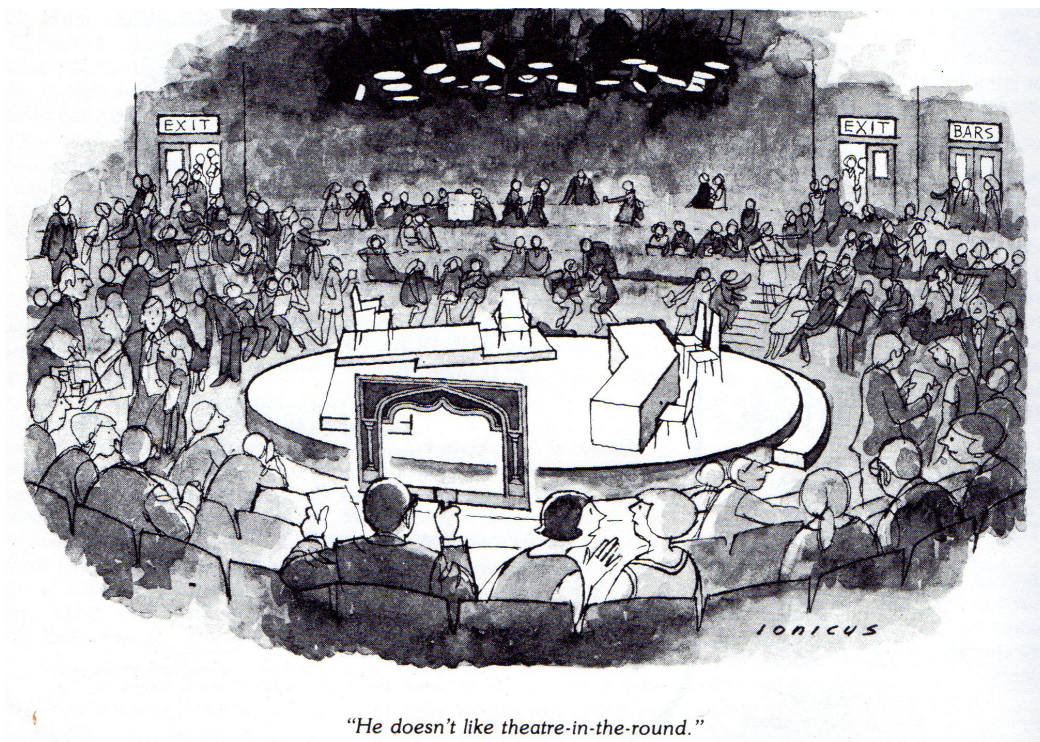
Sadly none of this year's new awards have seen the light of day:

- The Michael Norris Award for use of original and or live music;
- The APRA Award for best use of soundscape and sound effects, including recorded music;
- The Steven Arnold Creativity Design Award for costume and set design, visual appeal, soundscape, theatricality and ambience;
- He Pito Aronui Award: the Seeding of Creative Potential for a team using new writing, created by and containing Maori or Pacifica content featuring a culturally appropriate cast.

**Remember about these awards next year and work on upskilling your production values to make a satisfying whole.**

## Meritorious Service Award

Nominations were received and the names of the people awarded this special 25 year plus service award will be published in Backchat after their awards have been given to them.





# North Island Regional Finalists

## Congratulations

The following groups were sent forward to the Regional Finals:

*We'll never know which 6 - 8 groups would have come to Wellington for the National Final...*

### Upper North Island Regional TheatreFest

#### **Diocesan School For Girls, Auckland**

*Breaking News* by Angie Farrow directed by Sarah Spicer (NZ) - Youth

*Anomaly* by Liv Warden directed by Sarah Spicer - Youth

*Fugue* by Rona Munro directed by Sarah Spicer - Youth

*Contractions* by Mike Bartlett directed by Sarah Spicer - Youth

#### **Dargaville Little Theatre, Northland**

*Strangers Like Us* by Deborah Steele directed by Eryn Wilson-Collins – (New NZ)

*Lawn Clippings* adapted by David Mitchell directed by David Mitchell (NZ)

#### **The Not A Kangaroo Theatre Group, Hamilton**

*The Diaries of Adam and Eve* by Ron Fitzgerald adapted from a story by Mark Twain directed by Ron Dalton

### Lower North Island Regional TheatreFest

#### **Kuranui College, Greytown, Wairarapa**

*Far Away: A Puppet Play* written and directed by James Moreland (New NZ) - Youth

*A Midsummer Night's Mime* by Shakespeare directed by Juanita McLelland - Youth

*Maltreatment* written and directed by Jasmine Loveday (New NZ) - Youth

*Tom's Clouded Mind* written and directed by Jack Lewington (New NZ) – Youth

#### **Napier Girls High School, Hawkes Bay**

*Cagebirds* by David Compton directed by Amy Edwards - Youth

#### **Napier Repertory, Hawke's Bay**

*100* by Petterle, Monaghan, Heimann directed by Jonathan Smith

*Forward to the Right* by Lilly Ann Green directed by Jack Hull

#### **Newlands College, Wellington**

*The Still Alarm* by George S Kaufman directed by the students - Youth

*The Princess and the Nag Hag* by Sue Murray directed by Jo Matheson - Youth

*Home Sweet Home* by Sue Murray directed by Jo Matheson - Youth

#### **Masterton Theatre Company Youth Group, Wairarapa**

*Chairs* by Scott Mullen directed by Linda Voice & Sasha Hart - Youth

#### **Khandallah Arts Theatre, Wellington**

*Enigma* by Floyd Dell directed by Hayden Rogers

*Overtones* by Alice Gerstenberg directed by Archana Sahani

#### **Masterton Theatre Company Youth Group, Wairarapa**

*Chairs* by Scott Mullen directed by Linda Voice & Sasha Hart - Youth

#### **Khandallah Arts Theatre, Wellington**

*Enigma* by Floyd Dell directed by Hayden Rogers

*Overtones* by Alice Gerstenberg directed by Archana Sahani

# South Island Regional Finalists

## Upper South Island Regional TheatreFest

### Waimea College Drama Creative

*The Strawmen* written and directed by Nicholas Mathison (New NZ) – Youth

### ROARS – Reefton Operatic and Repertory Society

*Hidden Meanings* by Michael Snelgrove directed by Alun Bollinger

### OnStage Productions

*The Denniston Rose* by Ellen Curnow directed by Pat Barr-McLeod (New NZ)

### Hokitika Dramatic Society

*Mediocrity* by Anton Kruegar directed by Sue Asplin

### Greymouth Operatic Society

*The New Mrs Jones* by James Armstrong directed by Sam Gibbens

### Burnside High School

*Almost Maine* by John Cariani directed by the cast - Youth

*Henry VI, Part 3, Act 1, scene 4* by William Shakespeare directed by Kate Oliver – Youth

### Riccarton Players

*Stitches/Punotinoti* by James Cabot directed by Doug Clarke (New NZ)

## Lower South Island Regional TheatreFest

### South Canterbury Drama League

*What Would Jesus Do?* written and directed by Wayne Doyle (New NZ)

### Hagley College

*Final Exam* written and directed by Heather Wright (New NZ) - Youth

### Park Players – Logan Park High School

*The Raft of the Medusa* – devised by Year 12 Students directed by Holly Bettis (New NZ)

### Wakatipu High School

*An Illustrated Death of Eddie Fivetree's* by Simon O'Connor directed by Jake Hansen (NZ)

And one of these Regional Finalists could have had their name on the Roll of Honour. Here's the finished scroll for the years 2000 - 2021

TheatreFest logo featuring the word "TheatreFest" in a teal, sans-serif font. The "F" is stylized with a large, yellow, swirling shape that loops around the top and bottom of the letters. A yellow arrow points from the left towards the text.

# TheatreFest





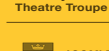
# Roll of Honour

## Theatre New Zealand

*Te Pūtoi Whakaari o Aotearoa*

Book of Honour awarded to the winner of the National Final known as The Festival of Community Theatre until 2012, renamed TheatreFest in 2013

Theatre New Zealand 3  
Te Pūtoi Whakaari o Aotearoa



### 2000 OILY RAG THEATRE, CHRISTCHURCH

The Adjudicator by Tim Barcode directed by Julian Southgate and Jenny Alexander  
Adjudicator Hazel Minehira in Christchurch

### 2001 HUTT VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL, LOWER HUTT

The Magic and the Madness by Charles Harter directed by Charles Harter  
Adjudicator Nerissa Moore in Feilding

### 2002 WELLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

Rock of All Ages by Annie Millard directed by Annie Millard  
Adjudicator Sheridan Hickey in Wellington

### 2003 ONSTAGE PRODUCTIONS, WESTPORT

The Miner's Lullaby by Rae Reynolds directed by Pat Barr-McLeod  
Adjudicator Elric Hooper in Waimate

### 2004 TOP DOG THEATRE, CHRISTCHURCH

Ritual for Dolls by George MacEwan-Green directed by Derek Doddington  
Adjudicator Ewen Coleman in Inglewood

### 2005 FEILDING LITTLE THEATRE

The Wooden Pear by Gillian Plowman directed by Miralie Thomas-Vincent and Trish Gray  
Adjudicator Dawn Somerville in Westport

### 2006 WELLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

Nobody's Fool by Annie Millard directed by Annie Millard and Roger Mantel  
Adjudicator Denise Walsh in Palmerston North

### 2007 FAHS FEILDING HIGH SCHOOL

Lest We Forget – FAHS War Years by Karla Crofts and Year 13 Drama Students  
directed by Karla Crofts  
Adjudicator Nanette Wright in Dunedin

### 2008 LJJ THEATRE, CHRISTCHURCH

Bent by Martin Sherman directed by Laurence Wiseman  
Adjudicator Claire Marsh in Wellington

### 2009 DRAMATIX YOUTH THEATRE, NELSON

Youthanasi by Scott Frater directed by Scott Frater  
Adjudicator Bryan Aitken in Palmerston North

### 2010 NAPIER REPERTORY PLAYERS

The 75th Day by Philip Bentley directed by Sharon Kerr  
Adjudicator Pam Logan in Wellington

### 2011 INVERCARGILL REPERTORY SOCIETY

A Talk in the Park by Alan Ayckbourn directed by Gussie Johnson  
Adjudicator Natalie Ellis-Wilson in Nelson

### 2012 FAHS FEILDING HIGH SCHOOL

Extracts from Coalhouse Blues by Mervyn Thompson directed by Karla Crofts  
Adjudicator Larry McLuskey in Hastings

### 2013 FAHS FEILDING HIGH SCHOOL

Extracts from Oedipus the King by Sophocles directed by Karla Crofts  
Adjudicator Claire Marsh in Wellington

### 2014 NAPIER REPERTORY PLAYERS

Snap Time by John Cocking directed by Sharyn Hildreth  
Adjudicator David Chambers in Wellington

### 2015 WAKATIPU HIGH SCHOOL, QUEENSTOWN

Bang Bang You're Dead by William Mastrosimone directed by Kate Moetaua  
Adjudicator Lindsay Nash in Hamilton

### 2016 ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE SILVERSTREAM, UPPER HUTT

Brown All Round by Albert Lataishepa and Manasae Taulanga directed by Albert Lataishepa and Manasae Taulanga  
Adjudicator Phil Peleton in Invercargill

### 2017 HUNTINGTON HOUNDS OF RIVERLEA, HAMILTON

An Incident by Leonid Andreyev directed by Robyn Chappell  
Adjudicator Jon Pheloung in Wellington

### 2018 RANG RURU GIRLS' SCHOOL, CHRISTCHURCH

Girls Like That by Evan Placey directed by Peter Rutherford  
Adjudicator Hilary Norris in Wellington

### 2019 HUTT VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY THEATRE

We'll Meet Again by Tama Smith directed by Tama Smith  
Adjudicator Jonathon Hendry in Wellington

### 2020 COVID-19: VISION 2020 POSTPONED

### 2021 VISION 2020+1 CANCELLED DUE TO DELTA VARIANT OF COVID-19

# Poster Winner and Runners Up

And the winner was Arcade Theatre, Dunedin with Now. Here. This., designed by Angus McBryde!



The Judge's comment on the winning posters was that overall they were eye-catching and thought-provoking with suitable use of fonts and colours!



# Poster Runners Up

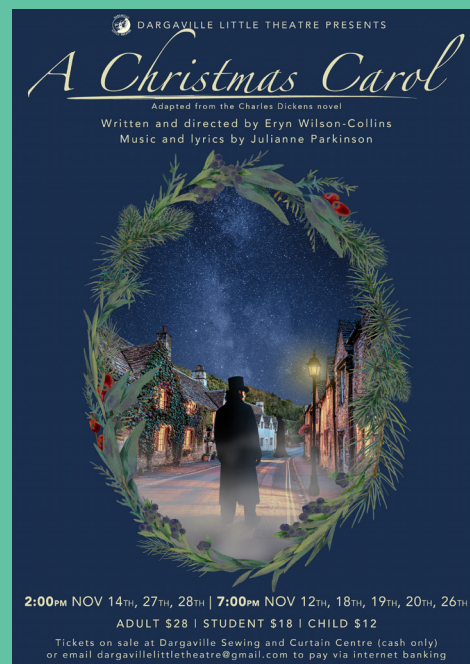


Mana Little Theatre Wellington  
for Death and Taxes designed  
by Blair Mclean



Hamilton Playbox for  
Move Over Mrs Markham  
designed by Lorna Ashton  
and Kaz Graphics

## Can you help Dargaville Little Theatre?



Christmas is coming and a new NZ musical version of A Christmas Carol will be performed in Dargaville in November. Does anyone have access to a very large early Victorian dress coat they could loan?

Please contact them [dargavillelittletheatre@gmail.com](mailto:dargavillelittletheatre@gmail.com)

# Regional Round-Up!

Dargaville Little Theatre A Christmas Carol adpt by Eryn Wilson-Collins	Nov 14-26
Howick Little Theatre My Cousin Rachel adpt Joseph O'Connor	POSTPONED
Hunua Theatre Club A Toe in the Water by Derek Benfield	POSTPONED
Katikati Theatre Overloaded by Francis Young, Di Logan Julie Thomas	Oct 19 - 24
16th Ave Theatre, Tauranga The Revlon Girl by Neil Anthony Docking	Oct 15 - 30
Swingers by April Philips	Nov 26 – Dec 11
Detour Theatre Tauranga Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure of the Speckled Band by Tim Kelly	Nov 18 – Dec 4
Te Puke Repertory Soc. Break Out Poetry (Poetry Slam)	October 15
Rotorua Little Theatre Neighbourhood Watch by Alan Ayckbourn	October 20 -30
Gisborne Unity Theatre Mistletoe, Mayhem and Murder by Dorothy Fletcher	Nov 26 – Dec 31
Evolution Theatre Gisborne The Mousetrap by Agatha Christie	Sept 16 – 25
Napier Rep. Players Sindafella by Jonathan Smith	Nov 24 – Dec 11
New Plymouth Repertory Theatre Jack and the Beanstalk	November 6 - 20
Cue Theatre, Inglewood Unoriginal Sin by David Tristram	Oct 27 - Nov 6
Hawera Repertory Love Begins at 50 by Raymond Hopkins	December 3-11
Foxton Little Theatre Lent by Michael Wilcox	Oct 8,9,15,16
Levin Little Theatre Disney's Peter Pan JR	October 15 - 17
Coasters Musical Theatre Mary Poppins	October 7 - 16
Kapiti Playhouse Murder by Chocolate by Phil Ormsby	November 4 – 13
AUDITION The Addams Family Musical	November 21
Mana Little Theatre Mabel by Campbell Smith (Level 1 only)	October 20 - 28
Porirua Little Theatre Peter Pan Jr	October 8 - 16
New Players Murder on the Menu by Devon Williamson	October 9
Khandallah Arts Theatre It's My Party (And I'll Die If I Want To) by Elizabeth Coleman	Nov 18 - 27
Stagecraft Theatre Hangmen by Michael McDonagh	Nov 17 - 27
Wellington Rep Suddenly Last Summer by Tennessee Williams	October 20 – 30
Havelock Community Theatre AUDITION The Old People Are Revolting By Devon Williamson	October 19 @ 4pm
Marlborough Rep. Relatively Speaking by Alan Ayckbourn	POSTPONED
Amuri Players Mirror, a pantomime by Members	November 3 - 6
Canterbury Repertory A Bunch of Amateurs by Ian Hislop/Nick Newman	POSTPONED
South Canterbury Drama League Radio Plays Suspense Thrillers	October 2
Juniors Musicville	November 4 - 13

# Playmarket Scripts

Did you know that, by subscribing to Playmarket for \$40/year, you can download single copies of unpublished scripts from our website directly at any time? <http://www.playmarket.org.nz/membership>

## FRESH SHORTS

**Making a Meal of It** by Roger Hall (1w, 2m)

An entertaining one act comedy in which two strangers meet at a restaurant. The pair strike up a conversation and agree to have their meal together, culminating in a seductive duel and a tantalising twist.

**The New Normal (A Level 4 Office Comedy)** by Joni Nelson (2w, 3m)

Jess and Eliot are friends and colleagues working from home amidst a global pandemic. As far as they're concerned, nothing much has changed. Jess is eager to use the situation to her advantage, to climb the ranks and finally settle the score with an old workplace nemesis. Eliot is content nesting at home with his boyfriend and gossiping with his work wife on calls. On the surface, their new level 4 lives are bizarrely mundane, but trapped inside their home-turned-offices, the stresses of the new normal are threatening to burst their corporate bubbles wide open.

**Ruminate** by Helen Vivienne Fletcher (2w, 1m)

A woman relives an argument with an old friend, but is she remembering everything correctly?

## LET'S GET DIGITAL!

**Second Afterlife** by Ralph McCubbin-Howell (2-4w, 4-6m, 0-4 any)

Dan has done it all – Facebook, Bebo, Warcraft, that unfortunate foray on Tinder. Profiles, used and deleted. Now he's ready to reinvent himself. It's time for a new profile. However, there's a hitch. In order to forge a new identity, Dan has to face up to his internet history: the Bebo emo, Warcraft gamer, and Tinder casa-nova. They're cooler, savvier, and shot from more flattering angles. And they're not going down without a fight. Second Afterlife is a twisted allegory for the Facebook generation – a poetic, ass-kicking romp to the darkest corners of web. Commissioned by Young & Hungry Arts Trust.

**Heroes Must Die** by Rick Stemm (10-12 people)

Experience the world of video games brought to life in the audience-interactive show Heroes Must Die. When player against player combat is introduced to their world, can heroes survive when they are turned against each other? Don't just find out, but control the action as a player of the game and see monsters, magic, and gameplay brought to life with incredible stagecraft. The sequel to the Heroes Must Die video game, available now. Find out more and play the prequel video game.

**Gameplan** by Dan Bain (4w, 4m)

Dylan and his friends are broke and good at one thing - video games. They need 10 grand and fast, but there aren't any end of level bosses guarding treasure in real life.... Or are there? What happens when a team of nerds and social rejects try to take their on-screen skills into real life? Can video games train you to be awesome? To take control of your destiny? Or to at least be able to talk to girls? Commissioned by Young & Hungry Arts Trust.



# Playmarket Youth

## FOR YOUNG PERFORMERS

Explore! by Kieran Craft and Jonathan Vanderhoorn (35 any)

The adventures of the crew of the Starship Explore, told in song as well as action. When the Starship Explore sets off on a mission to test a new warp drive, it ends up teleporting through the solar system. The crew are catapulted into the future and have to figure out a way to reverse their journey so they can get back home.

Robin Hoodlum by Alex Lodge (2w, 3m, 20-100 any)

A play for a large ensemble of kids aged between 6 - 16. A post-modernised version of the Robin Hood story, dealing with how the rich and poor talk to each other in Aotearoa.

Kia ora Khalid by Dave Armstrong (2w, 2m, 20 any)

This children's opera takes place over a lunch hour in a New Zealand school, where we meet Tom, a pākehā boy, who has a bit of a mouth that he can't control, Trang, a first generation Cambodian New Zealander, Serena a Samoan migrant and ever the diplomat, and Khalid, an Afghani who arrived in New Zealand via the Nauru Island detention camp. Kia Ora Khalid explores these childrens' family stories, revealing that you don't have to go far back in any New Zealand family tree to find the refugee story in all of us.

To request any plays and/or musicals, contact Nathan Mudge (Script Coordinator/Kaiwhakahaere Whakaari).

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