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WHY WE WROTE

Te Kare, O'Sullivan, Chapman and Mizusawa

No 53
SPRING 2018

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TE WHARE WĀNANGA
O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI



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TE WHARE WANANGA
O TE EPŪKO O TE IKA-A-MĀUI



DIRECTOR'S WORD

ISSUE *No 53*

Pre-European entertainment in Aotearoa had included gatherings and presentations known as *whare tapere*. Then, in 1843, a savvy entrepreneur opened the first European-style purpose-built theatre in New Zealand in Manners Street, Wellington.

The history of theatre in this country is rich and rewarding. We have produced, written and devised theatre throughout our history. The theatre landscape has always seen myriad manifestations of entertainment and thought-provoking mindfood, on a multitude of platforms.

Theatre evolution involves the re-discovery of works in the canon as much as experimentation. It includes embracing technologies - like the electric light that subsumed limelight, hand operated rigging invaded by mechanisation, and hand-painted staging replaced by computerised LED sets. The ways of making and presenting theatre constantly alters and re-invents the spaces and the works. On the one hand we have site specific works with minimal design or on the other, spectacular musical presentations with huge wardrobes - such as the one pictured on this page.

Playmarket's latest compilation of statistics shows almost 80% of work on our professional stages currently originates within Aotearoa. This surge will hopefully excite community theatres to increase the local work they stage too. After all, the growth of NZ theatre writing was largely championed by community theatres.

This issue, once again wonderfully edited by Mark Amery, focuses on the changes manifest in today's theatrical landscape. The way theatre is presented and where, who it is presented by and how it is created. Traditional theatre making is invariably challenged by a new generation and the health of the landscape relies on exploration of form and process.

Inclusion of cultures other than the dominant one and inclusion of differently-abled practitioners continues to grow and some conversations about these topics appear in these pages.

I hope the introduction of New Zealand Theatre Month in September has helped increase the profile of all the fine work being produced and has enticed more of the public to experience the thrill of live theatre.

Murray Lynch

Director, Playmarket



PLAYMARKET ANNUAL

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NEW ZEALAND
PLAY AND PLAYWRIGHT

Playmarket Annual Editor: Mark Amery

Design: Cansino & Co

Advertising: Annesley Kingston

Editorial Assistants: Salesi Le'ota
and Murray Lynch

Published by Playmarket
PO Box 9767, Wellington
Aotearoa New Zealand
Ph. 64-4-382 8462
www.playmarket.org.nz
email: info@playmarket.org.nz

ISSN 1179-9676 (Print)
ISSN 2463-7343 (Online)

NEW ZEALAND PLAYWRIGHTS
PLAYMARKET THE NZ
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The *Playmarket Annual* is published once a year. The next issue will be September 2019. The views expressed in this magazine are not, unless stated, those of Playmarket staff or its board.

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Playmarket receives major funding from:



Playmarket receives publication funding from:



COVER IMAGE: Alice Canton, Ahi Karunaharan
and Nisha Madhan in Freyberg Place, Auckland.
Image: Andi Crown Photography.



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Kerryn Palmer asks whether we're there yet

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: *Erechon* by Arthur Meek, music by Eva Prowse, Magnetic North Productions and Christchurch Arts Festival. Image: Erik Norder. Hone Kouka, Moira Wairama and Sunny Amey at the 2018 Playmarket Accolades. Image: Philip Merry. *Body Double* by Eleanor Bishop, Julia Croft and Karin McCracken, BATS. Image: Tabitha Arthur. *The Wizard of Otahuhu* by Troy Tu'ua and Alison Quigan, Mangere Arts Centre - Ngā Tohu o Uenuku. Image: Raymond Sagapolutele. *Alice* devised by the cast, Auckland Theatre Company. Image: Michael Smith.

PAGE THREE IMAGE: *Pleasuredome The Musical*, original book by Mark Beasley, created by Michael Hurst, produced by Rob Tapert and Charlie McDermott. Image: Aaron Lam.

Why we Wrote the Play we Wrote

JASON TE KARE

on Cellfish

New Zealand has the eighth highest rate of imprisonment in the OECD. Consider then that Māori are 3.8 times more likely to be prosecuted than non-Māori, and 3.9 times more likely to be convicted. That 16,000 Māori males, currently between the ages of 20 and 29 years, have a record of serving one or more sentences. That equates to more than 30% of all Māori males in that age band in prison. At any given point in time throughout the last decade 3% of all Māori males between the ages of 20 and 29 years were in prison, either on remand or as sentenced prisoners. Then consider that a child whose parent is in prison is eight to ten times more likely to end up in prison themselves. Māori are not the only indigenous people to be over-represented in this area. The statistics are not why we wrote *Cellfish*, but they became a strong driving force.

It was 2013 when Miriama McDowell and Rob Mocaraka began working on *Cellfish*. They began with two reasons. The first: they wanted to work with each other as actors. They had never done this before. And they wanted something that would test all their skills and showcase what a wahine and tane actor were capable of. They searched

but found nothing they really liked. So, they decided to create a work themselves.

Miriama always knew she'd wanted to write something about an experience she'd had straight out of drama school. Her first gig was working with Te Rākau Hua o te Wao Tapu in Christchurch Men's Prison. The characters she'd met during that time were so rich and vibrant – she'd kept lots of notes.

As they explored the possibilities they struck on the second of their ideas: systems failing people. When they delved deeper it became clear that prison was where many people were ending up after other systems failed them. Education, health, housing, ACC, state care, mental health, these systems and others were failing people, not just Māori. Like the rates of incarceration though, Māori were over-represented.

Miriama and Rob spent four weeks working together developing the idea and brought me in on the last week. They spoke to me about their central storyline and the style they were wanting to play with. What I saw when I entered the process was utterly charming and heartbreaking in equal measure. It was dark comedy and the approach worked perfectly for the world of the play and subject



THERE IS NOTHING ANYONE CAN ASK THAT WE HADN'T ALREADY ASKED OF EACH OTHER

matter. Humour allowed us to see the inmate characters as more than just the crimes they'd committed, while also never shying away from the pain they'd caused or the pain they'd suffered. Their central storyline however sat more in the world of a psychological thriller. The question then became, could the work be a mix of both genres?

Over the next five years we continued to develop the work and I moved from dramaturg to fellow writer. This time allowed us to interrogate our ideas further, to experiment and play, to research and interview, to make choices and challenge them. The work was not always easy. At times I sensed frustration from my fellow creatives, but I believe it was the long road that has delivered such a thoughtful piece that has now had two seasons in Auckland and is soon to embark on a national tour. Each new season has allowed us to learn more and develop further. The collaboration between Miriama, Rob and myself and the time we took allowed us to interrogate everything we've put on stage.

There is nothing anyone can ask that we hadn't already asked of each other.

Miriama and Rob could've taken what they had in 2013 and put on a very good show. However there was the potential of making something that could be of International Festival quality, that could have more than one season. The real opportunity though was to present this issue faced by Māori and give a voice to those who are seen as being unworthy of having one. If the politics and media coverage we discovered in our time developing the work had shown us anything, it was that everyone had an opinion on crime and criminals. Here was an opportunity to challenge those perceptions. To take all the dry statistics and research, use our skills as story tellers and theatre makers and create something that would engage with people on an emotional level.

When I had first seen *Cellfish* in 2013 I remember thinking, 'finally a contemporary non-Māori, non-fictional setting where Māori are the majority'. That thought was followed very quickly by, 'how fucked up is that?'

ABOVE: *Cellfish* by Miriama McDowell, Rob Mocaraka and Jason Te Kare, Silo Theatre and Taki Rua Productions. Image: Andrew Malmo.



AUCKLAND

BY NATHAN JOE

The last year of Auckland theatre has been a battle of survival of the fittest, demanding our makers adapt furiously. It's fortunate, and a positive reflection of our steadily growing theatre ecology that many have passed this test. Theatre continues to thrive despite a lack of funding – through sheer blood, sweat, and tears.

This proved true for '80s spectacle show *Pleasuredome* which, despite receiving a mixed critical reception, became the talk of the town with its immersive replica of New York City. Then there was the Pop-Up Globe's third season with its unmatched commercial success, confidently holding its position at the Ellerslie Racecourse while also touring to Australia.

On the other hand, AUSA's Summer Shakespeare broke an annual tradition with the cancellation of their *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. To the cast's credit, they scraped together a koha-entry, street theatre production of the show for Fringe. And, for the first time, AUSA held an indoor winter production of Thomas Middleton and William Rowley's *The Changeling* which was met with strong audience numbers, hopping all over Auckland venues for an atypically long season of Jacobean lust and carnage. It offers a promising future for the institution.

A question of both the relevance and future of theatre criticism has also been posed with the current lack of platforms – with the discontinuation of Theatreview's Auckland coverage being just one notable example. For all the backlash that it has drawn in recent years, it has always been an invaluable archival resource with a wide range of voices.

Only time will tell what new avenues will fill the void left behind its loss, and whether or not these critical dialogues will be seen as an outdated relic or take on new forms.

Auckland Fringe, under the helm of Lydia Zanetti, has returned annually and confidently cemented its place in the city. Where else could we have had the irreverent theatre deconstruction of Nisha Madhan's *Fuck Rant* or Anders Falstie-Jensen's literal *Watching Paint Dry?* The Basement also continued its engagement with the spirit of Fringe, replacing their 2017 performance salon with a series of one-on-one performances. And let's not forget that it gave *The Contours of Heaven* (winner of the Basement Theatre Migration Award) the opportunity to be seen by a wider audience, bringing the real voices of six rangatahi from Hawkes Bay into our hearts. Most unexpectedly, this Fringe introduced a variety of alternative theatre venues, including Lot23 (*The Plastic Orgasm*), The Wine Cellar (*Buddy*) and Uxbridge (*Roots*).

The New Zealand International Comedy Festival is no longer just a platform for stand-up: Johanna Cosgrove's quintessentially Kiwi *Aunty*, Leon Wadham's stream-of-consciousness *Giddy* and Chris Parker's hilarious and heartbreaking *Camp Binch*.

In the wake of Harvey Weinstein's sexual misconduct revelations, Hollywood and – by proxy – society's dirty laundry have been aired and in this context the more socially-driven plays seemed to resonate most deeply with audiences. Theatre that reflects what critic Jill Dolan describes as the 'utopian performative', where a group of people come



BEYOND A SINGLE FLASH IN THE PAN

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:

Mrs Warren's Profession by George Bernard Shaw, adapted by Eleanor Bishop with the cast, Auckland Theatre Company. Image: Michael Smith.

Burn Her by Sam Brooks, Smoke Labours and Q Theatre. Image: Julie Zhu.

Upu Mai Whetu curated by Grace Taylor, 2018 Matariki Festival Auckland. Image: Julie Zhu.

Still Life with Chickens by D.F. Mamea, Auckland Theatre Company. Image: Michael Smith.

Pippi Longstocking by Astrid Lindgren, adapted for the stage by Tim Bray, songs by Christine White, Tim Bray Productions. Image: David Rowland, One Image.

The Naked Samoans Do Magic by The Conch and The Naked Samoans, Auckland Arts Festival. Image: Andi Crown Photography.

Yorick! by Binge Culture, Binge Culture and Q Theatre. Image: Andi Crown Photography.

PREVIOUS PAGE: *Tea* by Ahilan Karunaharan, Agaram Productions and Auckland Arts Festival. Image: Andi Crown Photography.

together to explore and experience new possibilities, to enact or inspire ideal futures through a 'simple utterance'.

I see these utterances everywhere. Who can forget the stirring and impassioned speech at the end of Katori Hall's *The Mountaintop*, Nicole Whippy urging us to pass the baton on? A performance that would not have existed if not for the sheer passion of its company (FCC) and crowdfunding. Or what about the voices of our Asian diaspora through productions of Alice Canton's *OTHER [chinese]* as part of Q's Matchbox season or Ahi Karunaharan's *Tea*, a triumph of this year's Auckland Arts Festival. Both equally epic pieces of theatre that place the often underseen and tokenised at the centre of the stage, whether through large-scale documentary or Sri Lankan history.

For all the new and vital work, the classics of the western theatrical canon continue to populate our mainstages. Silo's *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Auckland Theatre Company's *Mrs. Warren's Profession* and *The Cherry Orchard*, all resisted traditional interpretation in their own unique ways. While not all audiences were pleased with the textual and dramaturgical tamperings, each production fought to find relevance in our modern world. A universally warmer reception was given to their family-friendly productions of *Peter and the Wolf* and David Mamea's *Still Life with Chickens*.

Te Pou theatre also said goodbye to their New Lynn home with Eugène Ionesco's *The Chairs* in multiple productions and translations (English, Māori, Samoan and Cantonese) before relocating to Henderson's Corban Estate Arts Centre.

Auckland's continued growth as a theatre metropolis can be measured best not just in the volume of productions mounted, but the amount given a second life here. This is particularly true of the relationship with our Wellington brothers and sisters. One only needs to look at Courtney Rose Brown's *The First Time*, revived by a new cast and crew, Jane Yonge's directorial double-effort of *Weirdo* and *The Basement Tapes*, Eleanor Bishop, Julia Croft and Karin McCracken's *Body Double* and Mīria George's *The Vultures*. It's affirming to see that the life of a show can be beyond a single flash in the pan.

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A book by Lisa Warrington and David O'Donnell



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\$39.95



IN CONVERSATION WITH **THE PATRIARCHY**

Anya Tate-Manning

WHAT DO YOU MEAN NO MORE SHAKESPEARE?!

Yeah, so we had a meeting and decided no more Shakespeare.

THEN ART IS DEAD!

Stop shouting, we can hear you just fine.

THIS IS HOW I TALK, I TRAINED AT RADA YOU KNOW.

Of course you did.

BACK THEN THEY REALLY THUMPED THE COLONIAL ACCENT OUT OF YOU.

Sounds wonderful.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS.

Look, you were on your final warning after those *Mikado* productions and you blew it.

SHAKESPEARE WILL NEVER DIE! NEVER!

Shakespeare is already dead. He died quite a while ago, I'm sorry to be the one to break it to you.

HE LIVES ON ETERNALLY, FOR ALL ETERNITY, FOREVER, LITERALLY FOREVER LIKE A VAMPIRE.

It's over. He had 400 years and that's long enough.

THEN ART IS DEAD AND IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD.

Quite the opposite I'm afraid, but unfortunately for you, the artistic tools of colonisation are slowly being erased. I know this must be scary for you, but we don't care about your feelings. So go to the bar, drink your lunchtime bottle of Malbec, have a nap and we'll take care it.

BUT THE CLASSICS! TRADITION!

The classics are colonial. In brief, colonial is bad.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH COLONIAL? MY GRANDFATHER DIED IN THE WAR.

Everyone died in the war. It was a war. That we fought in because of colonisation.

COLONIAL TRADITIONS ARE THE BACKBONE OF OUR THEATRE INDUSTRY.

No, they are strangling our industry with racist, sexist, homophobic bullshit. They teach us that our own stories don't deserve to be told, because as people from a colony we have no value.

WAIT, HAVEN'T YOU BEEN TRYING TO AUDITION FOR US FOR YEARS AND YEARS?

...

WELL?!



THEATRE FOR EVERYONE

PRICING

We know that cost can be a huge barrier to accessing the arts. So here's what we're doing. With Pay What You Can nights audiences can choose the amount they pay for their tickets; we've brought in 30 Below where audiences are able to buy \$30 tickets if they're under 30 years old and all patrons receive seat discounts when presenting a Community Services or KiwiAble Leisure Card.

INCLUSIVITY

KiwiAble Leisure Card holders now receive a free seat for their support person at The Court, while Relaxed Performances offer all the fun of our kids shows to an audience with sensory needs. Additionally, Play Mates brings solo theatregoers together to see a show.

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Our hearing loop makes it easier for patrons with hearing difficulties to engage with our productions and we are planning our first audio described and sign interpreted theatre experience.

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... Maybe.

HYPOCRITE!!!

Yes. I'm a massive hypocrite. I'm also an actor and I would do almost anything for half a sandwich. And yes, I like prancing around in pantaloons and saying fancy words. I'm not a monster.

WHO DOESN'T LIKE PRANCING ROUND IN PANTALOONS?

Exactly. But no more.

BLAH BLAH BLAH TRADITION, BLAH BLAH PASSING DOWN HISTORY, BLAH BLAH I'M A WHITE MAN SPEAKING OUT LOUD SO THE WHOLE WORLD IS LISTENING TO ME.

We're not going to explain anymore about how representation and diversity are important, about making space for new voices, faces, creators, and leaders. There will be no more forums, hui, wānanga, conferences, articles, panel discussions, Skype meetings, or online tutorials. Stop pretending you don't understand, that you're still 'learning', but it's 'hard' because you've got to honour 'tradition' and 'legacy'. Fuck tradition. Fuck legacy. Get. Out. Of. The. Way.

WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS SO ANGRY?

Do you have any idea how exhausting it is to be raging all the time? It's very draining. Another all male cast, another 2.5 million dollars to make more Gilbert and Sullivan, another 'racy' comedy about straight white people and infidelity. We write articles, complaints, petitions. We gather together and drink wine and rant for days, we go online and vent and vent and vent.

BUT I THOUGHT WE FIXED IT? WE'LL INCLUDE, YOU KNOW, WOMEN.... AND OTHERS.... AND STUFF....

You had your time, with the undivided attention of everyone, to tell endless stories of the straight white man and his complex struggle with whatever the fuck he struggles with. That time is over. That show is over. That season has finished. Pack up your shit and get out of the way, the next show is

HAVEN'T YOU BEEN TRYING TO AUDITION FOR US FOR YEARS AND YEARS?

packing in and you're not in it.

BUT I CAN HELP!

We don't need your help.

IT'S DISCRIMINATION! JUST BECAUSE I'M A STRAIGHT WHITE MAN!

Yeah discrimination sucks aye?

WHAT MAKES YOU RIGHT ABOUT THIS?

I'm not right about anything, I'm a woman so I've always been wrong and not invited. Unfortunately for you I don't care about getting it wrong anymore because I'm sick of waiting and watching while you make another show about Winston fucking Churchill.

... (INCOHERENT PATRIARCHAL RAMBLING).

It's time to open the gates and hand over the keys. Learn Te Reo Māori. Learn a third language. Learn a fourth. Learn something about someone else and stop talking about yourself.

THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE. DON'T YOU KNOW WHO I AM?

All of your work is already gone, and no one will remember you. Because that's what happens in theatre, it's all temporary. So you can have your legacy. You will be remembered as the ones who stood in the way. Not as great artists who upheld tradition but as the ones who wouldn't change, wouldn't move over, and so were left behind and forgotten.

CAN'T WE DISCUSS THIS IN A CALM MANNER WITHOUT ALL THIS SHRILL HYSTERIA.

Get. Out.

PREVIOUS PAGE: *My Best Dead Friend* by Anya Tate-Manning and Isobel MacKinnon, Zanetti Productions. Image: Peter Jennings.

BEYOND LITERATURE

*Adam Goodall writes on different ways
of creating, past and present.*

The traditional history of New Zealand theatre looks something like this. In 1841, a 'Professor of Elocution' performs a melodrama at an Auckland pub. He's so popular that the pub owners build a theatre out back, but subsequent shows tank and he leaves the country. People take the wrong lesson from his failure and start building theatres out the backs of pubs. Drama Leagues pop up performing West End melodramas and local plays about the Motherland. Then Bruce Mason writes *The End of the Golden Weather*, Roger Hall *Glide Time* – New Zealand stories are mainstream. Writers come out of the woodwork. New Zealand theatre 'comes of age'.

Actual history is a bit more complicated. For several reasons. One is the history of Māori theatre. Another is that this assumes that theatre is just the realm of the playwright. In his 2013 book *Rebellious Mirrors: Community-Based Theatre in Aotearoa/ New Zealand*, Paul Maunder writes, "It is a history... of the search for a local literary

theatre, showing some impatience about theatre lagging behind other literary forms." That history only tells part of the story.

Community-based theatre in NZ has roots in the Drama Leagues and workers' theatre groups of the 1930s, performing foreign plays and rough skits for friends and colleagues. Local playwriting competitions brought locally written plays, but as well as amateur companies further strides were taken by the experimental and avant-garde companies of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. In his 1996 PhD thesis on experimental theatre in NZ Murray Edmond wrote that avant-garde companies like Red Mole, Theatre Action, Living Theatre Troupe and Amamus weren't so much "rebelling against an institutional theatre, which did not fully exist here," but were instead interested in breaking the British stranglehold and building a unique local theatre. They looked to overseas community-based models for inspiration.



As Maunder describes, community-based theatre involves “professional theatre workers – usually, but not always, from outside the community – working with [a] community group” to tell that community’s stories. In the form’s Platonic ideal, directors and playwrights do not and cannot dictate a community’s vision. Instead, the professionals provide their skills in service of the community.

Other companies emerged from outside the avant-garde with similar community-minded goals. Te Ika a Māui Players toured universities, marae and community centres in the late 1970s with Rowley Habib’s play *Death of the Land*. Brian and Roma Potiki, who had worked on *Death of the Land*, brought that community impulse to their productions *Maranga Mai* and *No Ordinary Sun*, developed in collaboration with Māori and Pasifika members of the Mangataipa community.

The act of devising, which had been carried into the country in part by ‘autonomous theatre’ advocates Amamus and Theatre Action gained popularity. Companies like Rangimoana Taylor’s Te Ohu Whakaari and later Jacob Rajan and Justin Lewis’ Indian Ink built texts through collective devising processes.

So what does community-based theatre look like now? What kind of stories are we telling, and how are we talking through it to people? And, what impact has it had on the role of the playwright?

THE MOST WONDERFUL THEATRE IS CREATED IN ALL OF THESE WAYS

ABOVE: *The Contours of Heaven* by Ana Chaya Scotney, Puti Lancaster, Marama Beamish and Owen McCarthy, Zanetti Productions. Image: Andi Crown Photography.



THEATRE IS A BRIDGE

ABOVE: *Sightings* by Miriama McDowell, Fiona Graham and Denyce Su'a, Massive Company. Image: Andi Crown Photography.

THE COMMUNITY-BASED MAKER

The dam burst in the 1990s and 2000s with community-based models spreading across the country. Maunder writes that those decades saw the growth of “a diverse range of practices with a diverse range of communities” that were more often than not “deeply embedded in social movements and changing social structures.”

Jim Moriarty's Te Rākau Hua o Te Wao Tapu Trust toured schools and marae, and later embedded in places like Arohata Women's Prison and the Northern Residential Centre to build 'marae theatre' – that is, theatre as a “whole of life performance” where performers could make themselves vulnerable and open to spiritual healing.

In Christchurch, Tony McCaffrey's A Different Light Theatre Company and the late Elizabeth O'Connor worked with locals with intellectual disabilities to create both original productions and adaptations of classic texts. Christchurch's Many Hats Theatre Company and Wellington's Everybody Cool Lives Here have followed.

Auckland's Massive Company and Christchurch's Two Productions build work in collaboration with young people.

Others build work in collaboration with marginalised communities like Auckland's transient community (Hobson Street Theatre Company) or the Waikato deaf community (Equal Voices Arts). Others root their practice in their region. Whangarei's Company of Giants works with professional and non-professional locals to build work articulating Northland history and political anxieties.

Puti Lancaster roots her practice in Hawke's Bay. "A lot of what we've been doing here," she says, "is because our focus has been in this place, really trying to explore all the stories that are in our own backyards."

Lancaster's River Seeds Collective have devised two productions, 2016's *Edge of a Raindrop* and 2017's *The Contours of Heaven*. Both tell local stories that locals don't often hear. *The Contours of Heaven* was "embroidered" out of interviews and collaboration with six Heretaunga rangatahi. "[We were] pulling out what the themes were," she says, "and [then] going back to each of the rangatahi and asking, 'what would you like us to know now? What is it that you would really like the audience to understand about you?'"

"We don't give enough time to sit and listen, to sit and hear the ordinariness that we all experience. We don't give enough time and value to someone else's experience." Through performances and the discussions that they hold afterwards, River Seeds encourages audiences to take the time to meet each other across social and economic divides.

"Theatre is a bridge," Lancaster says. "It's a way for us as an audience to meet. That meeting is to have a conversation, and that conversation is as important as seeing and listening to the story." Without that conversation, it would be much harder to ask the question the company wants audiences to think on and answer: 'what can you do for your community now?'

THE WHITE GUITAR

"The seed of the whole thing started when Matthias Luafutu was at New Zealand Drama School," Nina Nawalowalo tells me. "Tom [McCrorry, creative producer at The Conch] was a tutor there and they had a very close bond, and Matthias had come through Jim Moriarty's programme for youth at risk... He was a huge talent and huge to hold."

"He got through two years and when he left," she recalls, "he gave Tom *A Boy Called Broke*, a book that his father had written when he was in jail."

Nawalowalo and McCrorry had the idea to make *A Boy Called Broke* into a one-person play, with Luafutu playing his father. But then McCrorry took the idea further – what if they brought Luafutu's father John and brother Malo (better known as Scribe) into the play?

First they had to build trust. They approached the Luafutus through their Samoan culture and Nawalowalo's Fijian culture, welcoming them into the Conch space with a *sevusevu*. "Someone's culture can speak deeper than anything."

McCrorry encouraged them to look back at specific points in their shared history. The family wrote about those moments from their own perspectives and then shared them with each other. "It was absolutely massive, to have things revealed to them that they were not aware of," says Nawalowalo.

McCrorry held the script (with the help of dramaturg Oscar Kightley), Nawalowalo held the audio visual experience and Moriarty held the knowledge and safety of the Luafutu family. Collaboration between all was critical. Nawalowalo explains, "I think we all made very strong offers because they're very strong personalities. You had to be able to meet that level of intensity."

THE WRITER'S JOB IS TO DESIGN THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE PERFORMANCE

CREATING YOUR OWN COMMUNITIES

Christchurch's Pacific Underground, Wellington's Taki Rua Depot and Auckland's Pacific Theatre in the 1990s were open places for Māori and Polynesian communities, building a framework so that Pacific artists could be heard.

That tradition is carried today by spaces like Wellington's Te Haukāinga. A long-gestating partnership between Taki Rua, Tawata and The Conch launched in late 2016, Te Haukāinga provides offices and rehearsal room. Nina Nawalowalo, Artistic Director of The Conch, tells me that, "Culturally [we wanted to] find a space where we felt we could be together and we could have cultural practices, things that we all were for."

Te Haukāinga is designed to create strength and safety for the people that it holds: "we're showing that we want to support each other rather than compete against each other, and that we're different and diverse in our voices." More than that, though, Nawalowalo values "the movement through the space," the 'energy' that comes from pooling resources and working in the same place.

Auckland's Te Pou Theatre was brought to life in early 2015 with a bit more speed. Director Tainui Tukiwaho: "It had been 25 years since we had our space, [in New Zealand] Māori had their own space."

Communities soon found the space. Tukiwaho's brother, Borni Te Rongopai Tukiwaho, brought the mental health-focused Atawhai Festival and the Whakapuawai Festival for building AIDS awareness. Amber Curreen mounted the Kōanga Festival, bringing emerging Māori artists and industry veterans together for workshops, performances and social events.

Both Te Haukāinga and Te Pou are still building their communities. Nawalowalo tells me that Te Haukāinga's core companies are currently focused on serving programmes like the Kia Mau Festival and the Conchus Youth outreach programme, which existed before the space came together. Because of that, they're still asking themselves questions around how best to bring the Wellington Māori and Pacific performing arts community into the space. "How do we work in a room together? What could we exchange creatively?"

Tainui Tukiwaho wants Te Pou to become a place with the funding and resources to develop Māori works that belong on, and cannot be ignored by the country's main stages. As of July he's one step closer to that ambition: Te Pou will be moving to a new space in Henderson's Corban Estate Arts Centre.

RIGHT: *Dominion Road The Musical* by Renee Liang, music composed by Jun Bin Lee, Sharu Loves Hats.
Image: Andrew Malmo.



THE ESTABLISHMENT

Lynne Cardy has been with Auckland Theatre Company since 2004, currently Associate Director. The company's Creative Learning programme has grown to cover summer schools, school tours and artist residencies under her guidance, and young people are now able to get involved in devising and staging work as part of ATC's Here and Now Festival. ATC has also produced community-minded productions like 2011's *The Waste Land* – from which Marvellous, a now-independent theatre company for senior citizens was born – and 2013's *Dominion Road Stories*, a 'community theatre event' that took over the eponymous road for the weekend.

"The thing about the devising process," says Cardy, "is that it really brings in the voice of the young person and it gives them a huge amount of agency." Building plays this way, she says, has exposed ATC's traditional audience to new stories and voices, but also opened the door to the communities being represented, making them feel welcome as audience.

BOYS

Co-directors Eleanor Bishop and Julia Croft started with a provocation: how to create a space in which young people (especially cisgender men) could come together to discuss toxic masculinity? Like Bishop's past work, *Boys* was devised social practice theatre. This time, it would be devised under ATC's roof. The creation of a safe space for discussion, a space built on trust and intimacy, and time were paramount.

The duo started the devising process with a workshop and discovery phase, to which Bishop tells me, "I will always bring something to the table." The provocation was Greg McGee's *Foreskin's Lament* and events of misogyny from New Zealand.

The group read *Foreskin's Lament*, stopping along the way to talk about what it meant today in the context of Tony Veitch, Roast Busters and the Chiefs scandal. "Lots of talking," Bishop explains, "and then there must be making every rehearsal, so that you are grappling with the theatre of it as well as the politic."

Bishop and Croft conducted interviews with the young cast, improvised sketches around these issues and, with McGee's consent, reworked scenes from *Foreskin's Lament* to better reflect the story the company wanted to tell. This long process was a godsend. "It gave time to really respond to the ensemble and make the work specifically with them," Bishop says.

It was important that ATC also provided dramaturgical and emotional support, so that supporting the performers didn't just fall on Bishop's and Croft's shoulders. Cardy and ATC Youth Arts Coordinator Nicole Arrow provided a lot of pastoral care, Bishop says. Rape Prevention Education was also brought on board to provide support.



NONE OF THE WRITING I WAS DOING WAS ABLE TO CAPTURE THAT PLURALITY

ABOVE: *He Kura e Huna Ana*
by Hōhepa Waitoa, Taki Rua
Productions. Image:
Philip Merry.

You can see that same motivation in other establishment companies. Taki Rua produces a Te Reo show each year touring to kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa, community centres and marae. After 2009 they even worked with kura kaupapa students to develop those shows. Some mainstage shows, like Rob Mokaraka and Paolo Rotondo's *Strange Resting Places*, have been devised so they can easily tour marae and community venues.

Auckland's Basement Theatre runs schools programme Te Ara ki Angitu, donating tickets and transport so that students can attend shows and artist workshops. Their programmes like Ideas in Residence and the Producers Development Initiative are designed to help emerging artists and companies establish themselves and make their voices heard. Centrepoint Theatre runs a youth performance company, the Basement Company, and their Open Stage programme is designed to, well, open Centrepoint's main stage to the region's performers and designers for one production each year.

Cardy admits ATC's community-based work is still in its early days. She has a number of ambitions, including an annual community-based mainstage show not unlike *Dominion Road*

Stories. “Going to a community show, you’re going to have this whole different experience beyond what you’re seeing on stage. It’s actually about who you were with and what the atmosphere was in the house.”

THE LITERARY PLAY

“I think the ground is becoming more and more crowded, in that there’s more ways of creating theatre that are becoming more mainstream,” says playwright and educator Gary Henderson. “But I don’t think that means that the validity of any of those [ways of creating] is being diluted.”

Henderson has worked on devised projects like 1992’s *Big Blue Planet Earth Show* and community-based projects like Massive Company’s 2009 production *My Bed, My Universe*. However, he’s largely known as a literary playwright. To him, it’s story that makes the playwright an important figure. “William Goldman said that the writing of dialogue – y’know, actors can make it up if they have to. What they can’t make up is the bigger structure of the story. So now, my bon mot is that the writer’s job is to design the architecture of the performance.”

Neither literary plays or community-based plays make better theatre, says Henderson. It also doesn’t mean that a playwright *owns* their play just because it wasn’t built in a community-led process. (Henderson’s quick to clarify that he doesn’t mean copyright, but the ‘ownership’ that comes with having the final say on a work’s interpretation).

“If you’re really going to be serious about [writing], you constantly have to be open to input and not just negate it and see yourself as the auteur or owner of the story,” Henderson explains. “When I did *Shepherd*, I said to the cast, ‘this play is now *yours*, because I have no more input now’ – this is when it opened. ‘And in a moment, you’re going to give it away again, to the audience, and it’s going to be theirs, and you can’t control how they’re going to interpret it.’”

HE KURA E HUNA ANA

He Kura e Huna Ana is Hōhepa Waitoa’s first play. A composer, Māori studies lecturer and key figure in Canterbury kapa haka, Waitoa was recommended to Taki Rua to adapt the Ngāi Tahu story of Waitaiki and Tamāhua, lovers separated by the jealous taniwha Poutini. “My idea was to not just write about Ngāi Tahu narrative,” Waitoa says, “but to try and incorporate some modern day themes to encourage us to look at our ancestral stories to guide us.” So Waitoa wove the contemporary story of Hine, a doctor-in-training who returns to her papa kāinga into the adaptation.

He Kura e Huna Ana was developed over two years as part of Taki Rua’s Nga Tai o Kurawaka initiative, itself a sort of community-focused project designed to bring the stories of iwi across the country to the stage. Waitoa seized the opportunity to tell this story in Te Reo. “I am tired of people leaving the richness of language and narrative to a book or four walls of a classroom,” he says. “This platform allows Te Reo to be seen, heard and felt.”

The Court, Matariki Development Festival and Taki Rua provided Waitoa with resources and opportunities to develop the script. *He Kura e Huna Ana*’s development process was a relatively traditional one for literary plays, driven by the writer.

Waitoa finds power in that process, and in playwriting as a way of communicating with audiences. Literary playwriting has the power to “enhance one’s understanding,” Waitoa tells me. “It is about Aotearoa becoming familiar with how or why we do what we do. How we as individuals interact with each other no matter the background.”



OTHER [CHINESE]

Alice Canton's 2017 documentary theatre production *OTHER [chinese]* was originally conceived as a script-based project, but "none of the writing I was doing was able to capture that plurality," Canton tells me. "It was like, if you're going to be critical of the way narratives are being represented in a context like the theatre or screen, then you open yourself up to that criticism by showing a really singular idea of that identity through the lens of a white-passing half-Chinese person."

Canton drew on her background in community education and programme management to find a form with 'integrity'. "Once I started down that route," Canton explains, "...to extend the work into a kind of large-scale community participation project, it all felt kind of natural."

Canton took an 'unsophisticated' grassroots approach to building the cast, phoning people and setting up a stall at the Auckland Lantern Festival to collect names. Once she had enough participants signed up – which, due to social and political divisions in the Chinese-New Zealand community, "took a fucking long time" – Canton invited them to

attend a series of open-room rehearsals over eight weeks. Transparency was key in order to guarantee open, unrestricted conversation.

It became clear that documenting rehearsals and getting performers to rehearse and recall key stories would be "impossible and undesirable". A performance structure followed that discovery, built with the guidance of dramaturg Kate Prior. A physical continuum exercise – *if you strongly agree with this statement, stand on this side of the room; if you strongly disagree, stand on that side* – formed the show's backbone, and Canton remained in the room as a live director, cueing in video interviews and "key storytellers" when and where they might fit.

The show played to a more traditional theatre audience – read, middle-class Pākehā – in the Q Loft, but that was important too. "I didn't want to ghettoise community theatre or the Chinese people... because that is further othering and marginalising that group," Canton explains. "There is a kind of a validation when it hits the main stage." Having Chinese people tell Chinese stories radicalised the space.



Henderson explains in 'What To Write About', his essay in *The Fuse Box: Essays on writing from Victoria University's International Institute of Modern Letters*, that "You should be able to articulate, at least to yourself, your authority for telling this story, for making this statement, for addressing this question." The authority that comes from using your voice to tell stories about and for your community, Henderson says, is part of the reason why there's "such a huge momentum at the moment for indigenous cultures telling their own stories, especially indigenous cultures that have been colonised."

In *Rebellious Mirrors*, Mauger explains that community-based theatre draws its power in part from 'reciprocity' and 'communal context'. A professional artist working with a community draws their authority from serving that community's desire, creating "joint ownership of a complex kind."

Henderson stresses that literary playwriting was never the 'only way' of making theatre. "It's just that that's how it was presented to us in the formative years of mainstream New Zealand theatre." And different styles of making, these forms, cross-pollinate, amplifying marginalised voices in ways that they haven't before.

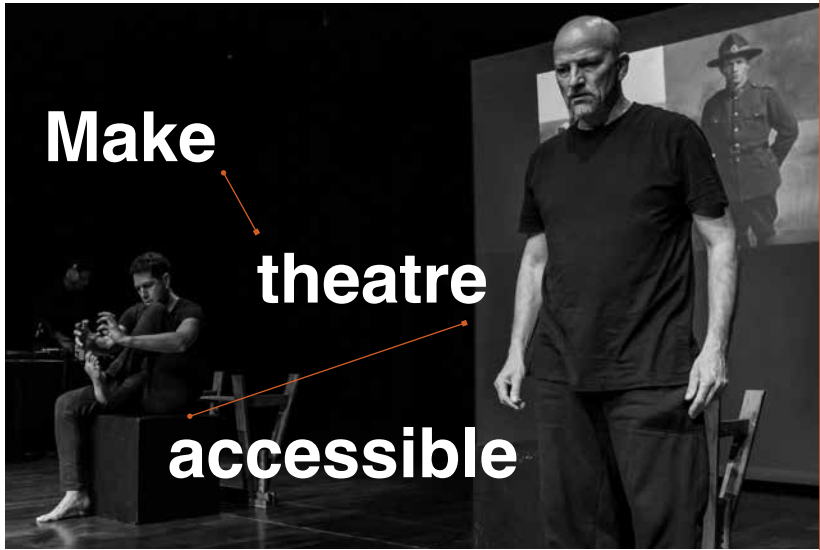
"It is so rich at the moment," Henderson tells me, "and I think there's room for all of it."

IT IS SO RICH AT THE MOMENT

LEFT: Workshop for *OTHER [chinese]* by Alice Canton, White_mess and Q Theatre.
Image: Julie Zhu.

ABOVE: *Skin Tight* by Gary Henderson, Studio Theatre, Washington DC, USA, 2013.
Image: Scott Suchman.

Equal Voices Arts' production of Salonica, with actors Shaun Fahey and Mihalio Ladavac, uses New Zealand Sign Language, English and Serbian. Photo: Michael Smith



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FORTUNATE

*Alister McDonald, Fortune Theatre Dramaturg 1985 – 2018,
writes as the theatre closes.*

In August 1974 the second main bill production of the Fortune Theatre Company (and 18 months later its first revival) was *The Two Tigers*, by first generation Playmarket client Brian McNeill. 44 years and 405 main bill productions later, the Fortune closed on 1 May 2018, having just staged for school holiday matinee audiences *Robin Hood*, by recently listed Playmarket client Zac Nicholls. In its lifetime a third of the Company's main bills were by New Zealand dramatists. Only English plays at 37% made up a larger portion of the repertoire.

Of the 120 New Zealand main bill plays staged, 46 received world premieres. Almost half went on to be produced professionally elsewhere and four have been seen overseas (*Mothers and Fathers*, *Love Off the Shelf*, *Social Climbers* and *The Book Club*).

The most frequently staged dramatist at the Fortune was Roger Hall, who between 1977 and 2017 was missing from only six seasons. Other New Zealand dramatists receiving multiple main bill productions by the Fortune were Stephen Sinclair, Anthony McCarten, Alison Quigan (five credits each), Brian McNeill, Dave Armstrong (four), Robert Lord, Joseph Musaphia, Murray Hutchinson, Renée, David Geary, Gary Henderson, Ross Gumbley, Carl Nixon (three), and Michelanne Forster, John Broughton, Mark Casson, Ken Duncum, Patrick Evans and Craig Cooper (two).

The Fortune staged 45 productions of

37 of Roger Hall's plays – more than any other company has produced. Of the 55 productions seen by more than 3,000 paying spectators at the Fortune – hits in Dunedin terms – 26 were written by him. A further ten were written by other New Zealand writers.

The Fortune's professional predecessors, the Southern Comedy Players, knew the Dunedin audience's longstanding preference for comedies and musicals. The Fortune's greatest comedy and musical hits (*Four Flat Whites in Italy*, *The Share Club* and *Love Off the Shelf*) were seen by around 7% of the resident population, a staggering market penetration by world standards. But among all the hit productions there were only five dramas (*Foreskin's Lament* twice, *Larnach Castle of Lies*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* and *Othello*). New Zealand dramas averaged audiences totalling around 1% of the city's citizens. That is nothing to be ashamed of – how many New Zealand novels, poems or films attract even that level of interest?

Despite its limited financial and staff resources, the Fortune from its inception also played a significant role in local play development. Starting with co-founder, Murray Hutchinson, company members wrote plays. Later came a writer in residence (Brian McNeill), commissions, readings and in recent years the future focused 4x4 Emerging Playwrights project providing mentoring for young, aspiring dramatists.

SAFER SPACES

Jean Sergent talks to Fiona McNamara and Borni Tukiwaho.

In 2019, Claire O'Loughlin will be collaborating with Fiona McNamara and Borni Tukiwaho on Playmarket's first set of wellness resources. Fiona is a founding member of Binge Culture Collective, and the general manager of the Sexual Abuse Prevention Network (SAPN). Borni is a core whānau member of Te Pou Theatre, and also runs both Taurima Vibes theatre company and Whāriki Hauora – a peer-support space for performing arts professionals.

JS: What is the wellness project?

FM: The project is about emotional well-being, safety, and healthy relationships within the theatre industry. The first thing we're doing is creating a booklet that will be a resource for all theatremakers in Aotearoa. Then we will do workshops around the country, talking people through how to use that resource.

JS: What are your backgrounds with relevance to developing these resources?

FM: I'm the general manager of Sexual Abuse Prevention Network. We do a lot of training around prevention and response to sexual abuse and harassment; and we also work on policy review with organisations around the culture in their organisation.

BT: I've been working in suicide prevention and mental health advocacy. I've been working as hard as I can to look at what structurally we are able to do within our foundational spaces in theatre, to help us to look after our friends. I've been able to create relationships with Changing Minds, The Mental Health Foundation, DHBs, and create a koha space for actors or performers within our industry – and for our directors and our crews. For our friends. It's peer support space. Generally speaking you have to be a part of the mental health system to access peer support, and you have to go through primary and secondary care in order to get to acute and peer support spaces. So we've created this new initiative called Whāriki Hauora that's available to anyone within our industry.



JS: What sorts of conversations about wellness have you noticed happening in the theatre community?

FM: Theatre is an industry that seems to lend itself to a not necessarily wonderful working environment. People experience a lot of not great things for their well-being. Sometimes there's some really bad behaviour from people within the industry, and that impacts on a lot of people.

In terms of sexual gender dynamics and relationships and respect, then the performing arts is a workplace like any other. But there are a few things about the theatre industry that make it different. Most of the time, everyone's either a contractor or a volunteer, meaning you can't use a lot of employment law and employment tools that exist to manage harmful situations, or to prevent them. To do the kind of long-term culture change work that you can do within a big central organisation – well, you can't.

One thing that I think will be interesting to look at in this project is that, in theatre, you've got the real work environment, but you've also got the fictional environment. That can be a part of wellness for performers – what is the actual content of your show, and in terms of the dramaturgy, or the script, what you're asking performers to do onstage, or the meaning of the work being presented. You have these dual realities that produces a unique challenge for wellness resources and culture change.

JS: What has been the need and the impact in other sectors you've worked with?

FM: I'm doing work with a lot of different industries at the moment including law, IT and public service. In those places we can put into place employment policies and training and professional development staff. They can put staff through proficient environment training.

JS: And do your interventions and training work?

FM: Yes. This year we started a new programme with the working title *Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response*. So far I've run it across an entire law firm, across one group in a particular government department, in another government agency and in an IT company. From an evaluation point of view, from the last three months of running our training, we got pretty close to 100 percent of people saying that they'd reflected on their behaviour during the training. Which is great, because that's part of what the training is for. It's not just focused on looking after yourself and making sure you report anything that happens. It is about what you think about what you're actually doing. I was asked to write content that could explain to more senior members of the workforce what sexual harassment actually looks like, and educate people about what the lines are around appropriate behaviours, including drinking culture.

JS: What are some of the challenges specific to working with people in the performing arts industry?

BT: So many layers to that. Up until about four or five years ago it was really scary to talk about mental health. Conversations were ignored or pushed to the side. Our industry was a place that wasn't safe for people to say they weren't okay. You'd be in fear of not being hired because of how people perceived you.

What's happened is our industry is shifting because our generations are shifting, and our rangatahi who are coming up come with a completely different sense of what this world is. So we have people trying to work out what it is that we're able to do to look after ourselves and look after each other. People are trying to figure out how to look at what we can do from a systemic point of view. One of the challenges in the performing arts is that it is not like a central business. It's not like we're all in one building. So how will we get

THE CONVERSATION HAS CHANGED SO MUCH

messages out there? Without it, it will just be a flash in the pan.

FM: I think the practical challenge is actually getting people to turn up. In a permanent employment situation that's easier: the boss can be like 'you're all going to this training, you're all reading this policy.' People in the theatre industry might come voluntarily, which means probably people who are already switched on to these issues. Getting people to turn up is the ongoing challenge of sexual violence prevention work, or any kind of culture change.

JS: What are some of the ways in which people push back against this kind of culture change?

FM: Things like "what's the difference between sexual harassment and flirting". It's about consent. In some workplaces it's never appropriate to hug a colleague, but in theatre we're quite huggy! And we're certainly not saying that you have to take the fun out of a work environment. And we're not saying you can't ever have a romantic or sexual interaction with your colleagues. Tons of relationships begin at work. Absolutely, continue to have good relationships with your colleagues, but there is a difference between harassment and safe relationships. Consent is the key.

BT: I think the conversation has changed so much. Now there's very little pushback to talking about mental health wellness. Four or five years ago, nobody listened to me when I wanted to have these conversations. But now everyone just says "cool, cool, yes let's talk about this."

PREVIOUS PAGE: *Finding Temeraire* by Stanley Makuwe in rehearsal. Image: John Schroeder The Digital Darkroom.

AN INCLUSIVE MOVEMENT

Alex Lodge on an exciting time for the disabled and the non-disabled.

“We both know a language is waiting inside my tongue.

Please put down the adze, the skillsaw, the file:

Speak gently to me so I can recognise what’s there.

No, don’t chip away at pink flesh and taste buds:

Oozing and swollen, I will choke on my blood before you’re done.”

Excerpt from ‘Rākau’ by Alice Te Punga Somerville.

We are in a very exciting time for inclusive theatre in Aotearoa. Perhaps we aren't as advanced as countries with bigger communities and audiences in seeing disabled performers in the mainstream, but there is real, promising talent in the Deaf* and/ or the disabled communities. We just need to keep nurturing what is already there.

The above excerpt from ‘Rākau’ refers to the manaakitanga I believe the theatre community needs to practice in order to nurture these artists. As a non-disabled artist gaining access to Deaf or disabled artistry you are a guest in someone else's world. Act accordingly.

There's a relevant whakataukī about community: “E kimi ana, ngā kāwai i toro ki tawhiti” (“seek the plant whose shoots stretch into the distance”). This evokes three key aspects of the inclusive theatre movement: connectedness, evolution and the importance of acknowledging one's roots.

I write here on just a few of the pockets of creativity popping up around the country. Institutions, particularly with the help of Arts Access Aotearoa, are already doing incredible work connecting audiences and art across myriad boundaries. The artists below give a picture of what the future of this movement might look like as it continues to grow. Hold onto this manaakitanga and openness as you read about the way these artists are reshaping theatre. As a community of practitioners we can get stuck in our rules and rituals, no? This movement needs space to play and resources to make new rules and rituals.

If you have had anything to do with the Deaf community in New Zealand, or with New Zealand Sign Language you have probably encountered Shaun Fahey's work. An exceptional actor and deviser who passed away in August, he toured

internationally with Equal Voices Arts' recent piece *Salonica*. We worked together on a bilingual collection of vignettes about Deaf history in New Zealand, *At the End of My Hands* in 2015.

As well as being an actor, Fahey was known for his comedic storytelling, deaf poetry and talent for visual art (his sign-name is 'artist'). He hand-drew the 2,500 sign illustrations in the New Zealand Sign Language dictionary (nzsl.vuw.ac.nz). He worked freelance as a teacher, too, leading workshops in physical storytelling for adults of all abilities.

Duncan Armstrong meanwhile is often referred to as "a force" rather than a person. A dancer, actor, musician and writer, Armstrong is not yet 30 but has already achieved more than many of his artistic elders. He has worked with prestigious inclusive dance company Touch Compass, as well as working as a deviser and actor with theatre company Everybody Cool Lives Here. His solo show, *Force Field* premiered at Auckland's Basement Theatre. Armstrong described the play's story of a man looking for love as "kinda like *Where the Wild Things Are* but instead of in the bedroom it's in the workplace."

Critic Rosabel Tan described *Force Field* as "charming and disarming", and Armstrong has said that he hopes the work encourages all theatre directors to work more with disabled actors to perform their own stories.

Rodney Bell's autobiographical dance theatre piece *Meremere* was developed with director and choreographer Malia Johnston (of company Movement of the Human). In *Meremere*, Bell performs a series of vignettes about his life in San Francisco, including living on the streets for a time before returning home to Aotearoa. Of the development process, he describes how he returned home "to Te Kuiti. I began carving a meremere from a piece of black maire, one of the world's hardest woods. During that process memories would storm through my head – it was quite meditative."

Bell was the 2017 recipient of the Arts Access Artistic Achievement Award, celebrating his outstanding contribution to dance, as well as his gift for interweaving his Ngāti Maniapoto heritage into a disability dance kaupapa. Bell eventually hopes to build a dance company made entirely from disabled artists, "so we can raise awareness through strong and positive outcomes".

A scan over these three artists' work illuminates a specific area of progress: that the kupu or word 'inclusive' in inclusive theatre may refer not only to the people making and performing the work, but also the artistic disciplines being woven into theatre. These are dancers, visual artists and comedians as well as theatre practitioners. Inclusive theatre in Aotearoa now has a wide range of artistic languages. Kanta Kochhar-Lindgren describes the European school of disability and deaf performance as aiming to "create a synthesis between activism and aesthetics, particularly in order to use performance as a site of resistance." I think this kaupapa of synthesis, in both form and content is crucial for the evolving dramaturgy of inclusive theatre in Aotearoa.

Visual artist and writer Stace Robertson recently published an excellent resource: *All of Us: Minority Identities and Inclusion in Aotearoa New Zealand* (website and hard copy versions are available). *All of Us* provides first-hand accounts from a variety of New Zealanders, and practical advice for creating more inclusive, safer spaces.

Included are simple but important observations about tikanga within Deaf and/or disabled cultures. Robertson notes: "Culture within minority groups of all types includes its own sets of unique rules and acceptable behaviours. For example: in Deaf culture it is acceptable to point at another person to identify them; and wheelchair etiquette includes never touching a person's mobility aid or service dog without permission."



All of Us combines journalism, critical writing and illustrative portraiture from Robertson to create an interdisciplinary experience of minority communities in Aotearoa. Though obviously not in a performance medium, the intersectionality in both form and content aligns it with this interdisciplinary ‘aesthetic of accessibility’.

An international example of this is the work of UK playwright Kaite O’Reilly. Her scripted work for Graeae Theatre Company and others often includes British Sign Language (BSL), visual vernacular and spoken English. Her most famous work, *Peeling* (2002) is written explicitly for three disabled actors and masterfully flits between speech, BSL, audio description and projections of captioned text. The possibilities of innovating with these tools to increase access is another avenue for Aotearoa theatre practitioners to explore.

My own creative research has focused on the dramaturgy of Māori, Deaf and Pākehā stories in performance. I have named this creative practice ‘takitoru dramaturgy’. Through Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato’s English programme I have developed a trilingual play, *Tanumia ō Kōiwi*, with three actors – one was Shaun Fahey. As I am still early in my journey into both

ABOVE: *Force Field* created by Duncan Armstrong and Isobel MacKinnon, *Everybody Cool* Lives Here. Image: Andi Crown Photography.

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EXPERIENCING THE BUZZ OF LIVE
THEATRE FOR OVER 45 YEARS



New Zealand Sign Language and Te Reo Māori, I did the original scripting (and translated captions) in each language but sought out guidance from artists who knew these as their first languages (including moko artist Mokonui-a-Rangi Smith), and sign language interpreters in most of the workshops.

I was also fortunate enough to have Saran Goldie-Anderson, a professional interpreter as one of the three actors in my script development process. Saran offered a unique mediating presence between Deaf and hearing dramaturgies. The core message was never to forget that, as with any community Deafness comes with its own tikanga.

Although my own experience has been predominantly with the Deaf community and Deaf artists, it's clear that this is an important kaupapa for wider disability theatre and performance. As someone from the Pākehā hearing mainstream, it can be easy for me to try to tell someone different that their way of storytelling needs refining; to make it more like my way of storytelling. But that isn't quite how progress works, is it?

I'm reminded of one of my favourite Dr Who quotes: "You don't need to own the universe, just see it." Taking the time to learn the tikanga of each community and shaping creative practice around that tikanga is, I think a more important tool for inclusivity than arming artists from every community with three-act-structures and Stanislavskian theory. We have incredible artists in our community, with new and innovative stories to tell. Let's just see them.

**Deaf is mostly capitalised here to indicate Deafness as a culture, as opposed to the medical diagnosis of deafness.*

YOU DON'T NEED TO OWN THE UNIVERSE, JUST SEE IT

ABOVE: *Meremere* by Rodney Bell with Malia Johnston and Movement of the Human.
Image: Claire Gordon.



WELLINGTON

BY MATTHEW LOVERANES

The thing I love the most about theatre is that almost anyone can do it. You don't need a fancy camera or a big budget. All you need is your story. Theatre is the refuge for the voiceless; a platform where they can express themselves honestly and with little constraint. And as I reflect on the year it's those voices which sang the loudest.

Kia Mau Festival is a prime example. Not only does it create and cultivate Māori, Pasifika and other indigenous voices, it continues to challenge our perception of what that is and should be. It remains the gold standard for Wellington festival programming.

Taki Rua's *He Kura e Huna Ana*, shouldn't feel so revolutionary being entirely performed in Te Reo. Yet the fierce and unapologetic use of the language makes it a rallying cry. Wāhine Works' searing, powerful remount of Hone Kouka's timeless *Waiora* is a stinging reminder of colonialism's ugly afterbirth of debilitating racial politics and cultural separatism. The play gains even more power and pertinence with an ensemble largely comprised of women, which is still, unfortunately, a rarity on stage.

The biennial New Zealand Festival hit our shores earlier in the year, bringing an impressive slate of well-realised, spectacular productions (*Home*, *Barber Shop Chronicles* and *Peter and the Wolf* were highlights). However it was the smaller scale productions of the concurrently run New Zealand Fringe Festival, which endured.

Solo performances ruled Fringe this year. Kasiano Mita and The Co-Lab's heartfelt celebration of family and heritage in *Talofa Papa*, Hilary Penwarden's wistful lamentations

on queer love and self-discovery in *The Loneliest Whale in the World* and Anya Tate-Manning's life-affirming exploration of grief and memory in *My Best Dead Friend* all struck an indelible chord. Liam Kelly's *How to Write an Album in 12 Hours* exemplified the no-holds-barred creativity of the festival more than any other show. It melded musical performance, the rigours of the creative process and fostering community with its audience into a singular, rapturous experience.

This year Dunedin bid adieu to Fortune Theatre. We're no strangers to the volatility of theatre space here in Wellington, with the recent closure of 19 Tory Street as a performance venue. We are, however, excited to welcome a couple of new venues to the fold. The Scruffy Bunny provides a safe haven for improv, comedy and no-frills theatre. Whitireia and Weltec's Te Auaha inner city campus boasts two theatres, and was home to Everybody Cool Lives Here's *Big J Stylez*, an inspiring and energetic examination of Jacob Dombroski's life as a differently-abled artist.

Circa Theatre's peaks this year included DF Mamea's big-hearted *Still Life with Chickens* and Victor Rodger's twisted family drama *At the Wake*. But it's their forays into dance-based storytelling which were the true gems. The multimedia spectacle *Rushes*, the deeply personal *Meremere* and the sensual and surreal *Lobsters* all brought a propulsive and exciting energy to the Circa slate that should be built upon in the future.

BATS continues to be a stalwart for exciting new theatre. Barbarian Productions'



THEATRE IS THE REFUGE FOR THE VOICELESS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

LEFT: *The Travelling Clown*
by Rasmus Wessman, Toi
Whakaari: NZ Drama School.
Image: Philip Merry.

Welcome to the Murder House
by Jacob Rajan and Justin
Lewis, Indian Ink Theatre
Company. Image: Ankita Singh.

Ropable by Ross Gumbley and
Allison Horsley, Centrepoint
Theatre. Image: Alexander
Hallag AH23 Photography.

Bless the Child by Hone Kouka,
Tawata Productions and
New Zealand Festival, Auckland
Arts Festival. Image: Matt Grace.

Aunty by Johanna Cosgrove,
Zanetti Productions. Image:
Andi Crown Photography.

Black Knight Dreaming
by Long Cloud Youth Theatre.
Image: Philip Merry.

Problems by Joe Musaphia,
Circa Theatre. Image:
Roc+ Photography.

PREVIOUS PAGE: *Joan*
by Tom Scott, Circa Theatre.
Image: Stephen A'Court.

Soft N Hard – an absurd meditation on marriage and gender roles, Uther Dean's highly emotional *Me and My Sister Tell Each Other Everything*, Finnius Teppett's idiosyncratic *Marine Snow* and Abby Howells' off-the-wall comedy *Attila the Hun* all left lasting impressions.

Also at BATS was William Duignan, Waylon Edwards and Jane Yonge's *Weirdo*, which perfectly captured the quiet rage of the “model minority”, one of the strongest and loudest voices of the zeitgeist. It's an acute depiction of how easily and carelessly white people drop microaggressions in their daily parlance. The show is emblematic of the growing anger of young people of colour in this country and around the world who are fed up with being dehumanised by casual racism. This same anger was explored in Red Scare Theatre's *Movers*, written by James Cain.

No show proved more audacious and transgressive, however than Eleanor Bishop, Julia Croft and Karin McCracken's mammoth *Body Double*, 2017's STAB commission. It's a frenzied, breath-taking, high-concept undertaking placing the male-influenced portrayals of women and female desire on blast. Given the revolution sparked by the #MeToo movement, *Body Double* was a clarion call that signalled both an avalanche of rage and a celebration of female sexuality in all its sexy, ugly contradictory beauty.

In last year's *Playmarket Annual* round-up, Sam Phillips cited James Nokise's words from 2016's Wellington Theatre Awards. “I am more important than Shakespeare”. Those words still reverberate, aching. There are other stories to tell in Wellington. Stories from people of colour, women, women of colour, differently-abled people. In the year that's gone by, Wellington showcased those normally unheard. In order to thrive, we need to continue supporting these stories and these practitioners. The stories of the voiceless aren't just their stories, they're everyone's stories. I, and other artists like me have spent hundreds of years treasuring and relating to Shakespeare's stories. Time's up. It's our turn now.

Why I wrote the play I wrote

VINCENT O’SULLIVAN

on Shuriken

I was working at the *Listener* in 1982, when editor Tony Reid suggested it might be timely to run a piece on ‘the Featherston incident’ that led to the death of 49 Japanese prisoners of war and one guard. It was coming up to the 40th anniversary of an event most New Zealanders knew little about. Official documents were still partly under wraps and, apart from a few fairly imprecise newspaper articles, nothing had been written in depth on the country’s one prison of war camp during the Second World War. It didn’t take long with official reports, interviews with soldiers who served at the camp, and reading accounts by prisoners for it to become obvious that the ‘incident’ was rather more complex than military records declared. What had at first been termed a ‘riot’ seemed far more likely to have been the result of confusion, incompetence, and a straight-out misunderstanding between two cultures that had little chance of approaching each other with any degree of subtlety.

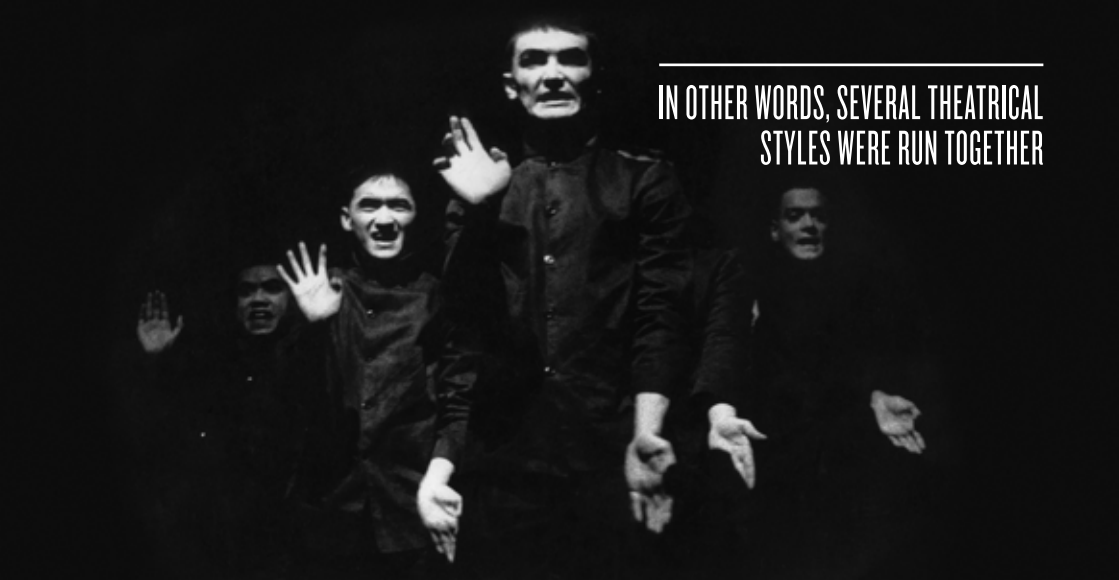
After my article appeared, my friend Phillip Mann, then Wellington’s most exciting and innovative director with his productions of Brecht especially, and I began chatting about this event, which was also, in itself,

intensely dramatic. The immediate challenge was to find an appropriate form, one that could convey realism but not be shackled by naturalism, one that reflected cultural assumptions so antipathetic to each other, that could represent NZ speech and thinking of the time, and find the means to do justice to Japanese and ‘alien’ perceptions of us. In other words, several theatrical styles were run together – elements of Kabuki, balletic movement, choric unity, ritual and song, Māori waiata, and Brechtian abruptness.

The fact that there were several Māori guards at Featherston allowed us to draw a third cultural element into the weave, while always in the background, and emerging more as the play went on: there were the conflicting hierarchical and religious beliefs of vastly different cultures, and the challenge to keep a sense of individual characters within that sense of opposition.

I can’t over-emphasise Phil Mann’s part in the shaping of the play, or the great reservoir of theatrical craft he brought. It now seems an almost impossible wish in the first place, to have Downstage Theatre so solidly behind a production that asked for 14 male actors, half of whom needed to be Asian.

IN OTHER WORDS, SEVERAL THEATRICAL STYLES WERE RUN TOGETHER



There was no difficulty assembling a fine line-up of Pākehā professionals. Ingeniously, Phil scoured martial arts groups, and assembled a group of overseas students, a part New Zealand Japanese Leo Donnelly and – perhaps the triumph of the production – found superb lead Japanese actor Akira Kikuchi working on the Shiseido counter in Kirkcaldie and Stains. For the Māori actor, Phil recruited the natural and charismatic Pou Temara from the Māori Studies Department at the university, a compelling presence who had no more been in a drama production before than the Asian actors. Among the NZ professionals involved like Des Kelly and Roy Billing it was also Mark Hadlow's first professional production, and there was even a young Colin McColl!

That melding of professionals and first-time amateurs, of diverse races and varying temperaments into the communal and dramatic force they became remains to me Phil's achievement. A production that so convincingly suggested the vast differences in the camp itself. I once said in an interview how the play attempted to present “two utterly different conceptions of power. One group of characters has an almost mystical

conception of its right to power, but are in a powerless position. And those fighting against those assumptions, are the ones with the power to destroy.” As Mann saw it, “The theme of grief runs through the entire play like a subterranean stream, which occasionally breaks to the surface, nourishing and sustaining every aspect of the action.”

As a writer, there was the opportunity to work at suggesting two different cultural registers: the highly formal, choric, hierarchical certainties of the Japanese, with their awareness that they were part of a cosmic certainty, while the New Zealanders by comparison seemingly unstructured, casual, puzzled, but with their own core certainties. On both sides, there was a kind of ‘priceless integrity’ that came through the brute facts of war.

The memorable privilege of *Shuriken's* first Downstage production was the sense of working with such a gifted, focused and in some ways unexpected cast. The feeling that they shared, without fuss or carry on, was three cultures being celebrated by what they brought to a repellent story.

ABOVE: *Shuriken* by Vincent O'Sullivan, Theatre Corporate 1984. Image: Justine Lord.



WE ARE HUSTLERS

*Alice Canton in conversation with fellow theatremakers
Ahilan Karunaharan and Nisha Madhan over a Google doc.*

Alice Canton (AC): I'm just going to get right into it. What does the term 'participation' mean to you?

Ahi Karunaharan (AK): The dictionary definition is "the act of taking part in something". In the context of art, that for me comes down to contribution. So, the contribution of time, energy and ideas is participation.

Nisha Madhan (NM): Just because an audience is implicated or, rather, pulled forcibly into a scenario, doesn't mean that it's necessarily of their own choice. Participation can often be a guise to trap audiences into simply agreeing with what message the artist has intended all along. True instances of egalitarian, participatory and simultaneously uncanny/artful instances are difficult to find. Perhaps because an artist's will is what often makes the work. And so the event reflects this will, as does the design of audience participation. And can't sitting down and simply concentrating

on the image in front of you be enough to constitute participation? For some, yes. For others, not so much.

What would it be to truly risk the participation of an invited audience? I suppose you must be willing to risk sitting in disagreement with them, negotiating that disagreement and allowing your artwork to be truly changed and go off course at the suggestion of the participant (whether you, the artist, agree or not). I feel like: to rope one audience in at their expense is interaction; to submerge them into a world already created for them to roam and wander, that's immersive; to allow them to affect a certain event, or write certain parts of the event with you, is participation; and to invite them to create the event from the very start with no hidden agenda, that's collaboration.

AC: Do you have an NZ audience in mind Nisha when you describe this kind of audience?

LET'S WRITE A LIST TOGETHER OF WESTERN CONSTRUCTS

NM: I often think of theatre audiences, as opposed to visual/fine arts or performance/live art or contemporary/experimental dance audiences. Perhaps that's because I rarely think of myself as culturally or racially different from others so I don't tend to view the world that way (though this is changing!). I mean, the world seems to me like hundreds of sets of tangled up fairy lights that have been left at the back of the cupboard for millions of years. It's quite possible that it's all related.

AK: I spent my formative years trying so hard to dismiss my cultural and racial difference. I wanted to participate at the same level as my colleagues and artists around me. It was only when I left the country and was surrounded by a bigger sector and industry that I became aware of my own difference and the unique perspective that I held, and I was taken aback by the level of engagement from the audience.

NM: It's funny, many of my friends who are New Zealanders practising contemporary performance in Berlin seem to have a balanced view of things at the moment. And from what I've encountered with them it's simply because it is bigger and there is more of everything. So nothing gets in a position of standing out as the single beacon or example of a radical, or politically super important statement. It's just them expressing themselves how they want... and there is an audience for that.

I think that people respond to what is directly around them. In New York or Brussels diversity is unavoidable.

The savage colonial history is unavoidable. And as someone who sits in a margin, I am used to responding/surviving/adapting/integrating (for good or bad) so that I can live amongst the dominant powers of the world.

AK: I totally hear you Nisha, and I can speak for many of my close artistic friends with a point of difference who over the last ten years have had to adapt, adhere, assimilate as an artist to exist and survive. It is only now in reflection that I understand what that journey was for myself and for all of us. I had to play the game, give them what ticked the boxes, give them that 'tourist' theatre experience. "Here is my cultural currency." It is the only way I can be part of this system because that is all you are interested in. I've got bills to pay.

NM: As an artist this is fucked right? Because people want you to speak your mind... but they also want you to participate in a severely systemised capitalist structure that makes it almost impossible for you to live without giving into your own marginalised existence i.e. "buy tickets to hear about how screwed up it is to live as an immigrant, but only by your standards... not mine"... ? My colonisers are interested to hear me talk about that which they have done to me. They are not interested when I talk about astrophysics instead.

We are hustlers... we have to survive in a world that is not built for us and we'll figure out how to do that... we always have and always will... but, like Nina Simone, there

LEFT: A performance by val smith for The Town Centre Somewhere Series. Image: Tallulah Holly-Massey.

will come a time when in the middle of that jazzy set you insisted upon we will speak a devastating truth, with a rolling rhythm underneath that you'll have to dance to! Your system is strong, but it's got cracks everywhere.

AK: When I think back on it now, I spent too much of my early years out of drama school running away from the boxes that the sector and industry kept putting me into, so my participation was limited, it had to be within certain boundaries and most of the time I was merely a passive participant, even when I'm contributing, it is still within someone's else's agenda.

NM: More and more I feel the weight of having to continuously offer emotional labour to my oppressors, telling them – it's ok... you aren't all bad... don't worry... you enslaved/robbed/colonised/segregated/beat the shit out of my ancestors... and gained from it... but I still love you...! How have we ended up in this abusive relationship? Why do we keep going back?

AK: The agenda. It is super sweet and overwhelming when you can hit up that neat relationship where you find that mutual agenda. Working with the Auckland Arts Festival this year with my show *Tea* was exactly that. I had conditioned myself so much to constantly keep moulding my art and vision so that I could get a chance in anywhere, it was liberating and empowering to be given the resources and the autonomy to do what I wanted as an artist.

AC: What does the term 'cultural inclusion' mean to you?

NM: I guess cultural inclusion has less to do with me than it does to the dominant culture in charge (which for me is white - cis - hetero - and - male). I don't even want to answer that question because it's not mine to answer - it's theirs.

AK: Aiyo! (Asian Distress call!). Cultural Inclusion is such a Western construct, no?

AC: Okay let's write a list together of Western constructs. I'll start. Cultural Inclusion.

NM: Reverse Racism.

AC: OMG SCREAMING.

AC: Authentic storytelling/Authenticity.

AK: Community Arts.

AC: ALSO SCREAMING.

NM: Diversity... I mean what the actual fuck - should this word even have to exist if it weren't for White supremacy?!?

AC: Should we call a 'non-diverse' space/board/organisation a "White Supremacy" space?

NM: 'intersectional women' – whaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa...?

AC: That's like every time the Diversity Project Fund rolls around and all of a sudden I get asked whether I'm interested in a bunch of projects that are (1) funding dependent (2) only came about because there was a fund (3) won't happen otherwise.

AK: Haha, that's why I love the month of August. It's when everyone in the Arts Sector suddenly remembers that I exist and start approaching me so that they can tap into that "Diversity Fund".

AC: *It's When Everyone Suddenly Remembers That I Exist: An Autobiography* by Ahi.

NM: Oh! I got one... 'it's the best person for the job' that's a western notion/ guilty conscience if ever I heard one! And #historicallyaccurate.

I have to be honest – I am sometimes guilty of all these things too... which I think is the result of learning to cope in a world where I have been determined to prove that I am as white as the best of them... the absolute fuckedness of systemic racism.

AC: What does 'community' mean to you? Do you identify with these terms in your practice – why? Why not?

NM: Community for me is by far and large the artists that I engage with – less so the

LIKE HUNDREDS OF SETS OF TANGLED UP FAIRY LIGHTS



audience that I reach – perhaps because I explicitly deal with experimental forms of practice... I don't expect to reach the public at large – I expect to interrogate forms and structures as hard as I possibly I can. My work is concerned with dismantling structures. My community are those who want to dismantle with me.

I feel that support should go to the artists not the art. When I make work I make it to excite/ignite/take care of the fellow investigators of the world around me... I need to care for them and their brains and hearts first and foremost. I need to make sure they don't stop making...

AK: Community for me means being in a whanau of people with some sort of shared vision, therefore my community are my comrades, my amigos, my fellow creatives and artists that I make work with.

Whenever I'm stressing out about ticket sales for an upcoming show, I'm often told to chill and that "there is 'community' out there for your work so you'll be fine." My last four shows sold out before even opening. So perhaps there is a community out there for my work. I'd like to think it's not just one singular community.

AC: So 'community' isn't necessarily the wrong term, but a reduced understanding of your audience?

AK: I think the sector and the industry have a different understanding of what community means and it differs to mine. With each work, I have specific audiences that I'm hoping to reach out to. With *Mumbai Monologues* it was Queer South Asians. With *Swabhoomi*, intergenerational Indian migrants. With *Light vs Dark* primary school kids. With *Tea* Tamil and Sinhalese SriLankans. The common factor is that the works have all had South Asian practitioners involved so naturally the audience is predominantly going to be them. They're not concerned if the work is deemed professional or community, they're not concerned about the funding outcomes.

AC: Ok team, we're gonna wrap there – I'm glad we just solved a shit tonne of world problems over a Google doc. Catch you both in real space and time outside the Basement with a bottle of red for some more paradigm shifting truths. Peace!

ABOVE: *Tea* by Ahilan Karunaharan, Agaram Productions and Auckland Arts Festival. Image: Andi Crown Photography.

A LONG WAY, BABY

Playwright David Mamea reviews
Floating Islanders: Pasifika Theatre in Aotearoa.

It's hard to believe that Pasifika theatre in New Zealand has only been around 37 years. From theatre group Taotahi's *Atia*, a devised short play for a summer city festival in Wellington in 1981, to The Conch's *The White Guitar*, which toured the country in 2016, it's come a long way, baby, and it's matured nicely.

Floating Islanders: Pasifika Theatre in Aotearoa (published by Otago University Press) traces the development of Pasifika theatre over that period, told with extracts from interviews, reviews, and media and academic articles over that time. It's the culmination of over five years of research by Lisa Warrington, recently retired associate professor in theatre studies at Otago University, and David O'Donnell, associate professor in theatre at Victoria University of Wellington. They interviewed over thirty playwrights, directors and performers who identify as Samoan, Niuean, Fijian, Tongan, Tokelauan, and/or Cook Islander. I was one of those interviewees. The finished product is a welcome and necessary summation of how Pasifika theatre got to where it is today.

All the usual suspects are here: Justine and Paul Simeai-Barton's Pacific Theatre, Eteuati Ete and Tofiga Fepulea'i of The Laughing Samoans,

Pacific Underground – who gave us Erolia Ifopo, sisters Mishelle and Tanya Muagututi'a, Oscar Kightley, David Fane, and many others – Nina Nawalowalo and Tom McCrory's The Conch, Lemi Ponifasio and Mau, The Naked Samoans – where Kightley and Fane were joined by Iaheto Ah Hi, Mario Gaoa, Shimpal Lelisi and Robbie Magasiva – and Vela Manusaute and Anapela Polataivao's Kila Kokonut Krew.

The book also highlights contemporaries like Toa Fraser, Dianna Fuemana, Tawata's Miria George, Black Friars' Michelle Johansson, Victor Rodger, We Should Practice's Louise Tu'u, Leilani Unasa and Makerita Urale.

I namecheck as many as I can, despite the risk of your eyes glazing over, as I believe it's important to see those names and know that it's on their shoulders – and countless others – that Pasifika theatre enjoys the position that it has now in the wider New Zealand theatre scene. It's also helping tremendously with my word count for this article.

There are familiar beginnings: the actors who responded to the dearth of Pasifika roles by writing their own plays, reflecting their heritage and experience. And there were those who wanted to tell culturally specific stories.



MORE (ANY!) PASIFIKA CRITICS ARE NEEDED

Quotes from reviews of the time show a tension in how to process what was on stage and review it like any other performance. The reviews were often prefaced with celebrations of the arrival or discovery of Pasifika tales and culture in a European artform. I suppose it's to be expected when critics are almost exclusively non-Pasifika, trying to review shows that come with their own culture, language and outlook.

More (any!) Pasifika critics are needed. I'm of two minds on this though: work should be strong enough to withstand or accept critical analysis; and critics should be culturally knowledgeable enough to know what they're looking at. There are massive assumptions on my part here that I look forward to being skewered in person.

Reading about the reach Pasifika theatre has had in Aotearoa and overseas was eye-opening. How Pacific Underground took Iפו and Kightley's *Romeo and Tusi* around New Zealand schools as part of its theatre-in-education programme. How Ponifasio's *Mau* is feted in Europe yet largely unknown back home. And how The Conch's national tour of *The White Guitar* has crossed the gap from Pasifika theatre's signature humour to more serious (read mainstream) theatre.

Floating Islanders touches on the current and next generations of Pasifika practitioners including Iaheto Ah Hi and Leilani Clarke's Kinetic Wayfinding, Moana Ete, Suli Moa and Natalie Malietoa-Moa's *Tales from the Kava Bowl*, and James Nokise. I'm looking forward to seeing where they're headed, what stories they will tell, and how much more of the many and varied Pasifika communities they will bring to New Zealand theatre.

31 pages of endnotes are a treasure trove of background details, with some intriguing hints and clues at what happened behind the scenes. The eight-page bibliography is a heady starting point for further reading. Included are a large number of unpublished manuscripts that I hope are made more widely available.

I look forward to the next book on Pasifika theatre, five or ten years from now, and not just to see how many times I appear in it. *Floating Islanders* places Pasifika theatre in the wider New Zealand theatre scene, with its distinctive stories and voices. Many thanks to Warrington and O'Donnell for bringing it all together.

ABOVE: *Think of a Garden* by John Kneubuhl, TAPA and Nathan Homestead. Image: Raymond Sagapolutele.

Why I wrote the play I wrote

KEN MIZUSAWA

on The Boy Who Caused 9/11

Close to a decade ago, I was driving down one of the many expressways that crisscross the tiny, but economically vibrant city state of Singapore – a “little red dot” on the map in South East Asia that was recently thrust suddenly into the media spotlight courtesy of the Trump-Kim Summit. My radio was tuned, as it normally was by default, to the BBC. As an English teacher it is always important to be up-to-date with current affairs. On this particular day, the news bulletin featured an item about a young autistic boy living in the UK convinced he was solely to blame for 9/11, having failed to perform his daily rituals the day before the tragedy.

The story was extraordinary, but what struck me most was the scale of the boy’s imagination and his interconnectedness with the world. One that made him see his small personal actions having massive global implications. This was coupled with the sheer audacity of his reasoning, which seemed at once simple, yet profound. It reminded me of the big, bold and bright visions in picture books I had been sharing with my daughter. Books in which remarkable events can unfold from one sentence to the next without logic or reason and still convey an essential human

truth. One moment, a boy could discover a forgotten aeroplane in his cupboard; the next, he would be flying it to the moon.

As I pondered further, I felt I had all the ingredients of a modern allegory: a tale emblematic of this era of global connectedness, fast communication and public accountability. It could explore how an incident on one side of the world could have terrible consequences on the other. How a tragedy such as 9/11 never totally slips from our collective consciousness because the digital world is always there to compel us to recollect and, to an extent, relive. This was the inspiration behind *The Boy Who Caused 9/11*.

As I continued to my destination in bumper-to-bumper traffic, I imagined a very different car journey; one that would take me down the long, winding, open roads of New Zealand’s rural landscape, past plains of ochre, grassy fields, and areas of bush and mountains. Occasionally on the horizon would emerge small townships, proudly proclaiming their existence and local identity with a large, iconic statue: a giant fish perhaps or some oversized piece of fruit.

Having now spent much of my working life in this faraway island nation, the remembrance

of a childhood, adolescence and young adulthood in such a timeless, unchanging and comparatively vast world felt strange. Against the crowded backdrop of high-rise buildings, commercial development and accelerated living in which I was immersed, where the old was constantly giving way to the new, this other place was unreal and magical. Almost like something out of a picture book, a place where anything could happen or be made to happen.

It was in one of these small, unassuming towns that I discovered my protagonist: Kevin Mullins, “aged 11 years and 11 months”, who, through a sense of cosmic destiny, came to believe that he had caused 9/11 from his remote corner of the world.

From the very beginning I knew that I didn’t want to write a play about disability. I wanted to capture Kevin’s immense curiosity, intellect and wonder, that allowed him to see the universe in the manner that only he could. This was the heightened reality I desired to represent on stage for all its glorious problems and possibilities.

I would have Kevin possess, in his own special way, the dignity and standing of a philosopher, artist and poet. He would be an outsider in his own community, but not thought inferior to others. He would be drawn – whether he understood it or not – to other outsiders such as Miss Finnegan, his confidante, and the Girl in the Bright Yellow Dress, his antagonist. At the end, the audience must empathise with him as a heroic and tragic figure isolated by his uniqueness and sensitivity.

As the work began to take shape, it naturally fitted the pattern and aesthetic of an ensemble play for large and expandable casts. I integrated a chorus. This proved a powerful vehicle for dramatising the media narrative of 9/11. With a chorus of players, the scene could build up to a climactic and amplified peak through a collage of overlapping voices.



A FAST-CHANGING WORLD FOREVER GOVERNED BY AMBIGUITY, JUXTAPOSITION AND TENSION

I decided to depict the character of Kevin through three actors. Not only did this decision provide the means of visibly showcasing different aspects of Kevin’s personality – illustrating an identity in conflict and facilitating quick scene changes – it also set up a comic scene in which the three Kevins come together to discuss their next course of action. Crucially, in the play’s final moments the Kevins could be employed to simultaneously present three competing and contradictory narratives on stage that could then be gradually interwoven to signal a closure. Fitting I thought for a fast-changing world forever governed by ambiguity, juxtaposition and tension.

ABOVE: *The Boy who Caused 9/11* by Ken Mizusawa, Dunman High School, Singapore.



**Drama NZ: the New Zealand Association
for Drama in Education.**

Who is Drama NZ?

Drama New Zealand is the national body that represents and advocates on behalf of drama teachers from all sectors, academics, applied theatre workers and theatre in education practitioners at national and international forums as well as providing a voice in education policy-making.

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Lori Dungey (*A Lion in the Meadow
and Other Stories* by Margaret Mahy)
Photo by David Rowland/One-Image.com



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: *Fold* by Jo Randerson, Arcade Theatre Company. Image: Angus McBryde. *Journey on the Jura* by Wow! Productions. Image: Martyn Roberts. *Lavvies* by Ruth Carraway, Studio 4x4. Image: Emily Duncan.

A BIG THANKS

to all those who have made
the inaugural programme
such a success



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DUNEDIN

BY EMILY DUNCAN

As I write, the Fortune Theatre clearance auction has just taken place. Nevertheless, determination to produce work and retain skills and talent has persevered. There are strong upward currents assisting the theatre phoenix to rise from the ashes.

The New Athenaeum Theatre (current capacity 90) opened in October at what was the original site of the Fortune. Run by the Dunedin Collaborative Theatre Trust as an affordable co-working production and performance space, it will be eventually configured as a black box. The NAT has hosted no fewer than ten productions in its first year, including Sacrilege Productions' *Sharp Dressed Man*, Rollicking Entertainment's *Seven Deadly Stunts* and Arcade Theatre Company's production of *The First Time* by Courtney Rose Brown.

Alex Wilson, who founded Counterpoint Theatre Company launched Arcade in February this year with Jo Randerson's *Fold* at Allen Hall. And Wow! Productions branched into new territory with *Journey on the Jura*, a character host experience at Toitū Otago Settlers Museum. Audience members accompanied two female immigrants from the Firth of Clyde to Port Chalmers in 1863. Given the number of heritage sites, there is scope to expand this model to further explore and stage local history.

The Studio 4x4 Emerging Playwrights Initiative continues to foster new writing and plans are underway to expand the programme in 2019. Accolades for local writing over the past year include the Robert Lord Award for Outstanding Script/Narrative/

PRACTITIONERS HAVE RE-PURPOSED AND REINVIGORATED

Libretto to Keith Scott for *1917: Until the Day Dawns* at the 2017 Dunedin Theatre Awards and the 2018 Fringe Festival Best Theatre Award for *How to be a Stripper*, co-created by Katherine Kennedy (performance) and Jordan Dickson (direction). Fortune AD Jonathon Hendry must be acknowledged for programming new New Zealand work, including Ellie Smith's *One Perfect Moment* and Zac Nicholls' *What You Will*.

The Globe Theatre restoration was assisted by a \$20,000 grant from the Otago Community Trust in April to undertake urgent repair work. This theatre, in what was once a house, remains an important site for practitioners to hone and test their craft. Globe stalwarts and long-term committee members Brian and Rosemary Beresford retired at the AGM in March, at which Keith Scott was appointed Chairman.

In response to the Fortune closure, Dunedin professional practitioners have re-purposed and reinvigorated Stage South. At its first hui in May willpower to maintain and strengthen the practice and profile of professional theatre in the South was evident. While theatre is not dependent on a building, the group agrees that there is a need for a purpose-built, medium-sized, flexible space in the city. Ideas have been floated around restoring and re-fitting various venues. It gets very cold down here and a new, fit for the 21st century space must be a priority.

Why I Wrote the Play I Wrote

KIP CHAPMAN

on Hudson & Halls Live!

I wrote *Hudson & Halls Live!* over a six-day period in the Robert Lord Writer's cottage in Dunedin in the middle of 2014. My husband Todd and I had relocated for the winter to perform at the Fortune Theatre. Todd would leave to rehearse each day and I'd turn the heater up to full, sit on the couch and pretend to be two alcoholic chefs and lovers from the 1980s.

I write in sequence so each day I'd watch Todd read the ten or so pages I had sketched out. I can't imagine how annoying I must have been lying on the bed, asking him which bits he was laughing at. I wrote it that quickly because each night I was terrified I'd lose the ability to write. At the end of six days I was sure that only a couple of words would change before opening night. In reality, half the dialogue changed, the structure was altered and scenes were completely rewritten.

It was Todd who was inspired to make a show about David Halls and Peter Hudson. He was told stories about the couple at a party by 'Dame' Rima Te Wiata. When he asked her why no one had made a show about them he was challenged to create one himself. The following day, on our deck at home, Todd told me about these two guys, lovers in real life,

party chefs, 1980s TV stars, iconic hair. I'd like to say I immediately saw the emotional depth of their story but what I really saw was an oven catching fire, terrible recipes, witty dialogue and neon lights. Before even watching an episode of the pair, we sketched out a rough idea of what a show could look like.

Our friend and collaborator Sophie Roberts had recently been appointed Artistic Director of Silo and the company commissioned the production. Sophie became the dramaturg and Todd, Sophie and I created the story together. We spent three hilarious days in the Silo office creating story beats, character arcs and theatrical moments. I think this is one of my favourite parts of writing a story. I've always worked on structure first. Before I start any dialogue I like to have the whole story mapped out. (Of course, I'm not following that rule for the current show I am writing so who knows how that'll end up).

Chris Parker, aged 23 seemed the perfect person to play the 55-year-old David Halls. Early on we spent a few sessions in our kitchen with Todd and Chris improvising whilst making recipes from the Hudson and Halls cookbooks. I sat in the corner capturing dialogue and learning the dynamic



between the pair. Peter and David were unique individuals and their voices are very different. Our job was not to create new characters; our job was to learn to be them.

When you are in flow, writing dialogue is a magical thing. You sit down in front of a blank page knowing what plot beats you need to put on the page. You write down the first line and then suddenly the next line writes itself in reaction. Sometimes it feels as if the characters themselves are making the jokes and you're just trying to keep up with them.

Sophie gave notes on the first draft and I adjusted as best I could. A table read of the script led me to think I had written something really boring. It's very deflating to hear what you think is easy to say dialogue sounding clunky and unrealistic. A three-day workshop followed, now including Jackie van Beek, improvising unrelated scenes. I used my iPhone to capture the style of the dialogue. Sophie and I also changed some of the structure of the show. Watching it now the show seems so simple. But simplicity is hard work. It wasn't until draft three when some key plot points were locked in.

Rehearsals were a joy. As an actor by training and director of the show I was happy to rip apart the script. I was happy to riff with the cast

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING ONE PERSON HOLDING THE VISION

on better dialogue. Often I would get the cast to improvise. I think we changed about thirty percent of the dialogue during rehearsal period.

But it was not a devised piece. Everything was filtered through me, the playwright, and once we had set the changes in place the actors stuck to the prescribed dialogue. I say this to demonstrate the importance of having one person holding the vision for the show.

The show has changed relatively little since first being performed in 2015. Sure there are a few new lines, especially around whipped cream, but our development path, led by Silo, ensured that our show was structurally really sound.

I knew the show was going to work from the moment I heard about Peter and David on our deck that summer's afternoon. This crazy pair making party food for a New Zealand who were not very good at parties. The show is theirs.

ABOVE: *Hudson and Halls Live!* by Kip Chapman with Todd Emerson and Sophie Roberts, Silo Theatre.
Image: Andrew Malmo.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: *Matai* by Sela Faletolu-Fasi and Silivelio Fasi, Tulou Productions and The Court Theatre. Image: The Court Theatre. *Easy Money* by Roger Hall, The Court Theatre. Image: The Court Theatre. *Hell or High Water* by Two Productions, Christchurch Arts Festival. Image: Charlie-Rose Creative.

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CHRISTCHURCH

BY HOLLY CHAPPELL AND TOM EASON

Christchurch has had a year of exciting theatre: Free Theatre continue their series of Tom Waits musicals with *Alice*; No Productions presented *The Woman in Black* and *A Picasso*; Two Productions the Anthony Harper Summer Theatre season with their adaptation of *The Little Prince*; and the Māori and Pasifika festival at The Court developed into Ē Toru, a work-in-progress festival, featuring works by Tania Gilchrist, Tavita Nielsen-Mamea and the Y Not Collective.

Shows starring women have featured strongly on mainstages: *Chicago*, *Steel Magnolias* and *In the Next Room (or The Vibrator Play)* at The Court were all hits. *Wicked* by Showbiz was a knockout, not to mention Ali Harper in *Songs for Nobodies*.

2018 is a year of bold change and big beginnings in Christchurch – our city finding ways to kick start initiatives that will come to fruition in the coming years. The beloved Buskers Festival has been axed, replaced by a new festival Bread and Circus, run by Australian company Strut and Fret. The Christchurch Arts Festival has a new team, with Craig Cooper's role as Director seemingly split between Claire Wilkinson as CEO and George Parker as Artistic Director. The CEO of The Court Theatre, Philip Aldridge left and is now EO of The Arts Centre (his replacement at The Court Theatre is Barbara George). The Christchurch City Council is holding a series of outreach workshops to feed into what a new arts strategy could look like and the Town Hall is on its way to being finished.

The biggest controversy has been about what the performing arts precinct should look like. The Court have long been promised a spot



IT REINFORCED AN 'EITHER/OR' MENTALITY

back in the CBD after years just outside 'the four Aves'. But there was a new contender for the council funding dedicated to the theatre venues of the precinct. Andromeda pitched a multi-venue building to host independent theatre companies and their shows. The council's decision was to give The Court alone the opportunity to develop a full business case and concept design with a new Council-run theatre working group. The backers and developers of the Andromeda concept are exploring other avenues to make their vision a reality, but it seems the worst part of this process is that it reinforced an 'either/or' mentality that is common when talking about theatre in Christchurch. With many practitioners and public alike asking "Why not both?".

If we can continue to find ways to collaborate and cross-pollinate, our city will be unstoppable.

ABOVE: *The Biggest* by Jamie McCaskill, The Court Theatre. Image: The Court Theatre.

WHERE CREATIVITY AND TALENT COLLIDE

Annie Ruth at Te Auaha



“I was only supposed to be here one year, but stayed because I was curious about Te Auaha.”

So says Annie Ruth, former director of Toi Whakaari, who has been leading the stage and screen programme at Te Auaha, the New Zealand Institute of Creativity.

“The new creative school combines everything from acting to illustration, dancing to creative writing. It’s a wide palette for the students to look at and really expands their ideas of what’s possible,” says Annie.

“I know I’m sometimes more inspired by something outside my discipline. It gets the creative juices going.”

Te Auaha, which is based in Wellington on the corner of Cuba Mall and Dixon Street, brings together the creative and arts programmes of Whitireia and WelTec.

Earlier in the year, Annie directed a production of *Arabian Nights* in Te Auaha’s main theatre that combined several different art forms.

“As well as our acting students, we also had dance students, a music student in the band, students doing special effects makeup, plus

the poster and programme were designed by our graphic design students,” she says.

“We’re also very fortunate to regularly work alongside the New Zealand Film and Television School, which is based here at Te Auaha.”

Annie was one of the first graduates of the New Zealand Drama School. She travelled, taught in Europe – at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Regent’s University London and University of Surrey in England as well as a Montessori school in Greece – but got back into performing on her return, while continuing teaching.

“I look at my life and teaching and acting is all of it. I’ve taught everyone from two year olds to 70 year olds.”

Annie will step down at the end of this year, but leaves the programme in good hands.

“The whole team has worked to lift the standards. I’ve been very impressed with the team since I came,” says Annie. “The tutors are first-class. Carmel McGlone, for instance, is one of the prominent woman actors in New Zealand and Ricky Dey has made such a name for himself as an actor and director.”

Students audition at places like Circa and Taki Rua, and perform shows at Te Auaha as well as theatres such as BATS where they had two shows in August.

“They’re directed by outside directors. Last year, our final-year students did the production *Punk Rock* and this year performed two Victor Rodger plays” says Annie.

“One of the good things about the programme is you also learn stagecraft. You learn to do everything here and that makes for a strong whānau atmosphere.”



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YEAH. WHY NOT?

*Pacific Underground's Tanya Muagututi'a
on new Pasifika theatre in Christchurch.*

There is a fresh Pasifika theatre voice in Christchurch. A new generation buzzing about creating, connecting and making their mark in amongst the noise of a revitalised and restructured city.

And they are keen. In just eighteen months Y Not have devised two plays, *La'u Gagana*, a play about the Samoan Language and *The Fahu* about a Tongan family.

In 2017 they ran with cool collaborators like the FIKA writers' collective at COCA's exhibition *Making Space*, delivered workshops at The Court, workshopped two new works with Pacific Underground, and with Victor Rodger and new Pasifika theatre movement FCC they took part in *Christ(church) Almighty!* at the Christchurch Arts Festival. At the 2018 CNZ Pacific Arts Summit they represented on a youth panel, presented *La'u Gagana* at Kia Mau Festival, ran a holiday programme with No Limits and Judah Arts, and returned to The Court with their new work in development *Palu*.

It's all happened rather fast and, okay, there's a big bias from me towards them doing well. It's the city Pacific Underground was founded in and in June I spent time with Y Not as a director just before they left for

Kia Mau. And that's when I really saw the sparks flying, everywhere. Fresh, youthful, nervous, anxious energy. Kia Mau Festival was another first, another cool collaboration. Their first tour, their first invitation outside of Christchurch. This was Y Not under pressure, and they couldn't wait to get to Wellington.

In 2017, two Samoan actors Jake Arona and Albany Peseta met through mutual friends. Their similar backgrounds in theatre ignited their immediate call to gather the like-minded. My first question – the name.

"It is a response to the question "Why do you perform? Yeah. Why not?" says Arona whose background is in Auckland with Massive Company and the Māngere Arts Centre. A break from Auckland to become an independent practitioner meant relocating to Christchurch in early 2017.

"In Christchurch there's not so much pressure. I can sit and create but at the same time I'm learning the different styles of creating, and that it can be hard."

Peseta agrees. "That's how we started. We did a call-out and it's been nothing but an incredible experience. It's taught us to be grateful, and that rewards don't come without hard work." Since graduating from NASDA

last year Peseta has secured roles as an actor at The Court Theatre.

Soon they were joined by Talia-Rae Mavaega, Mana Tatafu, Susi Afitu and Maxwell Siulangapo with occasional contributors Shane Asi, Pua Siulangapo, Toa Siulangapo, Mena Petaia, and Tavita Nielsen-Mamea.

Born in Christchurch Mavaega is a Diploma graduate of Auckland's Pacific Institute of Performing Arts (PIPA) that recently closed down. "The lack of female presence in Y Not urged me to jump in and show the boys what's up," she says. On representing in Wellington: "We got to see what the arts world outside of Christchurch is doing, our relevance to that and their relevance to us".

Mana Tatafu has studied all his life in Business and IT systems. His love for acting and joining Y Not has given him a leap of faith leaving his IT Technician job to act. "Acting has always been my passion, and my goal is to take Y Not shows all around the world – and to build our own space."

School administrator Susi Afitu: "I'm hoping to get the Pacific community here in Christchurch more interested in theatre, and after the success of *La'u Gagana*, make more brown theatre."

The platform that Y Not have created has been about addressing issues as Pasifika millennials in Christchurch. *La'u Gagana* touches on a young father's decision to not teach his new born the Samoan language because of the ridicule and racism he faced in 1980s Christchurch.

"Our first two plays are about struggles with identity and colonisation," says Arona. "It feels like Christchurch Pasifika people are still going through it. Even now, creating *Palu* we're working with those issues but presenting through talanoa around a kava bowl. These issues are important to us, because in 2018 we are still exploring our own cultural differences."

Peseta supports this: "That aligns with what the future Y Not is; Christchurch having a



A DAMN GOOD LIFE MOTTO

strong Pasifika stance in theatre, alongside our brothers and sisters of Māori Theatre who are making their own mahi. Pacific Underground paved the way in Christchurch so we're carrying that on."

"That's what Y Not is," adds Tatafu.

"The name. A damn good life motto as well. If you want anything in life, having a 'why not' attitude means that you won't let anything stop you from your goals... your dream!"

"Why not chuck our stories on stage?" says Afitu.

Y Not are keen, relevant and fresh. Their fast and upcoming stance is a sure way for Pasifika theatre to thrive.

ABOVE: Y Not at BATS for 2018 Kia Mau Festival.
Image: Michelle Muagututi'a.



CELEBRATING AND SUPPORTING NZ PLAYWRIGHTS - 2017/18 SEASON

Maurice Gee, Pip Hall, D.F. Mamea, Eleanor Bishop,
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Māori and Pasifika Theatre at The Court

The Court Theatre takes great delight and endows with great importance the journey it has been on with Māori and Pasifika practitioners to enable them to tell their stories, their way, on The Court Theatre's stages.

In 2018

- Director Nancy Brunning's production of Albert Belz' *Astroman* programmed for our mainstage
- Jamie McCaskill's play *The Biggest* reeled in the laughter as the final production in our Meridian Energy 2017/2018 season
- *Ē Toru* brought to life the work of Y NOT, Tania Gilchrist and Tavita Nielsen-Mamea in a development season of works in progress
- Commissioned at The Court are plays from Hone Kouka (*The Rehua Boys*); Rutene Spooner (*Just Like Billy*) and Oscar Kightley (*Aotealofa*)
- Bi-lingual kids touring school *He Kura Kōrero* played to over 10,000 primary school students across Canterbury

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COPY & RIGHT

The copyright conversation.

The government is currently reviewing the Copyright Act. Playmarket has been participating in seminars and consultations, keeping a close eye on the impact this might have for playwrights. Murray Lynch asked Paula Browning, Chief Executive of Copyright Licensing Limited, about her work.

Why is this review happening now?

The New Zealand government last looked at the Copyright Act in 2008, when it was updated to take account of new technologies. At that time, the government committed to looking at it again within a five year window. However, in 2013 the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement was being negotiated and, with copyright being one component of the Agreement that may have required New Zealand to change local legislation, a review of the Act was deferred. With the direction of the TPP changing course due to the presidential elections in the United States the former Minister of Commerce and Consume Affairs, Hon Jacqui Dean, announced the review of the Act in June 2017. The new responsible Minister, Hon Kris Faafoi, is continuing the work.

What are the main challenges on the copyright horizon?

In a legal sense copyright is a complex subject to engage with. But in a moral sense it's pretty straight forward – well to me it is. If you write something you should have the choice as to how and where what you write is distributed or copied. If writing is your primary source of income, you may need to monetise the majority of your work. That should be your choice.

If you break the word copyright into two parts – copy and right – and look these words up in the *Collins Dictionary*, you'll find that copy means to imitate or reproduce an original and right means in accordance with what is good, proper, or just. So it's not so complex after all if you take it away from the 294 pages in the legislation and think of it in terms of what the purpose of the law is.

It's interesting to look at copyright in terms of what the law is meant to do and what it actually achieves in practice. The most over-used word you'll hear in copyright discussion is "balance". It's unlikely you'll hear playwrights say this, but you'll hear it a lot from groups that rely on the input of other people's content to make their businesses

work. Let's go back to the dictionary for a moment. Balance is defined as giving two or more things the same strength or importance. So in copyright, this would mean giving equal rights to people who create content as to those who want to use the content. I see this argument as fundamentally flawed: where else in the economy are the makers of a product or a service told that their rights as to how they run their livelihoods need to be balanced?

The so-called balance is achieved in copyright law through the provision of exceptions to copyright. In New Zealand we have a number of defined exceptions in our law. There are exceptions to your exclusive rights as a creator that benefit the media, the education sector, researchers and those undertaking private study, libraries and archives, the government and those with a print disability. If New Zealand's review of copyright follows that of other countries, we can expect to see arguments made for these exceptions to be broadened, and for other exceptions to be added.

I encourage you all to make sure you have a voice in the copyright conversation. Copyright is your right to choose what happens with your work!

Tell us a little about CLNZ and We Create, the other organisation you chair

Copyright Licensing NZ (CLNZ) is the licensing agency for New Zealand authors and publishers. CLNZ sells licences to large users of copyright works, such as education institutions, so that they can make multiple copies of published materials while providing a valuable revenue stream to the creators of what is being copied. CLNZ returns over five million dollars per year to the New Zealand publishing industry as well as undertaking advocacy with government and running an extensive programme of grants and awards activities to support authors and publishers. This includes a biennial Writers Earnings Survey (for which we partner with Playmarket).



We Create is the alliance of New Zealand's creative industries. The organisation's membership spans the full breadth of the creative sector from visual arts to gaming to music to film to mixed reality. Established in 2014, We Create has united the sector and, for the past two years, has been increasing engagement with creative businesses and central government as we develop an action plan that will work towards growing the creative sector's contribution to the New Zealand economy. I am privileged to be the Chair of We Create and have the amazing Victoria Blood (Chair of the NZ Music Commission) working alongside me. We're a very lean organisation in terms of human resources, but we have achieved quite a lot in our four years – particularly in raising awareness of both the value and the opportunity that the creative industries offer to New Zealand's economy and to our future wellbeing.

ABOVE: *Weirdo* devised and written by Waylon Edwards, William Duignan and Jane Yonge. Image: Julie Zhu.

SWIMMING AROUND

*Playmarket Script Coordinator Claire O'Loughlin
on script circulation.*

“From the beginning,” Nonnita Rees wrote in reference to co-founding Playmarket in 1973, “the intention was to have a non-profit distributing organisation.” Today we call it circulation, and I like the image ‘circulate’ conjures. I imagine scripts being sent off to swim around in the collective consciousness, full of potential, ready to turn into physical reality the moment a producer picks them up. That might sound like I’m chucking scripts willy-nilly into the sea like messages in bottles, hoping they eventually wash up on some distant stage. That’s not the case. The process is judicious, and relies strongly on play and sector knowledge, communication within our organisation and good relationships with producers.

It starts with reading. In 2017 Playmarket read over 300 new scripts. For the most part these were either scripts from our clients, scripts submitted to a competition, or scripts by non-client playwrights who paid for an assessment. We employ senior playwrights and practitioners as readers and judges for our assessments and competitions. Playmarket Script Advisor Stuart Hoar reads the competitions’ shortlists, as well as everything by our clients.

After each script is read it is entered into our Script Register, where we record themes, casting, length, a synopsis, ownership details, licensing conditions and more. As I write, we have 3589 scripts in our register and more arrive every week. We use the register to search for plays by any number of categories, or even by a word that might appear in the synopsis. We also have several lists of plays for quick reference, like ‘Greek Adaptations’ and ‘WWI Plays’. Whenever a new trend for a certain kind of play is happening, I start up a new list. A few years ago we kept getting requests for zombie plays. Recently there has been an increase in requests for plays with environmental themes.

At our weekly staff meeting new scripts are discussed and we decide together where I should send them. I also circulate older scripts as much as new ones. As a licensing agency, we are fortunate to know which scripts have worked well for which companies in the past, so we can target circulation. Earlier this year I did a push to community theatres. I sent over 60 groups two or three new plays that had similar themes and cast sizes to the Playmarket



A FEW YEARS AGO WE KEPT GETTING REQUESTS FOR ZOMBIE PLAYS

plays they had produced before. Some of these have already been picked up.

Internationally, we have sent scripts to over 40 countries, from American Samoa to Venezuela, France to Vietnam. With international circulation, it is great when there is a producer we know personally, but I also reach out to literary departments who may have never heard of us, where we are in direct competition with everything else they receive. For this out-of-the-blue method to be effective, we need to keep on top of what is happening with those theatre companies: what they are interested in and when they are setting their programme, which can be several years in advance. We think carefully about what we send them – they will usually read only a very small number of plays per year, and sometimes will only read new plays if they have enjoyed what we have sent before.

In all scenarios, I am conscious of not bombarding producers with scripts. Of course, when I receive requests such as ‘send me everything you’ve got on volcanoes’ I oblige (answer: we have seven plays in which volcanoes play an active part). But circulation tailored to the receiver has proven to be more effective overall, in terms of plays actually being picked up for production.

There are other ways that our scripts are getting

out there – last year we sold 1901 published plays through our Bookshop, which was on top of the 1294 scripts emailed, 596 hard-copy scripts posted, and 1492 downloaded from our website (a service available to those with Playmarket membership, which is \$40 per year).

With over 250 playwright clients it is important that we don’t highlight one single playwright too much. I’m also conscious of actively sending out work by our Māori, Pasifika, Asian and women playwrights. White male playwrights have received a lot of exposure in recent millennia, and I want to make sure we’re doing what we can to address that imbalance.

We really encourage clients to stay in contact with us, let us know when their scripts are ready to be circulated, and send through their post-production drafts as soon as possible. The best time to send out a script is always when everyone is talking about it.

What is the future of script circulation? Maybe it’s going to be more personal, more about getting playwrights known to producers rather than just their plays. I’m not sure. But I do know that the way to make an impact is changing all the time. We are always ready to develop our systems to make circulation as effective as possible.

ABOVE: *Under the Mountain* by Maurice Gee, adapted by Pip Hall, Auckland Theatre Company. Image: Michael Smith.

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My Best Dead Friend, created by Anya Tate-Manning and Isobel MacKinnon, directed by Isobel MacKinnon and performed by Anya Tate-Manning. Performance design by Meg Rolland, photo by Tabitha Arthur, produced by Zanetti Productions.



THEATRE CALENDAR 2018

Professional Productions of NZ Plays 1 August 2017 – 31 July 2018

TOURING & INTERNATIONAL

How I Met my Father

by Rhian Hill
National Tour
2 – 24 Aug 2017

Jane Doe

by Eleanor Bishop
Carnegie Mellon
Pittsburgh, USA
6 Aug 2017, Duquesne
University Pittsburgh, USA
21 Sep 2017

(A Smidge of) Pidge

by Sherilee Kahui and
Jimmy Sutcliffe
Newtown Community
Centre Wellington
12 Aug 2017, Melbourne
Fringe, Australia
23 – 30 Sep 2017

Shot Bro

by Rob Mokaraka
Mookalucky Productions
Whangarei, Gisborne,
Christchurch, Kokomai
Festival, Auckland Live,
Te Papa, Auckland Fringe,
Nelson, Motueka, Massey
University Wellington,
Unitec, Beach Haven,
Havelock North, Tokoroa,
Te Oro, Horowhenua tour,
Northland tour
12 Aug 2017 – 18 Jul 2018

Fa'aafa

by Fafswag feat.
Tusiata Avia
Basement Theatre
15 – 19 Aug 2017
BATS NZ Fringe
6 – 9 Mar 2018

The South Afreakins

by Robyn Paterson

Impi Theatre Company
Basement Theatre
15 – 19 Aug 2017
Meteor Theatre Hamilton
31 May 2018

Ernest Rutherford:

Everyone Can Science!
by Nic Sampson
Taranaki Festival,
Christchurch Festival,
Nelson Festival
19 Aug – 19 Oct 2017

Soft N Hard

by Jo Randerson and
Thomas LaHood
Barbarian Productions
BATS 22 – 26 Aug 2017
and 13 – 17 Feb 2018
Southland Festival
3 – 4 May 2018

Anzac Eve

by Dave Armstrong
Armstrong Creative
Taranaki Festival
23 – 26 Aug 2017

Poropiti: Prophet

by Mara TK and
Tola Newbery
Taranaki Festival,
Christchurch Festival,
Hawkes Bay Festival
23 Aug – 30 Sep 2017

An Awfully Big Adventure

by Leo Gene Peters,
devised by the company
Capital E National
Theatre for Children
Taranaki Festival,
Christchurch Festival,
Nelson Festival
24 Aug – 17 Oct 2017

Mockingbird

by Lisa Brickell

Rosendal, Norway
27 Aug 2017
107 Projects Sydney,
Australia, Garnet Station
14 Feb – 24 Mar 2018

That Bloody Woman

by Luke di Somma and
Gregory Cooper
Tour-Makers
National Tour
29 Aug – 20 Oct 2017

Bill Massey's Tourists

by Jan Bolwell
Handstand Productions
Arts on Tour National Tour
31 Aug – 1 Oct 2017

Miss Jean Batten

by Phil Ormsby
Taranaki Festival
31 Aug – 1 Sep 2017
Tauranga Festival
22 – 23 Oct 2017

The Pickle King

by Jacob Rajan and
Justin Lewis
Indian Ink Theatre
Company Q Theatre,
Hannah Playhouse
2 – 9 Sep 2017

Peter Paka Paratene

by Rawiri Paratene
Te Pou Theatre
6 – 9 Sep 2017
Hamilton Gardens
Festival
10 Feb 2018

The Wholehearted

by Massive Company
Auckland Live, Clarence
Street Theatre Hamilton,
Hannah Playhouse,
Hawkes Bay Festival
9 – 27 Sep 2017

Aunty

by Johanna Cosgrove
Basement Theatre, BATS
12 Sep – 7 Oct 2017
BATS, Fortune Theatre
Dunedin Fringe
13 Feb – 11 Mar 2018
Melbourne Comedy
Festival, Australia,
Auckland Live
28 Apr – 5 May 2018

Te Waka Huia

by Naomi Bartley
Te Pou, Auckland
Northland Tour
17 Aug – 30 Sep 2017
Basement Theatre
3 – 7 Jul 2018

Meet the Fakas

by Maree Webster
Basement Theatre,
Mangere Arts Centre
5 – 23 Sep 2017
Mangere Arts Centre
13 – 16 Dec 2017

Wat er Gebeurde Terwijl de

Mussen de Polka Dansten
by Jo Randerson,
translated by Kerensa
Verhoosel Schippers
and Van Gucht
Netherlands and
Belgium Tour
16 Sep – 30 Nov 2017

Elizabeth by Lisa Crawley

and Rochelle Bright
Bullet Heart Club
Melbourne Fringe,
Australia
18 – 24 Sep 2017
NZ Fringe
6 – 8 Mar 2018
Bright Cabaret Festival
Adelaide, Australia
11 – 12 May 2018



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: *Anahera* by Emma Kinane, Circa Theatre. Image: Philip Merry. *A Paintbox of Clowns* by Dan Bain, The Court Theatre. Image: The Court Theatre. *Peter Pan* by J.M Barrie, adapted by the company, Centrepoint Theatre. Image: Alexander Hallag. Rehearsal for *Movers* by James Cain, Red Scare Theatre Company. Image: Roc+ Photography.

North by Northwest
adapted from the
Alfred Hitchcock film
by Carolyn Burns
Royal Alexandra Theatre
Toronto, Canada
19 Sep – 29 Oct 2017

Cynthia and Gertie
Go Baroque!
by Helen Moulder and
Rose Beauchamp
Centrepoint Dark Room
20 Sep – 1 Oct,
Circa 10 – 23 Dec 2017

Super Hugh-Man –
The Legend Lives On
by Rutene Spooner
Basement Theatre
20 – 23 Sep 2017
Q Theatre, Meteor
Theatre, Globe Theatre
Palmerston North
27 Jun – 7 Jul 2018

Success
by Stephen Sinclair
The Classic Comedy

Club Auckland,
Titirangi Theatre
23 – 16 Sep 2017

The Basement Tapes
by Stella Reid
Melbourne Fringe
23 – 30 Sep 2017
Basement Theatre
27 – 31 Mar 2018

Power Ballad
by Julia Croft and
Nisha Madhan
Zanetti Productions
Melbourne Fringe,
Australia
23 – 30 Sep 2017
Fringe World Perth,
Australia
27 Jan – 3 Feb 2018
Q Theatre
12 – 13 Apr 2018
Battersea Arts Centre
London, UK
28 – 30 Jun 2018

The Bookbinder
by Ralph McCubbin Howell

Trick of the Light Theatre
Belvoir Sydney, Australia
26 Sep – 8 Oct 2017
Calgary International
Children's Festival,
Canada
23 May – 26 2018

A Brisk Wind Whistling
Down Twin Oak Drive
by Phoebe Mason
Melbourne Fringe,
Australia
28 Sep – 10 Oct 2017
Basement Theatre
20 – 24 Mar 2018

The Contours of Heaven
by Ana Chaya Scotney,
Puti Lancaster,
Marama Beamish and
Owen McCarthy
Hawkes Bay Festival,
4 – 8 Oct 2017
Auckland Fringe
22 – 24 Feb 2018
Basement Theatre
20 – 30 Jun 2018

Promise and Promiscuity:
A New Musical
by Jane Austen and
Penny Ashton
UK and Ireland Tour
4 Oct – 15 Nov 2017

Allergic to Love,
Curse of the 80
by Tom Knowles
Hastings Fringe,
Christchurch
5 – 28 Oct 2017

Songs of the Sea
by Peter Wilson, music
by Stephen Gallagher
Capital E National
Theatre for Children
Wellington and
South Island Tour
6 Oct – 21 Nov 2017

The Bright Lights
of Taihape
by Loren Mason
Centrepoint Dark Room,
Fourth Wall Theatre
12 – 14 Oct 2017

- Auckland Fringe
1 – 2 Mar 2018
- Kokako's Song*
by Roger and
Bridget Sanders
Birdlife Productions
Nelson Festival
13 Oct 2017
Isaac Theatre Royal
Christchurch,
Southland Festival
15 Apr – 18 May 2018
- Valerie* by Robin Kelly,
with Tom Broome
and Cherie Moore
Last Tapes Theatre
Company
Kokomai Festival,
Nelson Festival
13 – 19 Oct 2017
NZ Festival
7 – 8 Mar 2018
Q Theatre
17 – 21 Jul 2018
- The Vultures*
by Miria George
Tawata Productions
Hamilton, Q Theatre
14 – 21 Oct 2017
- Maungatapu*
by Justin Eade
Nelson Festival
16 – 17 Oct 2017
Nelson Musical Theatre
24 – 25 Nov 2017
- Skin Tight*
by Gary Henderson
Southern Magpie
The Hope Theatre
London, UK
17 Oct – 4 Nov 2017
- If There's Not Dancing at
the Revolution, I'm Not
Coming...*
by Julia Croft
Melbourne Fringe,
Australia, Nelson Festival
17 – 14 Oct 2017
Singapore Fringe
18 – 20 Jan 2018
Southland Festival
9 – 10 May 2018
The MAC, Belfast, Ireland,
22 – 23 Jun 2018
- Looking for America*
by Indigo Paul
- Basement Theatre,
Crave, One One Six
Whangarei, Timeout
19 Oct – 10 Nov 2017
- Troll*
by Ralph McCubbin Howell
Trick of the Light Theatre
Tauranga Festival
19 – 20 Oct 2017, BATS,
Fortune Theatre, Orange
Studios Christchurch,
Expressions Upper Hutt
3 – 18 Apr 2018
- Outside In*
by Hilary Beaton
Wit Incorporated
Bluestone Church Arts
Space Melbourne,
Australia
20 Oct – 4 Nov 2017
- Watching Paint Dry*
by Anders Falstie-Jensen
The Rebel Alliance
Hamilton Fringe
26 – 28 Oct 2017
Auckland Fringe
28 Feb – 3 Mar 2018
- Don Juan*
by A Slightly Isolated Dog
Tauranga Festival
27 Oct 2017
Regent Theatre Dunedin
13 – 16 Dec 2017
Q Theatre
5 – 9 Jun 2018
S&Ms Wellington
19 – 20 Jul 2018
- Weirdo* by Waylon
Edwards, William Duigan
and Jane Yonge BATS
31 Oct – 4 Nov 2017
Basement Theatre
17 – 21 Apr 2018
- Maggot*
by Angela Fouhy, Freya
Boyle and Elle Wootton
Scungebags
Basement Theatre
3 – 11 Nov 2017
BATS NZ Fringe
22 – 24 Mar 2018
- Body Double*
by Eleanor Bishop,
Julia Croft with
Karin McCracken
BATS
- 9 – 25 Nov 2017
Silo Theatre and
Q Theatre
Auckland Festival
20 – 29 Mar 2018
- 2AM Phone Call*
by Sunlight Liquid
Collective and Black
Sheep Productions
Basement Theatre
14 – 18 Nov 2017
BATS NZ Fringe
10 – 13 Mar 2018
- Solitude: The Secret Life
of Annie Chaffey*
by Martine Baanvinger
Drama Lab
Nelson Provincial Tour
23 Nov – 2 Dec 2017
NZ Fringe
21 – 24 Mar 2018
- Desperate Huttwives*
by Louise Proudfoot
Nextstage Theatre
Hutt Old Boys Marist
Rugby Club Lower Hutt,
Hannah Playhouse
29 Nov – 16 Dec 2017
- Question Time Blues*
by Catherine Delahunty
BATS
7 – 9 Dec 2017 and
1 – 3 Feb 2018
Q Theatre,
Auckland Fringe
1 – 3 Mar 2018
- Olive Copperbottom*
by Charles Dickens
and Penny Ashton
Buskers Boutique
Christchurch
18 – 27 Jan 2018
Arts on Tour National
Tour, Southland Festival
27 Mar – 12 May 2018
- Ze: Queer as F*ck!
and I'm an Apache
Attack Helicopter*
by Ren Lunicke
Fringe World Perth,
Australia
3 – 17 Feb 2018
- Blood Relative*
by Ren Lunicke
Zir Productions
Fringe World Perth,
- Australia,
Dunedin Fringe,
NZ Fringe
3 Feb – 18 Mar 2018
- Conversations
Avec Mon Pénis*
by Dean Hewison,
translated by
Marc-André Thibault
Théâtre Bistouri
Premier Acte,
Quebec, Canada
27 Feb – 3 Mar 2018
- Pardon Me Alan Turing*
by Stephen Lunt
Dare You Theatre
Auckland Pride Festival,
NZ Fringe
14 Feb – 4 Mar 2018
The Race Hobson Street
Theatre Company
Auckland Live Auckland
Fringe, BATS NZ Fringe
28 Feb – 21 Mar 2018
- Bless the Child*
by Hone Kouka
Tawata Productions
NZ Festival, Hannah
Playhouse, Auckland
Festival, Q Theatre
28 Feb – 12 Mar 2018
- The Don*
by Stuart Coats
The Madamina
Cooperative
BATS NZ Fringe
4 – 7 Mar 2018
Te Auaha
4 – 7 Jul 2018
- Once Upon a Dance*
by Jan Bolwell and
Mona Williams
Globe Theatre Palmerston
North, Dunedin Fringe
4 – 15 Mar 2018
St Peter's Hall
Paekakariki, Te Whaea
Wellington
15 – 20 Jun 2018
- My Best Dead Friend*
by Anya Tate-Manning
and Isobel MacKinnon
BATS NZ Fringe
5 – 9 Mar 2018
Escape Festival Tauranga
2 – 3 Jun 2018

TOI

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- Big J Stylez*
by Jacob Dombroski,
Everybody Cool Lives Here
NZ Fringe
6 – 10 Mar 2018
Auckland Live
4 – 7 Jul 2018
- Dead Dads Club*
by Sarah Harpur
NZ Fringe, Dunedin Fringe
7 – 13 Mar 2018
- Medea The Mother*
by Euripides,
adapted by Laura Irish
Dunedin Fringe,
Orange Studios
8 – 13 Mar 2018
- Stupid Bitch*
by Claire Waldron
and Chris Jannides
Monkeyhorse
Dunedin Fringe,
NZ Fringe
9 – 24 Mar 2018
- Hands!*
by Pip Smith
Dunedin Fringe,
9 – 10 Mar 2018
Nelson Fringe,
4 May 2018
- The Girl Who
Climbed a Mountain
and Saved the World*
by Lisa Allan
Dunedin Fringe,
NZ Fringe
11 – 24 Mar 2018
- Apocalyptic Us*
by Sunday Morning Gothic
Dunedin Fringe,
NZ Fringe
11 – 19 Mar 2018
Nelson Fringe
3 May 2018
- Salonica*
by Equal Voices Arts
Christchurch
1 – 2 Dec 2017
Q Theatre, Circa Theatre,
Auckland Fringe,
Playhouse Hamilton
24 Feb – 2 Mar 2018
- Your Heart Looks
Like a Vagina*
by Dominic Hoey
- Basement Theatre, BATS
10 – 21 Apr 2018
- The Iliad*
by Claire Ahuriri-Dunning
and James Dunning
Pearangri Creative
Te Pou Theatre,
Pumphouse
12 – 28 Apr 2018
- Odd One Out*
by Jo Randerson and
Thomas LaHood
Capital E National
Theatre for Children
National Tour
16 Apr – 1 Aug 2018
- Seven Deadly Stunts*
by David Ladderman and
Lizzie Tollemache
Rollicking Entertainment
Circa, The New
Athenaeum Dunedin
17 Apr – 20 May 2018
The Wizard of Otahuhu
Mangere Arts Centre
20 – 28 April 2018
Q Theatre
10 – 14 July 2018
- My Fat / Sad*
by Uther Dean,
Basement Theatre, BATS
27 Apr – 19 May 2018
- Dignity*
by Eamonn Marra,
Basement Theatre
Te Auaha
27 Apr – 19 May 2018
- Giggly Gerties*
by Chris Parker and
Tom Sainsbury
Parker and Sainsbury
Basement Theatre, BATS
27 Apr – 19 May 2018
- The Arrival* created by Kate
Parker and Julie Nolan
from the graphic novel
by Shaun Tan, Red Leap
Theatre Company, Out of
the Box Festival, Brisbane
Powerhouse, Australia,
26 Jun – 7 July 2018
- G+Force
by George Fenn
G+Fennertainment
Nelson Fringe
- 27 Apr 2018, BATS
28 – 30 Jun 2018
- Just a Phase*
by Hayley Sproull
The Bakery BATS,
Basement Theatre
1 – 12 May 2018
- The Snot Gobbler*
by The Chocolate
Lantern Company
Uxbridge, Te Pou
5 May – 10 Jun 2018
- Verbatim*
Devised by
William Brandt and
Miranda Harcourt
Simple Truth Theatre
National Tour
7 May – 10 Jun 2018
- Giddy*
by Leon Wadham
Basement Theatre
8 – 12 May 2018
BATS 26 – 30 Jun 2018
- Why Does This
Feel so Good*
by Brynley Stent and
Rhiannon McCall
BATS, Basement
8 – 17 May 2018
- Camp Binch*
by Chris Parker
Basement Theatre, BATS
9 May – 23 Jun 2018
A Country of Two Halves
Ensemble Impact
National Tour
14 May – 7 Jul 2018
- I Am Not Margaret Mahy*
based on Mahy's Notes
of a Bag Lady, adapted
by Jane Waddell
BATS, Artworks
Waiheke Island
22 May – 10 Jun 2018
- Heaven and Earth:
Rangi and Papa*
by Midge Perez
Little Green Man
Productions
Auckland Northland Tour
28 May – 21 Jul 2018
- The Road That
Wasn't There*
by Ralph McCubbin Howell
- Trick of the Light Theatre
The Albany London,
Edinburgh International
Children's Festival UK
30 May – 10 Jun 2018
- Meremere*
by Rodney Bell
Movement of the Human
Te Pou, Kerikeri,
Circa 5 – 30 Jun 2018
- He Kura e Huna Ana*
by Hōhepa Waitoa
Taki Rua Productions,
BATS, Tauranga,
Auckland Live, Hamilton,
New Plymouth
12 Jun – 5 Jul 2018
- Seed*
by Elisabeth Easther
Arts on Tour National Tour
4 Jul – 4 Aug 2018
- Jekyll and Hyde*
by A Slightly Isolated Dog
Southland Festival,
Tour-Makers National Tour
17 May – 11 Jul 2018
- Hine Kihāwai*
by Hone Hurihanganui
Taki Rua Te Reo Māori
Season National Tour
23 Jul – 28 Sep 2018
- No Holds Bard*
by Natalie Medlock,
Dan Musgrove and
Michael Hurst
Arts on Tour National Tour
29 Jul – 31 Aug 2018
- Edinburgh Festival Fringe
4 – 28 August 2017**
- Ancient Shrines
and Half Truths*
by Binge Culture
Break Up (We Need to Talk)
by Binge Culture
Jane Doe
by Eleanor Bishop
Power Ballad
by Julia Croft
*The Road That Wasn't
There*
by Ralph McCubbin Howell
Whales
by Binge Culture;
La Vie Dans Une Marionette
by White Face Crew

AUCKLAND**Auckland Theatre Company**

My Own Darling
by Grace Taylor
Taranaki Festival,
Christchurch Festival,
ASB Waterfront Theatre
24 Aug – 17 Sep 2017

Last Legs
by Roger Hall
14 – 27 Sep 2017
Clarence St Theatre
Hamilton,
Baycourt Tauranga
5 – 15 Oct 2017

*Light vs Dark: The
Adventures of Rama*
by Ahilan Karunaharan
16 Oct – 3 Nov 2017

Under the Mountain
by Maurice Gee,
adapted by Pip Hall
7 – 21 Feb 2018

Still Life with Chickens
by D.F. Mamea

Auckland Festival
Māngere Arts Centre and
ASB Cube, Centrepoint
8 Mar – 15 Apr 2018
Circa 8 – 2 Jun 2018
Taupo, Artworks Waiheke
12 – 15 Jul 2018

Here and Now
Festival: *Tender*
by Benjamin Henson
and the cast; *Alice*
by Leo Gene Peters
and the cast; *You First*
by Billie Staples
20 – 23 Apr 2018

Mrs Warren's Profession
by George Bernard Shaw,
adapted by Eleanor
Bishop and the cast
1 – 16 May 2018

The Cherry Orchard
by Anton Chekhov,
adapted by Albert Belz,
Tainui Tukiwaho,
Philippa Campbell
and Colin McColl
12 – 26 Jun 2018

Silo Theatre

*Hudson and
Halls Live!*
by Kip Chapman with
Todd Emerson and
Sophie Roberts
Taranaki Festival,
The Court Theatre,
Tauranga Festival,
Fortune Theatre
17 Aug – 16 Dec 2017

Peter and the Wolf
by Sergei Prokofiev,
adapted by
Sophie Roberts and
Leon Radojkovic
Auckland Live
9 Nov – 9 Dec 2017
NZ Festival
14 – 18 Mar 2018

Cellfish
by Miriama McDowell,
Rob Mokaraka and
Jason Te Kare
Q Theatre
13 – 24 Jun 2018

Basement Theatre

Looking at Stuff in Clouds
by Donna Brookbanks
and Soshana McCallum
25 Jul – 5 Aug 2017

Ranterstantrum
by Victor Rodger
1 – 12 Aug 2017

Non Flower Elements
by Arlo Gibson and
Ash Jones
22 – 26 Aug 2017

O A'u by Spencer Papali'i
14 Sep – 1 Oct 2017

Feagaiga
by Jonathan Soo Choon
Samoa House
15 – 16 Sep 2017

Thrifty
by Ali Foa'i
29 Aug – 3 Sep 2017

Soft Tissue
by Ella Gilbert
26 – 30 Sep 2017



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A Public Airing of Grievances and Everything is Surrounded
by Uther Dean
My Accomplice
10 – 14 Oct 2017

Finding Temeraire
by Stanley Makuwe
17 – 21 Oct 2017

The Winterreise Project
by Frances Moore and
Alex Taylor
Unstuck Opera
17 – 28 Oct 2017

Neon Bootleg
by Moe Laga-Fa'aofa
Fafswag
21 – 25 Nov 2017

Santa Claus
by A Slightly Isolated Dog
1 – 20 Dec 2017

Fala Muncher
by Lyncia Muller,
Cassise Utah,
Vaiani Ngaromoana
Irirangi and
Cassandra de la Croix
Auckland Pride Festival
13 – 17 Feb 2018

Twenty Eight Millimetres
by Sam Brooks
Smoke Labours
Auckland Pride Festival
13 – 17 Feb 2018

Conversations with Dead Relatives
by Phil Ormsby
Flaxworks
3 – 7 Apr 2018

The First Time
by Courtney Rose Brown
3 – 14 Apr 2018

Puss by Nomi Cohen
27 – 28 Apr 2018

Cult Show: The Revitalisation of the New Zealand Women's Archives
by Saraid Cameron
and Amelia Reynolds
29 May – 2 Jun 2018

Living Large with Marge
by Hamish McGregor
26 – 30 Jun 2018

Maumahara Girlie
by Mya Morrison-Middleton
3 – 7 Jul 2018

Upu Mai Whetū
curated by Grace Taylor
10 – 14 Jul 2018

First World Problems
by Agaram Productions
and Prayas Theatre
17 – 21 Jul 2018

Run Rabbit
by Victoria Abbott
24 Jul – 4 Aug 2018

Q Theatre

Other [chinese]
by Alice Canton
Matchbox
6 – 16 Sep 2017

Te Pō
by Carl Bland,
Nightsong
25 Oct – 4 Nov 2017

Gays in Space
by Tom Sainsbury and
Jason Smith
Smith and Thomas
Auckland Pride Festival
7 – 16 Feb 2018

Legacy Project 5: *Clean up in Aisle 3* by Ashleigh Ogden, *Mud Maids* by Holly Hudson, *On the Experience of People Whose Life is Exactly Like Mine* by Hamish Annan, *Three* by Ciarin Smith and David Butler, *Vision of Desire* by Aatir Zaidi, *Whole* by Danny Lam, Auckland Pride Festival, 8 – 16 Feb 2018

Tea
by Ahilan Karunaharan
Agaram Productions
Auckland Festival
9 – 18 Mar 2018

Yorick
by Binge Culture Collective
Matchbox
12 – 23 Jun 2018

Sightings
by Miriama McDowell,
Fiona Graham and

Denyce Su'a
Massive Company
24 – 28 Jul 2018

Te Pou Theatre

Kororāreka The Ballad of Maggie Flynn
by Paolo Rotondo
Red Leap Theatre
22 – 24 Sept 2017

Herstory
by the company
14 – 17 Feb 2018

Maniac (On the Dance Floor)
by Natasha Lay
Auckland Fringe
21 – 24 Feb 2018

No Science to Goodbye and Todo Verano
by Annabel Wilson
Ravel Productions
Goya Theatre
14 – 17 Mar 2018

Cat Dog Rat
by Justin Wilson and
Michael Brown
28 – 31 Mar 2018

Beneath Skin and Bone
by Trae Te Wiki
18 – 21 Apr 2018

Such Stuff as Dreams
by Camilla Walker
25 – 28 Apr 2018

Dope
by Dan Tomlin
Colour Theory Productions
9 – 12 May 2018

Tampocalypse
by Embers Collective
16 – 19 May 2018

He Tūru Māu
by Eugène Ionesco,
translated by Ani-Piki Tuari
18 – 21 Jul 2018

O Nofoa
by Eugène Ionesco,
translated by Aleni Tufuga
25 – 28 Jul 2018

Tim Bray Productions

Mrs Wishy-Washy
by Joy Cowley adapted

for the stage by Tim Bray,
songs by Christine White
23 Sep – 12 Oct 2017

The Santa Claus Show
by Tim Bray, songs by
Christine White
9 – 23 Dec 2017

Pippi Longstocking
by Astrid Lindgren,
adapted for the stage
by Tim Bray, songs
by Christine White
7 – 28 Apr 2018

The Great White Man-Eating Shark and Other Stories
by Margaret Mahy
adapted by Tim Bray,
songs by Marshall Smith
30 Jun – 21 Jul 2018
and Northland Tour
Whangarei, Kerikeri
and Kaitiā
27 Jul – 1 Aug 2018

Auckland Live

The Dunstan Creek Haunting
by Lizzie Tollemache
and David Ladderman
Rollicking Entertainment
24 – 31 Oct 2017

The Naked Samoans do Magic
by The Conch and The
Naked Samoans
Auckland Festival
22 – 25 Mar 2018

Portrait of an Artist Mongrel: Rowley Habib
Hāpai Productions
Auckland Writers Festival
18 – 20 May 2018

Garnet Station

One of Those
by David Charteris
5 – 14 Oct 2017

The Boss in Our Lives
by Hope Kennedy Smith
25 – 28 Oct 2017

Random Shagger
by Andrea Kelland
Auckland Pride Festival
3 – 15 Feb 2018

Other Venues Auckland*Dominion Rd*
The Musical

by Renee Liang,
music composed
by Jun Bin Lee,
Sharu Loves Hats
The Playhouse Auckland
9 – 19 Aug 2017

Balls by Joshua Baty
Navi Collaborative
Off Broadway Theatre
Papakura
6 – 10 Sep 2017

Love Me Tinder
by Stephen Sinclair
and Friends
Click-Clack Productions
Freida Margolis,
The Classic Comedy Club
29 Oct – 14 Dec 2017

Pleasedome
by Mark Beesley
17 Patiki Rd Avondale
1 Nov – 23 Dec 2018

Mrs Krishnan's Party
by Jacob Rajan and
Justin Lewis
Indian Ink Theatre
Company TAPAC
6 – 14 Dec 2017

Think of a Garden
by John Kneubuhl
TAPA and Nathan
Homestead
25 – 28 Jan 2018

Hearts of Men
by Albert Mateni
Gym CMB Ltd
Mangere Arts Centre
5 – 14 Apr 2018

The Book Club
by Roger Hall
Tadpole Productions
The Pumphouse
9 – 20 May 2018

Morningstar
by Albert Belz
Sapphire Theatre
Company
The Pumphouse
7 – 16 Jun 2018

Whitu – A Matariki Story
by Jenny Parham

Lopdell House
18 – 20 Jul 2018

Auckland Fringe Festival
20 February – 4 March 2018

*50 Years Before the
Frock* by Julia Clement;
Buddy by Joel Thomas;
Cool Behaviour by Ava
Diakhaby and Frith Horan;
The Dead Writers Retreat
by Claire O'Loughlin
and Marcus McShane;
Drowning in Milk by Saraïd
Cameron; *For Your Eyes
Only* by Nathan Joe;
Force Field by Duncan
Armstrong and Isobel
MacKinnon; *Fuck Rant*
by Nisha Madhan; *Happy
Hour* by Binge Culture;
It's a Trial by Binge
Culture and Barbarian
Productions; *The Jenny
Taylor Show* by Chicken
Thigh Productions; *Judge,
Jury and Cookie Monster*
by John Burrows;
The Last Supper by
Bloom Theatre Co.;
Lockdown by Nik Rolls;
The Plastic Orgasm by
Julia Croft and Virginia
Frankovich; *Pan is Dead*
by Theatre of Love; *Smore
Sisters* by Angela Fouhy
and Maria Williams; *This is
What You Signed up for* by
Amy Mansfield; *Welcome
to Self Co.* by Hope
Kennedy-Smith; *Wigging
Out* by Tom Sainsbury
and Hamish Russell;
A Womb with a View by
Arlo Gibson; *Women and
Water* by Vida Gibson

HAMILTON**Meteor Theatre**

Like, Shakespeare?
by Apocalypse Lounge
3 – 5 Aug 2017

One Hill of a Fight
by Michael Switzer
11 – 23 Aug 2017

*She Danced on a Friday:
The Birth and Death of
Margery Hopegood*

by Nicola Pauling
6 – 9 Sep 2017

Boot
by Small Dynamite
Hamilton Fringe
25 – 27 Oct 2017

Spot the Difference
by Antony–Paul Aiono
and Benny Marama
Hamilton Fringe
25 – 27 Oct 2017 and
6 – 7 Apr 2018

The Quest
by Chris Williams
1 – 9 Dec 2017

Judgement of Ecstasy
by Small Dynamite
22 – 26 May 2018

*Professor Novum's
Adventures in Orbit*
17 – 21 Jul 2018

Artful Dodgers
by Ross MacLeod
19 – 21 Jul 2018

Hamilton Gardens
Arts Festival
7 – 18 February 2018

Flowing Water Waikato
by Witi Ihimaera, Tom Roa
and Janet Jennings;
Larger Than Life by
Chris Rex Martin
and Tainui Tukiwaho;
A Revealing Thyme
by Joanna Bishop;
*Wilfrid Gordon McDonald
Partridge* adapted
by Peter Wilson

PALMERSTON NORTH**Centrepoint and
Dark Room**

Ropable
by Ross Gumbley
and Allison Horsley
4 Nov – 16 Dec 2017

A+ Mum Club
by Antoinette Scoggins
Spotlight Theatre
30 Aug – 2 Sep 2017

The Experiment
by Skin Theatre
26 Oct – 4 Nov 2018

That Bloody Woman
by Luke Di Somma and
Gregory Cooper
5 May – 3 Jun 2018

Peter Pan
by J.M Barrie
7 – 29 Jul 2018

Messy Magic Adventure
by David Ladderman
and Lizzie Tollemache
Rollicking Entertainment
17 – 21 Jul 2018

WELLINGTON**Circa Theatre**

A Doll's House
by Emily Perkins,
adapted from
Ibsen's original
5 Aug – 2 Sep 2017

Caging Skies
by Desirée Gezentsvey
based on the novel
by Christine Leunens
12 Aug – 9 Sep 2017

Anahera
by Emma Kinane
9 Sep – 7 Oct 2017

A Doris Day Special
by Ali Harper
16 Sep – 14 Oct 2017

Lobsters concept
by Lucy Marinkovich
Borderline Arts Ensemble
21 Oct – 4 Nov 2017

Peter Pan: The Pantomime
by Pinky Agnew
and Lorae Parry
18 Nov 2017 – 13 Jan 2018

Joan by Tom Scott
20 Jan – 17 Feb 2018

Rushes
by Malia Johnston
NZ Festival
23 Feb – 5 Mar 2018

At the Wake
by Victor Rodger
21 – 31 Mar 2018

*Messy Magic Adventure:
Kitchen Chaos!*
by David Ladderman and
Lizzie Tollemache

- Rollicking Entertainment
17 – 22 Apr 2018
- Problems* by Joe Musaphia
11 – 31 May 2018
- The Atom Room*
by Philip Braithwaite
9 Jun – 7 Jul 2018
- Black Dog* by Pamela Allan, adapted by Peter Wilson and *Duck, Death and the Tulip* by Wolf Erlbruch, adapted for the stage by Peter Wilson Little Dog Barking
10 – 21 Jul 2018
- BATS**
- The Swimmer*
by Manuel Saez
Smoko Theatre Company
8 – 12 Aug 2017
- M'Lady book and lyrics*
by Cassandra Tse and James Cain, music and additional lyrics by Michael Stebbings
Red Scare Theatre Company
11 – 19 Aug 2017
- In the Wars*
by Juliet O'Brien
Plateforme Théâtre
16 – 26 Aug 2017
- The Night Mechanics*
by Miria George
Tawata Productions
30 Aug – 9 Sep 2017
- PSA Stranger Politics*
by Thom Adams and James Nokise
No Fefe Collective
12 – 16 Sep 2017
- Me and My Sister Tell Each Other Everything*
by Uther Dean
My Accomplice
14 – 23 Sep 2017
- I, Will Jones*
by Eamonn Marra
Leaving Party Theatre
19 – 23 Sep 2017
- Among Strangers: Esther, Breaking News and August Moon*
by Angie Farrow
26 – 30 Sep 2017
- Satisfied Customers*
by Ben Wilson
5 – 14 Oct 2017
- Paying for It: An Insider's Guide to the New Zealand Sex Industry Volume II*
by the company
10 – 14 Oct 2017
- Ancient Shrines and Half Truths*
by Binge Culture
14 – 25 Nov 2017
- Marine Snow*
by Finnius Teppett
16 – 25 Nov 2017
- Weave – Yarns with New Zealanders*
by Kate McGill
Alacrity Productions
28 Nov – 2 Dec 2017
- Taking the High Ground*
by Jan Bolwell
Handstand Productions
5 – 9 Dec 2017
- The Christmas Detention Centre*
by the Chapel Perilous
12 – 16 Dec 2017
- Christmas Actually*
by Playshop
12 – 16 Dec 2017
- Lola's Grave Mistake*
by Ian Harman
7 – 10 Feb 2017
- Talofa Papa*
by Kasiano Mita
The Co-Lab,
NZ Fringe Festival
17 – 19 Mar 2018 and
5 – 9 Jun 2018
- The Universe is Pretty Big and I'm Afraid of Sex*
by Logan Cole and Marshall Rankin
Pretty Big Company
5 – 7 Apr 2018
- Movers* by James Cain
Red Scare Theatre Company
5 – 14 Apr 2018
- Colour Me Cecily*
by Bea Lee-Smith
24 – 28 Apr 2018
- Twinkle*
by Peter Wilson
Little Dog Barking
24 – 28 Apr 2018
- A Time Like This*
by Jackie Davis
24 – 28 Apr 2018
- PSA A New Dawn*
by Thom Adams and Carrie Green
No Fefe Collective
8 – 12 May 2018
- Self-Helped*
by Tom Sainsbury
15 – 19 May 2018
- Don't Date Androids*
by Stefan Anderson
Lightbringer Productions
21 – 30 Jun 2018
- The Loneliest Whale in the World*
by Hilary Penwarden
10 – 14 Jul 2018
- Kidzstuff Theatre for Children**
- Defrosted* by Fingal Pollock
30 Sep – 14 Oct 2017
- Badjelly the Witch*
by Spike Milligan adapted by Alannah O'Sullivan
14 – 27 Apr 2018
- Jessica Bo Peep*
by Amalia Calder
7 – 21 Jul 2018
- Other Venues Wellington**
- Retail Therapy*
by Maxwell Apse and Jen Smith
Scruffy Bunny
19 – 22 Sep 2017
- Spook Week*
by Ryan Cundy
Horse with No Name
19 Tory Street
31 Oct – 4 Nov 2017
- Under* by Cassandra Tse
Red Scare Theatre Company, The Third Eye
2 – 11 Nov 2017
- Seacliff: Demise of Ward 5*
by Renee Maurice
Soundings Theatre
9 – 10 Dec 2017
- Ka Tito Au: Kupe's Heroic Journey*
by Apirana Taylor
NZ Festival, Te Papa and schools tour
24 Feb – 9 Mar 2018
- romeojuliet@twilight*
from the play by William Shakespeare adapted by Geraldine Brophy
Nextstage Theatre
Little Theatre Lower Hutt
28 Feb – 3 Mar 2018
- Wild Dogs Under My Skin*
by Tusiata Avia
FCC, NZ Festival
Hannah Playhouse
7 – 11 Mar 2018
- Eating the Wolf: A Musical*
by Sarah Delahunty
Hannah Playhouse
21 – 25 Mar 2018
- Welcome to the Murder House*
by Jacob Rajan and Justin Lewis
Indian Ink Theatre Company
Te Auaha
26 May – 10 Jun 2018
- The Bone Thief book and lyrics* by Cassandra Tse, music by Bruno Shirley
Red Scare Theatre Company
Gryphon Theatre
12 – 21 Jul 2018
- Almost Sober*
by Ben Wilson
121 Theatre Space
24 Jul – 4 Aug 2018
- NZ Fringe Festival 2 – 24 March 2018**
- All Shapes and Sizes*
by Fondle the Orange;
The Border by Manuel Saez; *Camembert* by Acts of Kindness; *Deep South Caesar* by Aimee Smith; *Discharge is Rotten to the Core* by Discharge;



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ON EVERY STAGE

Like any family, at Tautai we take pride in guiding our young people to shine on whatever stage they choose to perform on. An example of this is our ever-growing community of talented Pacific artists who are shining in their chosen art forms.

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Dressing Up with Margot by Sasha Tilley; *Evensong* by Glenn McKenzie; *Flippin' Norah!* by Scene It Theatre Group; *Girl You Want* by Tessa Mitchell; *Love and Loss* by Anastasia Matteini-Roberts; *The Nose* by Jonny Potts and Michael Trigg; *The Odyssey* by A Slightly Isolated Dog; *Run* by Owen Baxendale; *Three Dead Dogs* by Cat Tipene and Ryan Cundy; *U Can Heal My Life!!* by Maria Williams; *Wahine Mawhero* by Lee Ray; *The Wellington Weather Lovers Playlist* by Holly Gooch; *The Wellingtonians* by Ethan Morse Theatre; *The World We Live in* by Grahame Woods

Kia Mau Festival 1 – 16 June 2018

Barrier Ninja by Fran Kewene; *Beneath Skin and Bone* by Trae Te Wiki; *He Kura e Huna Ana* by Hōhepa Waitoa; *La'u Gagana* by Jake Arona; Maxwell Siulangapo; Talia-Rae Mavaega, Tavita Nielsen-Mamea, Mana Tatafu; *Tusks and Fevers* by James Waititi, Julian Chote and Rosanna Raymond; *Waiora: Te Ū Kai Pō – The Homeland* by Hone Kouka

OTHER NORTH ISLAND

Coaltown Blues by Mervyn Thompson
Chris Green
Unity Theatre Gisborne
13 – 17 Sept 2017

The Hooligan and the Lady by Pauline Ellen Hayes
Hawkes Bay Festival
28 Sep 2017

Jacob's Party by Jake Brown Hastings Fringe
7 Oct 2017

The Floating Theatre by Stephen Bain

Tauranga Festival
25 – 28 Oct 2017

Yours Truly by Albert Belz
West Coast Theatre
Fourth Wall Theatre
New Plymouth
24 May – 2 Jun 2018

CHRISTCHURCH

The Court Theatre

Hamlet: The Video Game (The Stage Show) by Simon Peacock
Taranaki Festival
22 – 23 Aug 2017
Auckland Live
4 – 7 Oct 2017

Matai by Sela Faletolu-Fasi and Silvelio Fasi
Tulou Productions,
Christchurch Festival
8 – 16 Sep 2017

The Ugly Duckling by Will Robertson
2 – 14 Oct 2017

A Christmas Carol by Dan Bain
2 – 23 Dec 2017

Trios by The Court
Youth Company
7 – 10 Dec 2017

Puff the Magic Dragon by Carl Nixon based on the song by Leonard Lipton and Peter Yarrow
17 – 27 Jan 2018

Easy Money by Roger Hall
17 Mar – 14 Apr 2018

A Paintbox of Clowns by Dan Bain
16 – 28 Apr 2018

The Biggest by Jamie McCaskill
16 Jun – 14 Jul 2018

The Littlest Ninja by Javier Jarquin
7 – 21 Jul 2018

Papa Hou

The Things Between Us by Luke Di Somma
Christchurch Festival
14 – 17 Sep 2017

Aleppo by Wayne Beaven
21 – 24 Sep 2017

Caterpillars by Thomas Monckton and Kallo Creative
19 – 21 Jul 2018

Other Venues Christchurch

Erewhon Revisited by Arthur Meek
Magnetic North and Christchurch Festival
12 – 16 Sep 2017

The Butler Dresses Again by Joe Bennett
Lyttelton Arts Factory
10 – 28 Jan 2018

Earthquakes and Butterflies by Kathleen Gallagher
Transitional Cathedral
22 – 25 Feb 2018

Shit Finds Love by William Burns
Two Productions
14 Apr 2018

MAM!L: Middle Aged Man in Lycra by Gregory Cooper
Isaac Theatre Royal
31 May – 2 Jun 2018

Up and Away by Cubbin Theatre
Isaac Theatre Royal
3 – 8 Jul 2018

DUNEDIN

Fortune Theatre

Rumpelstiltskin by Gregory Cooper
7 – 14 Oct 2017

One Perfect Moment by Ellie Smith
21 Oct – 11 Nov 2017

Robin Hood by Zac Nicholls
21 – 28 Apr 2018

The New Athenaeum

Sharp Dressed Man by Kerry Lane
Sacrilege Productions
18 – 22 Aug 2017

Double Maths by Kerry Lane
Sacrilege Productions
27 – 31 Oct 2017

Good Thing He's Cute by Kerry Lane
Sacrilege Productions
19 – 21 Apr 2018

The First Time by Courtney Rose Brown
Arcade Theatre Company
20 May – 2 Jun 2018

Other Venues Otago and Southland

Fold by Jo Randerson
Arcade Theatre Company
Allen Hall Theatre
28 Feb – 3 Mar 2018

Dust Pilgrim by Red Leap Theatre
Southland Festival
2 – 3 May 2018

Charlie, Estelle and the Poppazoid by Jodie Bate
Toitū Otago Settlers Museum
10 – 12 Jul 2018

Dunedin Fringe Festival 8 – 18 March 2018

Boy Braille by Julie Woods and Amanda Phillips; *From Sex to Soccer: Exercise, Sport and Me and Everything Else in Between* by Rochelle Savage; *How to Be a Stripper* by Katherine Kennedy and Jordan Dixon; *Intergalactic Space Pirates Puppet Show* by Philip Lomas
Mental Notes by Suitcase Theatre

Nelson Fringe Festival 27 April – 6 May 2018

An Evening with Lord Nelson by Daniel Allan; *Don't Push the Button* by Dylan Hutton and Isaac Thomas; *Home Invasion* by Justin Eade; *Kauri Jack: All Shook Up* by John Crick; *The Man Who Was Thursday* by Peter Coates

PLAYMARKET INFORMATION

Playmarket issues and manages performance licenses and royalty payments, circulates clients' plays in New Zealand and internationally, advises on and negotiates commission, translation and collaboration agreements, and maintains an archive of playwrights' work.

Playmarket also offers advice to all New Zealand playwrights, theatremakers and producers, a raft of development resources such as clinics, readings, and events; and industry discourse, partnerships and networks. Our bookshop provides every published New Zealand play in print and we have a comprehensive catalogue of plays to download or purchase.

FACTS AND FIGURES

1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018

Professional performance licenses issued: 61

Community performance licenses issued: 84

International licenses issued: 15

School/Tertiary performance licenses issued: 162

Scripts circulated: 1847

Scripts/drafts received: 312

Paid script assessments: 11

PUBLISHING 2018

NZ Play Series

Southern Stage: Michael James Manaia

by John Broughton, *Romeo and Tusi* by

Oscar Kightley and Erolia Ifopo, *Peninsula*

by Gary Henderson, *The Raft* by Carl Nixon

| Series Editor: David O'Donnell | Design:

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Badjelly the Witch adapted by Alannah

O'Sullivan from the book by Spike Milligan:

David O'Donnell | Design: Cansino & Co |

Editing and Production: Whitireia Publishing

Playmarket Annual

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and Makers | Editor: Claire O'Loughlin |

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Editor: Salesi Le'ota

AWARDS, COMPETITIONS AND PROJECTS

Playmarket Award Winner 2017: Renée

Bruce Mason Award Winner 2017:

Miria George

Adam NZ Play Award Winner 2018:

Everything After by Shane Boshier

Best Play by a Māori Playwright:

Cradle Song by Albert Belz and *Little Black*

Bitch by Jason Te Mete

Best Play by a Pasifika Playwright:

Tales of a Princess by Suli Moa

Best Play by a Woman Playwright:

Before the Birds by Angie Farrow

Playwrights b4 25 Winner 2018:

Penalty by Peter Croft



Highly Commended: *Running Late* by Courtney Rose Brown, *Four Nights in the Green Barrow Pub* by Kieran Craft

Playmarket Plays for the Young Competition 2017: *Ellie and the Star* by Simon McArthur (3 – 8 year olds), *What You Will* by Zachary Nicholls (8 – 12 year olds), *The Number 23* by Courtney Rose Brown and *Attila the Hun* by Abby Howells (teenagers)

Brown Ink Development Programme 2017: *Cradle Song* by Albert Belz and *Provocation* by Aroha Awarau

Asian Ink Development Programme 2017: *Moodporn* by Matthew Loveranes

Rebecca Mason Executive Coaching 2017: Geoff Pinfield, Emily Duncan and Holly Gooch

Playwrights' Retreat 2018: Courtney Rose Brown, Uther Dean, Beverly Martens, Phil Ormsby, Johanna Smith, Anya Tate-Manning, Benjamin Teh, Cassandra Tse and Morna Young

Scotland Residency in partnership with Playwrights' Studio Scotland, BATS and Toi Pōneke Arts Centre: Morna Young

Playwrights in Schools programme in partnership with NZ Book Council 2017: Dave Armstrong, Philip Braithwaite, Whiti Hereaka, Lauren Jackson, Alex Lodge, Carl Nixon and Ella West

Robert Lord Cottage Residencies 2017: Hannah Bulloch, Mere Whaanga, Lynn Jenner, Elspeth Sandys, Riemke Ensing and Annabel Wilson

CLINICS, SCRIPT ADVISORY, READINGS AND WORKSHOPS

1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018: *Provocation* by Aroha Awarau, *The Atom Room* by Philip Braithwaite, *The Number 23* by Courtney Rose Brown, *Unflattering Smock* by Rose Kirkup, *Uneasy Dreams and Other Things* by Lori Leigh, *Sing to Me* by Alex Lodge, *Moodporn* by Matthew Loveranes, *Camp Binch* by Chris Parker, *Swingers* by April Phillips, *Another Mammal* by Jo Randerson, *Stood Up* by Stephen Papps, *The Bone Thief* by Cassandra Tse, *The Bright Side of My Condition* by Roy Ward and *Legacy Project V*

Playmarket Playfellows 2017 – 2018: The Wallace Foundation, Ruth Graham and Alister McDonald

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Playmarket thanks our partners for their support: Creative New Zealand; Foundation North; First Sovereign Trust; Adam Foundation; Auckland Live; Base Two; BATS; Bruce Mason Estate; Circa Theatre; Drama New Zealand; FAME Trust; Four Winds Foundation; Hannah Playhouse; Hilary Beaton; Infinity Foundation; Massive Company; Musical Theatre New Zealand; NZ Book Council; NZ Festival: Writers Week; NZ Players Theatre Trust; NZ Writers Guild; Playwrights Guild of Canada; Playwrights' Studio Scotland; Playwriting Australia; TAPAC; Tawata Productions; The Actors' Program; The Audience Connection; Te Whaea: National Dance & Drama Centre; The Writers' Cottage Trust; Theatre New Zealand; Toi Pōneke; Underwood Family; Whitireia Publishing; Young and Hungry Arts Trust and all of the professional theatre companies.

PREVIOUS PAGE: 2018 Playmarket Award winner Renée signs her autobiography for 2018 Bruce Mason Playwriting Award winner Miria George. Image: Philip Merry.



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THE LAST WORD

Kerryn Palmer asks whether we're there yet.

I've been musing for this column on the representation of women in the theatre industry for several months. My early drafts were measured, thoughtful and generous. But as I wrote the Pop-Up Globe announced its upcoming season and I just felt angry. Angry, tired and fed up. Also, furious at having to expend precious creative energy on trying to explain *why* I am so angry, tired and fed up.

I'm not going to vent here about the all-male 'feminist' version of *Taming of The Shrew* the Pop-Up Globe announced they were presenting, before an angry and defiant nationwide protest saw them abruptly change their plan. But I do want to talk about how as women we are represented in Aotearoa.

In 1985, fuelled by the feminist movement and sick of the lack of substantial artistic roles in both theatre and on the screen a group of female theatre practitioners gathered at the Depot Theatre in Wellington. They vigorously debated, frustrated about the lack of decent female characters in New Zealand drama – usually 'the wife' of the lead male or 'the mistress'. The consensus at the meeting is summarised by Kathy McRae.

"The problem was systemic and it lay in the creation and writing of the work. Male writers tended to write about their experience from

their point of view and male producers and commissioners related to their stories. By the end of the meeting, the discussion centred on how the situation would only change when there were more women writing, directing and producing."

This meeting helped prompt an increase in work and advocacy by female practitioners.

Founded on a patriarchal British model, prior to the 1980s, the New Zealand Theatre Industry was dominated first by the British Drama League and overseas touring companies, then by early professional theatres, nearly all run by male actors/directors/dictators. While we have an amazing whakapapa of female leaders – Ngaio Marsh, Nola Millar, Sunny Amey and Renée to name a few – who trailblazed for us in spectacular fashion, women were often marginalised.

Recently, in an all-female rehearsal of Elisabeth Easther's *Seed* we were discussing the #MeToo movement and how it related to our experiences in the theatre industry. This led to discussion about the many times in our careers that we have felt undermined, undervalued, ignored, patronised and bullied. This treatment had led theatremaker Hannah Banks to write her PhD thesis about women devising theatre in New Zealand,



IS IT MISOGYNY, IGNORANCE OR UNCONSCIOUS BIAS?

particularly after being misquoted and having her ideas attributed to others. In my 25 years in the industry I have also had all of these experiences. Which begs the question, why? Can this mistreatment be attributed to immodesty? Is this a case of us as women not standing up and shouting, “Look at me – I am amazing, I am making great art?” or is it misogyny, ignorance or unconscious bias?

In 2016 Playmarket conducted research into plays performed in our major theatres. Over the five-year period from 2011 to 2015 only 29% of the productions were by women writers. There was at least one major theatre company in 2015 that had no female directors directing their main stage work. In 2016 the Women’s Theatre Hui in Wellington mobilised many to debate this issue of equality. This continuing discourse is beginning to make changes in all areas of the theatre industry. [Ed: in 2017 48% of work was by women]. Circa Theatre’s Women’s Theatre Festivals are a great example of this. So, with more and more women creating their own directing kaupapa in Aotearoa, and, statistically, more female playwrights writing than ever before, are things changing fast enough?

At the core of the problem is a lack of awareness by many, including producers, critics, directors, actors and audiences. This was spectacularly illustrated by the

Pop-Up-Globe’s programming announcement. One of our few female Artistic Directors, Sophie Roberts, relates how at Silo they aim for parity and equity in all levels of their organisation. They are consistently conscious of the politics of the work and of the way the work is made. It is this cognisance and awareness that is so important. Change is happening – women are writing, directing and producing more. But while many are educating themselves, others are lagging behind.

I believe, when theatres and companies are commissioning and programming work they need to consider the gender split of playwrights, directors, actors, designers and technicians. They need to be consistently conscious about the politics of the work, action equal gender representation in companies, on arts boards, in tertiary institutions and within our funding bodies and fully respect the way women are represented in this industry, on stage and off. Don’t talk over us, patronize us, undermine or undervalue us, and understand that we are definitely not here for you to wipe your feet on as you leave the theatre, after seeing an all-male directed and performed ‘feminist’ interpretation of a misogynist play, written by a long-dead male.

ABOVE: *M’Lady* book and lyrics Cassandra Tse and James Cain, music and additional lyrics by Michael Stebbings, Red Scare Theatre Company. Image: Liesel Carnie.



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Left to right in circular order: Michael Hurst, Penny Ashton, Mockingbird, Rollicking Entertainment, Theatreworks, Robyn Paterson, Solitude and Seed (centre) www.aotnz.co.nz



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