

BACKCHAT

News from THEATRE NEW ZEALAND
Fostering Community Theatre in Aotearoa

August/September Vol.42 Issue 4



Butterfly Creek Theatre Troupe in Eastbourne are staging *And Then There None* by Agatha Christie, a dark and captivating tale of murder that sets out to thrill and shock. One by one ten strangers brought together on an island die as the toy soldiers of the child's rhyme disappear too. In this publicity shot, Anne Innes plays Antonia Marston

www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz



As my three years as president draws to a close, I am confident in the future of Theatre New Zealand. It has been a tremendous privilege and a wonderfully enriching

time. I intend to remain on the executive after this AGM.

There are many people within every organisation for whom we have awe and gratitude. It is true that some people come and go, and these people bring colour and new energy. I focus my thoughts now on the members of our community who have been engaged, for years, for decades, and cumulatively their contributions add to centuries of wisdom. I want to focus on three in particular.

Ewen Coleman is a gentle and wise voice, one who personally inspired my entry in Theatre New Zealand back in the 1980s. Ewen is an adjudicator, reviewer, director, and also the TheatreFest co-ordinator at the moment. He has an enormous understanding of theatre, and balances his many skills and interests. I particularly acknowledge Ewen for his dedication and commitment to making it work.

Margaret Robertson is the stalwart behind BACKCHAT, Theatre New Zealand secretary, and is also engaged in both Wellington Regional and Khandallah Arts Theatre. She is always fun, and excited to be part of theatre, and she is organised and a tremendous team player.

Bryan Aitken (Current VP) is also a long-standing Theatre New Zealand member who practises in both community and professional theatre as a director and a coach. Bryan brings so many connections and insights into the theatre world. Bryan is also passionate about both maintaining standards and educating others in theatre.

So along with these three amazing heroes in the Theatre New Zealand story, we have myself and **Lorna Ashton**- a playwright, director, actor and theatre organiser; **Mark Perry**- a theatre technical whiz; **Deborah Steel** - new to Theatre New Zealand committee but a long-standing supporter

and practitioner of theatre; **David Cox**, who is the current treasurer, who has a life long association with drama and **Phil Jones** who is also a theatre technician.

I wonder if you have thought of standing or contributing to Theatre New Zealand?

Apart from TheatreFest we support poster competitions and The Arts Month, promote marketing programmes and run promotions eg creating banners, badges, t-shirts; we interface with national bodies eg Playmarket, Play Bureau, APRA, Musical Theatre, and International agencies such as AITA. We also support local groups - provide advice, advertising, a national newsletter - BACKCHAT, and offer workshops on a range of technical and dramatic topics. We give national advocacy to the community theatre voice. We meet quarterly online, and annually face to face; we run a tight budget, and keep track of the records of our archives.

Theatre New Zealand, in various guises (New Zealand Theatre Federation, British Drama League), has been around for 70 years. This year our TheatreFest entries are twice as strong as last year. Next year we will have a Christchurch based Final, celebrating our TNZ's 50th.

Many thanks for your engagement to date. What will you do to mark 2020 for your love of theatre?

Nga Mihi

Steven

BA, LTCL, LSB, ATCL,
ANZDA (ACCRED),
SCA -adjudicator (ACCRED)

Nomination forms

Forms for nominating National Officers (President, Vice-P, Treasurer and Secretary) and National Executive (6 places) are now available with this Backchat and on the website under Resources/Downloads. Forms are due back by 30 August. Scan to info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz or post to Box 22 249 Wellington 6441

Reminder that nominations for Merit and Brockett Awards are also due by 30 August.

Notice of AGM

Notice is given that the 49th Annual General Meeting of Theatre New Zealand will take place at Te Whaea, Newtown, Wellington at 9.30am Sunday 15th September.

Welcome to New Members

Ruawai College, Northland, Hutt Valley High School, Ella and Elizabeth, Christchurch have all entered TheatreFest and we wish them well.

Congratulations to Bill Sheat, Dominion Post Icon for 2019!



Bill Sheat OBE CNZM and second National President 1973 - 1975 of NZTF, was honoured at a recent Wellington Region Gold Award ceremony. He was named the

supreme winner for being a long-standing leader and patron of the arts and film industries for more than 60 years.

He has been a path-breaker in the capital city's creative sector both behind the scenes as well as out front, having key involvement with the QEII Arts Council, Downstage Theatre, the NZ Film Commission, the Royal NZ Ballet and the Shakespeare Globe Centre NZ. Bill has also led efforts to save and restore Wellington's Embassy Theatre and Opera House.

We too have honoured him as a Life Member since 1975

Acting Workshops on 10th August

Te Puke Repertory have invited Liam Hogan, actor, playwright, musician and director of Tauranga to lead a day on *Characterisation - Be That Character*. It's noted that Liam is the director for Tauranga's 2020 Shakespearian production of *Love's Labour's Lost*. **Detour Theatre**, Tauranga will hold an acting workshop for *Adult Beginners an Introduction to Theatre* led by Devon Williamson, theatre tutor, director and playwright.

Top of the South group, **Havelock Theatre** are also offering an acting workshop on the weekend of 10/11 August. Tutor Jon Hunter recently finished 7 years teaching at Toi Whakaari, Drama School as a senior acting tutor and his session is called *Actors Reset*. It will concentrate on understanding one's own emotional landscape in order to create a character.

Obituary Jim Barr, Life Member National President 1983 - 1986



Jim Barr, from Opunake joined the National Executive in 1981 and was our sixth NZTF President. He served until 1987 and also headed the library committee

for some years. After this he was President of the Drama Development Trust 2000 - 2013.

Jim was a very friendly caring person who had a passion for the festival system. In 2011 he was instrumental in gifting \$5,000 towards team travel to the National Final in Nelson.

TheatreFest Festivals 2019

Northland at Dargaville Little Theatre Dargaville Little Theatre:

The Accident by Herb Hasler dir Sharlene Aloa

Waiting for Granny dir & by Anna-Marie Russon

Too Late dir & by Deborah Steele NZ

Ruawai College *Lifetime* by Angie Farrow NZ dir Deborah Steele

Otamatea Rep *First Person Shooter* by Dos Zolidis dir Brittany Dyer

Auckland at Diocesan School for Girls

Following directed by Sarah Spicer -

Shakers by John Godber; *Queen B* by Pip

Hall NZ; *Fugue* by Rona Munro; *Women and*

Scarecrow by Marina Carr; *Effect of Gamma*

Rays. Paul Zindel; *Agnes of God* by John

Pielmeier; *Ahakoia he iti he Pounamu* by

Sarah Spicer. Stephen Butterworth & Merrin

Fagin NZ; *Hang* by Debbie Tucker Green;

Bazaar and Ramage by Sue Townsend and

Be My Baby by Amanda Whittington

Following directed by Merrin Fagan -

White Men by Abby Howells NZ; *2b or nt 2b*

by Sarah Delahunty NZ; *Living with Lady*

MacBeth by Rob John; *Chook Chook* by Fiona

Farrell NZ and *Sad Club and Sad Club 2* by

Luke Barnes and Adam Pleeth.

Sunscreen devised work NZ by Hazel

Francis, Sacha Achland, Charlotte Lobb,

Diana Wang, Olivia Wrapson

Henry IV Part 1 Shakespeare dir Rosie

Leishmann, Phebe Mason and Melissa Uren

Oddity by Sarah Delahunty NZ dir Rebekah

Brady

Chaos by Laura Lomas dir Emily Clelland

Hamilton Playbox *A Theatre Feast* dir
and by Lorna Ashton

Napier Girls High School *Verbatim* by
William Brandt NZ dir Amy Edwards

Manawatu Theatre *Desperate and Dareless*
by Neil Troost NZ dir Maxine Dale

Marlborough Rep *The Private War of*
Corporal Cooper by John Broughton NZ dir
Sam Lewis

Wellington at Hutt Repertory

Hutt Valley High Community Theatre *We'll*
Meet Again dir and by Tama Smith NZ

King John Youth Company *Harlequin*

Theatre Hoodie by Lindsay Price dir Linda

Voice and *The Cinema* mime devised by Cast

Newlands College *Sixteen; a Suite of Short*

Plays by Bradley Hayward dir Jo Matheson

Khandallah Arts Theatre *The Dreaming* by

Richard James dir Hayden Rogers and

Benedict Cumberbatch Must Die by Abby

Howells NZ dir Lynn Coory.

New Players Theatre Co *An Incident at the*
Border by Kieran Lynn dir Phil Saxby

Canterbury at Merivale Lane Theatre

Riccarton Players:

The Beach by Ashleigh Hook dir Giles and
Chris Wood

We Three by Owen Wymark dir Doug Clarke

Fun & Euba by Audrey Cefaly dir Christina

Stachurski

St Andrews College:

Gaggle of Saints by Neil LaBute dir Wood &
Calder

Fat Pig by Neil LaBute Hana Pearce

Me and My Friend by Gillian Plawman dir

Philip Nord

Keeping Good Company

The Play Reading dir & by David Winfield NZ

Ella & Elizabeth

Twelfth Night Shakespeare dir Finley-Bliss &
Lamont

Burnside High School

Mother Figure by Alan Ayckbourn dir Franki

Tellick

Canterbury Repertory

Interrogation dir & by Barry Grant NZ

Westcoast NBS Theatre, Westport

Granity Players:

Bamboozled and the Camel dir & by Mary
McGill NZ

The Ballad of Deadman's Creek and

White Lies, both dir & by Tracey McEwing
NZ

Divine Interplay dir & by Gary Smith NZ

Southland at Invercargill Repertory

Southland Boys High School: Gussie
Johnson

Dir *Anthony & Cleopatra* by Shakespeare

and *The Christmas Truce* by Aaron Shepard

Otago at Logan Park High School

Park Players *Cat* dir & by Diane Dupres
Wakatipu High School *The Rosenberg Sisters* Michelanne Forster NZ dir Hansen & Winders

South Canterbury Drama League *Moaner Lisa* dir & by Wayne Doyle NZ

Logan Park H.S. student directed
Chook Chook by Fiona Samuel NZ
The 15 Minute Hamlet by Tom Stoppard

If you didn't catch any of the above 60+ performances there's time to organise yourself for the Regionals as follows:

Upper North Island - note venue change
Dargaville Little Theatre August 17/18
Organiser Deb Steele
wayne.deb.steele@gmail.com
Adjudicator Jillian Carpenter ANZDA

Lower North Island
Pahiatua Repertory Society August 24/25
Organiser Gregg Perkins
pahiatuarep@gmail.com
Adjudicator Jillian Carpenter ANZDA

Upper South Island
The Boathouse, Marlborough August 17/18
Organiser Anne McAuley
anne.mcauley@outlook.com
Adjudicator Rob Ormsby ANZDA

Lower South Island
South Canterbury Drama League, Timaru
Aug. 24/25
Organiser Kevin Foley
Kevin.foley@xtra.co.nz
Adjudicator Rob Ormsby ANZDA

Book now for the National Final and join others for the Conference which includes Saturday afternoon workshops, an open forum and the AGM on Sunday morning.

Curtain Up

Theatre New Zealand Conference and National Final September 14/15
Te Whaea: National Dance and Drama Centre 11 Hutchison Rd Newtown, Wellington
Organiser Wellington District
wellingtonfestivals@theatrenewzealand.co.nz
Adjudicator Jonathan Hendry ANZDA

Workshops will cover **physical acting** with Fergus Aitken and a practical **playwriting** workshop with Dave Armstrong as well as **directing** and another **acting** workshop. Watch out for a Work Shop News Flash.

The registration form for the Conference and National Final is attached.

Poster Competition

It's time to sort out up to two posters from last year (September 1st, 18 - August 31st, 19) scan and email them with the covering registration form attached. The A4 poster should be in word, pdf or JPEG

Arts Month - September

September was the month chosen last year by Roger Hall to honour New Zealand Theatre. This September the Arts Foundation is helping facilitate a conversation for all New Zealanders to share what 'art is' to them, their community, and their country.

"It's time to give the arts some much needed oxygen to help grow their understanding and support" says Jo Blair Arts Foundation Lead. She continues "It's about time the arts were raised on the national agenda and given the support and financial backing they warrant."

As an arts organisation we are encouraged to promote this special Arts Month through digital channels, create a video, use the hashtag #ArtsMonthNZ or host an event. Our September conference and national final fits neatly into this initiative and further material will be passed on to you to use.



www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz



Here is a sampler of the wide selection of plays we have on offer at Playmarket. Become a subscriber at playmarket.org.nz (\$40) to download as many manuscript titles as you like. To purchase a published script or a hardcopy of a manuscript see our online bookshop. For queries email: holly@playmarket.org.nz

A quintessentially New Zealand musical
SHORTLAND STREET – THE MUSICAL by Guy Langford with Simon Bennett. 8-24f, 7-28m. You will love this musical whether you have watched every episode of the TV show or never seen one. Laced with Kiwi humour and pumped full of catchy songs, this show promises a great time. *Email us.*

Lots of laughs

MY INNER ORC by Allen O’Leary. 2f, 3m. Martin is a middle-weight kiwi actor, best known for his role as an elf in *The Lord of The Rings*, who is making a living from attending LOTR conventions in the UK. He shares a hotel room with Karl, a wannabe actor who is new to the convention scene. Ignoring Martin’s warnings, Karl invites some fans into the room, including Martin’s stalker whose restraining order expired the day before. *Downloadable.*

All female casts

THE SECRET LIFE OF SEAWEED by Julie McKee. 4f. It’s 1942 and New Zealand is under threat of a Japanese invasion. Louise MacGregor, formidable scientist, is sent in search of *Pterocladia Lucida*, a simple seaweed to aid the war effort. The young May Smith, who has recently discovered her Māori heritage, assists her, but has views that conflict with Louise’s. *Downloadable.*

Shorter pieces

SAVING GRACE by Emma Rattenbury. 2f, 1m. A family dinner goes haywire. Tania thinks Dan is hiding something, Dan thinks Tania is losing the plot, and Grace just can’t keep her food down. *Downloadable.*

BETWEEN by Helen Varley Jamieson. 3f, 2m. In the Between world, life is magical and filled with adventure. It is the world of kings and queens, fairies, pirates, animals and witches. At 14, Alice prefers the Between world than reality where she isn’t old enough to be left to do what she wants, but too old to have stories read to her. When she’s 15, will she be able to live happily ever after? *Downloadable.*

LOVIN’ IT by Jo Randerson. 10-20 any gender. This play investigates a world where youth are kept separate from the rest of humanity and the various issues that arise from this. Is this really the ‘ideal age’? What would the world look like with no elderly, no children, no death? And is anyone else hearing voices? *Downloadable.*

Tense Dramas

THE TRAIN SET by Joe Musaphia. 1f, 2m. Berlin, Germany, 1939. A Jewish couple are selling up to start a new life in New Zealand. Among their chattels is a Marklin train set in the spare room. An SS officer arrives at their house and demands to play with the train set. The couple and their family are wary of the officer’s intentions, but the officer himself deserves to be wary of the intentions of the couple as well. *Downloadable.*

CON by Gavin McGibbon. 1f, 3m. In a world of pyramid schemes, dodgy builders and Nigerian internet scams, the con artist is the fastest growing career path of the 21st Century. Steve and Earl are conmen. Now they have a chance to make money like never before with a con so wicked it’s irresistible. Will they pull it off? What will the consequences be when love walks in the door? *Downloadable.*

Pantomime

PUSS IN BOOTS by Paul Jenden. 2f, 2m, 2 any gender. A poor widow woman and her son live in a run-down shack and dream of winning Lotto. When they discover that they have been left Puss in Boots in a will, they hope their fortunes will turn. Follow their adventures as they come across a down-on-his-luck King, his feisty daughter and some marauding trolls. *Downloadable.*

What's On in August and September 2019

Otamatea Rep Theatre	AUDITION <i>This is Your Captain Speaking</i> (Dinner Theatre)	Aug 7@ 7pm
Howick Little Theatre	<i>Neighbourhood Watch</i> by Alan Ayckbourn	Sept 7 - 28
Te Aroha Dramatic Soc	<i>Relatively Speaking</i> by Alan Ayckbourn	to August 3
16 th Avenue, Tauranga	<i>Last Legs</i> by Roger Hall	Sept 6 - 21
Detour Theatre, Tauranga	<i>Murder on the Links</i> by Agatha Christie	Sept 5 - 21
Rotorua Little Theatre	<i>Sleeping Beauty</i> by Steve English	Aug 28 - Sept 7
Centre Stage, Taupo	AUDITION <i>The Pink Hammer</i> by Michele Amas	August 4
Performing Arts, Taumarunui	<i>Mama Mia</i> by B.Andersson, B.Ulvaeus, C.Johnson	Sept 27 - Oct
Napier Repertory Players	<i>Wheeler's Luck</i> by N.Collins, T.Leach, D.Andrew	Sept 3 - 7
Dannevirke Theatre	AUDITION <i>Ladies Night</i> Stephen Sinclair/Antony McCarten	Aug 17
Greytown Little Theatre	AUDITION 'Allo 'Allo by Jeremy Lloyd & David	
Croft	Aug 10 @ 2.30 and Aug 11 @ 4pm	
Cue Theatre, Inglewood	AUDITION <i>We Must Kill Toni</i> by Ian Stuart Black	August 4 @2pm
Feilding Little Theatre	<i>Haunted Through Lounge Recessed Dining Nook at</i>	
Ferndale Castle by David McGillivray and Walter Zerlin Jnr		August 2 - 17
Foxton Little Theatre	<i>Home Land</i> by Gary Henderson	August 9 - 24
New Players, Newlands	<i>Four Flat Whites in Italy</i> by Roger Hall	Aug 28 - Sept 7
Stagecraft Theatre	AUDITION <i>Frost/Nixon</i> by Peter Morgan	August 17
	<i>Bare, a Pop Opera</i> by Jon Hartmere, Damon Intrabartolo	Aug 28 - Sept 7
Wellington Repertory	<i>Black Comedy</i> by Peter Shaffer	to August 10
	AUDITION <i>First Date</i> by Austin Winsberg	August 17-18
Hutt Repertory Theatre	AUDITION <i>The Rivals</i> by Richard Brinsley Sheridan	August 4 @1pm
Butterfly Creek Theatre	<i>And Then There Were None</i> by Agatha Christie,	August 1 -10
Marlborough Rep	AUDITION <i>Nell Gwynn</i> by Jessica Swale	Aug 12-13@7.30
Nelson Repertory	AUDITIONS One Act plays x 4 for November festival	August 3-4
Amuri Players, Hanmer Springs	AUDITION <i>Treasure Island</i> by Ben Crocker	September 1
SC Drama League, Timaru	<i>Mathew, Mark Luke and Joanne</i> by Carl Nixon	Sept 11 - 15
Logan Park High School, Dunedin	<i>Fifteen Minute Hamlet</i> by Tom Stoppard	August 3 - 4
Remarkable Theatre, Queenstown	<i>One Man 2 Guvnors</i> by Richard Bean from Carlo Goldoni	Sept 12 - 21
Fiordland Players, Te Anau	<i>The Rural Variety Performance</i>	August 17-18
Invercargill Repertory	<i>Short Plays Festival</i>	August 23 - 24

Remembering Raymond Boyce MBE, Hon LtD,
Theatre Designer and Arts Icon 1928 - 1st August 2019



Amongst the long list of Raymond Boyces's achievements mentioned in The Arts Foundation's tribute to his passing is his mentoring of young talent at New Zealand Theatre Federation Schools. I wonder if any of our members remember his inspiration.

Khandallah Arts Theatre has its own special memories of him. In 1975 he answered the call of his director friend Zenocrate Graham to design the set for *Twelfth Night*. Long before pop-up Globes became fashionable he recreated the Globe on stage in the Khandallah Town Hall. It had a thrust stage with a painted canopy of the heavens, a balcony structure centre stage for the musicians, curtains beneath for entrances and exits and the mandatory pillars either side of the stage. *Pic. Raymond, Stage Manager and Director*



Editor Margaret Robertson
Technical Assistance Morris Robertson

Deadline for October/November Backchat **20 September 2019**

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