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*News from the New Zealand Theatre Federation Inc.*



Claire Marsh  
Adjudicator of National Final 2008

## President's Column:

Dear Members,

It is hard to find time sometimes to do the things that are really important to us – work often gets in the way – but one thing about thespians – the world of theatre always wins through.

Festival season is almost upon us and the new time has not quite caught up with some but I hope we are all in the rhythm of it next year and it starts to fit well into your programmes.

At the National level we are quietly moving on and at this stage farewell Lyn Doncliff who stepped into Jannat's shoes to give us a two year transition.. This she did with great enthusiasm and you will all have appreciated the wonderful presentation jobs she did with Backchat and programmes. As we have moved to portfolios the original position has disappeared and Lyn's work commitments have increased, so she felt that she had done what she originally offered to do and has stepped down. It is people like Lyn that we need in our societies who are willing to make a commitment and to see it through. I will personally miss the cheery emails that greeted me each morning.

Your committee are working hard and the library is going from strength to strength and can now chase up some of you who have failed to return scripts. The necessary records have been located as have all Jannat's meticulous notes. She left a strong legacy behind her.

Those in Festivals, I hope you have a good experience if not necessarily a winning one. I know what it is like having the knockbacks but I have learnt from them as I know we all do.

Those not in Festivals, I hope you can support those that are.

Yours in Theatre,

Denise Walsh



## Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of The New Zealand Theatre Federation Inc will be held in the Horticulture Hall Supper Room beside the Hutt Little Theatre, Civic Centre Lower Hutt on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at 11am.

Nominations have been received as follows

President	Denise Walsh
Vice President	Ewen Coleman
Treasurer	David Brockett

One remit has been received from Standing Committee to alter Rule 19 (v)

Present	All Life members may attend and speak at any General Meeting
Proposed	All Life Members may attend and speak at any General Meeting and shall be entitled to exercise one vote on each issue before that meeting.

## Festival of Community Theatre Dates

North Island Regional **June 6-7** Pahiatua Repertory Society.

South Island Regional **June 13-14** Aranui High School.

Regional Adjudicator Ewen Coleman (ANZDA accredited)

National Final **June 27-28** Little Theatre Lower Hutt Adjudicator Claire Marsh (ANZDA accredited)

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# Claire Marsh

(ANZDA accredited)

Adjudicator National Final June 27/28 '08

Claire's passion for live performance is at the heart of all her work. She works across New Zealand and in London as teacher, business trainer, voice coach, director and both examiner and adjudicator in speech and drama. She has specialist expertise in theatre, oratory & public speaking, poetry, communications and creativity.

She takes every opportunity to see plays performed around New Zealand, and over the last decade has been able to make annual trips to London. What is abundantly clear is that theatre is currently enjoying an explosion of new energies, with whole new dimensions of possibility opening around what theatre can be and can do. Exciting inventions are coming from the use of new media technologies; thrilling storytelling is being crafted from collaborative fusions with dance, film and video, music and visual artistry; and fresh theatrescapes are being realised out of new weaves of traditional, classical and contemporary forms of performance. New and unlikely places are being turned magical by their becoming performance spaces, and performers are experimenting and creating imaginative new ways of making connections with their audiences.

The NZTF Festival of Community Theatre offers a wide open invitation for Drama Societies to explore, invent, create, 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 reach out, connect and make rich storytelling experiences with audiences whether with highly sophisticated or powerfully simple performance approaches.

# THE8RE

2008 Festival of Community Theatre  
National Final Weekend June 27/28  
Little Theatre, Lower Hutt

As well as three performances each night beginning at 7.30, the NZTF Annual General Meeting at 11am (see page 2), there will be three Demonstration Lectures 1.30 – 4.30pm on Saturday afternoon for \$15 per person.

1.30 *They Vocalise ...The Extended Voice* with Bert van Dijk

2.30 *They Dance* with Jennifer Shennan

3.30pm *They Fight* with Allan Henry

These lectures will be highly informative, exciting to watch and relevant to anyone interested in theatre and stagecraft. Bert van Dijk will present a different perspective on using the voice on stage; Jennifer Shennan will demonstrate period movement and dance while Allan Henry will show how to effectively slap, hit, punch, fall and be thrown on stage.

Dutch-born **Bert van Dijk** is a theatre director and voice teacher of international repute, who has directed numerous productions in a great variety of genres: classics, devised theatre, mime, physical theatre, bi-cultural, inter-cultural, musical, community and outdoor theatre. Bert is widely recognised as a leader and innovator in the field of Inter-cultural and Inter-disciplinary Performance.

**Jennifer Shennan** is a Wellington dance teacher and writer. She has made particular study of Baroque dance and takes great pleasure to guide interested folk to the Lowe Collection of historic dance manuscripts and rare books in the Alexander Turnbull Library. The oldest of these is dated 1708. We should celebrate that tercentenary.

*They fight....* **With Allan Henry.** Allan has had considerable experience in coordinating and choreographing fights and stunts on stage having trained under Tony Wolfe who worked on Lord of the Rings. Allan tutors at Toi Whakaari: NZ School of Drama and has just recently been fight choreographer for a stunning new production at BATS – The Handyman

Are you going to come? Registration forms have already been posted to all theatre groups but if you haven't seen one you can register on-line at [www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz/festivalbooking.php](http://www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz/festivalbooking.php)

# Library Report – April 2008

Contributed by Sheridan Hickey

Since the NZTF May Ives Library has commenced operation from its new location in Square Edge it has been an exciting, yet frustrating, time. First there was the task of gleefully unpacking all the boxes of scripts. As this progressed we soon became painfully aware that not only was there insufficient shelving for all the scripts, but also none of the library records had arrived. The priority, however, was to measure and order more shelving, which eventually arrived mid-March. Then the slow process of stacking each of the 1679 production sets began in earnest. Finally, by the end of April, every script, sketch, score, anthology and reference book was allocated its space on a shelf.

The pantomimes, plays with music and musicals have been shelved separately from the one act and full length plays. This is because more physical space was required to embrace the sheer size and volume of the many production sets and individual scores, scripts, and librettos. Now that the shelving and cataloguing of all scripts is completed, a full stock take is about to commence.

Quite unexpectedly on April 23<sup>rd</sup> (which coincidentally just happens to be Shakespeare's birthday) two pallets of boxes arrived. Although, at the time of writing this article, these boxes have not all been unpacked it is evident they contain valuable NZTF archival material, library administration records and resources.



Library Manager Sheridan Hickey, left, shows Margaret Robertson the May Ives Library in the Square Edge Arts Centre

We were fortunate to have the opportunity to announce the new location of the NZTF May Ives Library and the services it offers at the Globe Theatre Awards held at Palmerston North's Globe Theatre Friday 29<sup>th</sup> February. The Globe Theatre Awards event is an initiative of the Globe Theatre Trust Board that is fast becoming a recognised annual celebration of local theatre achievement in the Manawatu. It was an ideal occasion to publicise the attributes of the NZTF May Ives Library as representatives, aficionados and fans from all the local societies in the Manawatu were present.

Requests and orders have been coming through steadily and regularly as the NZTF May Ives Library continues to develop and extend its wide network of users through schools, individuals, service and theatre groups. During the relocation process, though, it seems that some of the perusal copies and production sets have not been returned. *Awatea* and *End of the Golden Weather* (Bruce Mason); Carl Nixon's *Jack and the Beanstalk*; *Chook, Chook* and *Airwaves* (Fiona Farrell); *The Birthday Party* (Martin Baynton); and *All We've Done* (David Hill) to name a few. If you have these (or any other) scripts belonging to NZTF or know of their whereabouts please arrange their return to the library immediately. No questions will be asked.

When returning scripts (or sending other material) please ensure that the NZTF May Ives Library postal address is used. (If sent to the physical address at Square Edge, NZ Post sends it automatically to the Square Edge P O Box and, therefore, it takes an extra day or two to get to the library.)

## A reminder of the postal address :

**NZTF May Ives Library  
P O Box 329  
Palmerston North 4440**

Queries, requests and orders can continue to be placed any time via email or voice mail. **The Library is currently only "open" 10am – 1pm Wednesday and Friday** at this stage but the PO Box and email are cleared daily and actioned immediately. Should any group or individual wish to visit the NZTF May Ives Library this can be arranged by appointment.

**Phone : 06 356 5565 Email : [nztflibrary@xtra.co.nz](mailto:nztflibrary@xtra.co.nz)**

## Ewen Coleman

### Adjudicator of the Regional Finals

Actor, Tutor, Director, Administrator, Adjudicator, Ewen Coleman has been involved in theatre in some form or other for most of his life.

Since 1980 he has directed over 60 productions of various kinds including musicals and one act plays and worked with all the major recreational theatre groups in the Wellington region. On three occasions Ewen has directed a play at the National Final of the Festival of Community Theatre, winning in 1991. In 1992 he directed the Best Overall Productions in Wellington District's Full Length Play Competition.

As an accredited adjudicator Ewen has been adjudicating since 1986 and has adjudicated a NZTF District Festival almost every year since, as well as adjudicating the Regional Finals in 1996 and the National Final in 2004. In the same year he adjudicated the Norfolk Island Theatre Festival. He has also adjudicated the Wellington District Theatre Federation's Full Length Play Competition on numerous occasions. In 1992 he was invited to take a production to an International Theatre Festival in Japan and has represented New Zealand at other overseas conferences and international festivals.

## Special Guide to Critic Speak...

**The play reaches a shattering climax:** The rest of it's like watching a tap drip

**The supporting actors shine:** The leads were planks

**A commanding performance:** This actor had a very loud voice

**A subtle performance:** This actor was practically inaudible

**Kill for a ticket:** Because 30 years in prison would be better use of your time

**Spare, economical design:** Looks like it cost about \$30

**Epic:** I thought it would never end

**Mature:** Way too old to be playing a sex god

**This play is young and raw:** This play is written by someone whose sole experience of drama is watching Eastenders

**Cutting-edge:** I hated it but don't want to sound like a fuddy-duddy

**Crepuscular lighting:** I couldn't see a thing

**A welcoming venue:** The loo actually flushes

**Dense, intelligent and deeply witty:** Laugh knowingly even if you don't understand a word.

**A devised play:** A total mess

**Concise:** Too short

**Dreamlike:** I fell asleep

**Had me on the edge of my seat:** So eager was I to vacate it

**Exuberantly physical:** Why can't they learn to talk?

**Rigorously textual:** Why can't they learn to move?

**Avoids fashionable gestures:** Completely out of touch

*Thanks to New Players (Wellington) May '06 newsletter who reprinted this from the Guardian*

## Amanda Jackson

B.Ed, RSA Cert TEFLA

Adjudicator of the Olga Harding Playwriting Award

Amanda is a teacher turned writer, theatre and film critic and reviewer who loves her job. As a child her first thespian experience was in *The Crucible* and she has had various opportunities to act since in musicals as well as straight drama, recently turning her hand to playwriting. Amanda is a keen and involved supporter of theatre in Hawkes Bay and she is amazed at the depth of talent and the exceptionally high standard of performance and production there. She firmly believes live theatre is a growing trend as more people become aware of the thrill, raise their expectations and support the art.

"TV is furniture, Film is art, Theatre is life"  
Centrepoint Theatre, Palmerston North



In the past many theatre groups have been exempted from paying tax on interest earned on investments. The tax is called Resident Withholding Tax (RWT) and in order to receive an exemption they received Certificate of Exemption (COE) from Inland revenue.

Although some not-for-profit organisations have received this exemption because they fit the various IRD criteria for exemption, most have been classified by IRD as a charity in order to receive this exemption,

From July 1st 2008 however organisations that have been classified by IRD as a charity, which includes theatre groups, will need to be registered with the Charities Commission to be eligible for this exemption.

A theatre group will also need to be registered with the Charities Commission if they wish to apply for funding as most funding bodies have now made it a mandatory requirement that before an application for funding can be received the organisation must show either that it is registered or in the process of registering with the Charities Commission.

The New Zealand Theatre Federation is in the process of applying for registration and many theatre groups have already done so. It is therefore advisable that those who haven't should do so for the reasons outlined above. An annual fee of \$75 will be charged for registration which hopefully will be offset by successful applications for funding.

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are missing cues and blaming it on you  
If you can trust yourself, when all men mask  
you  
Downstage, and make damn sure you mask  
them too;  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting  
Off in the wings, nor miss your entrance cue;  
And if you're prompted – don't give way to  
hating  
The poor slob's got a thankless job to do.

If you can ad lib but not make *that* your mas-  
ter;  
Upstage the star; yet not make *that* your aim;  
If you can play in Triumph or Disaster  
And find the critics pan you just the same;  
If you can bear to have the lines you've spo-  
ken  
Changed by Directors whom you can't ignore,  
And try it his way – and not be heartbroken  
To find he's changed his bloody mind once  
more.

If you can dare to face adjudication  
And hear the worst, and smile a tight-lipped  
smile  
And tell yourself it's for your education.  
And only curse the lady for a while –  
Then start again on next year's preparation  
Of 40 minutes worth of distance run –  
Yours is the cup, at least in expectation  
And what is more, you'll be a Ham my son.

*With thanks to Hutt Repertory Theatre newsletter  
Limelight February '08*



# What's Gone & What's Coming Up

Morrinsville Theatre	<i>Nunsense II-The Second Coming</i> by Dan Groggin	May 2-9
Detour Theatre Company, Te Puke	<i>Crazy Ladies</i> by Devon Williamson	May 20-31
Butterfly Creek Theatre Troupe	<i>Macbeth</i> by Shakespeare	to May 3
Greytown Little Theatre	' <i>The White Cliffs</i> ' by Bettine Manktelow	to May 17
Heretaunga Players	<i>Ladies in Retirement</i> by E. Percy & R.Denholm	July 31-Aug 9
Hutt Repertory	One Act Play Season	June 13-21
Kapiti Playhouse	<i>Noises Off</i> by Michael Frayn	July 30-August 9
Khandallah Arts Theatre	<i>The Miracle Worker</i> by William Gibson	July 17-26
Levin Little Theatre	<i>Let's Get a Divorce</i> by A& R Goldsby Next up <i>Hen Pecked</i> by Peter Franklin	May 8-17 July 3-12
Mana Little Theatre	<i>Mum's Choir</i> by Alison Quigan	July/August
New Players	<i>The Memory of Water</i> by Shelagh Stephenson	to May 3
Porirua Little Theatre	<i>How the Other Half Loves</i> by Alan Ayckbourn	June 12-28
Stagecraft Theatre	<i>The Devils</i> by John Whiting Next up <i>Jane Eyre</i> by Polly Teale	May 2-31 July 16-26
Tawa Community Theatre	<i>See You Tomorrow</i> by Dave Smith	to May 3
Marlborough Repertory	<i>Touched</i> by Stephen Lowe	June 26-July 5
South Canterbury Drama League Playhouse	<i>Spreading Out</i> by Roger Hall Next up <i>Alone it Stands</i> by John Breen	May 30 -June 7 August 8 - 16
SCDL Mills Theatre	<i>Meshuggah Nuns</i> by Dan Groggin	June 27 - July 5

## Looking for a New Zealand Play for 2008?

Order a Perusal  
Script Now!

"Brilliant fast moving  
script.... Fun to stage,  
hilarious to watch..."  
Toni Henderson  
Director for Tauranga Musical Theatre"

"Looking for a NZ play  
that will pull in the  
crowds? This is it!"

Phil Ormsby  
Artistic Director Flaxworks Theatre

"Ideal comedy for the  
Repertory Theatre!"

Gregory Brownless  
Past President Tauranga Repertory Theatre"

"Hilarious, dramatic,  
insightful. Williamson's  
plays are winners for the  
audience and producer  
alike".

Stuart Gunn  
Artistic Director Absolute Theatre

Outrageous NZ Comedy!

"Another winner from  
the writer of Crazy  
Ladies!"

# Understanding WOMEN

Mike, Dave and  
Julian spend a  
weekend in a  
garden shed  
determined to  
break an age old  
mystery. Armed  
with a case of  
beer, a box of  
girlie magazines  
and a holy book  
they are going to  
"understand  
women". What  
they discover is  
not quite what  
they expected.

By Devon Williamson

Hilarious NZ Comedy!

# Crazy Ladies

An outrageous  
comedy! Five  
school friends  
stage their own  
reunion after 25  
years apart.  
Friendships are  
rekindled,  
secrets are  
revealed, a  
janitor is  
kidnapped!  
Hilarious and  
uplifting.

By Devon Williamson

For perusal scripts and information contact: | Email: info@plays.co.nz | Ph: 07 5710752

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

**Christine Hunt, President of Stagecraft, Wellington  
writes in the April edition of Stage Whispers**

It is always interesting to talk to people about what is happening in other theatre groups and it seems the same problems exist in many groups:

Finding people to do the backstage background work - these are our production assistants, stage managers, props and wardrobe people, the lighting and sound operators, front of house crew etc.

Casting plays which require more men than women Explaining to people that it's not all about acting Producing plays that will get people into the theatre yet maintain a balance and theatrical challenge for those who need it Getting recognition from the local media so that people know the play is actually on.

I can understand the people who just want to act but I can assure you that many of us 'older' members have done the backstage things before we got our chances. Some groups once maintained that all members had to be involved in a number of areas and this indeed was one of the founding principles of Stagecraft 50 years ago - learning the craft of the stage from all different perspectives.

**ADVERTISING IN BACKCHAT**

Advertising rates for this publication are:  
\$50 +GST per 1/2 page (advert supplied)  
- other sizes negotiable.

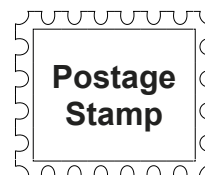
Contact: [NZTFnat@xtra.co.nz](mailto:NZTFnat@xtra.co.nz)

**Amateurs**

**Aficionado, Connoisseur, The Unpaid Enthusiast**

Amateurs are idealists. Amateurs affect the world deeply because they have passion and belief and will strive – beyond reward – for the perfection of their chosen art. Amateurs allow themselves their emotions, they are not professionally dispassionate. They run hot.

*Allen O'Leary NZ Playwright. Playmarket News 33, '04*



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