

THEATRE

*News from The New Zealand Theatre Federation Inc.
www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz*



*Pam Logan, Adjudicator at the National Final
See page 3*

President's Column

Dear Members,

District Festivals are now over. To all those involved in running District Festivals, we give a big thank you of appreciation from the Theatre Federation for your endless hours of volunteering, often over and above the day-to-day running of a theatre group. Without the input and dedication from local theatre people like you festivals wouldn't happen.

While it is not yet known which plays will be selected to appear at the National Final it is obvious from the diversity of plays appearing at the Regional Finals (see list opposite) that the programme over the two nights of the National Final will be wide and varied.

The Saturday AGM, Birthday celebrations and workshops will also provide a stimulating experience and it is hoped many from outside Wellington will travel to participate, as well as attend the evening performances. We hope to see a number of past administrators and executive members attend to help us celebrate NZ Theatre Federation's 40th birthday. They will no doubt assist in cutting the large cake that will be part of the celebration. We will also acknowledge new Meritorious Service Awards and Life Memberships at this function and during the awards ceremony of the National Final present the new David Brockett Award for Backstage Achievement for the first time.

We are fortunate to be holding the weekend at Te Whaea: National Dance and Drama Centre as it is also the 40th birthday this year of Toi Whakaari: NZ Drama School. In a partnership between the two organisations we were able to secure the services of their tutors to assist in running the Saturday afternoon workshops. From the diversity of topics offered we hope that there is something for everyone and by repeating the workshops that participants are able to go away stimulated and excited by new possibilities.

We hope that many of you will take the opportunity to come to Wellington to join us for what we know will be a fun filled and exciting weekend of theatre.

Ewen D Coleman
National President NZTF



ON 40 STAGE 10

FESTIVAL OF COMMUNITY THEATRE REGIONAL FINALISTS

Northern 27/28 August

- L and D Productions: *The Private War of Colonel Cooper* by John Broughton directed by Dean O'Flaherty
- Napier Repertory Players: *The 75th Day* by Phillip Bentley directed by Sharon Kerr
- Napier Repertory Players *Soldier's Song* by Campbell Smith directed by Anne Corney
- Theatre Hawkes Bay: *The Girl Who Eats Fish* written and directed by Peter Berry

Southern 3/4 September

- Dramatix Theatre Trust: *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Grunge* by director Scott Fraser
- Dramatix TT: *The Tent of War* by Marjorie Kemp-Baker directed by TJ Ramsay
- Dramatix Theatre Trust: *The Wedding Party* written and directed by TJ Ramsay
- Invercargill Repertory: *The Problem* by A.R.Gurney directed by Debbie Webster
- Park Players: *Fallen Angels* written and directed by Denise Walsh
- Park Players: *Myth Makers* written and directed by Denise Walsh
- Pegasus Southland High School: *The Package* by Trevor Norman directed by Gussie Norman

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Come to Wellington 17/18 September!

Plays, 40th Celebration, Workshops, AGM,
Poster and Photo Competition, Open Forum

The plays will be chosen from Regionals; the 40th celebration is on Saturday at noon — a cake will be cut, glasses raised and acknowledgment made of those who have brought NZTF through the years; workshop details are in the enclosed registration form; send in your best publicity shots and posters — form enclosed; think of subjects to discuss at the open forum and finally attend the annual general meeting.

This is the second notice for NZTF's 40th Annual General Meeting to be held at Te Whaea: National Dance and Drama Centre, 11 Hutchison Rd Newtown Wellington on 18 September at 10am.

Apologies to margaretr@vodafone.co.nz

Nominations have been received for Ewen Coleman (President) and Sharon Saxton (Treasurer)

Pam Logan, Adjudicator National Finals

For the last 35 years Pam has taught voice, speech, oral communication, public speaking, drama, acting and directing at all levels, including tertiary.

In the early 90s Pam was involved in a wide range of Shakespearian productions with Kempes' Jig Theatre Collective of Blenheim that toured NZ secondary schools.

Pam is an examiner for Speech New Zealand, is on their Board of Trustees and is currently Manager of the Examinations' Division.

Last year Pam adjudicated the finals of the drama section of PACANZ Mazda Young Performer of the Year.

She is a past president and a life member of both Marlborough Repertory Society and of the NZTF and was awarded a 1990 medal for services to theatre and a NZTF Meritorious Service Award in 2006.

Welcome to New Members

HaBYT (Hawkes Bay Youth Theatre)

Imagine Theatre (Motueka)

L and D Productions (Manawatu)

St Hilda's Collegiate School (Dunedin)

Farewell to Brian Hudson QSM



Brian Hudson, Ewen Coleman and Ross Pedder on the occasion of Brian receiving the Meritorious Service Award last year for 50 years in theatre.

Brian received his QSM for his involvement in theatre as an active member of Mana Little Theatre, Tawa Community Theatre, Wellington Repertory and Porirua Little Theatre.

His performances, no matter how large or small, always brought the same dedication and attention to detail, right down to personal jewellery and hair styles. He loved the craft of acting, but also got a vast enjoyment out of attending theatrical performances, and watching others get the same pleasure out of being on stage.

While he loved his stage appearances — and they were many and very varied over the years Brian was also a talented director, particularly of musicals, and he had a love of devising special effects, unusual stage props and clever ways of achieving stage sets.

Brian was both a public and very private person, with his work as a news reader in the early days of television in New Zealand making him a public face, and his work for many years as a news reader and editor with Radio New Zealand (in its many forms over the years) an easily recognisable and easy-to-listen to voice.

Brian will be greatly missed by a huge number of people, for many reasons, but for some of us, we have lost a very dear friend.

Contributed by Sue Miller (adapted)

Plays for Christmas

THE CHRISTMAS MONOLOGUES by Thomas Sainsbury
1–6w 1m

Can be presented by 1 woman (doing all female parts) and 1 man. It's Christmas morning and as the gifts are handed out you hear the stories of the many dysfunctions of the season. A series of twisted tales.

JOYFUL AND TRIUMPHANT by Robert Lord 5w 2m

A modern NZ classic. The history of the Bishop family - Dad, Mum, Rose, Ted, Ted's wife Brenda and their children - is told in a series of scenes set on Christmas Day over a period of forty years. By concentrating on the minutiae of family life Lord paints an authentic portrayal of New Zealand culture from 1949–1989.

GOOD NIGHT THE END by Jo Randerson 2m 2w

Moribund Harvester of Sorrow, overweight Unavoidable Destiny and pernickety Transitional Friend are three bored and tired Grim Reapers hanging out in the staff kitchen, counting down to Christmas, between professional stunts posing existential questions to the public with a wave of their scythes. "*Good Night The End* is a modern morality play; a cautionary tale that reminds us to live our lives well because there may be nothing else when it's over..."

THE SANTA SUIT (one act) by Stephen and Sue Tye
6+m 6+w

The action takes place in a courtroom; the audience sit in a gallery as if they are the public who have come to watch the case. A variety of witnesses, including Santa, argue the point of Christmas, with journalists, a jury and other familiar participants.

HOT WATER by Roger Hall 4m 4w

To a Taupo bach during the Christmas holidays come the holiday visitors - welcome and unwelcome: relatives, neighbours, a Rotary student from the US, Granny from the UK. Clive's hunting ambitions, combined with the offstage deer poachers, add mayhem to confusion — and this is no place for a honeymoon couple.

GIFTS by Sarah Delahunty 5w 2m

A comedy - two sisters meet again at Christmas after one has been living in London for many years. It is a time of domestic reorganisation.

INVITATION TO A SECOND CLASS CARRIAGE
by Anthony McCarten 3w 6m

The story of a train journey and a party in a second-class carriage one Christmas eve. Historical references from the 1953 Tangiwai Disaster are mixed with the bizarre, the suspicious, the terrible, and the comic to show New Zealanders in their alienated condition.

TE POUAKA KAREEHE by Renee 4w 1m

Irihapeti, a young Maori woman, is torn between her successful city life and the old values and customs she has grown up with and must confront this dilemma when she and her sisters return home for Christmas.

SCROOGE by Charles Harter 3+w and 6+ men

A sweet rock musical retelling the classic Charles Dickens tale A Christmas Carol.

TALENT by Gabe McDonnell (one act) 1w

Uncovering the lives of three very different women on Christmas Eve at Waterview Mall, in a suburb near you, Talent is a very funny observation of Mall life and Christmas consumer overload.

WEIGHING IN by Lucy Schmidt 6w 2m

The gang are desperately trying to get to their goal weight by Christmas. But is "Nutriconics" led by the outrageously caustic Cynthia really working? Or would they have more success taking the challenge into their own hands? A weighty comedy for 6 females and 2 males.

CHRISTMAS INDOORS by Paul Rothwell 4w 2m

An unashamed anti-Christmas comedy about family; sometimes the things that bring us together are the same things that push us apart! As with all good Christmas tales — something shocking happens, something that will force them back together under one roof, ruin plans, break hearts, upset futures and maybe bring absolution at last...

Suggestions from Playmarket

Perusals from NZTF May Ives Library

What's On September/October 2010

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Howick Little Theatre | <i>Sexy Laundry</i> by Michele Riml | September 1–25 |
| | Audition <i>Four Flat Whites in Italy</i> by Roger Hall | September 5 @ 1pm |
| Hamilton Playbox | <i>'Allo 'Allo</i> by Jeremy Lloyd & David Croft | August 14–Sept 4 |
| On Stage Te Kuiti | <i>A Touch of Tartan</i> Scottish Music & Dance | October 12–16 |
| Detour Theatre | <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> by William Shakespeare | September 1–18 |
| Napier Repertory | <i>A Travelling Salesman</i> by David Moore | October 7–16 |
| HaBYT | <i>Murder and Mayhem in Shakespeare*</i> Ken Keyes | October 18–19 |
| Kapiti Playhouse | Audition <i>Game Plan</i> by Alan Ayckbourn | September 12 @ 2pm |
| Mana Little Theatre | <i>The Wind in the Willows</i> by Alan Bennett | Aug 25 - Sept 4 |
| New Players | Audition <i>Spreading Out</i> by Roger Hall | September 5 @ 6pm |
| Khandallah Arts Theatre | <i>A Month of Sundays</i> by Bob Larbey | October 7–16 |
| Stagecraft Theatre | <i>The Three Musketeers</i> adapt from Alexandre Dumas | September 1–11 |
| Wellington Repertory Theatre | <i>Trick of the Light</i> by Ken Duncum | September 16–25 |
| | Audition <i>Black Adder II</i> by Richard Curtis/Ben Elton phone 394 1413 | September 4 |
| Hutt Repertory Theatre | <i>Peter Pan</i> by John Morley | Sept 27–Oct 2 |
| Butterfly Creek | <i>The Dresser</i> by Ronald Harwood | October 21–30 |
| Wainuiomata Little Theatre | <i>All Shook Up</i> (mixing Shakespeare and The King) | Sept 29–Oct 9 |
| Heretaunga Players | Audition <i>Scrubbers</i> by Cenarth Fox | September 5 |
| Elmwood Players | <i>Kiss Me Like You Mean It</i> by Chris Chibnall | Sept 29–Oct 9 |
| Top Dog Theatre | <i>Popcorn</i> by Ben Elton | Aug 27–Sept 11 |
| SC Drama League Musical | <i>Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat</i> by Webber/Rice | September 17–25 |
| SC Drama League Repertory | <i>A Bolt from the Blue</i> by David Tristram | October 8–16 |
| South Otago Theatrical Society | Audition <i>Black Adder II: The Elizabethan Years</i> by Richard Curtis/Ben Elton | September 4 @ 2pm |

Do you send your newsletters by email? If so please include the Backchat editor in your listing.

margaretr@vodafone.co.nz

Looking for a New Zealand Play?

Order your perusal script today!

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 girly 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

Hilarious, sidesplitting, comedy!

MENOPAUSE MADE ME DO IT

Five menopausal women are lured to a motel by a kidnapper who has seriously underestimated his prey. A weekend of madness and mayhem ensues as the woman seizes control and marry the kidnapper off to one of their group.

By Devon Williamson

Hilarious NZ Comedy!

Lost for Words!

Can a BBC announcer, a mute receptionist, a heel clicking German and a white guy who's convinced he's Jamaican, convert their Classical Music station to Reggae?

By Devon Williamson

What theatres and critics are saying about Devon Williamson's plays...

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

Stuart Gunn
Artistic Director Absolute Theatre

"Ideal comedy for the Repertory Theatre!"

Gregory Brownless
Past President Tauranga Repertory Theatre"

"A superb show!!!!"

Louise Dean,
The Radio Network Tauranga

"Brilliant fast moving script.... Fun to stage, hilarious to watch..."

Toni Henderson
Director for Tauranga Musical Theatre"

"Quick, witty dialogue... fast-moving... real Kiwi comedy that is sure to appeal and entertain..."

Whakatane Beacon

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

Phil Ormsby
Artistic Director Flaxworks Theatre

For perusal scripts and information contact: | Email: info@plays.co.nz | Ph: 07 5710752
Post: Detour Theatre Trust, 1 Oriana Crescent, Tauranga 3110

www.plays.co.nz

Midsummer Magic — A visit to Minack Theatre in Cornwall

Contributed by Morris Robertson

On a midsummer's night 2010 Margaret and I joined a large number of cars converging on the tiny Cornish village of Porthcurno. The attraction was not the village itself but the unique outdoor Minack Theatre hewn out of cliffs above the Atlantic Ocean.

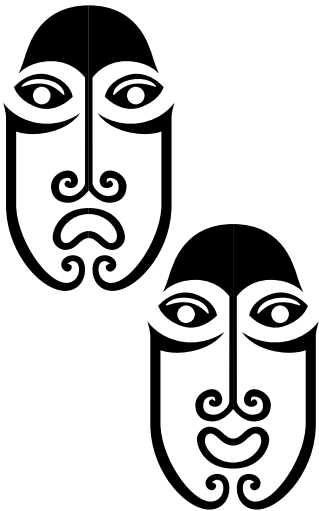
Many visitors are said to arrive imagining the theatre was built by invading Romans. However until the 1930's the gorse filled gully and cliffs echoed to the cries of gulls not actors. From 1931 until she died in 1983 the Minack Theatre was planned, built and financed by one determined woman — Rowena Cade.

The performance that night was *The Doctor's Daughter* loosely based on Shakespeare's *All's Well that Ends Well* and presented by first year students of the Central School of Speech and Drama of the University of London. The project at Minack has become a course tradition, first years act while second years provide backstage and front of house.

The Doctor's Daughter tells the story of Helena, a young girl who, in saving the Emperor from the brink of death, is granted marriage to

the love of her life. He however, is not so sure. We follow her on her determined pursuit of happiness, watching the trickery, comedy and farce unfold. Was all well that ends well? At the end the question remains.

The ensemble cast of 36 performed the many roles with slickness aided by clever effects building to a crescendo as darkness fell and the moon shone in across the sea — truly a magical experience.



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Designer: Matt Norrish

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