

BACKCHAT

News from THEATRE NEW ZEALAND
Fostering Community Theatre in Aotearoa

October/November 2019 Vol.42 Issue 5



Writer/ director Tama Smith (in red cap) with his cast and the adjudicator Jonathon Hendry. Tama's play *We'll Meet Again* is the result of much research and interviews with residents in the Montecillo Veteran's Home in Dunedin. It uses the real words of a generation whose common experience was the Second World War.

www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz

President's Message



TheatreFest Final 2019 has been celebrated in Wellington and what an event. One of the strongest finals for some years, the plays' content and subject matter, was met by the

strength of writing and the depth of production and acting. Such a range of storytelling: from violence and crime to bigotry and abuse, through lost love and emotional memory to fear of the unknown and self-harm.

This fearless range of work reflects the insight and observation of our adult theatre practitioners, coupled with our youth theatre and their training programmes. *TheatreFest* therefore, can be seen to be working!

This brings me to the subject of weekend workshops. Are you wanting to step up, but are feeling stuck? We have had some approaches to hold workshops in the coming year covering various aspects of theatre practice. Send in your requests through our website so we can help co-ordinate the needs of your region. Remember, if your society is a member of *Theatre New Zealand* and you host a workshop for your area not just your group, you are eligible for a grant to support the weekend and we also help provide the appropriate tutors. Start your planning for 2020 NOW!

2020 is going to be a year of national celebration. Not only will it be the 80th Anniversary of the One-Act Play Festival system, it is also the 50th Anniversary of *Theatre New Zealand* (formerly New Zealand Theatre Federation).

This national celebration will take place in **Christchurch, early September**

aligned to the 2020*TheatreFest* Final. Further information in the New Year.

2020Vision Celebrating the Past Creating the Future

Bryan Aitken
National President

2019/2020 National Executive

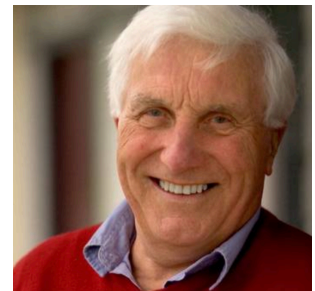
The 49th AGM confirmed that the leadership of TNZ for the coming year will be in the hands of:

President: Bryan Aitken Christchurch
VP: Lorna Ashton Hamilton
Treasurer: David Cox Wellington
Secretary: Margaret Robertson Wgtn.

Executive Members:
Steven Arnold, Auckland
Paul Percy, Masterton
Deb Steele, Dargaville

Co-opted:
Ewen Coleman - Festival Organiser
Mark Perry - Website and Facebook
Phil Jones - Health and Safety

The recent passing of our Patron Ray Henwood NZOM was recorded. He had his roots in community theatre in the



Titahi Bay, Porirua. He established both Downstage Theatre 1964 and Circa Theatre 1976 in Wellington. He worked in radio, television and film and became well known in Roger Hall's plays, especially *Gliding On*.

His replacement is being considered.

Life Membership

Steven Arnold, immediate past president was given Life Membership of Theatre New Zealand in recognition of his leadership over the past three years. Steven on left, Bryan on right.



Notice the new tear-drop advertising of which there are five for different locations. These were bought with thanks to money donated last year by The Drama Development Trust.

Further News from Curtain Up National Conference and TheatreFest weekend.

Saturday's acting and playwriting workshops were well received and Sunday's Open Forum discussed:

*Archiving see www.theatrearchives.nz

*Adjudicating and its effectiveness.

*Patrons' names.

*Feasibility of a Full length play festival, the 24 hour theatre challenge template from Hamilton Playbox and advocacy for groups travelling to uncharted venues.

*Need for establishing a culture of Health and Safety within our member groups.

TheatreFest Statistics

There were 58 entries this year, 20 of them from Diocesan School for Girls. 20 productions were sent to the four Regionals and of the 8 plays at the Final, five were written by New Zealanders. There were 3 adult and 5 youth productions.

Poster Competition

See How They Run by Philip King produced by Stagecraft Theatre of Wellington won this year for its great design and branding. Runner up was Wellington Repertory with *The Threepenny Opera* by Bertolt Brecht. Highly Commended were Gisborne Unity's *Kings of the Gym* by Dave Armstrong and Khandallah Arts Theatre's *Zero Inn* by Bruce Mason.



See back page for the winning poster.

Thank you very much to Wellington District team for hosting this big event so efficiently once again

Welcome to New Members
Belated welcome to Burnside High School and Manawatu Theatre both of whom entered TheatreFest.



Congratulations to all the teams that reached the National Final

Napier Girls High School *Verbatim* (NZ) by William Brandt directed by Amy Edwards

Dargaville Little Theatre *Too Late* (NZ) written and directed by Deborah Steele

Diocesan School for Girls *Hang* by Debbie Tucker directed by Sarah Spicer

Riccarton Players *The Beach* (NZ) by Ashleigh Hook directed by Giles Wood

Park Players, Logan Park High School *Cut* (NZ) written and directed by Diane Dupres

Riccarton Players *Fin & Euba* by Audrey Ceflay directed by Christina Stachurski

Hutt Valley High School Community Theatre Company *We'll Meet Again* (NZ) written and directed by Tama Smith

St Andrews College *Me and My Friend* Act 1 by Gillian Plowman directed by Philip Nordt and Toby Lee.

Thank you to Jonathon Hendry ANZDA for his illuminating assessments.

The **Book of Honour** was won by Hutt Valley High School's Community Theatre Company and here are the four actors in performance:



The Bryan Aitken Award for **Best Youth Production** St Andrews

Me and My Friend directed by Philip Nordt and Toby Lee pictured



The Ewen Coleman Award for **Best Adult Production** was won by Riccarton

Theatre's *Fin and Euba* directed by Christina Stachurski

The Denise Walsh Award for **Best Production of a New Zealand**

Play was won by Napier Girls High School's *Verbatim* directed by Amy Edwards. Pictured with the adjudicator, Jonathon Hendry.





Best Ensemble Award went to Park Players for *Cut* directed by Diane Dupres.

and to Philip Nordt as Bunny and Toby Lee as Oz in *Me and My Friend*.



Two Excellence in Acting Awards were given to Herena McKee as Aaron in *Verbatim* and to Leroy Paton-Goldsbury who covered many parts in *We'll Meet Again*



Jannat Aitchison Awards for **Emerging Distinctive Talent** were given to Anisha de Silva as Three in *Hang* (Anisha is between One and Two)



to Helena Cvitanovitch as Jean in *We'll Meet Again*

The **Best Design Award** went to *Fin and Euba* from Riccarton Players. Many dwarfs and autumn leaves adorned the set as the light faded.



The David Brockett Award for **Backstage Achievement** was not awarded as there were no nominations.

The Drama Development Award for **Best New Director** was presented by Margaret Robertson to Giles Wood who directed *The Beach*



There were 5 entries in the Olga E Harding Award for **Best New Playwriting** and the winner was Life Member Barry Grant for *Interrogation* which he directed himself. The production was seen at the lower South Island Regional.



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 a copy of 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

Plays you will have been hearing about

THE PINK HAMMER by Michele Amas. 4f, 1m. Get in quick to launch the 17th production of this popular comedy. Four women turn up to a ladies-only woodwork class to find that the tutor, Maggie, has gone AWOL. Maggie's husband Woody certainly doesn't want a bunch of crazy women playing with his tools, but he doesn't have a choice! *Downloadable.*

EASY MONEY by Roger Hall. 4f, 6m. The latest play from Roger Hall available for community theatres. An Australian couple is based in a swanky Auckland harbourside Airbnb with a plan. The plan is to scam the locals into buying shares in a fictitious company that will rake in money through toll charges on the Auckland Harbour Bridge. *Email Holly.*

LAST LEGS by Roger Hall. 4f, 2m. Another popular one. Set in an upmarket retirement community, this play sees well-to-do seniors indulge in greed, jealousy, love and lust – not to mention their share of gossip, backstabbing and scandal! A lethally funny black comedy about sex, death and politics with an irresistible appeal to the old and bold of heart. *Downloadable.*

ASTROMAN by Albert Belz. 4f, 2m. Performed professionally in both New Zealand and Australia, this play is set in Whakatāne in the 1980s. Jimmy, is a young Māori boy with the IQ of a genius and a passion for video games. Follow him as he befriends the local arcade owner Mr Macrae and fends off local bullies. *Downloadable.*

Two handers

ROUTINE MAGIC by Frances Steinberg. 1f, 1m. Shortlisted for the Adam NZ Play Award 2019. Sarah is a court-appointed psychologist on a visit to Aloysius, a young man who has established himself a routine to help manage his anxiety. Through their conversation both parties discover a more harmonious way of living. *Email Holly.*

CAROL & NEV by Phil Ormsby. 1f, 1m. It's the great kiwi road trip to the bach. Carol and Nev are on the road to their daughter's wedding at the bay. The only catch is that Carol died in 1984. A hilarious trip of a lifetime that explores the difference between growing up and giving up. *Downloadable.*

Small town comedies

THE WILLING HORSE by Isobel Andrews. 10f. A comedy about a group of women preparing the supper for a country dance. The kitchen becomes a refuge during the evening for the women's various emotional upheavals – ending with a most unexpected love affair. *Published.*

WHEELER'S LUCK by Nigel Collins, Toby Leach and Damon Andrews. 2-40 actors. A local landowner dies, leaving her prime coastal property to the people of the small town Bell End. But how on earth will the residents decide what to do with it? It may come down to the results of a bareback horse race across the prized land, but only if the developer from Auckland doesn't get to it first. *Downloadable.*

Cheeky comedies

SEX DRIVE by Lorae Parry and Pinky Agnew. 5f, 2m. The story of three women, working in a chicken factory who win ten thousand dollars from Lotto and decide to start a small business. But what sells? Sex! And so their mobile sex shop for women, by women is created. *Downloadable.*

THE HAND JOB by Conrad Newport. 3f, 1m. A regular Monday for Marie the manicurist is turned upside down when an old friend with a nail emergency reveals the truth of their past and jeopardises everyone's future. *Downloadable.*

What's On in October and November 2019

Otamatea Repertory	<i>This is your Captain Speaking</i> (dinner theatre)	Nov 1-17
Dargaville Little Theatre	<i>Bouncers</i> by John Godber	Nov 14 - 23
Howick Little Theatre	<i>Disorderly Conduct</i> by Nathan Hey	Oct 2 - 5
	<i>The Game's Afoot</i> by Ken Ludwig	Nov 9 - 30
Waihi Drama Society	<i>The Pink Hammer</i> by Michel Amas	Oct 2-13
Katikati Theatre	<i>Life is Not What it Seems</i> , dramatised readings	Oct 6 - 8
	<i>Badjelly The Witch</i> adapt Alannah O'Sullivan	Nov 26 -30
Detour Theatre	<i>The Odd Couple</i> by Neil Simon	Nov 14 - 30
16 th Ave Theatre	<i>Noises Off</i> by Michael Frayn	Nov 22-Dec 7
Putaruru Theatre Players	<i>Come Cruising</i> musical comedy	Nov 6 - 16
Rotorua Little Theatre	<i>Caught in the Net</i> by Ray Cooney	Nov 13 - 23
Performing Arts Taumarunui	<i>Mama Mia</i> by Anderson/Ulvaeus/Johnson	to 12 Oct
New Plymouth Repertory	<i>Cinderella</i> by Les Emslie	Nov 16-30
Greytown Little Theatre	<i>'Allo 'Allo</i> by Jeremy Lloyd/David Croft	Nov 25-Dec 1
Levin Little Theatre	<i>Uproar in the House</i> by Anthony Marriott/Alistair Foot	Nov 15-30
Kapiti Playhouse	<i>The Thirty-Nine Steps</i> adapt Ross Gumbley	Nov 6 -16
Mana Little Theatre	<i>Extremities</i> by William Mastrosimone	Oct 9 -19
Porirua Little Theatre	<i>Shrek the Musical</i> Dreamworks	Nov 13 - 30
Khandallah Arts Theatre	Ira Levin's <i>Deathtrap</i>	Oct 10 - 19
Stagecraft Theatre	<i>Frost/Nixon</i> by Peter Morgan	Oct 30-Nov 9
	AUDITION <i>One Man Two Guvnors</i> by Richard Bean	Nov 2@9am
Wellington Repertory	<i>First Date</i> by Austin Winsberg	Nov 20 - 30
Hutt Repertory	<i>The Rivals</i> by Richard Brinsley Sheridan	Oct 16 – 26
Butterfly Creek Theatre	<i>A Farmhouse called Shelter</i> by Michaeljohn Butcher	Nov 21 - 30
Heretaunga Repertory	<i>A Tribute to the Two Ronnies</i>	Nov 21 - 30
Nelson Repertory	Season of One Act Plays	Nov 27 - 30
Boathouse Theatre	<i>Nell Gwynn</i> by Jessica Swale	Nov 13 – 23
Havelock Theatre Company	<i>Celebrating 20 years</i>	Nov 30
Riccarton Players	<i>Bad Girls the Musical</i> by Maureen Chadwick/Ann McMannus	Oct 3-11
	AUDITION <i>Fifty and Fabulous</i> by Sharon Butterworth	Nov 9@10 -2pm
Invercargill Repertory	<i>The Pillow Man</i> by Martin McDonagh	Oct 2 – 5

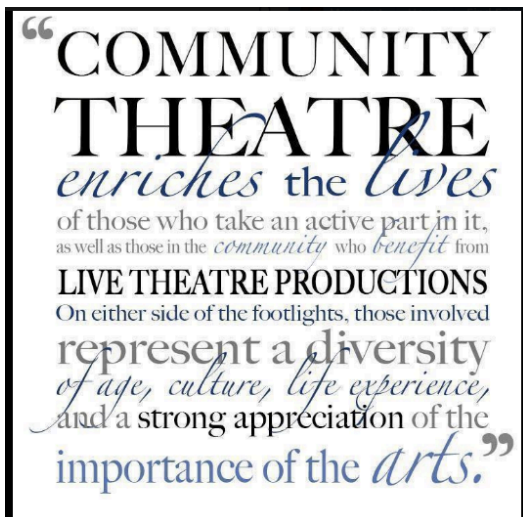
Send information about your upcoming productions to info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz

Snippets

Are you aware that it is a breach of copyright to mention a play without giving the playwright's name? One group has been challenged by Playmarket for omitting the writer's name on Facebook!

Do you want some help with establishing a good safe, healthy environment for your theatre? We plan to have a column in Backchat in which National Executive Member Phil Jones will give you some advice and answer your questions. Please use info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz

It has been decided that next year (April 1st) members will receive an invoice from the treasurer for their subscription & the secretary still needs a membership form filled out too.



Designed by Scenario



Editor Margaret Robertson
Technical Assistance Morris Robertson

Deadline for December/January Backchat
20 November 2019

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