

BACKCHAT

News from THEATRE NEW ZEALAND
Fostering Community Theatre in Aotearoa

August/September 2016, Vol.39 Issue 4



Eugenia (Jill Foster) and Violet Donaldson (Monique Cowen)
in Napier Repertory Players' production of *Eugenia*
directed by Anne Corney.

Read about their success on page 3

Register for National Finals/Conference at:

www.thehouseseries.co.nz/theatrefest

www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz

President's Message



TheatreFest is upon us again - and teams from the Far North to Southland are in rehearsal for the annual event. It always throws up such an interesting array of theatre in many forms.

The great aspect of this fest is not just the productions/performances that are mounted, but that senior practitioners work alongside new playwrights and new actors and directors, in bringing funny, incisive and stimulating theatre to us.

Having had the National Finals in Hamilton, this year we head to Invercargill where the excitement of hosting such an event, is already permeating the community. 2017 we head back to the central city of Wellington.

Do you have people wanting an opportunity to write, act or direct - but you feel are not quite ready? This is the ideal forum for them to be supported and receive professional feedback, through the process of adjudication.

If you live in the southern part of the South Island, why not attend this fabulous weekend and also participate in the exciting workshops that are being arranged. (see page 5 *Backchat*).

All the best teams. I hope your journey through this **TheatreFest** is enjoyable and fruitful.

Bryan Aitken
National President

Welcome!

A warm welcome to our new members. This year these new groups have entered TheatreFest: **Avonside Girls High School, Cashmere High School, Riccarton High School and St Thomas of Canterbury College** all of Christchurch. **The Big Little Theatre Company** has entered from Ashburton and **St Patrick's College, Silverstream** from Upper Hutt. From further north we welcome **Te Mata School and Havelock North High School**. We wish them all well. Welcome too to Individual Member **Maria Edgar, Rangiora**.

Notice of AGM

Notice is given that the 46th Annual general meeting of The New Zealand Theatre Federation Inc will take place in the Functions Room, Kelvin Hotel, Kelvin St, Invercargill on 10th Sept at 10 am.

Nominations

Nomination forms for Officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary) and the **National Executive** (6 members) are called for. Forms are enclosed, attached or can be down -loaded from the website and should be returned to Box 22 249 Wellington 6441 by **Wednesday 31 August**.

Register online for National Finals and Conference:

www.thehouseseries.co.nz/theatrefest or
download form from
www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz

Poster Competition \$100 to be won!
Registration on TNZ website. Due 2nd Sept.

Service Awards

A reminder that nominations for the David Brockett Award and Meritorious Service are due back 31 August. See TNZ website

From Despair to Jubilation by Anne Corney, President of Napier Repertory Players

At 2.00 am on Wednesday, 15th June, I received a phone call that no-one should ever receive - Napier Little Theatre was on fire.

Racing to the Theatre I found that the fire was under control and that it was the very quick thinking of Sergeant Marie Marshall of Napier Police who had saved the Theatre from being completely destroyed. She was on patrol and was at the right place at the right time. The fire was contained at the back of the building in a storage area and the kitchen and had been caused by a neighbour disposing of hot ashes over their back fence.

The fire occurred on the morning of the Opening Night of my production of *Eugenia*, written by New Zealand playwright Lora Parry. After a day of fielding phone calls and interviews with the police, fire inspectors and media, we had the all clear and was told "the show must go on".

Opening Night was the beginning of a sell-out season of nine performances. The show received fabulous reviews, standing ovations and audience members in tears, including the playwright. The feedback received has been 'Wow', 'Amazing', 'Bloody Brilliant'. The audience have gone away thinking and talking about the production, weeks after final night.

Parry first published *Eugenia* in 1996, so final night was celebrated with a birthday cake for its 20th Anniversary. Kim Falleni, *Eugenia*'s great nephew was also present that night.

I am very proud that my cast and crew touched many audience members. In some cases, the play has started the healing process for families divided because of their transgender or gay children. In a word, I highly recommend this play and encourage other societies to produce it.

As a postscript, I agree with *Eugenia*'s biographers, Suzanne Falkiner, and Mark Tedeschi, that she was innocent of murdering Annie Birkett in 1920. If her trial were to be held today, *Eugenia* would either be acquitted outright or, at the very most, convicted of manslaughter.



Hilarious New Zealand Comedies!

By Devon Williamson

www.plays.co.nz

The Supermarket Sisterhood

Cast: 5 Female, 2 Male **Length:** Two Acts

Tas if the daily skirmishes with farcical customers and the dim-witted men in their lives, wasn't enough, the women who operate the checkouts at the Discount Co supermarket are now facing a new boss and the prospect of losing their jobs due to newly installed automated checkout aisles. If the women are going to endure these challenges they're going to have to fight together and take things to a whole new level. Hilarious, madcap humour to tickle your funny bone and stir your heart.

Twass the Fight Before Christmas!

Cast: 4 Female, 2 Male **Length:** Two Acts

Think your family is complicated? Meet the most dysfunctional family you can imagine as they try to navigate Christmas. Peace on earth and good will to all men? Not likely! Ever since her husband died, Mary's horrible adult children have been ruining Christmas. This year, with the help of a suicidal French psychiatrist, Mary is determined to take Christmas back. Hilarious and uplifting Christmas comedy.

The Old People Are Revolting

Cast: 5 Female, 2 Male **Length:** Two Acts

An hilarious comedy about seniors seeking revenge! The residents of the Sunshine Retirement Village have had enough: they're revolting! Bursting with eccentric characters and crazy shenanigans the play is great fun to stage and a huge audience pleaser.

Other plays include: *My Inlaws are outlaws*, *Over Paid Over Sexed and Over Here*, *My Husband's Nuts*, *Menopause Made Me Do It*, *Crazy Ladies*, and *Understanding Women*.

Over 70 productions staged by theatres across NZ and Australia!



For perusal scripts and information
contact The Play Bureau

Phone: 03 455 9959

Email: info@playbureau.com



THEATREFEST

LOCAL HEATS

NORTHLAND

Three entries from **Dargaville Little Theatre**:

Check Mate by Anna-Marie Cutts, DIR: David Cutts

First Impressions by Deborah Steele, DIR: Deborah Steele/Yasmin Bainbridge

Words of Life by Deborah Steele, DIR: Lara Brownie

WAIKATO

Knitting by Brian Turner, DIR: Lorna Ashton for **Hamilton Playbox Repertory**

HAWKE'S BAY

Measure for Measure by William Shakespeare, DIR: Matt Brebner for **Havelock High School**

PRD by Willie Cooper, DIR: Glenn Cameron for **Napier Repertory Players**

Te Mata o Rongokako by Kirk Smith & Adrienne Hurley, DIR: Adrienne Hurley for **Te Mata School**

WELLINGTON

Four entries from **St Patrick's College Silverstream**:

Brown All Around written/directed by Albert Latailakepa & Manase Taulanga

Last Breath by Angie Farrow, DIR: Susan Hayworth

Lifetime by Angie Farrow, DIR: Beth Jones

The Body by Angie Farrow, DIR: Susan Hayworth

Quan-Tomfoolery written/directed by Ivan Siemonek for **Bewilderbeest**

Table Talk by David Campton, DIR: Lynn Coory for **Khandallah Arts Theatre**

Wings by Jess Sayer, DIR: Jillian Carpenter for **Khandallah Arts Theatre**

CANTERBURY

Four entries from **Riccarton Players**:

A Kind of Image by Barry Grant, DIR: Doug Clarke

Bugger Magritte written/directed by Barry Grant

Doll written/directed by Matt Stoppard

Profound Moments by Johnny Grim, DIR: Christina Stachurski

Three entries from **Elmwood Players**:

A Night Out by Frank Vickery, DIR: Shani Annand-Baron

Cosmic Fruit Bowl by Rosemary Frisino Toohey, DIR: Anna Willows

The Dumb Waiter by Harold Pinter, DIR: Sonya Cameron

Addison written/directed by Campbell Wright for **Cashmere High School**

Awaiting Mr Shaw written/directed by David Winfield for **Keeping Good Company**

Prunella written/directed by Kate Stedman for **Riccarton High School**

Red Fish Blue Fish written/directed by Olivia den Hollander for **Avonside Girls High**

The Cage Birds by David Campton, DIR: Angela Smith for **St Thomas of Canterbury**

To Whom it May Concern by Georgina Sivier, DIR: Jackie Heffernan for **The Big Little Theatre Company**

OTAGO

Carol and Nev by Phil Ormsby, DIR: Barry Gibbons & Joy Ramsay for **Clyde Theatre**

Eating the Wolf by Sarah Delahunty, DIR: Kate Moetaua for **Wakatipu High**

Queen B by Pip Hall, DIR: Sarah Spicer for **Logan Park High School**

SOUTHLAND

Three entries from **Invercargill Repertory Theatre**:

Macbeth by William Shakespeare, DIR: Tilly van Eeden & Chelsea Cosgrove

The Bear by Anton Chekhov, DIR: Hannah Kennedy

The New Zealand Nightmare Supplemental written/directed by Joshua Harris

Hi Santa, Remember Me? by Trevor Suthers, DIR: Gussie Johnson for **Southland Boys' High**

REGIONAL FINALS

DARGAVILLE August 19 - 20

Little Theatre, Victoria St Adj: Claire Marsh (ANZDA accredited.)

HASTINGS August 26 - 27

The Playhouse, Alexandra St Adj: Claire Marsh (ANZDA accredited.)

TIMARU August 26 - 27

SCDL Playhouse, Church St Adj: Ewen Coleman (ANZDA accredited.)

DUNEDIN August 19 - 20

Globe Theatre, London St Adj: Ewen Coleman (ANZDA accredited.)

NATIONAL FINAL



NATIONAL FINAL & ANNUAL CONFERENCE

INVERCARGILL September 9 - 10

SIT Centrestage Theatre, 33 Don St

Adjudicator: Phil Peleton (ANZDA accredited)

FRIDAY 9 SEPTEMBER

7:00pm Performances start

SATURDAY 10 SEPTEMBER

10:00am NZTF AGM

WORKSHOPS:

- 10:00am 1. *Text in Action - Building Dynamic Performance* (2 hours)
Artistic Director for Fortune Theatre **Jonathon Hendry** leads an intensive workshop especially for actors.
- 11:00am 2. *Lighting Design on a Budget* (1 hour)
The Cabaret Club's **Neale Smith** gives practical advice in this hands-on workshop for directors and technicians.
3. *Special Effects Make-Up* (1 hour)
Halcyon Creative co-owner **Kerry Peninsula-Spain** shares some tricks of the trade, including how to age characters and creating scars/wounds.
4. *Improvisation for Rehearsals* (1 hour)
Invers Theatre Company's **Angela Newell** teaches actors and directors games to encourage spontaneity in the rehearsal room.

12:00pm Lunch break

1:00pm A repeat of the following workshops:

2. *Lighting Design on a Budget* (1 hour)
3. *Special Effects Make-Up* (1 hour)
4. *Improvisation for Rehearsals* (1 hour)

7:00pm Performances start

POSTER COMPETITION

Is your latest show poster worthy of national recognition? Then enter our Poster Competition and be in to win \$100 in cash. The entry form is included with this edition of Backchat. Entries close September 2.

COST

Performances:

\$20 adults (per night)

\$10 students (per night)

Workshops:

\$20 Workshop 1 (Text in Action)

\$10 Workshops 2-4

Visit www.thehouseseries.co.nz to book

RECOMMENDED ACCOMMODATION:



KELVIN HOTEL

Kelvin St, ph 0800 802 829



TUATARA LODGE

Dee St, ph 0800 4 TUATARA



GRAND HOTEL

Dee St, ph 022 123 4276



This month we bring you wide range of New Zealand plays, some drama, some comedy, some for adults and some for kids. 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 with your queries.

WOMEN WITH SWORDS

by Geoff Allen (6w 1m) A western with swords set on the French Italian border in 1642. One last hidden valley remains untouched by the Thirty Years war. All the men have been killed. Only women are left. An army is coming. Six desperate women will fight to find the buried treasure of Count Carignano before that army reaches them. Only one will see the dawn. All are armed, all dangerous, all Women with Swords.

STAG WEEKEND

by Dan Bain and Brendon Bennetts (4m) A stag party in a West Coast cabin for four over-confident and under qualified city boys becomes increasingly hilarious (and dangerous) as they fumble towards the truth of what it means to be a New Zealand man in the age of the metrosexual. Limited availability in 2017.

CONVERSATIONS WITH MY PENIS

by Dean Hewison (1w 1m or 2m) The play explores 5 decades in the love/hate relationship between Tom and his penis. It is an absurd and charming buddy-comedy that tackles a lifetime of issues – from impotence to infidelity, men's health to Viagra. It has a lot of laughs and plenty of heart.

THE ROVER

by Nathan Joe (4-5 w, 4-5m) A sparkling adaptation of Aphra Behn's Restoration comedy. Two young sisters, Florinda and Hellena, decide to run off from home and look for fun during the carnival season. This is in the face of their domineering brother's disapproval, and the fact that he's arranged for the former to be married and the latter to become a nun. Suitable for youth companies.

PUPIL ZERO

by Paul Rothwell (1w, 1m) What would happen if a rural New Zealand town was the epicentre of the next big super-virus? What would happen if the hub of the chaos was a primary school? A comedic feast for two actors playing an entire school.

DEXTER'S DEEP SEA DISCOVERY

by Darlene Mohekey and Jess Sayer (4w 2m) One Act When Dexter pulls the bath plug, something grabs his foot, and he is dragged into a deep sea adventure that will change his life forever. A loony show full of musical mermaids, sharks with swag, and dancing dogfish! An interactive, immersive and explorative pantomime that reaches out to all ages. 3-8 YEAR OLD CATEGORY WINNER PLAYS FOR THE YOUNG 2015

THESE WOODS ARE MEAN

by Bruce Clyde Thomson (4-6w 2-3m) Lost girl on the run, Abigail, is rescued from the forest by Snowy, who herself was once lost in the same neck of the woods. At the time of this discovery, we also learn of a brutal murder, this time a young blond-haired girl outside the house of a family of bears. Snowy finds herself connected in more ways than one and her former associate Wolfie turns out to be responsible. A clever mash-up of detective noir stories and traditional tales.

CAVE OF WINDS

by Elspeth Sandys (1w 4m) One Act Crete. May 1941. The Germans have invaded. The defeated Allies are retreating. Two soldiers from the Maori Battalion - the badly wounded Lieutenant Somerset and Private Wiremu Kingi, having missed their chance at embarkation, are holed up in a cave in the mountains. What follows is a struggle for survival, the story of a friendship and a love story as Wiremu falls for Sofia, daughter of the local resistance leader.

TINY DEATHS

by Uther Dean (4-8w) Twisted loved stories: A series of monologues about love. The woman who kissed a gnome. The girl who is also a bomb. The lady so obsessed with stationery she is prepared to kill for it. Or even worse: love for it. A beautiful and odd collection of love stories, all as dark as dark chocolate. Wickedly funny and sumptuously grotesque, it's perfect for a first date. Or a last one.

What's On in August and September 2016

Dargaville Little Theatre	<i>Cabaret: Hall of Fame</i>	to August 13
	AUDITION <i>Jack and the Kumara Vine</i> by A-M Cutts & M. Collins	21 August @3pm
Ellerslie Little Theatre	<i>The Pin Up Boys</i> by Mark Rayner	August 11-20
	AUDITION <i>Waiting in the Wings</i> by Noel Coward	Aug 19 @ 1.30
Titirangi Theatre	<i>Little Gem</i> by Elaine Murphy	Aug 23 - Sept 3
Dolphin Theatre, Onehunga.	<i>Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense</i>	
	adapted.by Goodale Brothers	August 5 - 20
	<i>That's Love</i> by Ron Aldridge	Sept 23 - Oct 8
Howick Little Theatre	AUDITION <i>The Lady Killers</i> by Graham Lineham	August 28
	<i>How to be Happy</i> by David Lewis	Sept 6 - Oct 1
Papakura Theatre Company	AUDITION <i>Death and Taxes</i> by April Phillips	Sept 4 @12pm
Te Aroha Dramatic Soc	<i>Run for Your Wife</i> by Ray Cooney	August 4 -13
16th Ave Theatre, Tauranga	<i>The God of Carnage</i> by Yasima Reza	Aug 24 - Sept 10
Detour Theatre, Tauranga	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> by William Shakespeare	Aug 31 - Sept 17
Te Puke Repertory Soc.	<i>Calendar Girls</i> by Tim Firth	Aug 23 - Sept 3
Gisborne Unity Theatre	<i>Stages: Three One-Act Plays</i>	August 5 - 13
Putaruru Theatre Players	<i>A Murder is Announced</i> by Agatha Christie	to August 6
	AUDITION <i>Jersey Girls</i> by Kevin Smith	August 22-23
Theatre Hawke's Bay	<i>Motel</i> by April Phillips	Sept 1 - 10
Pahiatua Repertory Soc.	<i>Theatre in the Bush One Act Play Festival</i>	Sept 16 - 17
Harlequin Theatre, Masterton	<i>Taming of the Shrew</i> by William Shakespeare	Sept 1 - 10
Greytown Little Theatre	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> by Oscar Wilde	Sept 21 - Oct 1
New Plymouth Repertory	<i>Secret Bridesmaids Business</i> by Elizabeth Coleman	August 16-27
Hawera Repertory Soc.	AUDITION <i>Joyful and Triumphant</i> by Robert Lord	August 7-9
Foxton Little Theatre	<i>What the Butler Saw</i> by Jo Orton	to August 13
Levin Little Theatre	<i>Four Flat Whites in Italy</i> by Roger Hall	August 5-20
	<i>Seussical Jr</i> by Ahrens and Flaherty HYPE (Youth)	Sept 9 - 18
Mana Little Theatre	<i>Blue Remembered Hills</i> by Dennis Potter	Aug 24 -Sept 3
Porirua Little Theatre	<i>Twelve Angry Men</i> by Reginald Rose	Sept 7 - 24
Stagecraft Theatre	<i>Urinetown The Musical</i> Mark Hollman & Greg Kalis	Sept 14 -24
Drama Christi, Wgtn	<i>The Government Inspector</i> by Gogol	Aug 18 - 28
Wellington Repertory	AUDITION <i>Brassed Off</i> by Paul Allen	August 7 @1.30
	<i>Ladies in Lavender</i> by Shaun McKenna	August 17 - 27
Hutt Repertory	<i>Last of the Summer Wine</i> by Roy Clarke	August 17 - 27
Butterfly Creek, AUDITION	<i>A Little Hotel on the Side</i> by Feydeau & Desvalliers	7 August
Havelock Theatre TOS	<i>Once a Happy Cowboy</i> by Don Edwards	August 18 - 27
Marlborough Girls College,	<i>Blenheim Hairspray</i> by Whittman & Shairman	August 3- 6
Takaka Drama Soc	<i>Two Short Plays and entertainment</i>	August 20 - 28
Riccarton Players	<i>Triple Scoop:3 one act plays</i>	August 19 - 20
	<i>The Addams Family Musical</i> by Lippa, Brickman, Elice	Sept 28 - Oct 8
Elmwood Players	AUDITION <i>Holes</i> by Tom Basden	August 13
	<i>Holes</i> by Tom Basden	Sept 28 - Oct 8
Top Dog, Christchurch	<i>Teechers</i> by John Godber	September 1-10
Canterbury Repertory	<i>King Lear</i> by William Shakespeare	August 24 - Sept 9
The Big Little Theatre Company	Ashburton <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i>	
	by C.S. Lewis adapted by Glynn Robbins	Sept 16 - 18
Invercargill Repertory	National Conference and Finals	September 9 - 10
	<i>A Short Cut to Happiness</i> by Roger Hall	Sept 26 - Oct 1
Send information about your upcoming productions to info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz		

Interesting TheatreFest Statistics

There are 34 entries this year and of those three quarters are by New Zealanders.

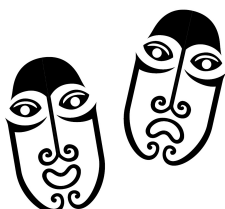
Half are youth productions. There are slightly more drama presentations than comedies and one involves dance.

In spite of opening entry to shorter performances there are still more, just, that will take over twenty minutes. The tally of new directors comes to 43%.

Some of our aims for TheatreFest are to provide

- a positive environment for young or new theatre practitioners to develop.
- space for adults and young people to mix, work and learn off each other.
- a place for dance and music to be shown.

From this year's statistics it's evident that TheatreFest is encouraging indigenous theatre, new directors and the participation of young people.



Editor Margaret Robertson
Designers: Jade Gillies & Morris Robertson

Deadline for October/November Backchat
20 September 2016

Send Theatre New Zealand communications to
info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz
or
PO Box 2585 Christchurch 8140