Region News

Eyes on Houston

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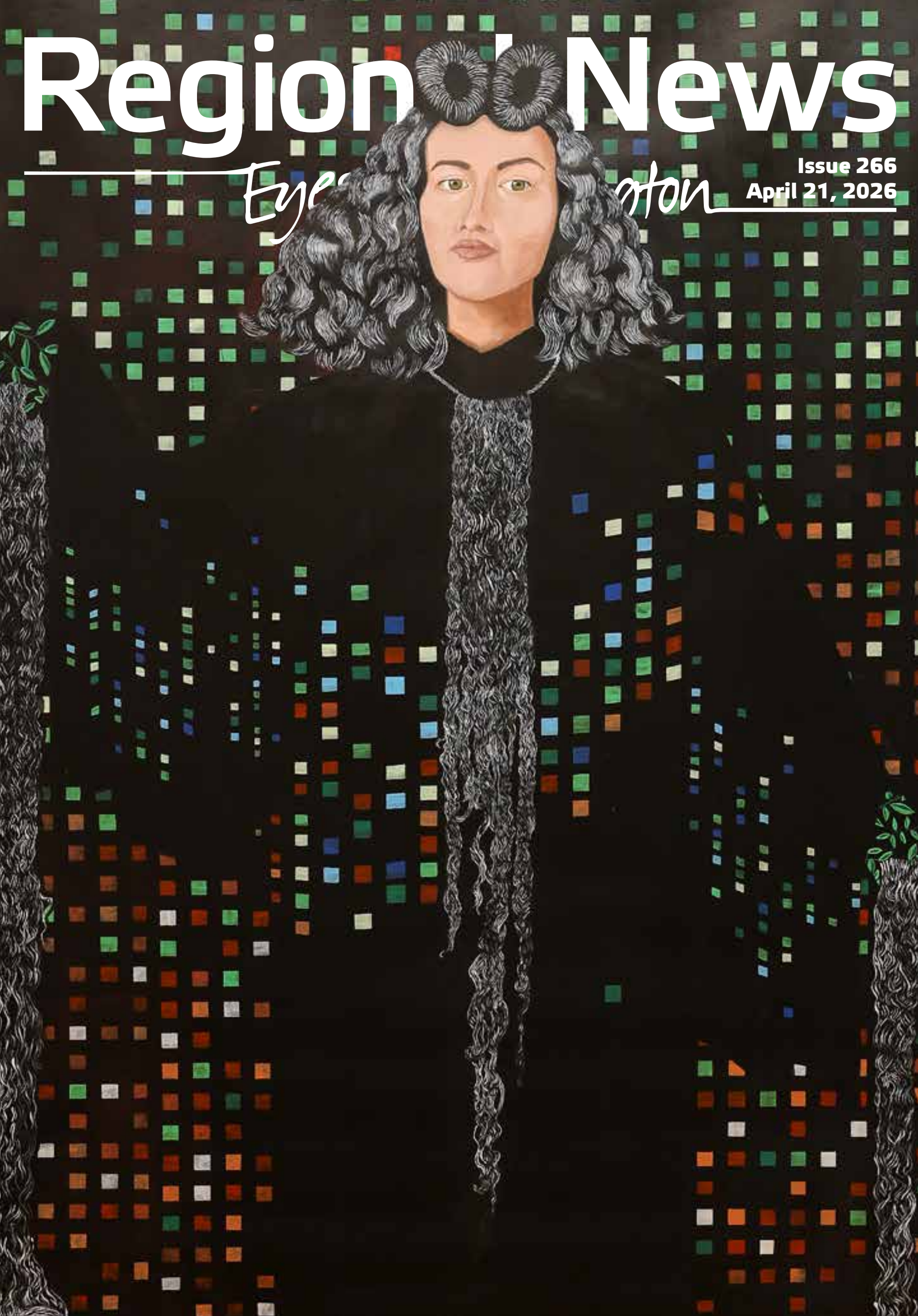

Jump to page

Music news 5 | Close-up 9
NZ adventures – the great outdoors 12-15
Health and wellbeing 16, 18
Midwives Day 5th May, Nurses Day 12th May 17
Pamper yourself 19-21 | Gallery News 23
Lower Hutt 5-star 24-25
Inspiring women in property 26
Buy, build, renovate 27-29 | Puzzles 32
Reviews 32, 34-35
NZ International Comedy Festival 36
What's on 37-39

News

You'll see! *by Madelaine Empson*

Photo by RocPhotography.

The world's only world-famous surreal sketch comedy circus trio Laser Kiwi are coming home with their bold, comical, and wildly creative new show *Everybody Knows*.

Brothers Zane and Degge Jarvie and acclaimed aerialist Imogen Stone performed the global premiere of *Everybody Knows* at the 2025 Edinburgh Festival Fringe, which Stone says was "a bit bonkers!"

"But we have absolutely no regrets! It was a brilliant season and the show evolved as we knew it would within the pressure cooker of the largest arts festival on this place we call Earth."

For Wellingtonians who are familiar with Laser Kiwi's classic stage shenanigans – which can include everything from razor-sharp juggling to audience-wide games of Pictionary – Stone says she doesn't want to give too much away about the new show.

"It's safe to say it'll be a warm hug – it's a joyful fresh continuation of all things intrinsically Laser Kiwi: it's Zane, Degge, and I, it's still Surreal. Sketch. Comedy. Circus. It's still irreverent, skilful, and funny. We're sharing so many new things we've been tinkering on for years and years! Compared to our previous mahi, *Everybody Knows* is higher energy and more colourful. It's very celebratory, and unites the audience in such a fun, fresh, truly joyous way! You'll see!"

Everybody Knows is the result of a pilot partnership between Auckland Live and The Hannah to support the creation of new Aotearoa performances.

"Developing this show in The Hannah was such an incredible experience", Stone delights. "We love this venue so much: its history, its people, its exposed concrete, and its spiralling staircases. It became our second home."

Laser Kiwi are stoked to be performing *Everybody Knows* at The Hannah from the 1st to the 16th of May as part of this year's New Zealand International Comedy Festival with Best Foods Mayo.

"Oh, we love this festival so much, and the energy it brings to our beautiful city", Stone exclaims. "There are so many funny folks filling rooms with laughter, and what could be better than that?"

A tip of the hat *by Madelaine Empson*

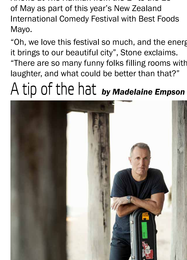

Photo by Kane Hibberd.

James Reyne shot to fame as the frontman of Australian Crawl, the Aussie rock band known for hits like *The Boys Light Up*, *Reckless*, *Errol*, and *Downheartedness* that dominated our airwaves from 1978 to 1986. He went on to have a successful solo career that's just seen him release the fast-driving, blasting country-rock banger *Going Back to Nashville*. Now, the singer-songwriter and guitarist is heading to our shores with a full band comprising John Watson (drums), Andrew McIvor (bass), Josh Owen (guitar), Brett Kingman (guitar), and Sean Johnson (keys) for a very special tour called *The Fall of Crawl*, a nod to the band's heyday at Meow Nui on the 1st of May.

I was lucky enough to pinch a moment for three quick questions with the man himself.

What was the inspiration behind The Fall of Crawl? Such an interesting concept, to highlight your disbanding!

We just thought it might be fun to celebrate an ending, rather than a beginning or a particular recording milestone. A kind of 'fun while it lasted' tip of the hat.

Which Australian Crawl songs are you most excited to play live again and why?

We've always included several of the Australian Crawl songs in the set whatever we're doing as people like to hear them. Usually the obvious hits; and I can usually find something fair-haired and personal in most of them.

What are you most looking forward to about playing Wellington and, in turn, what can audiences most look forward to about the gig?

Well, apart from anything else, Wellington is a beautiful-looking city with a great aesthetic sensibility. I also have friends who live just out of town so it's always fun to visit. And audiences can expect 90 minutes of a great rock and roll show played by a great rock and roll band; an hour and a half of all the songs they know and *love*, from Crawl to J. Reyne solo stuff.

Cover: Lady with the horns, 2026 by Rongomaiaia Te Whatli.

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The views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect those of *Regional News*.

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Fancy a trip to Te Manawa?

Artist Rongomaiala Te Whaiti pictured with her father, in front of her work Lady with the horns, 2026.

If you're in the mood for a day out that doesn't require much planning, just time, curiosity, and maybe a coffee afterwards, Te Manawa Museum is quietly one of the best options going. Right now, it's packed with exhibitions full of stories about home, power, creativity, animals, photography, and the pull of place. Even better: they're all free.

Spanning more than five decades and on until the 10th of May, *Robin White: Tuituia | Something Is Happening Here* is a chance to spend time with one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most important artists. Developed and presented by Te Papa, the exhibition includes early paintings alongside more recent collaborative tapa works.

Brent Harris: Home and Back Again runs until the 19th of July. At 22, Harris left Palmerston North, a familiar story for many artists, and many locals. This exhibition traces his painting and printmaking practice in conversation with works from the collection he grew up visiting at the former Manawatū Art Gallery. What emerges is something both personal and collective.

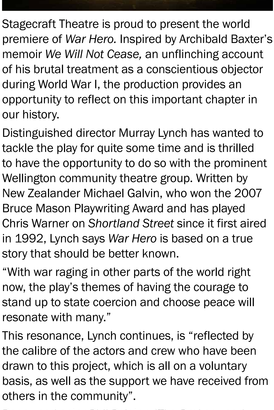
Running until the 19th of July, *Witipū* brings together six wāhine Māori associated with Toioho ki Āpiti, exploring the mana and many roles of Māori women on the marae and beyond. The title speaks to ideas of power, fear, and mischief often projected onto wāhine Māori.

Feather, Fur and Bone is an object-rich exhibition that sits at the intersection of culture, ritual, and environment, tracing the long and sometimes uncomfortable ways humans have lived with and used animals.

Out in the Field revisits the work of the late Peter Bush, one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most significant photojournalists. Spanning decades, his images document the country as it moved, protested, worked, and lived. Each photograph reflects Bush's insatiable desire to discover and record the world, paired with a rare knack for being in the right place at exactly the right time.

There's a strong pull of place running through Te Manawa Museum right now. If you're open to it, visit. Wander. See where it takes you — and what you leave with.

Conscience over compliance



Stagecraft Theatre is proud to present the world premiere of *War Hero*. Inspired by Archibald Baxter's memoir *We Will Not Cease,* an unflinching account of his brutal treatment as a conscientious objector during World War I, the production provides an opportunity to reflect on this important chapter in our history.

Distinguished director Murray Lynch has wanted to tackle the play for quite some time and is thrilled to have the opportunity to do so with the prominent Wellington community theatre group. Written by New Zealander Michael Galvin, who won the 2007 Bruce Mason Playwriting Award and has played Chris Warner on *Shortland Street* since it first aired in 1992, Lynch says *War Hero* is based on a true story that should be better known.

"With war raging in other parts of the world right now, the play's themes of having the courage to stand up to state coercion and choose peace will resonate with many."

This resonance, Lynch continues, is "reflected by the calibre of the actors and crew who have been drawn to this project, which is all on a voluntary basis, as well as the support we have received from others in the community".

Renowned actor Phil Peleton (*The Brokenwood Mysteries*) plays not one, not two, but 13 characters and is relishing the challenge of making each one unique and recognisable for the audience.

"My main aim is to take our audiences on the journey of the incredible real-life character, Archibald Baxter!"

Opening not long after Anzac Day, *War Hero* will run at Gryphon Theatre from the 6th to the 16th of May.

Peleton says Anzac Day brings up all kinds of discussions around duty, sacrifice, and the human cost of standing together to fight for something.

"I think this play explores the other side of that coin – the integrity to stand up for your personal beliefs, no matter what happens, and the personal cost and power of doing that."

SNIPS

Have your say

Wellington City Council's draft Annual Plan for the coming financial year is open for public consultation until the 10th of May. The draft budget reduces the forecast rates rise from 12.7 percent to 7.4 percent. Key changes up for consultation include increasing fees for contaminated waste, introducing room hire fees for Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library and Toi Pōneke, a rating change for short-term accommodation providers, changing the rollout of the Paneke Pōneke Bike Network Plan, and more. Printed copies and submission boxes are available in Wellington City Libraries, or you can visit letstalk.wellington.govt.nz

New living wage

The living wage increased on the 1st of April from $28.95 to $29.90. Living Wage Employers have until the 1st of September 2026 to implement the new rate. New Zealand's adult minimum wage increased to $23.95 per hour on the 1st of April, with a starting out and training rate of $19.16.

Protest party

Photo by Paul Maffi.

In 2019, after cancelling his New Zealand shows due to a series of personal tragedies and the stresses of touring, John Maus made his Kiwi fans a promise.

Now, five years of contemplation, retreat, and recuperation later, the synth-tastic American songwriter with an unmistakable baritone makes good on that promise with a string of new shows in Aotearoa that will see him take Meow by storm on the 6th of May. And with his first new album in five years to boot.

Later Than You Think takes something of a retro-futuristic look at Maus' career while scrutinising the musician's place in the here and now. Described as being "emotionally complex, alternately stoic and ecstatic", the 16 tracks range in style, from the bare-bones synth-punk anomalies of 2006 and 2007's *Songs* and *Love Is Real*, to the lush avant-pop cuts from 2011's *We Must Become the Pitiless Censors of Ourselves*, and, in a few cases, the symphonically ambitious endeavours of 2017's *Screen Memories*.

The record also includes the new single *I Hate Antichrist*, a song Maus describes as a sort of sequel to 2011's *Cop Killer*, which features a secular Gregorian chant that embraces French philosopher Alain Badiou's anti-xenophobic sentiment that "all the people who are here are from here".

Join the ranks of a creative constantly fighting the status quo at Maus' Meow party powered by "genuine emotion and radical sincerity".

Spellbinding music

What came first, the flute or the harp? No one can say for certain, but the sound of a string being plucked and wind blowing through a hollow reed or pipe has been the accompaniment to history's forward-march since time immemorial. Mulled Wine Concerts invites you to join Bridget Douglas and Carolyn Mills, flute and harp, for an afternoon of shimmering beauty at St Peter's Village Hall in Paekākāriki on Sunday the 3rd of May.

After being the principal harpist of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZSO) for 37 years, Mills retired to become a certified music practitioner offering harp therapy to hospitals and carehomes. Douglas is the principal flute of the NZSO, a teacher at Te Kōkī New Zealand School of Music, and was awarded the Composers Association of New Zealand KBB Citation for Services to Aotearoa New Zealand Music.

Together their luminous programme travels through multiple musical worlds to weave together the serene mysticism of Hovhaness' The Garden of Adonis, the soundscape of Eve de Castro-Robinson's Pearls of the Sea, folk-inspired compositions by Ravel, and a few traditional Celtic melodies.

Enjoy Baroque elegance from Marcello, Purcell, and Bach, Chopin's sparkling Variations on a Theme by Rossini, and a charming Praetorius set. The programme also features original works for solo harp by Mills. Organiser Mary Gow is excited by the prospect of bringing such spellbinding music to Kāpiti. "It will surely make for an afternoon to remember", she says.

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Music news

by Madelaine Empson

Happy birthday to the Bard of Duluth

The Zimmermans are Aotearoa's favourite Bob Dylan interpreters. The nine-piece outfit formed in Wellington to honour the Nobel Prize-winning singer-songwriter whilst putting their own spin on his timeless music.

I chatted with frontmen Chris Nichol (vocals, saxophone) and Paddy Burgin (vocals, guitar) about Dylan's enduring legacy and 85th birthday, which The Zimmermans will celebrate with a two-hour toe-tapping set at Meow on the 1st of May.

Please tell me what you most love about Bob Dylan.

Chris: Dylan's songs changed the way popular music was written. His lyrics are wide open to every listener's own interpretation. And he happily rewrites, reworks, and revises them. He does the same with his arrangements. And for the 65 years he's been recording, he's never stood still, evolving his style and playing every genre through folk, rock, gospel, funk, Americana, and a whole lot in between.

Why do you think his music and legacy endures today – especially considering how much the music industry has changed?

Paddy: Part of Dylan's genius is his ability to tell a story in a song that speaks to the individuality of each person listening. And though the music industry has changed hugely, the power of story through song hasn't diminished. His songs have continued to be covered throughout his 65-year career because musicians recognise their strength, energy, focus, and insight.

How have things been for The Zimmermans since we last spoke in 2024?

Paddy: One interesting change we've seen in the last couple of years has been the average age of our audience dropping. We put that down to younger people seeing Timothée Chalamet in the movie *A Complete Unknown*, which focuses on Dylan's early career. It seems as though a whole new generation has been struck with the magic and relevance of Dylan's lyrics.

What are you most looking forward to about the Meow gig?

Chris: Celebrating Dylan's birthday at Meow will be a treat for all sorts of reasons. We've played a lot at Meow and they've been really supportive of us. We celebrated Dylan's 80th there. So it's the right venue for a couple of hundred enthusiasts to get together to sing along with songs that have been the soundtrack to so many people's lives and provided them with inspiration.

What's your favourite Dylan lyric?

Chris: From *Changing of the Guard*, a track on his 1978 album *Street Legal*:

"Gentlemen, he said I don't need your organization,
I've shined your shoes
I've moved your mountains and marked your cards
But Eden is burning, either getting ready for elimination
Or else your hearts must have the courage for the changing of the guards"

Half a century and counting

Photo by Radlab.

Split Enz formed in Tāmaki Makaurau in 1972, starting a timeline stamped with incredible hits and accolades. In 1978, they dropped *I See Red*. In 1980, they released *True Colours*, an album that went multi-platinum here and across the ditch and featured the number one hit single *I Got You*. *Six Months in a Leaky Boat* would follow in 1982. The prog-art rock band was inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame in 2005. And in 2008, they played their final live concert in New Zealand at Vector Arena, now Spark Arena, in Auckland.

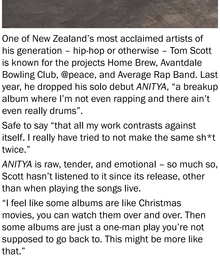
That is, until they reunited this year for their first show in 18 years. In February, they played their 1000th gig together in front of 45,000 rapturous fans at the Electric Avenue Festival in Christchurch.

Now, Tim Finn, Neil Finn, Eddie Rayner, and Noel Crombie – plus Matt Eccles on drums and James Milne on bass – will play two special shows at TSB Arena on the 6th and 7th of May, with the latter date added to meet extra demand.

"Aotearoa, rugged individual! We're looking forward to climbing into our new Noel Crombie suits and seeing you all soon", Tim Finn says. "The songs are sounding shiny and new… if music be the food of love, Split Enz are the silverware!"

Today, Split Enz is widely regarded as one of the most important antipodean groups of the last five decades. *History Never Repeats*, so don't miss your chance to party with the best of the best on the *Forever Enz Tour*.

The act of creation



One of New Zealand's most acclaimed artists of his generation – hip-hop or otherwise – Tom Scott is known for the projects Home Brew, Avantdale Bowling Club, @peace, and Average Rap Band. Last year, he dropped his solo debut *ANITYA*, "a breakup album where I'm not even rapping and there ain't even really drums".

Safe to say "that all my work contrasts against itself. I really have tried to not make the same sh*t twice."

ANITYA is raw, tender, and emotional – so much so, Scott hasn't listened to it since its release, other than when playing the songs live.

"I feel like some albums are like Christmas movies, you can watch them over and over. Then some albums are just a one-man play you're not supposed to go back to. This might be more like that."

The album chronicles the duality of the agony and ecstasy of the act of creation.

"At the time you don't really know you're drowning. You just try to keep swimming. Then you wash up somewhere. You *think* that you're consciously doing your job, making music, creating a product. But a level deeper than that you're in real time going through some cathartic-ass therapy session while everyone's watching. I'm kind of embarrassed to think about it now", Scott laughs. "But it's the only way I've ever known how to deal…"

Less hi-fi – "like teasing hair or something to make it feel messier and realer" – the atmospheric album was recorded with a cast of 30 versatile musicians, beatmakers, and vocalists and has a homemade, bedroom production feel. "Snare drums distorting. Unpolished mistakes in the vocals. Soundtrack-type sound design."

Scott will take *ANITYA* out on the road on the *self untitled tour*, which hits Meow Nui on the 8th of May.

Back to contents

The future is human

charmort.

Psy Fi is an independent showcase bringing together different streams of future-focused Aotearoa visual artists, musicians, and writers on Saturday the 9th of May at Massey University's Great Hall.

What began as a small gig for a book launch has since become one of Wellington's most exciting musical lineups to date. The prophecy that the future is human is already playing out in the clustering of visionary artists around Pōneke writer Lee Hana's launch of his post-punk, mind-melting science fiction *Descendants*. A vivid panorama of a future, the stories are shaped by the world's long carbon spree and by people learning how to live after its end.

After the launch, anticipate an astral journey into new possibilities with the quantum harmonics from sound explorer Erika Grant and the shimmering waves of guitar from mesmerising duo Tondo. Dance to the sublime alien warmth that is Dream Chambers and witness the rare appearance of peerless shoegazing act The Golden Awesome before duo BirdParty take you for an industrial dancefloor workout with their ecstatic sci-fi club soundtrack.

Headlining the night is a boundaryless, transcendental set from ambient techno legend Microniom, back from Australia for the show, before Charmort bushwhacks new electronica trails late in the night.

Interstellar local doyen DJ Martyn Pepperell will stitch the acts together, whilst visual art "a mile wide" will be flung across the venue for an immersive, sensory experience you won't want to miss.

Get inspired about your future!

The Porirua Careers Expo is promising a jam-packed day at Te Rauparaha Arena, offering a chance to engage with different industry professionals and get tips to land your dream job, along with free food, giveaways, and the opportunity to win one of eight $250 Prezzy cards.

It is aimed towards students and school leavers and anyone looking for inspiration in those next steps in education or a career.

Porirua Mayor Anita Baker says people of all ages are welcome to head along to get a headstart and some insight into what might come next. "The feedback we've had from the last two Career Expo events has been amazing," she says. "It has a fun, welcoming atmosphere with plenty of interactive displays and friendly people who will answer all your questions."

Porirua City has partnered with Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Education, Le Fale Jobs and Skills Hub, and Partners Porirua to deliver this expo for our community.

Don't miss 80+ stalls covering jobs in technology, health and beauty, construction, trades, professional services, and more; opportunities to connect with education providers, industry professionals, and peers; practical CV and interview help; giveaways, free food, and chances to win $250 Prezzy Cards.

The event takes place from 9:30am to 3:30pm on Tuesday the 5th of May and is free to enter. Find out more at
www.poriruacity.govt.nz/careers-expo

Back on the runway

"Florals? For Spring? Groundbreaking." After 20 years, Miranda Priestly (Meryl Streep) is back with her impossibly high standards and higher heels for The Devil Wears Prada 2. What better way to immerse yourself in the fashion, the rivalries, the shade than at Rainbow Wellington's special fundraiser screening at Lighthouse Cuba on Thursday the 30th of April – a day earlier than its official release?

You'll be dropped straight back into the lives of the original characters in the sleek offices of Runway magazine in New York City – but the times have changed and the stakes are higher than ever.

Fast forward 10 years from where we left off and print media is on the decline. Miranda is nearing retirement and struggling for advertising revenue in the new digital media landscape ruled over by her former assistant turned rival, Emily Charlton (Emily Blunt). She reunites with the ambitious and awkward Andy Sachs (Anne Hathaway) and ever loyal friend Nigel (Stanley Tucci) to turn the ship around. New to the runway of cast members are Kenneth Branagh, Simone Ashley, Justin Theroux, and Lucy Liu.

All proceeds for the evening go directly to Rainbow Wellington grants that support local projects and individuals facing hardship. Rainbow Wellington is a registered charity that has supported the LGBTQIA+ community in Te Whanganui-a-Tara for 30 years through providing connection, advocacy, and inclusive social spaces.

Head down to see the highly anticipated sequel of a movie that defined a generation, all for a good cause.

"That's all."

Mad, mad, MAD!

Is it the government, climate change, the price of butter, your creepy uncle, or Brian Tamaki? 15 comedians get honest about what makes them rage in this *Three Minutes in Hell* comedy event at The Fringe Bar on the 28th of April. The catch is in the title: each comedian has only three minutes to talk about what makes their eyes twitch, their face go red, and steam stream from their ears.

Winner of the Best Regular Comedy Show of 2024 at the Wellington Comedy Awards, *Three Minutes in Hell* was established by Anya Rzhevitskaya [pictured] the producer at Drug of Choice Productions and MC of the show. She says the bi-monthly event sits somewhere between an open-mic night and regular stand-up comedy. The lineup for *RAGE* features some familiar names including Lydia Sainsbury (winner of Raw Comedy Quest 2025), Marc Hamilton (producer of Distilled Comedy), and Zach Mandeville (producer of Airhorn) alongside comedians with a range of experience on the stage.

The subject changes each month and is always timely and topical. Past ones have included how to be happy, elections, poetry, and conspiracy. To celebrate NZ Music Month, the May event will feature musical comedians sharing their gags.

The event encourages comedians to write new material on ridiculous things and develop some solid sets. If you're looking for some fast-paced, rage-fuelled comedy, or are keen to give stand-up a swing, head on down to The Fringe Bar and tell the audience what makes you mad!

Big Flowers For A Wild City

In this new series, Isabella Smith meets the artists behind the sculptures dotted around our city.

Martin Basher.

In our small centre city, hedged in by harbour and hill, there are few places that feel as open-aired and expansive as the forecourt between the Wellington Waterfront and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, where the sweep of grey tiling and the gridded facade of the surrounding buildings create sharp-edged geometry that slices shapes out of the sky.

The proportions of the plaza are what make this part of Wellington a challenging spot for public sculpture. It needs to stand out against the muted tones and not feel swamped by the space. Martin Basher's sculpture *Big Flowers for a Wild City* does just that.

The four seven-metre floral arrangements constructed of steel and wood erupt out of the four plinths in a burst of colour. "The low-relief sculptures with their high gloss, pearlescent and day-glow pigments... rise up against the thrumming city back-drop", Basher says. Having returned to his hometown after 25 years of living and working as an artist in New York, he tells me, "I wanted to make some work to convey a little of the joy and optimism I've been feeling near daily about living here." The colourful bouquets are ultimately "lasting tokens of affection... Their generosity, embodied in their vibrancy and their exuberance, should be seen as a tribute to both the city of Wellington and to the power of art itself."

Martin Basher has exhibited widely and internationally. Born and raised in Te Whanganui-a-Tara, he graduated from New York's Columbia University MFA programme and remained there with his family until returning to Wellington a few years ago. Though primarily a painter, he has made a number of public sculptures, including a major commission for the Public Art Fund, New York's leading presenter of public art.

The Collin Post 4Plinths Award series has been around for 20 years. The Wellington Sculpture Trust recognised the possibilities for both the city and artists represented by the four bollards that sat on the Te Papa forecourt. Modelled on the four plinths in Trafalgar Square in London, each work remains on-site for two years: a revolving door showcase situated in the heart of Pōneke. The award gives a literal platform for emerging artists to create site-specific works that deal with the complexities of scale and engineering, with maximum engagement from the public.

Chair of the Wellingon Sculpture Trust Jane Black says, "What makes this biennial award so special and the largest in Australasia is it is not acquisitive – after the two years of installation, the artist retains ownership of the work, and many have gone on to find new homes."

Big Flowers for a Wild City is the 10th sculpture to occupy the forecourt. With a constant vision to grow the award and make it internationally significant, this month the Collin Post Family doubled the award from $50,000 to $100,000. The Sculpture Trust says it is a response to both the reputation of the award and the increased costs for artists to achieve a work across the four plinths in the monumental environment.

The partnership with the Post family celebrates and commemorates the late Collin Post and his love of the arts, in particular sculpture. Black says, "Collin was a stalwart of the trust for many years."

Basher's studio is nearby the plaza. "I love getting to see the work in all weathers and as the light in each day changes", he says. "It's been fantastic to see them working for the public too. I love that kids get to see them when they visit Te Papa, and it was super nice that my own kids were able to show them to their friends a couple of weeks ago. It's a particularly nice feeling as my work becomes the city's work. It's the best part of public art, when a project merges into the fabric of a city."

News

Packing a punchline

Rocking up to The Hannah on the 8th of May with a gaggle of giggles in tow, internationally acclaimed British comedian and television star Stephen K Amos returns to New Zealand with his brand-new show *Now We're Talking*.

Last seen in Aotearoa in 2016 with *The Laughter Master*, Amos can still claim that title thanks to a joke book that is overflowing with freestyle musings and merrymaking to get your belly aching. He wants to get down to the nitty-gritty and talk about what gives him the ick and what makes him tick – no filter, no limits.

Amos "deconstructs the science of laughter before scrolling back to his youth and a 1970s brought pungently back to life", *The Guardian* beams. *The Real Chrispark*le writes that the message in Amos' new show is that we need to talk but moreover listen. "It is still possible to 'find the funny' in the most unusual or indeed impossible situations".

With his signature charisma, feel-good comedy, and innate ability to intimately connect with audiences, Amos has become a beloved household name both in the UK and internationally. He's a familiar face on UK shows like *Live at The Apollo*, *QI*, and *Have I Got News for You*, as well as an accomplished BAFTA Award-winning actor both on the stage and screen.

The gloves are off and Amos is packing a punchline at *Now We're Talking*.

A Kiwi abroad

All in the family

by Alessia Belsito-Riera

26 miles away from the super-city of LA, yet the old adage, 'it's not what you know, but who you know', still rings true here on Catalina Island. After all, we are just a hop, skip, and a jump from Hollywood, baby.

With my time with *Regional News* coming to a close (don't worry, you'll still hear from me in this column), I find myself faced with one of the least pleasant tasks during economic recession and geopolitical turmoil: job hunting. Despite it all I found one, thanks in big part to my mum.

As a fourth-generation Catalina Islander, my last name is often recognised before my face is. My Italian ancestors arrived in Avalon in the 30s when my great grandfather was hired to work on the breakwater. They stayed because it reminded them of a Mediterranean fishing village. When their youngest daughter visited Italy for the first time in the 50s, she met my grandpa and brought him home to her island. My uncle and mum were raised here and, as fate comes to have it, so was I. My family is woven in the fabric of Avalon.

To put things into perspective, in theatre rehearsal I found my uncle's name carved into the stage curtain weight. My art teacher was married to my mum's chemistry teacher. Grizzled fishermen still tell me about when they were kids on my grandpa's soccer team.

When I was younger, I would always sigh that no matter what I did, when I came home, I'd still just be Alessia. Now, I smile when I come home and I'm recognised as someone's daughter or niece or cousin, when strangers tell me stories about my grandparents, when I'm greeted like I was never gone, when my new boss tells me to "say hi to Mom".

Thanks to my mum, grandparents, and great grandparents for giving me this place I call home.

Guaranteed to rock you

Bring along your devil horns and get ready to raise them into the sky.

The Rock Tenors were born out of the cancellation of a Queen musical due to 2022 lockdowns. This group of five highly trained vocalists with musical theatre, opera, and rock sensibilities teamed up with producer Doug Kamo and partnered with accomplished musical directors Michael Grant and Che Long to create this rocket-fuelled spectacle.

Since forming, The Rock Tenors have enjoyed huge success with sold-out shows across the South Island and a growing loyal fanbase building up around them.

They're now on the road with their *Anthems Reloaded Tour* which will take them to 22 cities and regions around Aotearoa, stopping off in Paraparaumu at Te Raukura ki Kāpiti Coastlands Theatre, Carterton at the Wairarapa Events Centre, and Wellington at The Opera House on the 6th, 21st, and 23rd of May respectively. They'll be equipped with their high-voltage renditions of rock's greatest hits by the likes of Queen, Bon Jovi, AC/DC, Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden, KISS, Radiohead, and many more.

"This is more than a concert," Kamo says. "It's an electrifying rock spectacle – a high-energy blend of powerful harmonies, scorching guitar solos, and timeless anthems that have shaped generations."

The touring ensemble consists of five of Aotearoa's premier vocalists – James Adams, Luke Butson, Ben Hayward, Steve Jones, and Justin Wilson – with abilities spanning from opera to thrash metal. Collectively, they've appeared in musicals including *We Will Rock You, Jersey Boys, Grease – The Arena Spectacular, Phantom of the Opera, and Mamma Mia!*. With potent harmonies that reinvent the original arrangements, this show is set to be an immersive, exciting, and nostalgic rock experience.

Smiles and surprises

With over 41 albums released amassing more than 10 million sales worldwide, and 40-plus silver, gold, and platinum discs, not to mention performances for the Pope, the royal family, and at iconic venues the likes of the Royal Albert Hall, it's about time beloved Welsh singer and broadcaster Aled Jones MBE made his way to New Zealand!

"I'm really excited about this tour. I'm thrilled to be visiting New Zealand for the first time," Jones says. "I'll be sharing stories, songs, and special memories from across my career – with a few surprises too. It truly is the best show I've ever done, and I can't wait for everyone to see it!"

The silver tongue and witty raconteur will settle into Meow Nui on the 7th of May for an intimate new show that combines music, storytelling, and nostalgia. The first half of *My Stories, My Songs* delves into Jones' beginnings in North Wales, the 70s and 80s, and encounters with the Queen, Prince Charles, Princess Diana, Andrew Lloyd Webber, and Leonard Bernstein.

On the flip side, Jones will take audiences on a global journey – from world-first duets with his younger self to highlights from his times on TV – plus, sing-alongs and moments guaranteed to delight.

Fans will get up close and personal with Jones as he shares defining moments from a career spanning four decades, behind-the-scenes photos and videos, smiles, and surprises in *My Story, My Songs*.

Close-up

by Isabella Smith

Camera and a spear gun

For 26 years, the Tūhura Otago Museum Wildlife Photography Competition has been an Otago-only affair, inviting amateur photographers to send in their best wildlife, landscape, and botanical shots. This year the annual competition opened a new nationwide category called Wild Aotearoa, which made up about 5000 of the 9000-plus submissions sent in.

Wellington photographer Ricky Situ was named runner-up Wildlife Aotearoa Photographer of the Year with his stunning image *Whimsical Lion's Mane*. A stunning image of a solitary jellyfish lit up by sunlight that filters through the water. We caught up last week to discuss photography, wildlife, and life outdoors.

Tell me about how you got the shot of the lion's mane?

I do a lot of fishing and diving as a hobby. Generally, I go out to Kāpiti, along the South Coast, Mākara Beach. I do photography as a job and as a hobby as well, so I always take my camera out into the water to take photos.

When I'm out, I do a bit of fishing and photo taking, about half and half. On this day we were out in Kāpiti. During that time of the year – around this time last year – you get lots of jellyfish floating around you. There are some pretty big lion's mane jellyfish. This particular one was a little one, but it had some really cool colours, and the water was really calm and glossy at the top close to the surface. I called out to the boat guide Scott to give me my camera, then I quickly swam back and tried to find the jellyfish again and grabbed a few shots of it.

Do you mostly shoot underwater?

Not really. I just focus on anything that looks good. I'm a candid photographer. I think my interest in photography is naturally drawn towards nature, from being out there quite often either fishing or in the bush. I always carry my camera around and when the opportunity is there, I'll hopefully grab it at a good angle.

What drives your wildlife photography? Is there a philosophy behind it?

I hadn't really thought about it too much, I guess I just like doing it. It's part of my life now. I feel like it's an obligation for me to have a camera with me wherever I go, to be able to capture anything that looks good, to celebrate animal life or a beautiful scene. I try to freeze it in a frame and have it as a photo.

Are you a bit of a gear head when it comes to camera equipment?

There's being a gear head but also, there's a mentality of working with what you have. I guess coming from the industry of taking photos, I'm looking at all the gear and equipment that you can get – it's just endless. But no, I think I'm more in the mindset of: whatever you have, try to make the most of it. You don't need the flashiest camera to take a nice shot.

What are those close encounters underwater like?

Being underwater, it's a really different world. It's not your day-to-day. You know, wake up and go to work, see birds and mammals and things on dry land. When you go underwater everything is quite fluid. The terrains are rugged. You see weird, wavy shapes, and there's an abundance of animal life. You've got schools of fish and, when you look closely, you see nudibranchs (which are like little slugs), shellfish, crayfish, pāua, sea anemones. When you swim up to the reef, it's lit up with different colours.

Has this award encouraged you to pursue wildlife photography more?

You know, it does encourage me a bit. But I love taking photos out in nature anyway. There were about 5000 others who submitted into that category. So that was quite cool to know that [the judges] took interest in the shot I took. There were heaps of really cool other shots by other people. But, you know, you're always your own worst critic.

I never think of taking a shot to win something. I just take it. For me, it's always about trying to make nice shots to look back on. To show people what I get up to and show those who aren't into diving the kinds of things we get to see.

Do you have any stories about a close encounter you've had when you're out?

We were out on a hunting trip last Friday in the Aoraingi Ranges. It's the roar season at the moment and we were out hunting, pushing through the bush. We happened to bump into a female deer who was grazing. We were really close, probably like 15 metres. The sun was behind our backs, and we had just shot a deer and were covered in its scent. I suppose it masked our human scent, so the deer didn't notice us. We were slowly trying to make more noise so it would look our way. And we called out, doing the roars calls, and it still didn't really react, so I thought maybe it did notice us but just thought we were another deer.

It's cool that through your photography you bring hunting and fishing experiences to people who haven't gone on those adventures.

Yeah exactly, they're cool experiences. You can document it on your phone, but having a camera, you can compose the image.

Also, with a digital camera, you can be trigger happy – which feels like a bit of me right now. With the fast shutter, you can capture little micro moments. Sometimes when people are moving and talking and whatnot, their eyes close and you might capture a funny half expression. Taking heaps of shots in that moment, you can capture the whole process and get a better image out of the burst.

With the shot of the jellyfish, it looks so well curated. But it seems like you just go with the flow.

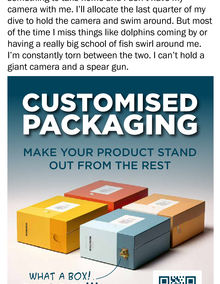
Yeah, it really was a small moment in the diving day. Later on when I was editing it I thought, 'sweet this is a really cool image. I just needed to pump up some colours.' When you take photos in the water, the light refraction cuts out certain colours. The deeper you go, the more reds and oranges get taken out of the photo. It's quite washed out when you have the raw photo. It can initially be quite a grey, sad looking shot.

When you edit, you play with colour saturation and push the image back into the purple, orange, and red end of the spectrum to make the jellyfish stand out a little bit more.

Taking photos of wildlife must take a lot of patience.

Yeah, you just wait for the moment. You won't find it if you're looking for it too hard. Things won't come along in the moment that you want them to. You can't really expect it, just be ready to take the photo when it's there.

I miss a lot of moments because I'm not holding the camera 24/7. Sometimes I'm just diving for something to take home and I don't have my camera with me. I'll allocate the last quarter of my dive to hold the camera and swim around. But most of the time I miss things like dolphins coming by or having a really big school of fish swirl around me. I'm constantly torn between the two. I can't hold a giant camera and a spear gun.



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Back to contents

Arise, fair sun

Photos by Hagen Hopkins Photography.

What if the greatest love story ever told ended differently?

& Juliet flips the script to ask the question: what if Juliet chose her own fate instead of following Romeo's?

The eight-time Olivier Award-nominated, smash-hit Broadway and West End musical created by Emmy® Award-winning *Schitt's Creek* writer David West Read is a hilarious and poignant story of self-discovery, empowerment, and second chances that proves there's life after Romeo. Paired with era-defining pop anthems by legendary songwriter Max Martin and friends, it's bound to set hearts soaring in a New Zealand premiere that hits Wellington's St James Theatre between the 9th and 24th of May.

Presented in Aotearoa by G&T Productions, *& Juliet* will deliver a concert-like experience that will see the chart-topping playlist that includes *Since U Been Gone*, *Roar*, *...Baby One More Time*, *Larger Than Life*, *Can't Stop the Feeling*, and more performed by an all-star cast of Southern Hemisphere legends.

"This is a show that is electrifying – it's smart, funny, and bursting with iconic hits, all brought to life by some of New Zealand's finest actors and creatives", Grant Meese from G&T Productions says. "We can't wait for New Zealanders to experience the magic".

In the titular role is Kristin Paulse fresh from wowing audiences across Australasia in *Tina: The Tina Turner Musical* and *RENT*, who is "beyond excited to be stepping into the role of Juliet. It is such an honour to come back home and perform alongside such incredible Kiwi talent as well as having the opportunity to reconnect with some old friends on stage".

These friends include Matu Ngaropo (*Hamilton the Musical*, *The Lion King*, *Something Rotten*), taking up the quill as Shakespeare himself; Awhimai Fraser (Disney's English and reo Māori *Moana 2*, reo Māori *Frozen*, and *Encanto*) as Anne; Lavina Williams (*The Lion King*, *Hairspray*, and *Sister Act*) as Angelique; Andrew Grainger (*End of Summer Time*, *Peter Pan*, *Chicago*) as Lance; and Andrew Papas (*Madagascar The Musical*, *Ten Tenors*) as the hopeless romantic Romeo. Rounding out the principal cast is Josh Johnson (*Jersey Boys*) as François, and Jared Pallesen (*REVEL* and *Something Rotten*) as May.

The laugh-out-loud and heartwarming story will see Hamish Mouat in the director's chair.

"With its iconic score of top-of-the-charts pop music, you can't help but fall in love with *& Juliet*", he says. "To see this level of Kiwi talent come together for *& Juliet* is thrilling. It's a show that's all heart, humour, full of pop hits, and absolute joy."

Fall head over heels for the unexpected theatrical triumph that *Forbes Magazine* dubbed "the best musical of the year". For you ne'er saw true beauty till *& Juliet*, a show of fire and powder, which as they kiss consume into something scintillating.

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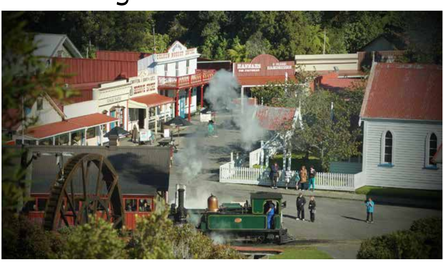
Grit and ghosts



Over 150 years ago, as settlers began expanding across Te Waipounamu, the wild West Coast became a rough-and-tumble place where folks of all stripes set out to build a life for themselves. Some opted to follow the straight and narrow, establishing businesses that would support them and cement their legacy in this new land of opportunity. Others chased a dream prospecting for gold to get rich quick… if it paid off. More still saw the gold rush as a chance not to find the shiny mineral, but to profit off those searching for it. Whoever settled in this region, there was one thing they all had in common: a relentless and indomitable spirit.

Along State Highway 6 between Hokitika and Greymouth is a crack in history, a wrinkle in time to this world of yore. Shantytown Heritage Park is a world-renowned time capsule that sets the stage for a journey into the past and reveals the real story of environmental destruction, adaptation, and regeneration that has defined life on the West Coast since people first fought their way through the bush. Here, visitors of all ages can become fully immersed in the daring experiences and rugged lives of the pioneers.

The recreated 19th-century town is made of original heritage buildings and historically inspired new ones, each one chock-full of trinkets and memorabilia. The open-air museum holds a collection of roughly 10,000 objects, 2000 photos, and 1000 archives, including those showcasing the barber, church, fire station, printing shop, bank, jeweller's, gaol, doctor's office, and more. Don't forget to follow the path to Chinatown too, which tells the story of Asian immigrants who arrived in New Zealand from 1867 and played a significant yet often overlooked role in the region's development.

Follow in the footsteps of pioneers by riding on one of the three historic locomotives up an old logging track through regenerating rainforests to catch a glimpse into the evolution of rail transport in New Zealand. Once you disembark, explore the old sawmill and read about the people who earned their livelihoods manning the machinery. Watch a sluice gun blasting away the mountainside, go gold panning in the run-off, and learn the knack of separating glimmers of wealth from sand. Whatever you find, you get to keep as a tangible keepsake of your time in Shantytown.

For another unique memento, dress up in old-timey garb and pose for a picture or head to the post shop to get your card emblazoned with an official Shantytown postage stamp. Along with an endless amount of history, there are plenty of activities for youngsters to enjoy: whizzing along on the playground's flying fox, completing the treasure hunt, and munching on old-fashioned sweet treats are but a few!

For a real West Coast pioneer experience, visit on a wet and wild autumn day. That's when you can feel the grit and the ghosts of Shantytown.

NZ adventures – the great outdoors

Simply exquisite

Where is the Lodge at Lansdowne Farm? On a pastoral farm on stunning Conway Coast south of Kaikōura.

The Lodge is for gathering friends and family. Oceanfront, crisp architecture, a campus setting, spacious common house… simply exquisite. Words don't suffice, really.

The Lodge hosts just one group at a time – perfect for family reunions, travelling friends, retreats, meetings, celebrations. Whether you require one big bedroom all to yourself, or all six bedrooms, the Lodge will be all yours. Unique, exclusive, private, beautiful. And as connected (Starlink® and Sky®) or detached as you wish.

Lansdowne Farm is 1500 acres of pasture and native bush, all along this Pacific beach, a 50-minute drive to Kaikōura.

Winter is wonderful here, with lower tariffs from June to October for the whole Lodge at Lansdowne Farm. Best to book directly at www.lansdownefarm.co.nz

Somewhere special

Mount Hakepa.

With dramatic coastlines plunging into the sea, thick emerald forests teeming with creatures, a turbulent history waiting to be unlocked, and all the hunting, fishing, and diving you could ask for, the Chatham Islands is where adventure awaits.

Being almost 800 kilometres away from New Zealand, these islands are as remote as they come – but only a two-hour flight away! This makes their ecosystem incredibly unique, with endemic species of flora and fauna found here and nowhere else.

The Chatham Islands are regarded as one of the last places in the Pacific Ocean to be permanently settled by people, yet they are rich in heritage with 11 registered historic places and one of New Zealand's two national historic reserves. Plus, there are over 700 recorded archaeological sites and hidden gems.

Walking, biking, boating, or diving are excellent ways to explore the wild side, while visiting the Chatham Islands Museum provides a window into the past.

The finest collection

The Geraldine Vintage Car & Machinery Club Museum is one of the finest collections in the Southern Hemisphere of vintage, veteran and classic cars and other machinery including tractors, small motors, chainsaws, motorcycles, vintage household items, film equipment, communications technology, and even a ship's engine. Additionally, it houses a Spartan vintage plane which used to fly commercially in South Canterbury.

Rated as the number one attraction in Geraldine on TripAdvisor, you could spend an entire day exploring the eight buildings. Some highlights include Zorro, a locally crafted electric car from the late 1960s, and the miniature and model room that houses a pedal car collection and model aircraft.

The museum is an enthusiast's dream. A recent visitor said, "This unsung gem of a museum is one of the best historical displays I have ever seen." In its 60th year, the museum is run by volunteers and is open daily.

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NZ adventures – the great outdoors

Adventures all around

Nestled in the central North Island lies the ancient forest of Pureora, home to the top-rated Timber Trail – a Grade 2-3 adventure suitable for most cyclists with sound skills and fitness. Winding down through the technically amazing Ellis and Burnard tramway, over magnificent suspension bridges, and around the engineering marvel that is the Ongarue Spiral, Timber Trail is a two-day ride of 84 kilometres. Three different styles of mid-ride accommodation and hosting can be found along the way.

Further down the island, the Mountains to Sea – Ngā Ara Tūhono trails are connected pathways navigating the journey of the Whanganui River from Tūroa on Mount Ruapehu to North Mole on the Tasman Sea. Ride the historic Ohakune Old Coach Road and traverse Fishers Track and Marton Sash and Door at Waimarino. Explore the connecting trails to Bridge to Nowhere through the Mangapurua Valley followed by a jetboat trip down the magnificent awa before traversing the Whanganui River Road. Ride individual sections or connect a full adventure.

Bespoke and boutique

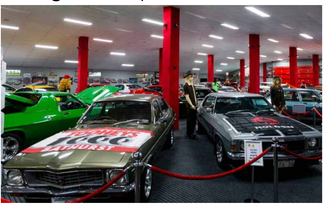
Feilding Golf Club is a regional gem of a boutique 18-hole course set alongside the banks of the Oroua River and surrounded by manicured mature trees, fairways, and greens.

Whether you're a seasoned golfer or just starting to perfect your swing, the course has the right amount of challenges for all skill levels, and its relaxed atmosphere and native birdsong make for an enjoyable walk – rain or shine.

The 18th hole leads you directly to The Clubhouse, serviced by a full bar operating on a club licence with fully staffed kitchen facilities. You'll also find a golf shop for all your balls, clubs, socks, and trundler needs.

The café offers a seasonally appropriate and classy menu. Pair this locally roasted Arrosta Coffee, a fantastic beverage selection, and one of the most stunning views in the region, and you have the most idyllic scenario.

Calling all autophiles



A 10-minute drive from the centre of New Plymouth sits the Hillsborough Holden Museum, home to an extensive private collection of Holden cars and memorabilia.

The museum emerged out of a lifetime passion from Steve Fabish, whose love for Holdens started when he bought his first 1972 HQ Ute. Steve and his wife Joy now invite other autophiles and grease monkeys to appreciate the collection of classic and modern cars, ranging from well-preserved early models to restored models and late-model new cars.

The complex also features Hideaway Luge Taranaki, including a train that takes you to the top of the hill after each run, a mini putt golf course inspired by the famous Mount Panorama Motor Racing Circuit in Bathurst, New South Wales, and a soundshell set up to host live music events. The Hillsborough Holden Museum is a great place to bring the whole family.

Check out our amazing Holdens, zoom down the family-fun Luge, & conquer our world-class mini putt!
from 2 June we are open during school holidays only
027 447 0708 | 683 Egmont Road, New Plymouth
www.hillsboroughholdenmuseum.co.nz

See and learn about Barry's vintage classic John Deere machinery collection!
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Saturday-Sunday 10am-5pm or weekdays by appointment | 1914 Mountain Road, Inglewood
027 447 9232 | bjbishoptransport@xtra.co.nz
www.maketawa.co.nz

Tuesday-Sunday 11pm-7:30pm | Phone 06 758 6280
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Back to contents

Health and wellbeing

Heart and soul

Across flat plains covered in shimmering golden grasses, past vineyards and pristine lakes, beneath enormous southern skies swollen with stars – Central Otago is famous for its wealth of bike trails.

Cycling is incredible for your fitness and health, especially heart health, and the variety of trails on offer in Central Otago means there is something for everyone. With shops in Clyde, Wānaka, and Cromwell, Bike It Now! are perfectly positioned for access to Aotearoa's best routes. They can be as hands on or off as you need them to be, whether all you're after is a bike – including e-bike hire – or want them to organise meals, transport, and accommodation in one of their tour packages.

Bike It Now! can get you feeling fit and healthy while visiting some of New Zealand's most storied and striking landscapes for what's sure to be an adventure of a lifetime.

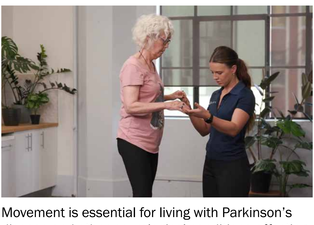
Embrace hauora

Toitū Te Ao provides mana-enhancing services, empowerment, and support for Māori and Indigenous people living with and affected by HIV. Founded in 2020 in response to an absence of support for Māori whānau, it tackles everything from hands-on care to advocacy.

They aim to provide pathways to health, understanding, and empowerment through activities, and services designed specifically for Māori, Pasifika, and Indigenous peoples – whether they identify as takatāpui, straight, male, female, or transgender. This includes one-on-one peer support for people living with HIV and their whānau, advocacy for Māori and Pacific communities, cultural guidance, and tikanga in the sexual health space. Testing for HIV and syphilis is also available along with training for other health organisations to deliver testing for these diseases.

Driven by kaupapa Māori, Toitū Te Ao's hauora (holistic wellbeing) approach ensures those seeking help are uplifted and supported in a way that embraces te ao Māori and strengthens connections.

Essential movement



Movement is essential for living with Parkinson's disease and other neurological conditions affecting balance, mobility, and the ability to carry out everyday functions.

Founded by neuro-exercise coach Ruby Talley, Plexity ensures people living with neurological conditions have access to the right forms of exercise and rehabilitation, helping them to manage their reality and support independence.

Plexity offers an initial consultation followed by a movement assessment that explores movement patterns and establishes a starting point for their journeys.

The pathway might include one-on-one coaching, neurophysiotherapy sessions, neuro-exercise classes, or a combination tailor made to fit their clients' lives.

At the heart of Plexity is connection, built through consistent, considered support. Every diagnosis is individual, and while each journey is different, Plexity works to provide the guidance you need.

Midwives Day 5th May
Nurses Day 12th May

Thank you, nurses

When we are at our most vulnerable and need a helping hand, nurses are always there to help without question. Yet, their hard work and selfless dedication often go unnoticed. Our midwives too provide essential reproductive, maternal, newborn, and adolescent health services worldwide, yet according to the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), the world needs one million more people in this role.

On the 5th and the 12th of May, we have the opportunity to recognise the midwives and nurses in our community and around the globe who help those in need every day.

The 5th of May is the International Day of the Midwife, bringing global attention to the need to invest more in midwifery education, employment, regulation, and leadership so there are enough midwives in the world to ensure better outcomes for women, children, families, and the future.

Every year on the 12th of May, The Council of Nurses (ICN) organises International Nurses Day to coincide with Florence Nightingale's birthday, who is often considered the founder of nursing. Building on the success of the 2025 campaign, this year's theme is Our Nurses. Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives.

You can show your appreciation by doing something as simple as buying a nurse or a midwife a coffee or making them a card, or you could donate to foundations that support nurses and midwives locally, nationally, or internationally.

Nurses and midwives are there from the beginning until the end. It's time to be there for them.

Whānau wellbeing

Kōkiri Marae is passionate and dedicated to serving the needs of its community. Structured yet flexible, challenging yet supportive, focused yet holistic, the compassionate and knowledgeable team offer a range of community, social, and hauora services.

Formalised in 1980, Kōkiri Marae's hauora services have expanded over the years to encompass a wide range of options to at-risk Māori and their whānau. They extend across all four of the hauora philosophy wellbeing principles: physical, social, spiritual, and mental and emotional.

Health services encompass specialised and broad programmes. Some options include outreach diabetes and immunisation services, sexual and reproductive health services, several stop-smoking programmes, the car seat rent-to-own scheme, and the Rangatahi Tū Rangatira National Programme. Kōkiri Marae also has a clinical campervan team driving to communities across the region in an effort to provide free vaccinations to whānau who may be unable to access them through their GP or medical centre.

In the Whānau Ora wellbeing services, Kōkiri Marae provides access to cervical screenings, nursing services, health education programmes, anger-management support, caregiving and after-school support, and social work.

From pēpi and tamariki through to rangatahi, pakeke, and kaumātua, Kōkiri Marae provides holistic and comprehensive hauora services for the whole whānau.

Birth Treasure

Celebrating and thanking our midwives on International Midwives Day 5th May

Linda Elvines
027 702 5413
or 0800 702 5413
ph only

Mel Symes
027 320 3838

Mariette Fuchs
027 412 7100

Shazeena Nisha
022 136 7889

You can find us in our clinic rooms at North City Plaza, Suite 412 Level 4, 2 Titahi Bay Road, Porirua | www.birthtreasure.org

International Nurses Day
12th May
A heartfelt thank you to all our nurses and caregivers, you are the best.

PEACE OF MIND

WE OFFER YOU...
• Security, dignity, companionship and peace • Rest home & hospital care
• Respite Care • Care suites • Palliative care

GLENWOOD MASONIC HOSPITAL

Denise McAlpine - Facility Manager
74 Upper Plain Road, Masterton
Tel 06 377 0221
E: gmhmanager@masonicvillages.co.nz

A big thank you to all our nurses celebrating International Nurses Day!

Hutt Valley region only

MEASLES Immunisations

ALL CHILDHOOD Immunisations

FLU & COVID Immunisations

OUR OUTREACH TEAM CAN COME TO YOU

We do home visits, attend Schools, Businesses, Kohanga Reo & Community Events

HPV, Boostrix, Whooping Cough, Measles, Flu & Covid Vaccinations are available

04 939 4630
022 0727 123

Back to contents

Time for a check-up

If you've been putting off that skin check or have been meaning to get a mole looked over, the services provided at the Witako Skin Clinic should be your first port of call.

The highly trained Dr Patrick Holla and Dr George Karageorge offer professional and friendly services with low wait times, competitive prices, and no need to procure a referral from your general practitioner.

The skin clinic provides a range of services including spot checks and specific lesion checks, full body clinical skin checks, surgical and non-surgical cancer management – including prevention, diagnosis, and treatment – as well as a range of minor surgeries (lipomas, cysts, and other benign lesions/conditions) and other treatments that improve your skin health.

You can find the team at Witako Skin Clinic at Ropata Health in Lower Hutt. Don't let that skin check-up keep sliding down your list – book an appointment today.

Hibernation holidays at Maruia River Retreat

Set within a 500-acre private forest estate in the South Island of New Zealand, Maruia River Retreat offers a different kind of luxury – one defined by space, quiet, and care. Positioned along the Maruia River and surrounded by epic landscapes, it is a place where you can immediately shift the pace of modern life and soften almost immediately.

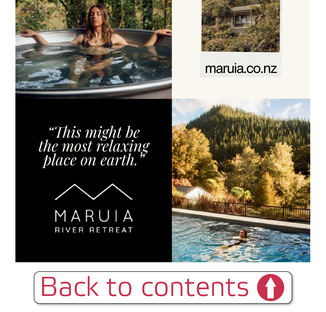
For many of us today, burnout is no longer occasional – it is constant. Long days, digital overload, and restless sleep create a baseline of fatigue that a typical holiday rarely resolves. A Personal Restoration Retreat at Maruia River Retreat is designed to create the guilt-free rest we all need and genuine recovery.

Mornings may begin with yoga or sleeping in, followed by time in nature – with a guided nature walk through forest trails, taking a cold dip or just sitting by the river, and simply resting in your comfortable villa with amazing views. Wellness facilities include two saunas, heated magnesium pool with swim jets, two hot tubs, a library and reading nook, a premium massage chair, and many private spaces for quiet reflection. With only seven villas and a maximum of 10 guests on the 500-acre property, the experience remains intimate, generous, and unhurried.

Equally central is nourishment through food and the care of its people. Meals are thoughtfully prepared, using local and seasonal ingredients and some from our own garden. Beyond the food itself, it is the human element – the attentiveness of hosts, the warmth of the environment – that allows guests to feel genuinely looked after.

Over time, sleep deepens, the mind clears, and the body recalibrates. What begins as a retreat becomes something more lasting: a return to balance, supported by nature, simplicity, and presence.

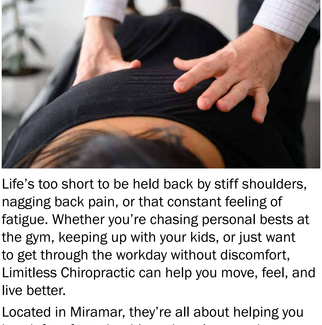
Take the opportunity to step away, reset, and experience the full depth of restoration Maruia River Retreat is known for, with a special offer available for a limited time at www.maruia.co.nz



Back to contents

Pamper yourself

Life's too short



Life's too short to be held back by stiff shoulders, nagging back pain, or that constant feeling of fatigue. Whether you're chasing personal bests at the gym, keeping up with your kids, or just want to get through the workday without discomfort, Limitless Chiropractic can help you move, feel, and live better.

Located in Miramar, they're all about helping you break free from the things that slow you down. The expert chiropractors focus on enhancing your nervous system, improving movement, and boosting overall wellbeing.

With the knowledge that every body is different, their tailored approach fits your unique needs. Whether you're an office worker dealing with tension headaches or a slouched posture, a tradesperson struggling with lower back pain, or experiencing a pregnancy that is taking its toll, they've got you covered. At Limitless Chiropractic their goal is simple: to help you feel limitless, so you can live life to the fullest.

Event excellence

Running a thriving events business while raising a family solo is no small feat. For Sharon Powick, it's simply part of the job. The driving force behind Foxtail Events, she has spent over 20 years delivering vibrant, well-executed events for the Greater Wellington Region.

Sharon balances logistics, creativity, and parenting with resilience and adaptability. She manages every detail – planning, marketing, vendor coordination, and budgets – with a hands-on approach and a passion for creating community-focused experiences. Foxtail Events span from grassroots gatherings to large-scale public celebrations. Sharon has contributed to major events like the Wellington Lantern Festival, while also producing popular local markets. Her work includes fundraisers, exhibitions, festivals, and gala dinners, as well as environmentally focused community events.

For Sharon, doing it all isn't just possible – it's how she supports her family and her wider community while continuing to grow a successful business.

Record-setting

World famous in Aotearoa, the fourth Annual Record Convention is coming to Brewtown in Upper Hutt on Sunday the 31st of May.

The convention will be packed to the rafters with records, CDs, tapes, merch, and memorabilia from a mind-blowing number of vendors from across the motu.

Expected to be bigger than ever – with tens of thousands of records for your perusal – you can discover hidden gems, bring an LP back from obscurity, or score a chance to pick up one of your all-time favourite albums.

Don't miss the opportunity to connect with fellow music enthusiasts while vibing to a curated playlist replete with the good, the bad, and the obscure of New Zealand music – the perfect way to celebrate the culmination of NZ Music Month.

Come along and flip through some records, have a drink at the bar, and let your kids entertain themselves at the activity table.

Annual Record Convention '26

Hosted By On the Record

Sunday 31st May
10am - 3:30pm
Brewtown
Upper Hutt

Set to become World Famous in NZ!

Records, CDs, Tapes, Merch and More!

cash sales - free entry - all ages

Pamper yourself

Timeless design

The beautiful store Ellora, found on Main Street in Greytown, is the embodiment of sustainability, intentional design, and dedication to craft. Raised in a farming and weaving tradition, Abhi and Nirmal are driven by a desire to make fashion both beautiful and meaningful. What began as a shared vision has grown into a brand that celebrates timeless design while staying true to ethical values.

All the fabrics and products sourced are ethical and sustainable. In their women's clothing and bed linen ranges, they use GOTS Certified organic hemp fabric, AZO-free reactive dyes, and buttons made from coconut husk, pearls, and metal instead of plastic. Even the trims, labels, and packaging are plastic free.

Every item is influenced by the natural beauty of Wairarapa and Aotearoa, designed to outlast trends, and thoughtfully made with comfort and balance in mind. Head in-store today to discover the creativity, craftmanship, and conscious living of Ellora.

Khandallah boutique

Tucked into the heart of Khandallah Village, Hamilton & Murray Boutique is a charming destination for fashion, gifts, and a little everyday delight. Inside, you'll find a thoughtfully curated mix of men's and women's fashion, accessories, gifts, and special pieces you didn't know you needed.

Owner Sheila hand-selects every item with care, shaping the collection around the season, her personal style, and what her loyal customers love most – always with a few playful touches to make you smile.

Featuring favourites like Vassalli, Barbour, Huffer, Cooper by Trelise, and Stella & Gemma, the boutique is as much about the experience as it is the product.

As Sheila puts it, "I want everyone to feel welcome – surprised, comfortable, and happy when they leave. Ideally, it feels less like shopping, and more like catching up with a friend."

Hamilton & Murray Boutique is your favourite department store, reimagined.

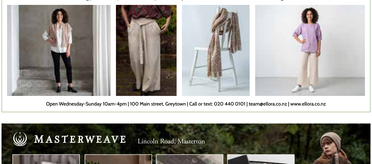
Deliciously luxurious

Located in Masterton, Masterweave Textiles is Aotearoa's only specialist mohair weaving facility, providing high-quality mohair, alpaca, and wool products to high-end specialty stores all over the globe.

Owners Philippa and Lindsay Cairns have over 30 years of experience creating consistently high-quality products. During his travels Lindsay observed a centuries-old brushing technique for knitwear. Using a truckload of Kiwi ingenuity he developed a machine that performed the same process. What's more, they're now entirely solar powered.

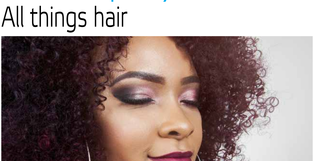
Masterweave Textiles provides deliciously luxurious products including throws and scarfs. Their mohair carpets and rugs have been featured at New York's D&D Design Centre and in *Architectural Digest*, and they have been commissioned to create bench blankets for the All Blacks and costumes for *The Lord of the Rings* movies.

Get your hands on a throw and feel the softness and warmth of these locally sourced natural fibres.



Pamper yourself

All things hair



All Things Hair Limited was built on the belief that "Having gorgeously maintained Afro curly or mixed textured hair should be effortless and cost effective wherever you are." ATHL are your hair product specialists regardless of whether you have kinky, coily, curly, or wavy natural locks, wear extensions, sport dreadlocks, or have chemically straightened hair.

Their expansive product range ensures that your hair stays hydrated, moisturised, and vibrant. They offer natural products – such as the African Pride Shea Butter Miracle Bouncy Curls Pudding and the Shea Moisture Jamaican Black Castor Oil Strengthen and Restore Leave-In Conditioner – hair extensions, relaxers, weaves, braid and dreadlock maintenance care, and hair accessories.

All Things Hair Limited can help get your hair feeling healthy, maintained, and looking good, no matter the weather. Visit their knowledgable team in-store in Newtown and they'll guide you to the right products that'll leave you looking and feeling flawless.

Healthy, beautiful skin

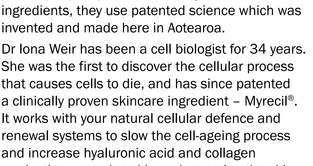
It's hard to find skin products without toxins or chemicals, let alone one that is scientifically proven. Atopis® products not only use natural ingredients, they use patented science which was invented and made here in Aotearoa.

Dr Iona Weir has been a cell biologist for 34 years. She was the first to discover the cellular process that causes cells to die, and has since patented a clinically proven skincare ingredient – Myrecil®. It works with your natural cellular defence and renewal systems to slow the cell-ageing process and increase hyaluronic acid and collagen production, restoring skin and reversing the skin damage cycle.

With products ranging from exfoliants, masks, and cleaners to creams, toners, oils, and gels, they're suitable for all skin types – including acne, eczema, and rosacea-prone skin.

Each product contains Myrecil® alongside other natural ingredients that nourish and revitalise your skin. The goal is simple: healthy skin is beautiful skin.

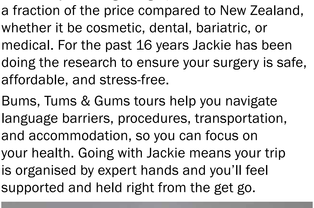
Better together



A previously fit and active 62-year-old woman from Nelson experienced pain in her hips so unbearable she couldn't walk. She saw a specialist who told her she urgently needed a double hip replacement. Unable to afford surgery in New Zealand she reached out to Jackie Brown, who was able to take her to India with a group to get the life-altering procedure she deserved.

The reality is that getting operations overseas is a fraction of the price compared to New Zealand, whether it be cosmetic, dental, bariatric, or medical. For the past 16 years Jackie has been doing the research to ensure your surgery is safe, affordable, and stress-free.

Bums, Tums & Gums tours help you navigate language barriers, procedures, transportation, and accommodation, so you can focus on your health. Going with Jackie means your trip is organised by expert hands and you'll feel supported and held right from the get go.



Back to contents

Playcentre

Where whānau play, learn and grow together

Celebrating 85 YEARS

A Wartime Beginning and Lasting Legacy: Playcentre Marks 85 Years

Playcentre parent Kara Dunn, with her son Brando Dunn adding his handprint to the new mural at Karori Playcentre.

This week, Playcentre will celebrate 85 years since it first started in the Wellington suburb of Karori.

On 24 April 1941 – what would turn out to be the eve of Anzac Day – a group of mothers in Karori, Wellington, did something that would quietly outlast the war, and every government since.

They started Playcentre. A simple and radical idea: that parents, together, could be their children's first and best educators.

What began in Karori has grown into a movement of more than 400 rural and urban centres supporting over 14,000 families across Aotearoa.

Founded during World War II, Playcentre emerged from a time of profound challenge. Fathers were absent, and mothers were raising children in conditions of hardship – facing financial strain, social isolation, and the weight of doing it mostly alone.

Those founding women recognised something essential: the issue was not just early learning. It was about families, connection, and community.

Over the Easter weekend, Playcentre Aotearoa marked where it all began with a new mural by celebrated Aotearoa artist FLOX, painted on the wall of Karori Playcentre.

Reflecting themes of play, growth, and the natural world, the work draws on values that have shaped Playcentre since 1941. It marks the place where the movement was born – a visible reminder that Playcentre is still here.

Still part of the same community, the story is not simply remembered. It is still being lived.

Playcentre's relevance is not only historical. In 2026, one in seven children in Aotearoa lives in material hardship. 44% of New Zealanders report feeling lonely. Postnatal depression affects 10-20% of mothers who have recently given birth.

Whānau today face the same essential pressures that moved those first Karori women to act – isolation, hardship, and the deep human need for community and connection.

Playcentre is not just about early learning. It's about care, community, and collective strength – and about ensuring no parent ever has to walk their journey alone.

To mark this milestone, we invite you to give what you can to support Playcentre and the communities we serve.

As a not-for-profit, every contribution goes directly towards supporting whānau-led early learning in communities across Aotearoa.

Your generosity helps ensure future generations of tamariki can continue to play, learn, and belong at Playcentre.

Donate today and be part of Playcentre's next 85 years at playcentre.org.nz.

Nepia Winiata, Chief Executive

"85 years is not just a number - it's a living legacy. It's generations of parents who have shown up, given their time, and grown alongside their tamariki. Together, they built a connection, a community, and something strong enough to endure. Karori is where our story began – and it's a story that is still unfolding," says Nepia Winiata, Chief Executive of Playcentre Aotearoa.

"The model those women created in 1941 is more relevant now than it has ever been. As other forms of social support and connection have dropped away over the decades, Playcentre's role as the village raising our tamariki and supporting their whānau make it more relevant than ever."

Playcentre family memories

Janina Paterson

When Janina Paterson joined Playcentre, she was searching for home. "It's the shared, collective care that makes Playcentre so special," she explains.

During some of the hardest periods of her life – postnatal depression and the fight for support for her son's autism – Playcentre quite literally helped her cope. "It didn't just support my children," Janina reflects. "It helped hold me together."

Playcentre helped Janina follow her child's lead and trust that learning happens naturally through play and strong relationships. It reframed how she saw learning, growth, and her role as a parent.

Alesha Murray

Alesha joined Playcentre after becoming a mother and realising she needed connection, support, and community. But there was another reason too.

"I was a Playcentre child," she says. "So, I joined Playcentre. That's just what we do."

That sense of continuity shaped Alesha's experience from the very beginning. What she found when she arrived was exactly what she needed at that point in her parenting journey: meaningful friendships, abundant resources for children, and a collective wealth of knowledge shared openly by experienced parents.

Judith and Graham Wear

Both Judith and Graham were South Islanders by birth and had spent the previous two years in Wellington. Auckland was new, and apart from each other and their children, they had no immediate support around them.

Jackie was nearly ready for school, but it was Billy who needed friends. The local kindergarten waitlist was two to three years long, and it was then that someone suggested Playcentre.

"We'd never heard of it," Judith recalls.

But there was one in the next bay. So, Judith packed up the three children and went to find it – and that first visit changed everything.

Jackie Quinlan Dorbeck

Playcentre isn't just part of Jackie's past – it's a thread that runs through her entire life. As a parent, a grandparent, an educator, and a community leader, Jackie's story reflects the heart of Playcentre itself: whānau, connection, and learning together across generations.

Jackie's journey with Playcentre began when she attended as a child with her parents and continued when she joined Mairangi Bay Playcentre as a parent with her two young children.

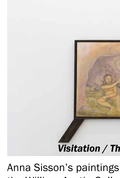
"I didn't really know of any alternative early childhood education at the time," Jackie says. "I had young children, and Playcentre was familiar. It felt right."

Find your local centre and join our village at www.playcentre.org.nz

Gallery news

by Isabella Smith

Art as alchemy



Visitation / The Gaze of Judgment, 2026.

Anna Sisson's paintings hang on the walls of the William Austin Gallery like question marks, interrogating and disrupting historical narratives and inherited mythologies to create images that are familiar yet changed, residing at an intersection between beauty and eroticism, disturbance and violence.

Sisson is a Tāmaki Makaurau-based artist who works primarily with sculpture, exploring historical nodes of queer repression through religion and enlightenment, and overlaying ideas of desire, sexuality, and taboos to construct a new gaze. Her exhibition *Temple of Romance* will be on display until the 25th of April.

Looking at the subjects in her paintings, it is evident that she grew up with her mother reciting Greek myths and poetry from William Blake: the biblical figures, angels, and caves, the Raphaelite cherubs floating among clouds, the landscapes representative of emotional and psychological experience.

She aligns herself with the New Zealand Gothic lineage, a movement that examines inherited stories to reveal the power structures they prop up. "The romantic and gothic act as a bridge between the classical and the contemporary", she says, adding they engage "with the land's darker undercurrents, themes of isolation, colonial anxiety, and the uncanny qualities of the landscape."

"The cave became an important motif while I was thinking about creation stories, female banishment, and figures like witches and oracles", she tells me. "I started connecting those ideas to 'caves' in my own life, internal, psychological, and physical spaces, and weaving those together."

Sisson says the paintings operate like pages from a book: atmospheric, dreamlike moments suspended in time and bound by their frames. Three sculptural pieces in the collection behave more like recently unearthed archaeological forms. "The gallery becomes the frame, and the viewer completes the work through their own judgment."

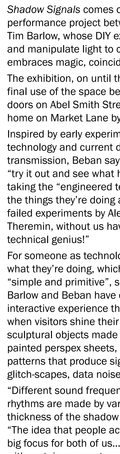
Sisson collected pebbles, wheat, glitter, and sand from different beaches to add broader historical weight to the sculptures. Mixing in the raw materials embeds land into the artworks, land that is haunted by shrinking shorelines, its colonial past, and a sense of isolation and loss. "The found materials act as ingredients in the alchemy of art making… They transform objects into meaning and turn earth into gold."

The design and intention of the exhibition extend beyond the subversion of symbols and mythology, the alchemy of found materials, the unreality created by the ethereal colour palette, and the write-up – which reads like a poetic treatise on hermeneutics. The frames too carry their own set of questions.

Behind the painting *XX* is a cross that "references crucifixion, particularly in relation to the historical persecution of women, queer people, and religious outliers. At the same time, that imagery has been reappropriated in fetish cultures, where ideas of suffering, transcendence, and the body are reworked… But the form can also be read as an 'X,' a kiss, the XX chromosome, or a mark of refusal."

Sisson's works are full of tension, demonstrating that the sublime is both overwhelming and unstable.

Light, shadows, sound



Shadow Signals. 2026.

Shadow Signals comes out of the ongoing performance project between Daniel Beban and Tim Barlow, whose DIY experimentations modulate and manipulate light to create sound in a way that embraces magic, coincidence, and failure.

The exhibition, on until the 15th of May, marks the final use of the space before Toi Pōneke closes the doors on Abel Smith Street and heads to their new home on Market Lane by the waterfront.

Inspired by early experiments in light and sound technology and current developments in data transmission, Beban says their approach was to "try it out and see what happens," rather than taking the "engineered technical" route. He says the things they're doing are "like some very early failed experiments by Alexander Bell or Leon Theremin, without us having one drop of their technical genius!"

For someone as technologically stunted as I am, what they're doing, which I've been assured is very "simple and primitive", sounds incredibly complex. Barlow and Beban have created an immersive, interactive experience that is activated only when visitors shine their phone torches through sculptural objects made of collaged-over and painted perspex sheets, in order to create shadow patterns that produce signal music: electronic glitch-scapes, data noise, and shadow tones.

"Different sound frequencies/notes and different rhythms are made by varying the fineness or thickness of the shadow patterns", Beban says. "The idea that people activate the work is another big focus for both of us… We set up an environment with certain parameters, but it only comes alive when someone interacts with it."

Glitch as a musical idea and genre grew with the advent of digital technology. It embraces the failure of technology and involves circuit bending, rewiring, and tampering with electronic instruments to create new sounds – a noisescape that Beban, owner and director of Pyramid Club, is more than familiar with. The exhibition experiments with glitch through its celebration of the wonky, noisy, and weird sounds that can emerge out of modulating one energy source into another: the optic into the aural.

The duo first began working together in 2023 for a tribute concert for the legendary artist, sculptor, and light modulator Jim Allen, who designed the coloured glass embellishments in Futuna Chapel in Karori. Barlow says, "There's an intensity of colour and beauty of reflected light patterns in that space. So we've been trying to turn light into a physical presence that can emotionally affect people."

An important aspect of their project is working with renewable energy sources. In an earlier evolution of the exhibition, Beban and Barlow worked with sunlight and wind to create sound frequencies, before creating a version that would fit within the enclosed gallery space. Tim Barlow's art practice focuses on community-based interactive public art, often building concrete sculptures from innovative materials. More recently he has been building seawalls from industrial waste. Daniel Beban has been a central figure in Te Whanganui-a-Tara's music community. His sound practice explores the sonic possibilities of things, including creating sound sculptures, with many of his works made of found or recycled materials.

For me, the sensitivity of the experiment almost feels like the artists have created their own version of synesthesia, altering our perception by linking two senses together with one setting off the other. Head along and say farewell to Toi Pōneke's home on Abel Smith Street, and step into your creative duty of bringing this exhibition to life.

Back to contents

Lower Hutt 5-star

Time to delegate

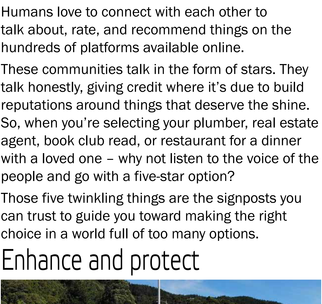
You didn't go into business to be buried in the back office. Office administration and management, bookkeeping, payroll, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, and other things on that endless pile can keep you from getting on with what really lights you up.

The team at Zesty Business Essentials are five-star business virtuosos who take care of the systems behind the scenes, partnering with you as a business owner to manage the essential tasks and keep the ship sailing smoothly.

Also on offer is mentoring and strategy support, help to set up and design your website, and the JuicyCRM platform that streamlines and automates your business through a single, easy-to-use command centre.

Business owners can save up to 13 hours a week of administrative duties. All you have to do is delegate those pesky tasks to the experts at Zesty, who provide a tailored, knowledgable, and trusted service based on true partnership.

Five twinkling things



One of the best things to come out of the internet is the public discourse around what's good, what's not so good, and what's absolutely fabulous when it comes to restaurants, services, accommodations, book and film recommendations, products, and everything in between.

Humans love to connect with each other to talk about, rate, and recommend things on the hundreds of platforms available online.

These communities talk in the form of stars. They talk honestly, giving credit where it's due to build reputations around things that deserve the shine. So, when you're selecting your plumber, real estate agent, book club read, or restaurant for a dinner with a loved one – why not listen to the voice of the people and go with a five-star option?

Those five twinkling things are the signposts you can trust to guide you toward making the right choice in a world full of too many options.

Enhance and protect

Sitting on top of your most valuable asset, your roof is the crown of your home. It ensures you and your whānau are warm and dry and keeps the house safe from weather.

Whether you need to fix up your current roof or are in the market for a new one, Midnite Roofing provides expert solutions that stand the test of time.

With years of experience, the Midnite Roofing team prioritise attention to detail and teamwork to provide high-quality roofing solutions. They offer a range of colours, materials, and styles of roofs to suit all types of homes. Whether you're restoring a heritage cottage or building your modern dream home, they work with you and your builders to deliver a project that will both enhance and protect your home.

Whether you're in the market for repairs, replacements, installation, or maintenance, Midnite Roofing completes every project to the highest standard.

THE MORTGAGE ADVICE COMPANY

We're Passionate, Responsible, Agile, Transparent, Experienced, and give great advice in an effort to get you the best results.

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Robbie and his team of experts can help you make the most of your financial future by aligning your investments with your goals and risk profile, and by devising strategies to improve your financial security. Whether you're preparing to purchase your first home or gearing up for retirement, our goal is to help you stay on track and make informed financial decisions every step of the way.

A trusted name

Dwain Bird is the owner of Betta Inspect It and Betta Property Compliance Wairarapa, bringing more than 25 years of hands-on experience as a builder.

Dwain lives and works in the heart of Wairarapa and he knows the building issues that can arise locally. His inspections are thorough, practical, and carried out in line with relevant regulations, giving homeowners, landlords, and purchasers confidence and peace of mind. Reports are delivered promptly, with clear, easy-to-read findings.

Alongside pre-purchase building inspections and healthy homes, Dwain is qualified to provide property condition assessments and meth and asbestos testing. By operating across both inspection and compliance, he offers clients a clear, end-to-end understanding of their property obligations in the rental market and helps people to make informed decisions when buying a property.

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Back to contents

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Wellington

Nothing speaks to client satisfaction quite like referrals and repeat business. For Ray White agent Sarah Mairs, success is built on a simple yet powerful formula: exceptional people skills, clear and consistent communication, a genuine, friendly approach, and deep local expertise.

Having joined the real estate profession in 1997, Sarah knows areas of Wellington inside out. Her market knowledge and strong negotiation skills ensure every transaction is handled with care and precision, delivering outcomes that meet the needs of every party. It's no surprise Sarah Mairs is a name people recommend. If you're considering your next move, get in touch today.

Porirua

There's no better sign of a good neighbourhood than knowing that your real estate agent also lives in the area. Harcourts' Jo Eastlake not only understands the unique character of the Whitby and Porirua region, she meets every client with empathy and understanding, is an expert communicator, and is efficient with her no-nonsense attitude.

Prior to becoming a real estate agent, Jo was a professional stylist, which gives her that extra creative edge that ensures properties stand out in the market and buyers get to see the full potential of their future home. Whatever your property needs, give Jo a call.

Kāpiti

With over two decades of experience in the real estate industry, Moira Simpson from Village Real Estate knows Kāpiti exceptionally well.

Having raised her three daughters there, her comprehensive knowledge extends beyond property and into community, connection, and ensuring your next move is made for all the right reasons.

Moira is an expert communicator and active member of the area. This is evident in the way her business has been built up around repeat clients and referrals. If you're thinking of making a change, get in touch with Moira, who'll show you a slice of the Kāpiti lifestyle.

Manawatū

With hundreds of successful sales, Property Brokers' Alison Kinghorn is the kind of real estate agent you want on your team. Her unique blend of industry expertise and strong relationship skills combined with a zest for life guarantees that she delivers customer service of the highest standard. Alison's passion for people and property go hand in hand. She is practical, professional, honest, and treats every client with respect. With her sharp eye for detail, strong organisational skills, and sound local knowledge, Alison is the right person to call when you're looking to make a change.

Upper Hutt

Proudly born and raised in the Hutt Valley, Anahera Waikato from Harcourts has the kind of local knowledge and genuine community connection you just can't fake. Known for her calm professionalism and thoughtful communication style, having Anahera on your team ensures that the ride will be a smooth one.

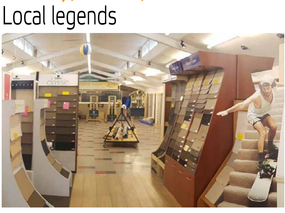
The property market is confusing even at the best of times, but her proactive and client-first approach ensures that every stage of the buying and selling process is clear, easy to understand, and stress free.

If you're looking to make a change, get in touch with Anahera Waikato for honest guidance you can rely on.

Back to contents

Buy, build, renovate

Local legends



Instantly recognisable, David & Maria's Carpet & Vinyl Warehouse has become part of the furniture in Strathmore Park, where the family-owned business has looked after customers and their flooring requirements for over 40 years.

Their local and imported wool and nylon carpets have been laid across the Wellington Region, including in Upper Hutt and Kāpiti Coast. If you're after a sophisticated look that feels soft underfoot, they offer a wide range of hard-wearing vinyl planks and laminates that are sustainable, long-lasting, and a fraction of the price of stone, ceramic, and wood.

The showroom's relaxed atmosphere attracts people from across the region, where the staff are renowned for being friendly, knowledgable, and committed to finding you the right flooring. Speak to the experts and discuss their recommended options, take home some samples, and let the team take care of the rest – stress free.

Tick off your to-dos

It's almost that time again! Doors open from Friday the 8th to Sunday the 10th of May for the Wellington Better Home and Living Show, and it's shaping up to be another fantastic event. With more than 140 exhibitors, this year's event will be brimming with fresh ideas, inspiration, and expert advice. You don't need a project on the go to enjoy a day out either, there really is something for everyone.

Hosted at Hnry Stadium, the Wellington Better Home and Living Show is the perfect place to spark ideas for your home, garden, and lifestyle.

"No project is no problem," marketing manager Emily Shanley says. "Whether you're midway through a renovation or just love a good browse, there's something here for everyone."

From artists to cabins, solar energy solutions, spa pools, décor, barbeques, wellness products, and tasty treats, there's plenty to explore. With show-only specials, great coffee, delicious food, and family-friendly entertainment, it's a fun day out and the perfect chance to tick off that to-do list while scoring a great deal.

The Wellington Better Home and Living Show keeps things fresh with a variety of first-time exhibitors, including Wools of New Zealand with locally grown wool carpets designed for comfort and durability, Schoc Chocolates offering handmade gourmet treats in a wide range of flavours, and ViBERi, a family-run orchard producing nutrient-rich New Zealand blackcurrants.

Visitors can also enjoy free daily Ask an Expert sessions, bringing along plans or questions, or simply listening in. Resident builder Peter Wolfkamp will present on Saturday. Plus, families can get creative with Resene's Paint a Birdhouse sessions from 11am to 2pm over the weekend, with giveaways and prizes up for grabs.

You'll find everything you're looking for and more at the Wellington Better Home and Living Show. Visit www.betterhomeandlivingshow.co.nz to find out more.

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From go to whoa

Born and raised in Wellington into a property investment family, Harcourts' George Loizou has real estate in his blood.

With those deep roots comes a vast network in the Wellington region. He says, "Wellington buyers and sellers are informed, cautious, and value honesty – something I strongly align with." George's mixture of expertise, sincerity, determination, and infectious zeal makes him the ideal person to helm the ship as you navigate the market on your journey to finding a new home.

George's passion flows beyond property and into fine arts and classic cars. His art can be found on walls across New Zealand, and he is living out his dream of owning and driving classic cars.

Described by clients as down to earth, pleasant to communicate with, and intuitive, George delivers unparalleled outcomes for buyers and sellers alike. His unwavering commitment and energy mean that he always goes above and beyond to exceed your expectations.

Keep comfortable

For 15 years, Eco Wellington has kept Wellingtonians cool in summer and warm in winter with insulated, double-glazed uPVC doors and windows. Starting as a one-man army with Ross McKitterick, it has grown into a team that services the entire region.

uPVC windows and doors are known for their high performance in winter thanks to their superior insulation. But double glazing is also beneficial in the summertime. By blocking draughts, controlling condensation, and reducing temperature loss and noise, they help homes stay comfortable, healthy, private, and easy to care for.

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Right now, families are under immense pressure. The cost-of living and fuel crises are pushing many people to the brink. The need for help has never been greater.

Wraparound services don't just ease immediate crises. They stop people from falling further through the cracks, offering practical help today and long-term support for tomorrow.

Your kind donation provides food, vital support and a pathway forward for people facing their toughest moments. It strengthens communities, and helps people rebuild their lives—emotionally, practically and spiritually. It takes an army to bring hope. Every day.

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SalvationArmy.org.nz/RedShield

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Te Ope Whakaora

RED SHIELD APPEAL

It takes an army

As the sun rises across Aotearoa, a new day begins. Salvation Army staff arrive at our centres, unlocking doors, putting out signs, and preparing to welcome all who will come seeking support and hope.

Every person who walks through our doors today, no matter their circumstances, will be met with dignity, care, and the wraparound services they need. This is only possible because of an army of compassionate supporters who stand alongside them.

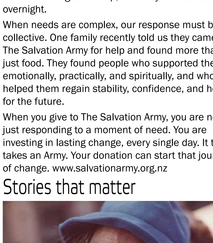
That is why the most meaningful help is not momentary. It is consistent, practical, and connected. It listens first. It stays for the long haul.

For those who turn to The Salvation Army, hardship rarely comes as a single challenge. Hunger is tied to stress. Isolation sits alongside grief. Housing instability intersects with debt, trauma, addiction, or sudden loss. No one issue exists on its own. These challenges overlap, and they do not resolve overnight.

When needs are complex, our response must be collective. One family recently told us they came to The Salvation Army for help and found more than just food. They found people who supported them emotionally, practically, and spiritually, and who helped them regain stability, confidence, and hope for the future.

When you give to The Salvation Army, you are not just responding to a moment of need. You are investing in lasting change, every single day. It truly takes an Army. Your donation can start that journey of change. www.salvationarmy.org.nz

Stories that matter



There's something in the water in Wairarapa to produce such a high number of accomplished filmmakers, and to call others to make the place their home.

This year Te Waiwhakaata Wairarapa Film Festival, on between the 20th of April and the 3rd of May, celebrates its sixth year of showcasing cinema from filmmakers with strong Wairarapa connections. The festival was gifted its new name, Te Waiwhakaata: wai meaning water, and whakaata to reflect, mirror, or display. Festival director Jane Ross says, "Te Waiwhakaata is about reflection, connection, and shared experience. It's a way for our communities… to see stories that matter".

Highlights include a screening of Barry Barclay [pictured]'s 1965 short film *Wairarapa*, commissioned by the Wairarapa Development Council to showcase the natural beauty, outdoor activities, and rural life of Wairarapa; the world premiere of *By Hand* directed by local Jane Ross, about the last wheelwright and coach painter in New Zealand; and two films from Annie Goldson, including a fundraiser screening of *Red Mole*, a 2023 documentary about the Wellington experimental theatre group of the same name. The Carterton Rotary will screen the extended editions of all three *The Lord of The Rings* films, celebrating the wealth of talent from Wairarapa who played big roles in the production and editing of the trilogy.

Head along to see iconic classics, local premieres, and celebrate the film community and the stories they tell of the region.

Served on silver

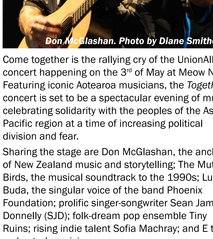
After 19 stops along a monumental Aussie tour celebrating the release of their new album *Everywhere Every Single Day*, The Rions have decided to hop the Tasman and keep the party going with a few more stops in Aotearoa, kicking off the tour at Welly's San Fran on the 7th of May.

Momentum is at an all-time high for the four-piece made up of high school best mates Noah Blockley, Harley Wilson, Asher McLean, and Tom Partington. The band rapidly evolved from local Northern Beaches favourites into one of Australia's most exciting indie-rock exports, gaining real traction in 2020 with a series of single releases that led to their first two EPs *Minivan* and *Happiness In A Place It Shouldn't Be*.

Their debut album *Everywhere Every Single Day* captures an evolution of their sound, delivering a pensive, contemplative, and emotionally driven collection of pristine bops. Lead single *Tonight's Entertainment* and a signature indie-pop rendition of Paramore's *Ain't It Fun* skyrocketed the record straight to the number one spot on the ARIA Australian Artist Albums Chart following its debut in October 2025 and kept it in rotation on Triple J too.

The collection is "the most open wound we've allowed the world to see thus far," The Rions tell *Rolling Stone Australia*. "All our triumphs, our regrets, our shortcomings, our philosophies, our hopes, and our dreams on a 13-track silver platter".

Come together



Don McGlashan. Photo by Diane Smithers.

Come together is the rallying cry of the UnionAID concert happening on the 3rd of May at Meow Nui. Featuring iconic Aotearoa musicians, the *Together* concert is set to be a spectacular evening of music, celebrating solidarity with the peoples of the Asia-Pacific region at a time of increasing political division and fear.

Sharing the stage are Don McGlashan, the anchor of New Zealand music and storytelling; The Mutton Birds, the musical soundtrack to the 1990s; Luke Buda, the singular voice of the band Phoenix Foundation; prolific singer-songwriter Sean James Donnelly (SJD); folk-dream pop ensemble Tiny Ruins; rising indie talent Sofia Machray; and E tū orchestral musicians.

The concert is a tribute to trade unionists Helen Kelly and Peter Conway, who dedicated their lives to fighting for workers' rights. All proceeds will go towards UnionAID's developmental projects in the Asia-Pacific region, in countries including Thailand, the Philippines, Myanmar, Fiji, and Solomon Islands.

UnionAID supports partners to build their capacity, advocate for labour rights, secure decent work and fair pay, ensure safe working conditions, promote equality, and engage in democratic processes. Their international projects put resources directly in the hands of working people who are organising to transform their own lives. While their Young Leaders Programmes are funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, all international projects rely on donations here in Aotearoa.

Head along for a night of musical excellence at this historic benefit concert – all in the name of supporting our neighbours from throughout the Pacific.

Puzzles

			7	8				6
	8	9	6		1			2
							1	
	9		1					4
	7						3	
3					4		8	
	1							
8			4		7	5	6	
5				2	3			

Across

1 - Cabbagelike plant (4)
3 - Curved surface of a liquid in a tube (8)
9 - Last longer than others (of clothes) (7)
10 - Dairy product (5)
11 - Sheltered side (3)
12 - Impersonator (5)
13 - Brace (5)
15 - Entice to do something (5)
17 - Give out, discharge (5)
18 - Unit of time (abbrev.) (3)
19 - Shell-like beds (5)
20 - Brisk, in music (7)
21 - Put at risk (8)
22 - Sight organs (4)

Down

1 - Intelligent and informed (13)
2 - Machine for shaping wood or metal (5)
4 - Moon of the planet Jupiter (6)
5 - Contradictory (12)
6 - Ship worker (7)
7 - Partially awake (13)
8 - Food shop (12)
14 - Rendered senseless (7)
16 - Spirit of a person or group (6)
18 - Droopy (5)

Reviews

The Boy With Wings

Written by Bridget, Roger, and Comfrey Sanders
Presented by Birdlife Productions and KidzStuff Theatre for Children
Tararua Tramping Club, 10th Apr 2026
Reviewed by Dani Yourukova

Cushions sprawl cosily on the floor in front of the stage, where we are welcomed by Roger Sanders (writer, composer, musician, puppeteer, *and* performer) in a jaunty black beret. He tells me these are the best seats in the house. I park myself a few rows back, but plenty of the audience take up Sanders' offer. A young family sits cross-legged on the rugs up front, eating apple slices from a plastic Tupperware. Another clutch of kids have brought puppets from home. Already the space feels intimate, a little like being in your favourite grandparents' living room. The only elements on stage are a table, a projector screen, and a series of cardboard boxes.

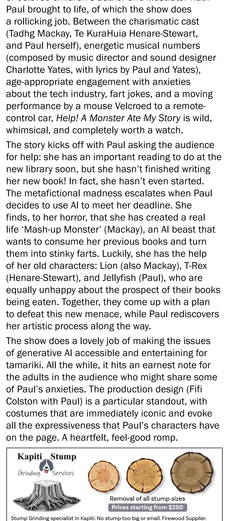
Originally directed by Daniel Allan, *The Boy With Wings* begins when Professor Beatrice 'Birdie' Bartholomew (Bridget Sanders, writer, performer, and creative director) emerges to make an enthused presentation about the migratory journey of the kuaka/bar-tailed godwit. Birdie is charming and goofy, an absentminded professor who soon has all the kids giggling. That is, until Sanders opens the box, and the whole room falls quiet.

Each box unfolds into a miniature set, built to scale for Jack, the star of the puppet show. In the Sanders' hands, Jack travels across far mountains, shimmering velvet seas, and vast cardboard cities to try and save his failing orchard. Shifting back and forth between Jack's journey and the kuaka's migration poetically interweaves the two tales. But the magic lies somewhere in the exquisite hand-painted detail of the sets, the way the hidden world emerges as if from nothing, the way the texture of fabric, light, music, and performance bring the sets and figures to life. I hear more than one "wow" from the audience when the kuaka first takes flight.

Simply, the Sanders team at Birdlife Productions are brilliant storytellers. Their ability to hold the audience's attention while they shift between scenes, disciplines, tones, storylines, and characters is astonishing. An absolute must-see next time they're in Wellington!

Help! A Monster Ate My Story

Written by Ruth Paul
Directed by Jacqueline Coats
Circa Theatre, 9th Apr 2026
Reviewed by Dani Yourukova



Before I walked into the theatre, I was curious as to how, exactly, a monster was going to eat an abstract concept, on stage, in front of a packed audience of children and parents in Circa Two. I was also immensely excited to see the imagination of beloved children's author and illustrator Ruth Paul brought to life, of which the show does a rollicking job. Between the charismatic cast (Tadhg Mackay, Te KuraHuia Henare-Stewart, and Paul herself), energetic musical numbers (composed by music director and sound designer Charlotte Yates, with lyrics by Paul and Yates), age-appropriate engagement with anxieties about the tech industry, fart jokes, and a moving performance by a mouse Velcroed to a remote-control car, *Help! A Monster Ate My Story* is wild, whimsical, and completely worth a watch.

The story kicks off with Paul asking the audience for help: she has an important reading to do at the new library soon, but she hasn't finished writing her new book! In fact, she hasn't even started. The metafictional madness escalates when Paul decides to use AI to meet her deadline. She finds, to her horror, that she has created a real life 'Mash-up Monster' (Mackay), an AI beast that wants to consume her previous books and turn them into stinky farts. Luckily, she has the help of her old characters: Lion (also Mackay), T-Rex (Henare-Stewart), and Jellyfish (Paul), who are equally unhappy about the prospect of their books being eaten. Together, they come up with a plan to defeat this new menace, while Paul rediscovers her artistic process along the way.

The show does a lovely job of making the issues of generative AI accessible and entertaining for tamariki. All the while, it hits an earnest note for the adults in the audience who might share some of Paul's anxieties. The production design (Fifi Colston with Paul) is a particular standout, with costumes that are immediately iconic and evoke all the expressiveness that Paul's characters have on the page. A heartfelt, feel-good romp.

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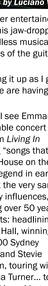
Back to contents

Living In The Light with a legend

by Madelaine Empson



Photos by Luciano Viti.

World-renowned guitarist and master entertainer Tommy Emmanuel, celebrated for his jaw-dropping finger-picking technique and boundless musicality, says he feels "like the Indiana Jones of the guitar world.

"I'm on this wild journey, just making it up as I go, and I'm thrilled that so many people are having fun joining along with me."

The next chapter of that journey will see Emmanuel return to Aotearoa on an unforgettable concert tour. He'll celebrate his 2025 album *Living In The Light*, filled with genre-bending "songs that tell stories", at Wellington's Opera House on the 22nd of May. I last interviewed the legend in early 2024 ahead of his autumn show at the very same venue. We covered his origins, early influences, and the evolution of his songwriting over 50 years, plus his (incredible) career highlights: headlining Sydney Opera House and Carnegie Hall, winning a GRAMMY®, performing at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, opening for John Denver and Stevie Wonder, working with John Farnham, touring with luminaries like Eric Clapton and Tina Turner… to name but a few. This time, I started by asking about his relationship with his hero, mentor, and friend Chet Atkins.

How did you and Chet first meet?

I heard Chet Atkins when I was about seven on the radio. It stopped me in my tracks. I could tell he was playing everything at once. So many people did not believe that – they thought it was a recording trick. But I could hear it and I don't know how to explain it – it's just how I'm wired. I ended up being so passionate about it that I worked out how to do it myself, without anyone's help. I got as many of Chet's recordings as I could so I could learn songs. When I was a teenager, I was learning stuff that was already way over my head. But it helped me because, when I look back on it now, I had a better understanding of arranging a song, finding a good key to play it in, how to get the melody right, how to think in a different way. That was all through listening to his records.

I wrote him a letter and he wrote back to me. We sort of became pen pals for a little while. Then I got a note from him, mid-to-late 70s, saying that he'd heard me playing on a tape that someone in Australia had sent him. "I was suitably underwhelmed,' is what he said [laughs]. He gave me his office number and address, and said, 'When you come to Nashville, call me. I want to see you.'

I eventually made the pilgrimage in 1980. I rang Chet's office thinking he wouldn't remember me, but he said, 'Hey! Where are you? Come on down, I'll see you.' So I get in my little Toyota Corolla rental car and go to his office. He came down the stairs, looking exactly like he did on his records. It was a beautiful moment of my life, when I met the guy that I just admired so much, who I had tried to steal as much as I could from [chuckles].

When I left Nashville to go to New York, Chet took us to the airport. He said, 'You'll be back, this is where you belong.'

Fast-forward to the late 80s, early 90s, to when I had built my career to a point where I was on the radio, on TV, writing songs that were getting radio play, producing other artists – I was starting to really carve out a good career back in Australia. I get this note out of the blue from Chet saying, 'When you come to Nashville, I'm hoping to catch up with you.'

I went there as part of a country music showcase for Sony and gave it everything I had, and the crowd went crazy – threw babies in the air. Chet was in the crowd that night, and he came backstage to see me. He was amazed and had no idea I could do what I did. He said, 'Are you here tomorrow? I'm going to make sure all the record companies come out and see you.' The next night, I go out there, and all of Sony are down the front. Chet's standing in the crowd like a teenager. I had a good night, and about a week later, I'm home and the phone rings and it's Chet. He says, 'Well, you really impressed this record company and they want us to record together.'

He said, 'Would you like to do that?'

I said, 'Is there a moustache in Mexico?'

I started writing for that album and wrote the song *Mr. Guitar*, which was Chet's moniker back in those days… We made the album, I got my first GRAMMY® nomination, and the rest is history.

Wow! How have the two years been since we last spoke?

Holy smoke, it's been unbelievable! My biggest problem is that things just keep getting better! This is what I'm meant to do. I'm 70 years old and I'm totally living my dream. And I'm a grandad with a beautiful family.

Within those two years, you recorded Living In The Light in just four days. That's my question – how on Earth?

Here's how I did it: Vance Powell, the engineer and co-producer. He's the guy I wanted. He's one of the greatest people on the planet right now to work with. He goes, 'We start at 10, we finish at 6, I don't work at night. Let's get it done. I mix as I go.' And I was ready. On the first day, I recorded *Young Travelers, Scarlett's World, Black and White To Color, Little Georgia,* and *You Needed Me*. Those five songs are one take, finished and mixed in one day. There was not a minute wasted.

How do you hope it hits your audience when you perform it live in Wellington?

I always try to write things that grab you as soon as you hear them. Songs that make you go, 'I've gotta hear that again!' That's what I'm always yearning for. And these songs work so well live. I don't always write stuff that I think, 'That's going to be a good opener.' But *Black and White To Color* – that's the best opener I've ever written.

As well as Living In The Light, will audiences get a sweeping career panorama of Tommy tracks?

I certainly hope so [laughs]. And maybe a Peter Posa song in there, you never know.

Anything you'd like to say to your Kiwi fans?

Kia ora! I'd like to say thank you to New Zealand for always being kind and welcoming to me… and for providing me with the best ice cream in the world. Let's hear it for hokey pokey!

Comedic crème de la crème

Buckle up, buster, because the *Best Foods Comedy Gala* beckons. Promising bucketloads of banter from the best of the best in comedy, the Opera House ballyhoo will bring on the ballyaches on the 2nd of May before the NZ International Comedy Festival with Best Foods Mayo begins.

Hosted by the inimitable Dai Henwood ONZM [pictured], New Zealand Comedy Trust's 2026 gala is bigger than ever before, with a lineup of farceurs from Aotearoa and beyond taking to the stage in the silliest of smorgasbords.

Last year's host Hayley Sproull – a familiar face and voice from TV and radio – returns as a performer in 2026. Rocking his signature grey suit and trademark deadpan wit, Ray O'Leary returns from his stint overseas to bring the laughs back to Aotearoa.

2012 Billy T-winner Guy Williams joins the lineup with his trademark Kiwi humour, while 2017 Billy T and 2025 Fred Award-winner Angella Dravid delivers a dose of the deadpan and dark. Newest Billy T taker-homer Hoani Hotene (Ngāti Hauā) is set to make waves in his *Comedy Gala* debut with his fresh perspective on te reo Māori, travel, and modern life.

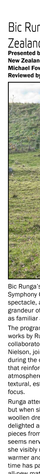
The international contingent includes Australia's Elouise Eftos, who racked up awards, rave reviews, and standing ovations after her first comedy hour; *The Office* (Australia) star Felicity Ward, known for her no-filter, authentic, and hilarious attitude to life; South American comedian Ivan Aristeguieta, who has risen to fame for his cheerful disposition, sharp observational style, and unique perspective on life as an immigrant down under; and Jessie Nixon, a fast-rising Bristolian comic with magnetic stage presence, razor-sharp writing, and brilliantly offbeat charm.

It may be all about mayo, but these stars are the comedic crème de la crème.

Reviews

Bic Runga with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra

Presented by
New Zealand Symphony Orchestra
Michael Fowler Centre, 2nd Apr 2026
Reviewed by Ruth Corkill



Bic Runga's collaboration with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra favours intimacy over spectacle, and manages to gently coax the grandeur of Michael Fowler Centre into something familiar and communal as a local hall.

The programme begins with two instrumental works by Runga's partner and long-time musical collaborator Nicky Nelson. The band, including Nelson, join the orchestra on stage one by one during the opening *Intro*, a staging choice that reinforces the low-key, almost informal atmosphere. Nelson's music is light-footed and textural, establishing a relaxed mood and soft focus.

Runga attempts a similarly understated entrance, but when she appears, wrapped in an off-white woollen dress, the audience greets her with delighted applause and cheers. Initially, singing pieces from her new album *Red Sunset*, she remains nervous, but as the concert progresses she visibly relaxes. Her voice frees up, growing warmer and more open, until it feels as though no time has passed at all since her last collection of all-new material 15 years ago.

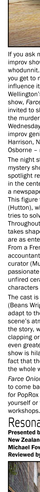
Racing Red Sunset alongside songs so deeply woven into our shared histories is no small task, but the newer works hold their own. Backed by Runga's signature melodic clarity, there is something almost effectiviously sardonic in them that feels new and interesting.

The orchestral arrangements are restrained, but this is very much a Runga show. The NZSO enhances the dynamic and beautifully structured qualities of Runga's songwriting, enriching her colours and adding fuller sonority without overwhelming them. Her catalogue feels both familiar and remarkably fresh, especially since Runga's voice is as clear and agile as ever.

Songs herself remains disarmingly unassuming throughout. At one point she offers, almost apologetically, "If it's alright I'd like to play something else from the new album". There is genuine affection between her, her fellow musicians, and her audience, and it makes the evening and this place feel special.

Farce Onion

Presented by Hannah Middleton and Stevie Hancock-Monk
Bats Theatre & PopRox
BATS Theatre, 15th Apr 2026
Reviewed by Nuni Stoesser



If you ask me, hardly anything beats a good improv show, especially when it is also a whodunnit. Now imagine that, as a viewer, you get to not only watch the story but also influence its course. This is what happens at Wellington's premier improv murder mystery show, *Farce Onion*, in which the audience is invited to shape the plot, choosing the location, the murder weapon, and even the victim. This Wednesday's performance features a cast of six improv geniuses – Dylan Hutton, Mo Munn, Austin Harrison, Nikki Hogg, Tana McClure and Millie Osborne – ready to win the crowd.

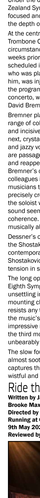
The night starts so criminally on every good mystery should: the stage is dark and a single spotlight reveals a mysterious silhouette sitting in one of the office rooms, his face hidden by a newspaper that bears the headline *Murder*. Hogg then turns out to be the story's detective (Hutton), who takes notes and desperately needs to solve a crime as it unfolds in real time. Throughout the night, a comically absurd story takes shape, featuring various characters who are as entertaining as they are suspicious: from a French artist dreaming about being an accountant (Munn) to a drug-killing museum curator (Munn) and a grandmother-stepmother passionate about vaginal self-pleasure and unfired ceramics (Hogg), the more bizarre the characters get, the funnier.

The cast is supported by two live musicians (Beans Wright and Isaac Thomas) who brilliantly adapt to the ever-changing plot and contribute an extra layer of humour.

Farce Onion truly is improv at its finest. I want to come back again and again. Keep an eye out for PopRox to experience their next performance yourself or take part in one of their improv workshops.

Resonance

Presented by
New Zealand Symphony Orchestra
Michael Fowler Centre, 9th Apr 2026
Reviewed by Ruth Corkill



David Bremner. Photo by Latitude Creative.

Under the direction of André de Ridder, the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra delivers a remarkably focused and cohesive performance that highlights the depth of talent within its own ranks.

At the centre of the programme is Bryce Dessner's Trombone Concerto, performed under unusual circumstances. The orchestra learned only two days prior to the concert that the originally scheduled international soloist Jörgen van Rijen, who was planning to premiere a work written for him, was injured and unable to do so. In response, the programme pivoted rapidly to Dessner's concerto, with NZSO section principal trombone David Bremner stepping forward as soloist.

Bremner plays superbly, drawing an impressive range of colour from his instrument: percussive and incisive one moment, molten and lyrical the next, crystal-clear lines interspersed with gravelly and jazzy voiced phrases. Especially striking are passages in which the soloist leads the ensemble and reappears across the brass section. Here, Bremner's close working relationship with his colleagues is evident. The ability of the other musicians to match his tone and colour so closely creates unusual textures, as though the soloist were accompanying himself. The concerto seems to build and develop over time, coherence. It is both technically impressive and musically absorbing.

Dessner's concerto is an intelligent pairing with the Shostakovich that follows. It is an unabashedly contemporary and direct work, the mirror to the Shostakovich it utilises dissonance and rhythmic tension in service of beauty and emotional insights.

The long opening movement of Shostakovich's Eighth Symphony unfolds with a grim and unsettling inevitability. Its jagged motifs and mounting climaxes tightly controlled. De Ridder resists any temptation to over-dramatise, trusting the music's cumulative power. Particularly impressive is the relentless drive of the ostinato in the third movement, which maintains its force with unbearably intense mechanical insistence.

The slow fourth movement is laden with grief, almost soothed, almost hopeful by turns. The NZSO captures this ambiguity beautifully, closing with a wistful and heartrending release.

Ride the Cyclone

Written by Jacob Richmond and Brooke Maxwell
Directed by Ben Tucker-Emerson
Running at Circa Theatre till 19th May 2026
Reviewed by Madelaine Empson

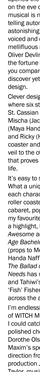


Photo by Maeve O'Connor.

It's already a coincidence that WITCH Music Theatre opened the Aotearoa premiere of *Ride the Cyclone* on the eve of Cyclone Vaiana. Connection that the musical is narrated by a mechanical fortune-telling automaton called The Amazing Karnak (an astonishing puppet by Kira Rose Kemp, expressively voiced and operated by Jhan Morgan with meltifluous mechanical effects from sound designer Oliver Devlin), and it's truly spooky. Keep hold of the fortune handed to you after the show because once you compare yours with others after the show, you'll discover yet another coincidence. This one by clever design.

Clever design permeates this late production, where six students of the St. Cassian Chamber Choir – Ocean (Lane Corbys), Misocha (Jackson Bartlett), Noel (Logan Tahan), Jane (Maya Handa Naft), Constance (Jade Merematua), and Ricky (Henry Ashby) – board a doomed roller coaster and wake up in Limbo with the fortuning said to the other sole, the mysterious Karnak, and proves why they should get a second chance at life.

It's easy to see why *Ride the Cyclone* has gone viral. What a unique premise for a musical. And because each character is so different, we're treated to a roller coaster (sorry) of genres and artforms – opera, cabaret, pop, you name it. It's difficult to pinpoint my favourite track in a show where everyone excels in a highlight, but Burling's autotuned rap *This Song Is Awesome* and Ashby's beautiful yearning *I Saved My Bachelor Man* might take the Sugar Cloud cake for me. Connection to Karnak's prophecy, and Handa Naft's soprano trills come from Heaven in *The Ballad of Jane Doe*, Corby's *What the World Needs* has me dancing (and jiggling) in my seat, and Tahiwi's *Noel's Lament* (raunchily lit by Alex Kelly Fisher) elicits whoops, hollers, and stamps across the audience that I noisily join with glee.

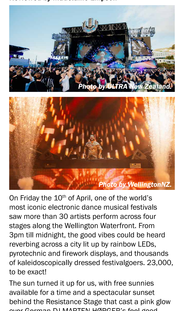
I'm endlessly spellbound by the talent spilling out of WITCH Music Theatre's cauldron. From a cast I could catch on Broadway to Emily McDermott's polished choreography (beautifully realised by Dorothe Olsen's colourful costumes on Scott Mason's spectacular set); to the exciting direction from Ben Tucker-Emerson, head of production Joshua Tucker-Emerson, and Hayden Tayler, musical director, pianist, and conductor; to every single magical detail adorning the stage, *Ride the Cyclone* is phenomenal.

Back to contents

Reviews

ULTRA New Zealand

Wellington Waterfront, 10th Apr 2026
Reviewed by Madelaine Empson



On Friday the 10th of April, one of the world's most iconic electronic dance musical festivals saw more than 30 artists perform across four stages along the Wellington Waterfront. From 3pm till midnight, the good vibes could be heard reverbing across a city lit up by rainbow LEDs, pyrotechnic and firework displays, and thousands of kaleidoscopically dressed festivalgoers. 23,000, to be exact!

The sun turned it up for us, with free sunnies available for a time and a spectacular sunset behind the Resistance Stage that cast a pink glow over German DJ MARTEN HØRGER's feel-good house set. At 6pm we shifted to the Oasis Stage – right by the sparkling ocean with plenty of room to breathe and dance – to vibe to Aotearoa jungle and bass legend Paige Julia's techno experience. The lighting at the ULTRA Main Stage for Oliver Heldens was fire (literally). Bathed in burnt tangerine orange and sunshine yellow, the Dutch DJ and producer dropped banger after banger, German DJ Zedd, French-Algerian EDM and dubstep force DJ Snake, and chart-topping American duo The Chainsmokers followed Oliver in turn, headlining a colossal ULTRA Main Stage lineup.

Los Angeleite Ray Volpe – aka the Volpetron – was one of my highlights on the UMF Radio Stage at 8:20pm. Two Australian headliners tore up the same stage next, I'm rooked to have joined the thousands screaming "Tarantula" back at drum and bass band Pendulum, and to have witnessed Alison Wonderland rocking up the crowd on a spiritual level after that.

We saw out the night with anthemic producers Flowdius at Oasis. We had no idea it was the best spot in the house for a surprise fireworks display that matched our elation.

The buzz before, during, and after ULTRA was undeniable. I spoke with four friends afterwards to find out why we're all still raving about it.

Jesse "loved the fact that the first ULTRA New Zealand edition was held on the Wellington Waterfront".

"It was the perfect venue to spread four stages across while maintaining exceptional sound quality at every stage," he said. "It was great to be able to move away from stages to get food and drinks and the Audiology crew did a great job of making sure there were ample facilities for everyone along the way."

This was the most recurring theme of our chats: how well organised and managed ULTRA was. The intuitive layout allowed people to move around with ease rather than elbow-barge their way to the loos or bars – a huge achievement for a sold-out festival of 23,000 revellers.

Ed agreed the environment was awesome thanks to the "good crowds – a lot of people were very respectful, and you could move to and from each stage with no drama".

Andie furthered that "the crowd control between the stages was excellent".

"And not a lot of issues with people shoving," Ed nodded.

When it came to the stellar lineup, Andie was awestruck by the sheer scale of ULTRA and "really happy to actually get dubstep and other types of EDM in Wellington. We usually only get drum and bass, and while I love drum and bass, I love dubstep. My favourite set was definitely Nightmare. Such a good time."

Keri raved about Oliver Heldens and his throwback hits.

"I was having a spiritual moment. You know it!" Ed's highlight was "for sure Alison Wonderland – she was amazing".

Jesse's were Mollie Collins, Oliver Heldens, Pendulum, Alison Wonderland, Flowdius, and "our very own Paige Julia".

"The light shows were epic and the fireworks at the end were a beautiful way to sum up a magical day," Jesse continued. "Can't wait to come back again next year, it can only get bigger and better from here!"

Count me in!

The Weed Eaters

81 minutes
R13
★★★★★
Reviewed by Isabella Smith

At the Q&A screening of *The Weed Eaters*, directed by Callum Devlin, someone put their hand up and said, "Thanks, that was hilarious, beautiful, disgusting."

The Weed Eaters is a Kiwi horror-comedy that already feels like an instant classic. Four friends go rural for New Year's Eve and smoke a bunch of weed that gives them the munchies so bad they end up eating people.

A DIY project between some incredibly talented mates, the cast and crew consisted mostly of the same seven people: Alice May Connolly plays Jules and was the on-set caterer, co-writer, and producer, Samuel Austin plays Campbell and was cinematographer and gaffer – the overlaps go on and you might as well scrap the titles and call them a band. A band that created an exceptional film that rides the line between horrific and hilarious better than I think I've ever seen.

The script sits in the perfect register of four Kiwi mates who are seriously stoned and maybe a little bit bored. The acting from Connolly, Annabel Kean (Charlie), Finnius Teppett (Brian), and Austin was outstanding – their ability to make the eating of a human body somehow erotic, grotesque, and funny is a mix I'm not sure I want to know the recipe for.

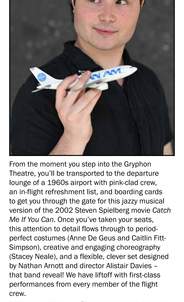
Like any good horror, each time it got dark outside you heard a groan from the audience. At one point I thought the film was so far down the horror end of the spectrum it couldn't possibly bring the audience back to safety. Then there was another cracker, flippant remark and we were suddenly back in that happy place.

I doff my hat to the rhythm of the film. Devlin says that "comedy is all about... the pacing", which Austin put down to their combined musical experience and history of creating music videos. In terms of the music, the soundtrack was impeccable, celebrating local indie artists and featuring a jazz score written and performed by Callum Passells, who somehow overlaid the scenes where human flesh is consumed with music that made the act appear surprisingly chic.

The film does what a lot try to do (not always successfully): stretch the audience's response across such a wide range of emotions that all you can do is squirm and laugh. And squirm and laugh we did.

Catch Me If You Can: The Musical

Written by Terence McNally, Marc Shaiman, and Scott Wittman
Directed by Alistair Davies
Gryphon Theatre, 8th Apr 2026
Reviewed by Tanya Piejus



From the moment you step into the Gryphon theatre, you'll be transported to the departure lounge of a 1960s airport with pink-clad crew, an in-flight refreshment list, and boarding cards to get you through the gate for this jazzy musical version of the 2002 Steven Spielberg movie *Catch Me If You Can*. Once you've taken your seats, this attention to detail flows through to period-perfect costumes (Anne De Geus and Caitlin Fitt-Simpson), creative and engaging choreography (Stacey Neale), and a flexible, clever set designed by Nathan Arnott and director Alistair Davies – that band revelé! We have liftoff with first-class performances from every member of the flight crew.

As the loveable rogue Frank Abagnale Jr, Jackson Stone is perfectly cast in a show he obviously has a passion for, Charming and eloquent, he has the singing and dancing chops to match. Sharing the load of carrying the story is hard-working Alex Rabina as FBI agent Carl Hanratty, ever one step behind his slippery quarry. His solo, the bluesy *The Man Inside the Clues*, is one of the show's many highlights.

The rest of the 15-strong cast provide stellar support. Carl Johnstone, who we don't see nearly enough of on stage these days, is a delight as Frank Abagnale Sr, his reported death a moment of well-earned pathos. Lily Tyler Meere wowed as the opening-night Brenda and was also part of a spectacular female ensemble who provided much of the production's groovy dance moves. Everyone on stage works as a polished and seamless ensemble under the excellent direction of Davies and his assistant, Stacey O'Brien. Davies' vision is even more remarkable for his being a first-time director.

The visible 12-piece band directed by Emma Salzano smoothly deliver the musical accompaniment in sparkly pink jackets, Tom Smith's lighting beautifully illuminates the mood of each song, and Alexander Gordon's on-point design rounds out the soundscape perfectly.

Congratulations to everyone involved in this Kauri Theatre production! Head to Gryphon's fellow audience member describe as "a cut above".

Back to contents

NZ International Comedy Festival

Silly smorgasbord

Sink your teeth into something sizzling, saucy, or silly at this year's New Zealand International Comedy Festival with Best Foods Mayo. 2026's programme is stacked with signature shows, serving up a sampler of Aotearoa mainstays, international talents, new favourites, and heavy hitters.

Celebrating 30 years in Wellington, this year's festival brings more than 150 hometown heroes, rising stars, and international heavyweights to the stage across more than 550 laugh-out-loud performances between the 1st and 24th of May. Capital audiences will be kept cackling across venues of all shapes and sizes, with laughs even leapfrogging up the coast into Kāpiti again, and to Petone and Porirua for the very first time.

This year's fest puts a spotlight on the undeniable wealth of homegrown talent at all career levels, with the likes of Brynley Stent, Tim Batt, Laser Kiwi, Ginge & Minge, David Correos, Abby Howells, James Nokise, Mo Munn, Tom Sainsbury, Hayley Sproull, Neil Thornton, Angella Dravid, Kajun Brooking, and more taking to the stage.

Plenty of fresh international talent graces the festival, including Jake Lambert, Jessie Nixon, Sashi Perera, Elf Lyons, Sofie Hagen, and more join returning favourites like last year's Best International joint winners Elouise Eftos and Rosco McClelland.

As the NZ Comedy Trust's cornerstone event, the NZ International Comedy Festival stands as a critical milestone where comedians of both local and international artistry can cut their teeth, develop their craft, and spoon out morsels of merry mayhem.

Those wishing for a taste of what's to come can enjoy an appetiser at The Fringe Bar hosted by 2025 Billy T nominee Lesa MacLeod-Whiting and starring Jundas Capone, Kipling DC, Opeti Vaka, Sarah Tuck, Samantha Hannah, and more at the *Te Whanganui-a-Tara Preview Show* on the 30th of April.

As for the entrée, the *Best Foods Comedy Gala* on the 2nd of May will bring on the best kind of bellyaches from the crème de la crème of Kiwi and international comedy.

Other highlights include international shows coming direct to Aotearoa audiences, including New York's gloriously chaotic variety sensation *Stamptown* hosted by clown bad-boy Zach Zucker, and Zucker's absurdist alter-ego Jack Tucker in a madcap and unpredictable show. Catch Joe Daymond's *Comedy Mixtape*, featuring a curated selection of absolute must-sees from the local comedy scene. Chaos, carnage, and courage collide in Ginge & Minge's show *REDEMPTION* [pictured right], while Hamish Parkinson and Ryan Richards' *Fuq Boiz* [pictured left] is bound to be an equally epic, unhinged, and gloriously silly live comedy hour.

Get ready to giggle, guffaw, and gawk at the greats and the greenhorns. The 2026 New Zealand International Comedy Festival will dish up non-stop laughs and a smorgasbord of shows to deliver a phenomenally funny feast.

Peekaboo!

2026 Billy T Award nominee Samantha Hannah is back in the comedy highchair this New Zealand International Comedy Festival with a simple but suspiciously ambitious mission: to take the first joke any of us ever learned and somehow make it funny again.

Peekaboo! is a joyously silly, slightly chaotic comedy show set to throw audiences into a fit of laughter at BATS Theatre from the 12th to the 16th of May.

"Do you remember the last time you laughed at someone shouting peekaboo" Hannah asks. "No? Me neither. But apparently that's the material I'm working with."

Returning to the stage after maternity leave and pregnant (again), Hannah draws inspiration from the surprising joy and absurdity of suddenly spending a lot of time with society's youngest (and most brutally honest) critics.

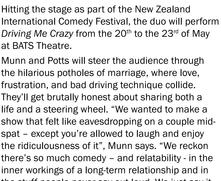
"All the effort we put into entertaining babies – the singing, the bubbles, the maracas, the primary colours – I've realised adults need that too," Hannah says. "Sometimes we just need to escape life for an hour and be a bit silly together."

While *Peekaboo!* was born from Hannah's recent adventures of pregnancy and parenthood, her performance isn't pointed. "This isn't a show aimed at people who've recently had babies," the award-winning Scottish Kiwi comedian says. "It's been specifically created for anyone who used to be a baby. Which is hopefully all of you."

Worried she may have forgotten how to talk to grownups, let alone entertain them, Hannah has resorted to the element of surprise, road testing her brand-new family-friendly persona when she believes adults need laughter more than ever.

"The world is increasingly worrying and stressful," she says. "This show is a little break from all of that – an hour of escapism, joy, and surprise. Why should the babies have all the fun?

Buckle up



Wellyott describes *Driving Me Crazy* as "the most competent execution of marriage comedy I've ever seen." Real-life married couple Mo Munn and Q Potts dive head first into the chaos with their latest show, a blend of stand-up and sketch comedy that's full of razor-sharp wit, real chemistry, and a dash of road rage.

Hitting the stage as part of the New Zealand International Comedy Festival, the duo will perform *Driving Me Crazy* from the 20th to the 23rd of May at BATS Theatre.

Munn and Potts will steer the audience through the hilarious potholes of marriage, where love, frustration, and bad driving technique collide. They'll get brutally honest about sharing both a life and a steering wheel. "We wanted to make a show that felt like eavesdropping on a couple mid-spat – except you're allowed to laugh and enjoy the ridiculousness of it", Munn says. "We reckon there's so much comedy – and relatability - in the inner workings of a long-term relationship and in the stuff people never say out loud. We just say it on stage."

Munn is a multi-award-winning comedian who has recently toured to Melbourne and Chicago. The show comes fresh off her win as the Best Newcomer at the 2025 New Zealand International Comedy Festival. Potts was a Raw Comedy Quest Finalist in 2025 and brings a cheeky spark to the duo's festival run.

Whether you're loved up, broken down, or somewhere in emotional third gear, *Driving Me Crazy* is a hilarious, high-octane night out.

Back to contents

2nd May. Roady with Nick Bollinger: An Insider's Guided Tour: *Te Waka Huia Wellington Museum, Jervois Quay, Pipitea* – 10:30am. Award-winning music journalist Nick Bollinger is set to take you on a guided tour of *Based on a True Story: The 20th Anniversary Exhibition* celebrating Fat Freddy's Drop's incredible and historic debut album.

25th Apr. Middle Age Spread – Play Reading: *Circa Theatre, Taranaki Street, Te Aro* – 2pm. Celebrating 50 years, Circa Theatre has trawled through the archives and selected four plays that will be rehearsed and read throughout the year. First up is the tragicomedy *Middle Age Spread* by Sir Roger Hall and directed by Susan Wilson, originally performed at Circa Theatre in 1977.

25th Apr. ATA: *Meow, Edward Street, Te Aro* – 9pm. A lineup of some of Te Whanganui-a-Tara's most potent and inspired singers, featuring LILA JNR, Iris Little, Mā, Romi Wrights, Mara TK, and Tony Douglas on a mic rotation with an in-house band. This event is a fundraiser for their new collective ORO ATA, a community-focused arts initiative.

21st-23rd May. Hokitika is the new Berlin: *Cavern Club, Allen Street, Te Aro* – 9:15pm. Alternative, observational, awkward, left-field, surreal, Jundas Capone brings his accessibly random new show *Hokitika is the new Berlin* to the NZ International Comedy Festival. "We were so confused it brought us back together", said a Spanish couple in Berlin.

28th Apr. Q&A Screening of Sgt. Haane: *Light House Petone, Beach Street, Petone* – 6pm. From award-winning director Tearepa Kahi, *Sgt. Haane* follows the true story of Lance Sgt. Haane Manahi DCM (Te Arawa, Ngāti Raukawa) of B Company, 28th Māori Battalion. This screening includes a Q&A with Kahi, lead actor Alex Tarrant, and Dr Donna Morrison.

20th-23rd May. Oliver Pol: Featherbrained: *BATS Theatre, Kent Terrace, Mount Victoria* – 7:30pm. It's clear Oliver Pol is an overthinker. On his new mission to embrace uncertainty, silliness, and the way of the goose, he's done a deep dive into the avian brain in *Featherbrained,* on as part of the NZ International Comedy Festival.

What's on Wairarapa

20th Apr-3rd May. Te Waiwhakaata Wairarapa Film Festival: *Regent 3 Cinemas, Queen Street, Masterton* – various times. Honouring local and national screen culture, the Wairarapa Film Festival features film screenings, discussions, workshops, masterclasses, and community events.

24th Apr. An Evening of Acoustic Music with Shaun Preston: *The Runholder, Martins Road, Martinborough* – 6pm. Settle into a three-course meal and an exceptional wine list and listen to local legend Shaun Preston perform on his signature white piano.

Kāpiti

2nd May. Kāpiti Concert Orchestra Presents: Power, Passion, Drama: *Te Raukura ki Kāpiti Coastlands Theatre, Raumati Road, Paraparaumu* – 2:30pm. This concert is a journey through the most iconic sounds of the Russian Empire, featuring compositions from Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov.

4th May. Rock Tenors Concerts Presents: Carolyn Mills and Bridget Douglas: *St Peter's Village Hall, Beach Road, Paekākāriki* – 2:30pm. A luminous afternoon of harp and flute from two extraordinarily gifted New Zealand Symphony Orchestra musicians.

5th May. Rock Tenors – Anthems Reloaded Tour: *Te Raukura ki Kāpiti Coastlands Theatre, Raumati Road, Paraparaumu* – 7pm. Rock Tenors return for a seismic blast of rockmanship playing all your favourites from Queen to Guns N' Roses to the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Events

29th Apr. Say The Thing: *Meow, Edward Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. A monthly open-mic night for lovers and speakers of words, be they poems, stories, personal essays, letters, comedy, or anything inbetween.

30th Apr. The Devil Wears Prada 2 Screening Fundraiser: *Light House Cuba, Wigan Street, Te Aro* – 5:30pm. A fundraiser preview screening of the highly anticipated sequel *The Devil Wears Prada 2*, all for a good cause supporting Rainbow Wellington.

5th May. Porirua Careers Expo: *Te Rauparaha Arena, Parumoana Street, Porirua* – 9:30am. A chance to check out career options and education pathways, featuring over 80 stalls and the opportunity to connect with industry professionals and education providers.

8th-10th May. Wellington Better Home and Living Show: *Harry Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Pipitea* – Eminent interior designers showcase their lifestyles at the Better Home and Living Show, packed with home, garden, and lifestyle products, designs, and innovations.

Music

25th Apr. The King of Pop Show – Michael Jackson Live Concert Experience: *The Opera House, Manners Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. The world's number one Michael Jackson Live Concert Experience is gracing Aotearoa for the first time, bringing you a night of iconic hits and legendary moves.

25th Apr. The Spectre Collective – Flamingo Release Show: *Moon Bar, Riddiford Street, Newtown* – 8pm.
Wellington psych freaks The Spectre Collective are celebrating the release of their new music video *Flamingo*. Warming the stage are Horn and Bone Chapel.

30th Apr. 5th Boy – Gold and Flowers: *The Rogue and Vagabond, Garrett Street, Te Aro* – 9pm. Seth Boyd and his quintet present a collection of original compositions painting a musical portrait of the Philippines.

30th Apr-1st May. Boney M: *St James Theatre, Courtenay Place, Te Aro* – 8pm. The kings and queens of disco are bringing all your favourite hits to the stage for what is set to be the last time of living the night live.

1st May. The Zimmermans: *Meow, Edward Street, Te Aro* – 6:30pm. The Bard of Duluth, Bob Dylan, is turning 85. New Zealand's favourite Dylan tribute band will celebrate his longevity with an evening of stellar music that spans his life.

1st May. Hudson Freeman: *San Fran, Cuba Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. After releasing his album is a *Folk Artist* last year, Brooklyn-based folk-rock artist Hudson Freeman has quickly emerged as one of indie-rock's most enthralling voices.

1st May. Symposium Brass: *St Andrew's on the Terrace, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. Combining a space between orchestral and jazz worlds, the programme comprises progressions written by trumpeter Cameron Pearce, published works from composers Aaron Copland, Steve Reich, and Gabriel Fauré.

1st May. James Reyne: *Meow Nui, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. Long after the band Australian Crawl came to an end, founder and lead vocalist James Reyne sets off on *The Fall of Crawl* tour to celebrate all things been and gone.

1st May. Efan: *Meow, Edward Street, Te Aro* – 10pm. Quickly rising in the UK rave scene, underground artist Efan brings his unique sound of UK garage, breakbeat, dubstep, and house.

2nd May. 1/3 Octave Band, Bridget Kelly & Peter Lilley, Grant/Winterwood: *Pyramid Club, Taranaki Street, Mount Cook* – 8pm. Pyramid Club presents an evening of ambient music ranging from eerie drone noise to unearthly growls to a spacious gong bath.

3rd May. UnionAID presents: Together: *Meow Nui, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. With all proceeds going to development projects in the South East Asia-Pacific region, taking the stage will be Don McGlashan, The Mutemuteis, Sola Rosa, Pylins, Luki Buda (Phoenix Foundation), Sofia Machray, and others.

4th May. Baxter Dury: *Meow Nui, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. Fresh from his post-punk, electronica, and art-rock, British musician Baxter Dury is headed to town to celebrate his latest nine-track tour-de-force album *Albarone*.

4th May. Jade Muaus: *Meow, Edward Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. Celebrating the release of his brand-new album *Later Than You Think*, the synthy songwriter brings his unmistakable baritone voice for a two-stop tour of Aotearoa.

6th-7th May. Split Enz: *TSB Arena, Queens Wharf, Te Aro* – 7pm. Kiwi music legends Split Enz are reuniting for the first time after 18 years for the epic *Forever Enz Tour*.

7th May. HBC Unplugged: Romi Wrights and LILA JNR: *Hataitai Bowling Club, Hataitai Road, Hataitai* – 6pm. Experience the powerful harmony of singers Romi Wrights and LILA JNR in a most tender setting at the first of a series of unplugged sessions at the Hataitai Bowling Club.

8th May. Ariel Jones: *Meow Nui, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. For the first time ever, beloved Welsh singer and broadcaster Aled Jones MBE is coming to Aotearoa for an intimate show that combines music, storytelling, and nostalgia.

7th May. The Rions: *San Fran, Cuba Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. The Australian indie-rock four piece are on their *Everywhere Every Single Night* tour to celebrate their new album of the same name.

8th May. Tom Scott: *Meow Nui, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 7pm. Hip-hop, jazz, and soul icon Tom Scott brings his debut solo album *AFOT 104* to Wellington alongside a collection of brand new B-side tracks recently released on Bandcamp under *Demos and Voice Memos*.

9th May. PFI: *Massey University Great Hall, Buckle Street, Mount Cook* – 7pm. A night dedicated to future-focused sound, visual art, and fiction with proceeds from Microwave, Ben Golden Awesome, BIRDPARTY, Dream Chambers, Charmort, Tondo, and Erika Grant, science fiction from author Lee Hana, and visuals from various video artists.

22nd May. Tommy Emmanuel – Living In The Light Tour: *The Opera House, Manners Street, Te Aro* – 7pm. World-renowned Certified Guitar Player (CGP) Tommy Emmanuel is visiting Aotearoa to display his jaw-dropping technique, innovation, and boundless musicality.

Performance

28th Apr. Three Minutes of READ: *The Fringe Bar, Allen Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. 15 comedians get three minutes each to get out of their system whatever it is that makes them furious.

30th Apr-2nd May. Staunch: *BATS Theatre, Kent Terrace, Mount Victoria* – 6:30pm. Anji's mum has been sworn by her side as she became an actress, a singer, a comedian, a TV show host. When she's gone, Anji discovers things about her mum that she'd never known before.

4th-25th May. Stagecraft Theatre Presents: War Hero: *Gryphon Theatre, Ghuznee Street, Te Aro* – Various times. Playwright Michael Galvin brings Archibald Baxter's extraordinary memoir *We Will Not Cease* to the stage in this powerful adaptation.

9th-24th May. & Juliet: *St James Theatre, Courtenay Place, Te Aro* – various times. What if Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* ended differently? This bold production reimagines what would have happened if Juliet lived beyond the end of the play.

Sports

25th Apr. One New Zealand Warriors vs Dolphins: *Hnry Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Pipitea* – 5:30pm. Kiwi sides once again battle it out in the prestigious Anzac Day game between the Warriors and their Queensland Rivals, the Dolphins. Kick off 8pm.

1st May. Hurricanes vs Crusaders: *Hnry Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Pipitea* – 5:30pm. Two Super Rugby heavyweights collide with the Hurricanes hosting the Crusaders for what is expected to be an intense, high-quality rugby. Kick off 7:05pm.

Galleries

Until 25th Apr. Temple of Romance: *William Austin Gallery, Willis Street, Te Aro.* Taking inspiration from early romanticism and gothic art, Anna Sisson interrogates inherited myths and narratives and their role in perpetuating queer repression.

Until 2nd May. Hope Holiday and Sentimental Hoos!: *Robert Heald Gallery, Left Bank, Te Aro.* New luminous paintings from Saskia Leek in her exhibition *Hope Holiday*, alongside beaded horses from Sione Tuivailala Monū in his exhibition *Sentimental Hoos!*.

Until 9th May. What happens if it's broken?: *Enjoy Contemporary Art Space, Left Bank, Te Aro.* Latamai Katoa considers the home as a site of perpetual repair, shaped through time and life's performances in this new series of photographs and objects.

Until 9th May. Civic Weeds: *PEG Gallery, Cuba Street, Te Aro.* Alisa Coulson, Gerard Dombroski, Turumeke Harrington, Bena Jackson, Michael Mahne Lamb, Brie Rate, and Siobhan Wooding consider complexities of the infrastructure, public places in this group show.

24th Apr-15th May. Shadow Signals: *Toi Pōneke, Abel Smith Street, Te Aro.* Duo Daniel Beban and Tim Barlow modulate and manipulate light shone through sculptural objects that transform it into sound in this immersive and interactive exhibition.

Festivals

1st-24th May. NZ International Comedy Festival: *Various locations and times around Greater Wellington.* The funniest month of the year is back. Brought to you by Best Foods Mayo, the NZ International Comedy Festival showcases the best of comedy from local, national, and international talent.

For your inclusion in the what's on listings email: whatson@regionalnews.kiwi. Close off for the next issue's listings is noon Tuesday 28 April

To the best of our knowledge, the information provided to us regarding the above events was correct at the time of press. Our company accepts no liability for events postponed, cancelled, sold out, or otherwise adapted.

Regional News
Connecting Wellington

Answers to the puzzles on page 32

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Back to contents

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