Regional News

Eyes on Wellington

Issue 263
March 10, 2026

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News

Shapeshifting through time

by Madelaine Empson

Photo by Philine van den Hul.

"MY BABY's sound has always been built on echoes, reverbs, and looping patterns, emulating EDM and forging a trance-like experience", Daniel 'Da Freez' Johnston, one-third of the Dutch New Zealand trio, tells me of their most recent album *Echo*.

"But *Echo* is also the title of a track inspired by the ancient myth of
Echo, the bush nymph scorned by Narcissus. We wanted to retell and reimagine that story from a feminine perspective and conjure a sound that feels ancient and futuristic at the same time."

MY BABY's signature use of echo effects – be that on vocals, guitars, or pulsating rhythms – will mirror the themes of the album, Johnston continues. "How stories reverberate across time, shifting shape with each retelling."

Formed by New Zealander Johnston alongside Dutch siblings Cato and Joost van Dijck, MY BABY has earned a reputation for being a must-see live act all around the world and has built quite the cult following here in Aotearoa. They were last here for a 12-date tour in 2025 that finished with a last-minute set at WOMAD – "a whirlwind affair", Johnston recalls – and since then have taken on Europe's summer festivals, notably performing at Glastonbury and supporting Alanis Morissette on her world tour stop in Amsterdam.

And yet, "Wellington shows have always been some of the best on the tour over the years", Johnston delights, adding that San Fran, where they'll play again on the 18th of March, "has always been packed and buzzing".

Gig-goers can expect to catch much of the bluesy, roots-driven, delta-trance *Echo* album as well as improv jams, older songs, and a sneaky peek at a few new unreleased tracks.

"Once again, Kiwi audiences get to hear our new stuff first", Johnston smiles.

Feast for the senses

The Pope: Roaming Forgiveness Clown.

The capital's creative heart will be beating to the sounds, sights, and soul of Wellington's most vibrant and beloved two-day street festival as CubaDupa pulses to life between the 28th and 29th of March.

Featuring over 210 acts, 70 food vendors, 220 performances, and welcoming thousands of visitors into Wellington to celebrate creativity in all its kaleidoscopic forms, CubaDupa will become a space alive with discovery, play, and surprise.

The lineup, spanning everything from street music and theatre to dance and interactive experiences, blends boundary-pushing local artistry with big stage energy.

The music programme features pop, punk, soul, electronic, and everything in between, with highlights that include RIIKI REID, MOKOMOKAI, Dick Move, Lou'ana, Aro, Jeff Parsnips, Tom Knowles, Paige, NOÉ, Reiki Ruawai, Star Time, LEAO, Tahini Bikini, Imani-J, and Melbourne's Gut Health to name but a few.

Other works and activations from BODYFX Makeover Mayhem presented by Wētā Workshop and *Decant* by Footnote New Zealand Dance and friends, plus a theatre programme crafted in partnership with New Zealand Fringe Festival and the Cuba Street Summer Series, will transform the precinct into a living, breathing celebration.

A new collaboration with Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington sees the Te Aro campus transformed into Whanga (The Cove): an immersive visual arts sanctuary chocka with exhibitions, installations, and creative activations. All the while, Street Feast will give festivalgoers the opportunity to embark on a global culinary adventure from right here in Wellington.

Savour a smorgasbord for all the senses at Cubadupa 2026.

Cover: The Rocky Horror Show

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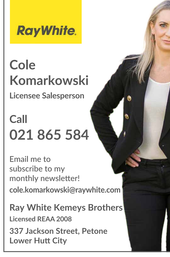


Madness takes its toll

Give yourself over to absolute pleasure. Swim the warm waters of *The Rocky Horror Show* – here you'll encounter erotic nightmares beyond any measure at St James Theatre between the 18th and the 29th of March, and sensual daydreams to treasure forever.

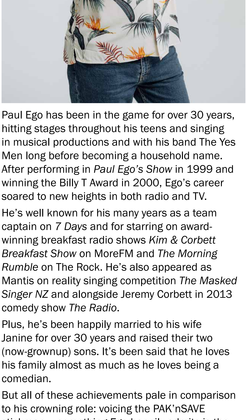
The world's sexiest and most outrageous rock 'n' roll musical celebrates five decades and returns to Pōneke direct from the UK after 15 years – bigger, bolder, and brasher than ever before. The wild, glitter-soaked party will *Time Warp* audiences back to 1973 to the kind of fun that's freakily fabulous and unapologetically unhinged.

Written 50 years ago by our very own national treasure Richard O'Brien, *The Rocky Horror Show* has thrilled over 35 million theatregoers worldwide, been performed in 30 countries, translated into 20 languages, and is the longest continuously running contemporary musical in the world. The story follows two squeaky-clean college kids – Brad and his fiancée Janet – who, by a twist of fate, find themselves stranded outside a mysterious mansion. Inside awaits the fabulous and flamboyant Dr Frank-N-Furter, and a wild adventure full of freakiness, frolics, frocks, and frivolity.

Directed by Christopher Luscombe, this high-energy stage spectacular is brought to Aotearoa by Trafalgar Theatre Productions and GMG Productions and stars a brilliant cast of West End actors that includes Stephen Webb reprising his acclaimed role as Dr Frank-N-Furter, New Zealand's own Kristian Lavercombe as The Narrator, James Bishop as Brad Majors, Haley Flaherty as Janet Weiss, Ryan Carter-Wilson as Riff Raff, Laura Bird as Magenta, Daisy Steere as Columbia, Morgan Jackson as Rocky, and Edward Bullingham as Eddie/Dr Scott.

Don't dream it, be it – it's just a jump to the left, and then a step to the right to see *The Rocky Horror Show* again!

Starring stickman



Paul Ego has been in the game for over 30 years, hitting stages throughout his teens and singing in musical productions and with his band The Yes Men long before becoming a household name. After performing in *Paul Ego's Show* in 1999 and winning the Billy T Award in 2000, Ego's career soared to new heights in both radio and TV.

He's well known for his many years as a team captain on *7 Days* and for starring on award-winning breakfast radio shows *Kim & Corbett Breakfast Show* on MoreFM and *The Morning Rumble* on The Rock. He's also appeared as Mantis on reality singing competition *The Masked Singer NZ* and alongside Jeremy Corbett in 2013 comedy show *The Radio*.

Plus, he's been happily married to his wife Janine for over 30 years and raised their two (now-grownup) sons. It's been said that he loves his family almost as much as he loves being a comedian.

But all of these achievements pale in comparison to his crowning role: voicing the PAK'nSAVE stickman – something Ego happily admits is the best job he's ever had.

He's also not done a solo New Zealand tour in three decades.

Enter *STICK*: an exciting and long overdue show from Ego inspired by his PAK'nSAVE persona that will deliver maximum laughs as he talks stickability, sticky situations, and, of course, stickmen.

With his famously quick wit in tow, Ego will delight audiences at Abandoned Taproom Petone on the 27th of March.

SNIPS

Fares increase
Metlink public transport fares will increase by 3.1 percent from the 15th of May, with discounts applied to off-peak fares being reduced from 30 to 20 percent. The decision was made to cover growing operating costs and address an expected revenue shortfall of $3 million for the current financial year.

Snap off
In other transport news, full-fare-paying adults will be able to tap on and off Metlink buses and trains using a debit or credit card, smartphone, or smartwatch through the existing Snapper system from the 12th of April. Once these additional payment options are available, Metlink will start to phase out the use of cash on board buses and trains over the next 12 months.

Lightbox call out
The lightboxes in Porirua's CBD will be showcasing new artworks this year. Curators and artists should put forward their exhibition proposals by the 27th of March. Search Te Manawa Lightboxes at pataka.org.nz to find out more.

Rip-roaring romp

“Inspired by a hot flash and a bottle of wine”, according to creator Jeanie Linders, Menopause The Musical is a hilariously heartfelt journey through “the change” that will turn up the heat at The Opera House on the 18th of March.

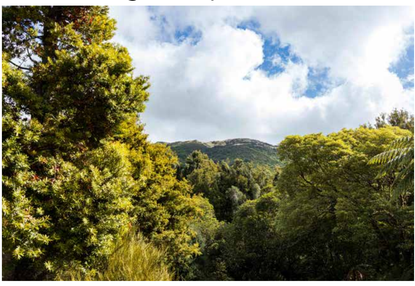
Told with love, laughter, and the greatest hits of the 60s, 70s, and 80s, the international phenomenon is set in a department store where four women meet by chance while shopping for a black lace bra. Though they couldn’t be more different, they quickly discover a shared bond over memory loss, hot flushes, night sweats, mood swings, and much more.

At the heart of this red-hot comedy are four powerhouse performers.

Multi-award-winning performer Ali Harper is one of New Zealand’s most respected and recognisable entertainers. She’s spent more than three decades captivating audiences and earning a reputation for her razor-sharp wit, warmth, and stage presence. Akina Edmonds has enjoyed a career in global musical theatre and was a finalist on The Voice Australia thanks to her formidable vocal firepower. Delivering depth, musicality, and finely tuned comic sensibility, Petrina Chisholm has a repertoire spanning musical theatre, bands, corporate entertainment, and education. Completing the cast is Sarah Kelly, a seasoned performer with more than two decades’ experience, who is known for her versatility, vocal strength, and energy.

Menopause The Musical celebrates women everywhere by turning shared experiences into shared joy.

Celebrating 100 years



Generations of Wellingtonians have walked Ōtari-Wilton’s winding paths for 100 years, learning about the taonga that make New Zealand’s natural heritage unique.

Since its establishment in 1926 to protect and study native plants, Ōtari-Wilton has grown into an internationally cherished place for conservation, research, learning, and recreation. For its centenary celebration, Ōtari-Wilton’s Bush Trust presents a year-long programme that looks back at the sanctuary’s history, honours its legacy, and looks to its future.

Starting in March and continuing through November, Ōtari Walk Series offers guided experiences of the sanctuary exploring the ecology and history of Ōtari and Aotearoa on the first Sunday of each month, while Ōtari Seminar Series features talks from conservationists, researchers, and community leaders on the first Tuesday of every month. Glow Worm Tours on select Saturdays between April and September will give visitors the chance to encounter nighttime wildlife.

Rā Tūwhera ki Ōtari | Ōtari Open Day on the 19th of September offers a behind-the-scenes look at the people, plants, and projects shaping Ōtari. During Wellington Heritage Festival in October and November, there will be guided walks through Ōtari’s remarkable history.

As part of the centenary celebrations, refreshed wayfinding has also launched to make exploring Ōtari-Wilton even better. Honour the past while shaping the future at New Zealand’s only public native botanic garden in 2026.

Music news

Superstars debut

María Dueñas. Photo by Sonja Mueller.

International violin sensation María Dueñas will make her Aotearoa debut with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZSO) this month. *From the New World* sees the 23-year-old Spanish virtuoso perform under the baton of chart-topping Venezuelan conductor Rodolfo Barráez, who has worked with the world's top orchestras and is also making his New Zealand debut, at Michael Fowler Centre on the 26th of March.

One of the most sought-after violinists in the world, Dueñas won the prestigious Menuhin Competition for Young Violinists at age 18 and has been described as "a strong-willed young artist with something to say, and the skill to say it brilliantly" (*The New York Times*). Praised for her dazzling technique and magnetic stage presence, her concerts are often met with stunned silence.

"I think it was the violin that chose me," *Gramophone*'s 2025 Young Artist of the Year says about her instrument. "It was like a passion. I was a very introverted child, so I feel like it was a way of talking, of expressing myself through music."

From the New World features Beethoven's beloved Violin Concerto, which Dueñas played during her much-anticipated debut with the New York Philharmonic earlier this year; Antonín Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 *From the New World*, one of the most popular symphonies ever written; and acclaimed New Zealand composer Eve de Castro-Robinson's mesmerising *Aurora*, a fanfare of birdsong and momentum.

Operatic aiga

New Zealand Samoan brothers Pene and Amitai Patì have made sonic waves in the world of opera. In the new documentary feature *Tenor: My Name is Patì*, out in cinemas nationwide from the 5th of March, the Patì brothers' extraordinary journey will be brought to life.

Well known to Kiwi audiences as part of the beloved trio Sol3 Mio alongside baritone Moses Mackay, Pene and Amitai's story is one of music, family, faith, and determination. From their original family home in Samoa and childhood in South Auckland to the most revered opera stages in the world, *Tenor* charts their against-the-odds journey that began in church halls and local competitions.

"I didn't think our story was remarkable," Pene says. "But as production went on, I realised how much has happened since Amitai and I started – the obstacles, the tests, the doubts, the tears, and ultimately, the success. Our journey wasn't easy or obvious, but if it sparks someone else to chase their own dreams, then that's the real win".

Directed by award-winning filmmaker Rebecca Tansley, *Tenor* was filmed across seven countries and blends soaring performances with intimate storytelling, wit, sweeping visuals, a richly varied soundtrack, and home footage filmed by their sister Torres Patì.

"Pene and Amitai's story is so much more than a story about opera singers", Tansley says. "It's about family and culture, and a beautiful testament to the transformative power of music – of all kinds".

Shimmering and sublime

by Madelaine Empson

Formed in Christchurch in 1982, The Bats – Robert Scott, Kaye Woodward, Paul Kean, and Malcolm Grant – have quietly and loudly endured as one of New Zealand's most beloved pop bands. Now, the indie legends are heading out on the road to celebrate their 2025 album *Corner Coming Up*, which peaked at number one on the RMNZ chart, number two on the Official Aotearoa Music Charts, and shows them at their shimmering, melodic best. I nabbed a few minutes with Scott to chat about the upcoming tour, which reaches St Peter's Village Hall in Paekākāriki on the 13th and Meow in Wellington on the 14th of March.

This will be your most extensive NZ tour in over 20 years! What are your top memories from road-tripping the country in the past?

The old tours were such fun – a new, exciting time, especially playing out-of-the-way places like Gore, Barrytown, even the Tokoroa C+W festival. Experiencing changes in the country each time you do a tour. Communication changes have made it easier – no more wrestling with maps or looking for phone boxes.

What are the must-dos on the road this time?

Nowadays, sleep, try and talk to the fans in person, and use smaller amps.

How do you think Corner Coming Up compares and contrasts with your earlier work?

Corner is a continuation of our sound with some new themes – we will always sound like The Bats. Each studio visit is a nice challenge.

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

Wellington is a special place with great memories: recording *The Law of Things* there, and of course, the super nice, musically smart fans who always make the effort to come out to our shows.

A blues boogie blast

Photo by Sally Garner.

Laura Collins and the Big Blues Band will be bringing boogie and brass, soul and swing, and, of course, blues in spades to Wairarapa Events Centre on the 14th of March.

Collins has been entertaining audiences with humour and heart for 30 years. The consummate performer may have explored many styles of music in that time, but she always comes back to the blues. 12 years touring nationally with her previous outfit Laura Collins and the Back Porch Blues Band shows the magnetic force between the genre and the singer who's about to bring Etta James, Aretha Franklin, Fats Domino, Ray Charles, and more to the stage.

Joining Collins will be some of her Wellington-based long-time musical companions: Wayne Mason, Kiwi music icon, being utilised here in his capacity as a master of boogie keys; John O'Connor eating it up on lead guitar; and George Barris and Richard Te One bringing a powerhouse rhythm section. Adding that soulful uplift, the brass horn section features Manawatū locals James Tait-Jamieson (saxophone), Craig Collis (trombone), and Neville Lauridsen (trumpet).

"I like to say there's at least 300 years of musical history on the stage," Collins notes of her brilliant Big Blues Band. "This is a group of 'old hands' who have been making music a long time, absolutely revelling in the playing".

In concert, Collins says "the emphasis is on having a hugely good time, with the brass enabling the dynamic energy to be turned up to 10!"

Get your bling on and get on down with Laura Collins and the Big Blues Band.

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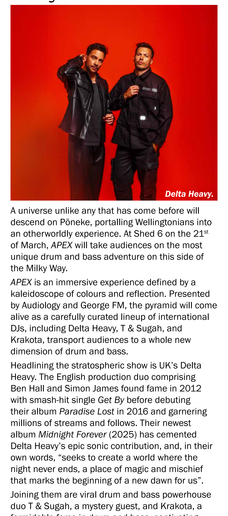
News

The night never ends



Delta Heavy.

A universe unlike any that has come before will descend on Pōneke, portalling Wellingtonians into an otherworldly experience. At Shed 6 on the 21st of March, *APEX* will take audiences on the most unique drum and bass adventure on this side of the Milky Way.

APEX is an immersive experience defined by a kaleidoscope of colours and reflection. Presented by Audiology and George FM, the pyramid will come alive as a carefully curated lineup of international DJs, including Delta Heavy, T & Sugah, and Krakota, transport audiences to a whole new dimension of drum and bass.

Headlining the stratospheric show is UK's Delta Heavy. The English production duo comprising Ben Hall and Simon James found fame in 2012 with smash-hit single *Get By* before debuting their album *Paradise Lost* in 2016 and garnering millions of streams and follows. Their newest album *Midnight Forever* (2025) has cemented Delta Heavy's epic sonic contribution, and, in their own words, "seeks to create a world where the night never ends, a place of magic and mischief that marks the beginning of a new dawn for us".

Joining them are viral drum and bass powerhouse duo T & Sugah, a mystery guest, and Krakota, a formidable force in drum and bass, captivating audiences with his signature blend of dancefloor energy and musical depth.

Welcome to a whole new world of drum and bass, where sound, light, and magic collide to create something extraordinary.

Savour the flavour

Project Juliette.

Wellington's Filipino community is a vibrant, energetic, colourful, and growing cultural presence in the capital. Chocka with talent and proud to call Wellington home, the local diaspora and Freemasons New Zealand present *Salo-Salo: A Filipino Food Fair and Charity Concert*, at Johnsonville's Masonic Community Hall on the 14th of March.

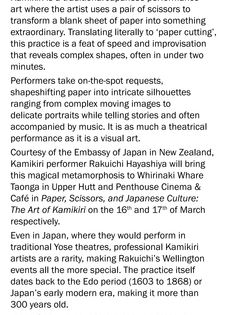
The kaupapa of salo-salo, which means to gather and share food with others, is at the heart of the event. It reflects the essence of Filipino culture and highlights the cornerstones of connection, hospitality, and bayanihan (community support). The celebration will bring together food, music, and community spirit in support of Mary Potter Hospice, a palliative care service helping patients and their families across the Wellington Region.

From 2pm, food trucks serving up delicious Filipino cuisine will line up in the carpark. Attendees will be transported to the Philippines through traditional delicacies and fusion flavours. Whether it's already a favourite food or you've never had the chance to try it, the menus will be vast and varied with something for all palates.

The charity concert will kick off at 5pm, shining the spotlight on local Filipino talent. Catch Juan43 Band, Project Juliette, Fusepoint Band, and Cousins live.

Celebrating the growing cultural presence of the Wellington diaspora, *Salo-Salo: A Filipino Food Fair and Charity Concert* promotes the diverse customs and cuisines of the local Filipino community while raising funds for an essential service in the region. Make a difference and savour the flavour!

Life in paper



Kamikiri is a traditional Japanese performance art where the artist uses a pair of scissors to transform a blank sheet of paper into something extraordinary. Translating literally to 'paper cutting', this practice is a feat of speed and improvisation that reveals complex shapes, often in under two minutes.

Performers take on-the-spot requests, shapeshifting paper into intricate silhouettes ranging from complex moving images to delicate portraits while telling stories and often accompanied by music. It is as much a theatrical performance as it is a visual art.

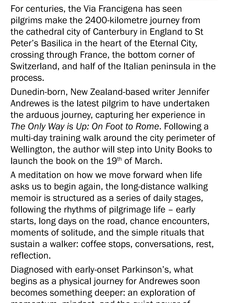
Courtesy of the Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, Kamikiri performer Rakuichi Hayashiya will bring this magical metamorphosis to Whirinaki Whare Taonga in Upper Hutt and Penthouse Cinema & Café in *Paper, Scissors, and Japanese Culture: The Art of Kamikiri* on the 16th and 17th of March respectively.

Even in Japan, where they would perform in traditional Yose theatres, professional Kamikiri artists are a rarity, making Rakuichi's Wellington events all the more special. The practice itself dates back to the Edo period (1603 to 1868) or Japan's early modern era, making it more than 300 years old.

In the *One-Minute Masterpiece*, the creative will manoeuvre his scissors to create an intricate artwork in the blink of an eye. The next moment he'll take suggestions from the audience, bringing unpractised images to life in paper, instantly.

Watch Rakuichi bring worlds to life from thin air at *Paper, Scissors, and Japanese Culture: The Art of Kamikiri*.

Forward movement



For centuries, the Via Francigena has seen pilgrims make the 2400-kilometre journey from the cathedral city of Canterbury in England to St Peter's Basilica in the heart of the Eternal City, crossing through France, the bottom corner of Switzerland, and half of the Italian peninsula in the process.

Dunedin-born, New Zealand-based writer Jennifer Andrewes is the latest pilgrim to have undertaken the arduous journey, capturing her experience in *The Only Way is Up: On Foot to Rome*. Following a multi-day training walk around the city perimeter of Wellington, the author will step into Unity Books to launch the book on the 19th of March.

A meditation on how we move forward when life asks us to begin again, the long-distance walking memoir is structured as a series of daily stages, following the rhythms of pilgrimage life – early starts, long days on the road, chance encounters, moments of solitude, and the simple rituals that sustain a walker: coffee stops, conversations, rest, reflection.

Diagnosed with early-onset Parkinson's, what begins as a physical journey for Andrewes soon becomes something deeper: an exploration of momentum, mindset, and the quiet power of putting one foot in front of the other when the way ahead is uncertain.

The Only Way is Up speaks to anyone standing at a crossroads, revealing how momentum can transform thinking, restore confidence, and open new possibilities. It offers pilgrimage not as an escape from real life, but as a practical framework for living well: shedding excess weight, building resilience, cultivating presence, and finding meaning through steady forward movement.

Kit for a cause

The players with Oliver Harper (L) and Oscar Harper (R).

In kits designed by kids, the Wellington Phoenix men's and women's teams will take to the field for the second annual Macca's Match for Good double-header on the 14th of March. The two games – which will see the men face off against Perth Glory at 3pm and the women versus Brisbane Roar at 6pm at Hnry Stadium – will proudly support Ronald McDonald House Charities® (RMHC®) New Zealand.

The charity matches shine a spotlight on RMHC NZ's vital work providing families who must travel away from home while their child receives hospital treatment with free accommodation and care. This year's games will also see the Phoenix wearing a bespoke kit featuring designs by children and families currently staying at Ronald McDonald Houses in NZ.

Placing families at the heart of the game, the match-worn jerseys will be auctioned to raise funds for RMHC, while replica jerseys available for purchase will see 10 percent of every sale donated as well. To amplify the impact, McDonald's restaurants will match every donation made to RMHC via kiosk and drive-thru until the 15th of March.

For Wellingtonian families like the Slaughters, whose youngest daughter Layla was diagnosed with infant leukaemia and airlifted to Christchurch, the Macca's Match for Good represents far more than a game.

"Having somewhere close to hospital, meals provided, and a space where Bailey could play lifted an enormous burden", Ashleigh Slaughter says.

Support the kicks and kits for a cause at Macca's Match for Good.

Autumn's bounty

Celebrating local food, Kiwi culture, and community connection, Upper Hutt Food Week will bring kai to every corner of Upper Hutt between the 21st and 29th of March.

Like an arts festival but for food, the celebration will see cafés, community gardens, foodbanks, Orongomai Marae, and food raising and gathering experts serving up a rich smorgasbord of workshops, shared meals, foraging walks, orchard and garden tours, markets, and events. Together, they'll mark the changing of the season, celebrate the autumn harvest, and promote a deeper connection to the fresh, healthy produce grown in Te Awa Kairangi ki Uta Upper Hutt.

Opening Upper Hutt Food Week on the 21st, Mangaroa Farms Harvest Festival is set to be a highlight. Expect fresh local produce, regenerative farm tours, kai tastings, nature play for tamariki, a pumpkin competition, demonstrations, live music, and more.

The week brings lots of local experts providing a wealth of knowledge and hands-on workshop opportunities to participate in, including permaculture, composting, preserving and fermentation, sourdough baking, and foraging. Rimutaka Lions Club has partnered with Upper Hutt City Council, Mangaroa Farms, 4 A Better City, and Heritage Nursery to bring a fantastic new event to the Hutt Valley.

Be part of a growing movement toward local food resilience, shared learning, and community connection at Mangaroa Farms Harvest Festival this Upper Hutt Food Week.

• Signature range stage (high-end)
• Tickadeebouje stage (mid-range)
• Tickadee basics

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Upper Hutt Food Week

21-29 March 2026

UPPER HUTT FOOD WEEK

What is Food Week?

A celebration of the people who grow, gather, hunt, make, and share our kai.

Why Join Us?

- Discover wild, local flavours
- Celebrate food traditions
- Learn & share skills
- Enjoy whānau-friendly events

Highlights:

- Harvest Festival Market – 21 March
- Workshops, Movie
- Local Produce Menus
- Pumpkin Competition Judging - 28 March

See our Facebook Page @ Upper Hutt Food Week and website for details

www.foodweek.co.nz

Celebrating **local kai, local people, and local places** for a whole week!

Te Kaunihera o Te Awa Kairangi ki Uta Upper Hutt City Council · For A Better City · Lions Clubs of New Zealand · Mangaroa Farms

News
A word from Maddi…

Sole searching

by Madelaine Empson

I lost a lot of shoes in my early teens. Crucially, it would always be one shoe, and I'd return home on the bus still wearing the other. My regular bus driver came to know me for panickily galloping to the bus stop, late, one foot in shoe, one foot bare – quite the sight at the best of times, let alone if you're wearing heels.

Remarkably, a number of these shoes made their way back to me. Mum would get a call from school – "We've got a boot here and a strong suspicion it's hers" – or I'd find my flipper at the pool's lost property. Each time this happened I'd consider it a minor miracle, thanking my lucky stars for the kindness of the stranger who handed it in. At the time, I failed to recognise that a singular shoe would be a rather pointless thing to steal.

Wallets, on the other hand… I cannot count the number of wallets I left on the bus (yes, *that* bus). The same driver, who knew me by name, wouldn't even take the haul to lost property. Instead, he'd finish his route and do a loop, returning to the stop where he'd dropped me off and where I'd still be, waiting hopefully. I'd see the bus coming and whoop, thanking him profusely while he chucked a wallet or a phone or a house key out the door for me to catch.

I'll never be able to repay that man for the many untold disasters he helped me avoid, but ever since, I've made it my mission to do the same for others whenever I get the chance. To walk a mile in their shoe, so to speak.

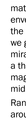
The other day, I found a giant envelope from Sweden to a stranger in our letterbox that seemed important. I looked the addressee's name up on Facebook and found three matching profiles, all locked. Going on nothing but a gut feeling, I chose one and messaged. Lo and behold, it was a match. The person provided proof and I popped the envelope back in the letterbox for them to collect the next day. We didn't check the mail again until we got home much later, where we found a minor miracle of our own: they'd left Lindt chocolate as a thank you. Let me tell you, no one appreciates magic chocolate more than tipsy people at midnight.

Random acts of kindness will always come back around the (Lindt) block.

Advice from Alan

Conditional vs unconditional

by Alan Knowsley, consultant, Rainey Collins Lawyers



Conditional offers are where offers to purchase a property are subject to certain conditions being met. This means if the conditions cannot be satisfied, the parties have the ability to cancel the agreement, and the transaction will not proceed.

Once a conditional offer is accepted by the vendor, the purchaser is given an agreed period of time (for example 10 working days) to satisfy the relevant conditions. Once the conditions are satisfied, the purchaser (usually through their legal representative) will notify the vendor and their agent that the condition has been satisfied. Once all conditions are met (there are usually more than one), the transaction will go unconditional and will proceed to completion and settlement.

Common examples of conditions include obtaining a satisfactory builder's report for the property, receiving confirmation of insurance for the property, review and approval of title to the property, receiving a satisfactory LIM report from the local council for the property, and obtaining an unconditional offer of finance to purchase the particular property.

Completing all this due diligence before submitting an offer can incur a lot of expenses, especially if acceptable reports have not been made available by the vendor.

Accordingly, often purchasers will submit a conditional offer to ensure that they only incur these expenses once their offer is accepted.

Unconditional offers are where the offer to purchase a property is submitted without being subject to any conditions. This means the offer would not be subject to any timeframes or conditions to carry out any checks and due diligence. If an unconditional offer is submitted and the vendor accepts it, the purchaser must proceed with the purchase. If a purchaser is considering putting in an unconditional offer, it is highly recommended that they complete their due diligence beforehand.

A situation whereby a purchaser must enter into an unconditional agreement is when the property is sold by auction. Accordingly, a purchaser must ensure that they are able to submit an unconditional offer (for example not having only conditional finance approval) before bidding on a property at an auction.

Hold your breath

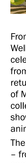
What if you had to pay for the air you breathe? Wellington Repertory Theatre will leave you gasping with their production of Ben Elton's 1990 satire about corporate greed and environmental exploitation that boldly imagines a world in which clear air is bottled and sold for profit.

Director Oliver Mander says *Gasping* is written in the typical Elton mould: fast, biting, and cuttingly funny. The first production of Wellington Repertory's centenary year will accentuate the rapid-fire dialogue and high-octane pace you'd expect from the brilliant British comedian who has written for the likes of *Blackadder* and *The Young Ones*. The result for those watching, Mander says, will be constant immersion in the action on stage.

"*Gasping* highlights the importance of balance in any successful market. In reality, companies operate with legislation or regulation that sets boundaries for what they can or can't do, and also have to balance the long-term needs of investors with short-term profitability. *Gasping* highlights a world where there is no check or balance, where actions are taken to an extreme."

With Elton's trademark wit at play, the cast of five will deliver a wickedly funny ride through boardroom spin, marketing madness, and the unstoppable pursuit of profit. But there's a darkness at the story's edge: this is a black comedy, after all. *Gasping* skewers corporate greed in a way that is at once laugh-out-loud hilarious and uncomfortably close to home, of its time and uncannily prophetic. Catch it at Gryphon Theatre from the 18th to the 28th of March.

Doses of discovery



Little Amélie.

From poetic shorts to pioneering features, Wellington Animation Film Festival (WAFF) celebrates artistry, innovation, and storytelling from around the world. The third annual iteration returns to Roxy Cinema from the 19th to the 22nd of March with nine feature films, five short film collections, and a series of industry-focused panels showcasing the variety and creative possibilities of animation.

The programme spans a broad range of genres – from ecological adventures and musicals to comedic and dramatic works – from France, Japan, China, South Korea, Canada, Belgium, Luxembourg, the UK, and New Zealand.

Seven films will have their New Zealand premiere, including award-winning titles from international festivals like Cannes Film Festival winner *Dandelion's Odyssey*, Annecy award-winning drama *The Square*, Annecy 2025 Jury Award-winning romantic fantasy *ChaO*, and the Golden Globe and Oscar-nominated *Little Amélie or the Character of Rain*. Short collections include the Annecy Best of 2025 and Female Landscape: Animation, which highlights women's voices.

The first New Zealand Chinese co-production *Mosley* is a highlight on this year's lineup and features the voices of veteran Kiwi actors Lucy Lawless, Rhys Darby, and Temuera Morrison.

Aotearoa's first Animation Student Competition launches as part of WAFF, featuring New Zealand graduation films from universities nationwide alongside an out-of-competition French student shorts programme.

WAFF will also host Industry Dayz for the first time both in person and online to provide opportunities to animation creatives to expand their connections, skills, and imaginations.

Close-up

by Madelaine Empson

The work-art balance

Photo by Andrew Empson.

Oliver Mander grew up on a diet of school productions in Christchurch and moved to Wellington in 1994. After a long break from theatre due to a role with BP that took him around the world for two decades, and prioritising raising his children, he made his return to acting in Wellington Repertory Theatre's *Take A Chance On Me,* directed by Ewen Coleman in 2015.

Since then, he has become a well-known face on our stages and behind the curtains, working with local companies like Porirua Little Theatre, KAT Theatre, Stagecraft, and, of course, Wellington Repertory Theatre, where he served as president and later treasurer for close to a decade. In 2025, Mander made the difficult decision to step away from the board due to increasing job intensity. He may be the CEO of NZ Shareholders' Association, but that has by no means stopped him getting involved in the Pōneke community theatre scene.

Mander will direct the first production of Wellington Repertory Theatre's centenary season: Ben Elton's *Gasping,* which boldly envisions a world in which consumers must pay for air. Catch it at Gryphon Theatre from the 18th to the 28th of March, and catch Mander's musings on the show below as he looks back on his time with the theatre company so far.

What sparked your interest in theatre?
When I was at school years and years ago, I was quite shy, to say the least. I discovered when I was on stage in an acting role, I lost my stutter. Acting helped me become someone else, and therefore my own personal shortcoming – the way I spoke – didn't really matter. Eventually, acting became reality and over time that's morphed into just talking normally. So, it was a very helpful tool.

What kept you involved with the Wellington Repertory Theatre board from 2016 to 2025?
The ability to help shape an organisation that could last, that could push itself in different directions, that could have an expanded programme, and that could offer challenges to people. I always enjoy working behind the scenes on things as much as I do in front of things. In fact, it's almost a preferred mode.

Looking back over the last decade with Wellington Repertory Theatre, what shows most jump out at you?
Some of the large-cast shows were really powerful. Some of the lesser-known shows – *Our Country's Good,* directed by Joanne Lisik in 2016. *Shakespeare in Love* last year was a bit of a highlight, it was the first time it'd ever been staged in New Zealand. It involved a huge amount of people from a lot of different walks and backgrounds. It's always good to see how cast and crew bond during the show – it all comes down to the culture that forms around each one. There have been shows where that culture has maintained itself for a really long time. Most recently, *The Great Gatsby* was an example of that. The people involved have kept the faith.

I really enjoyed staging *Popcorn* by Ben Elton, which I co-directed with Isaac Borgman. We did it a little differently – used AV extensively to form an inner monologue of what was going on in the show. People either loved it or hated it, but it didn't matter because the quality of acting and the production values were really high. I think Wellington Rep's ability to take a bit of a chance, a bit of a risk, do things that wee bit differently, by and large that really creates a different style and a different portfolio of shows for audiences. Wellington Repertory will take on projects that no one else does, from a community theatre perspective. I think that means it's always fresh and always interesting. It does come at things from different perspectives. That's a key strength.

Can you pinpoint the most outrageous thing that's happened on stage?
Nothing outrageous ever happens on stage [laughs]. Sometimes it's when the audience doesn't realise anything's going wrong – happy days! There was one show, *Brassed Off,* that I was in with my son. That involved a lot of running around backstage changing costumes. I remember going on stage and I hadn't had time to do my pants up properly, so basically I just sat there, facing the audience, shifting my muscles around my hips to make sure they didn't fall down.

The stuff of nightmares!
It wasn't good [laughs]. There are more, probably better stories than that, but it certainly springs to mind...

Like you say, when the audience can't tell that things are going wrong – that must be testament to the cast's dynamics and chemistry that they can keep things going?
It's actually where the culture of the show really matters, and where that bonding becomes important – that's absolutely right.

Speaking of culture! How are rehearsals going for Gasping?
It's a great, strong cast and they've bonded really well, which allows for a flexible rehearsal process. Rehearsals are good. We started early, which was a great decision. We're now able to spend more time on the characters and the trickier bits in the show. To me the really big thing is pace, particularly when you're dealing with Ben Elton. His writing is like his comedy: it's fast-paced, it's action-oriented, it's coming at you the whole time.

You've managed to maintain the work-art balance – any tips and tricks? What would you like to see more of in Wellington to make the juggling act manageable?
Having an open mind is a really big thing. I'm not particularly dictatorial, so recognising when you haven't always got the right answer. Having two people is always better than one. When things do need to change, working around that – so building a much more flexible approach. It's just a fact that we all lead busy lives. [With *Gasping,*] we've tried to keep a flexible and fluid rehearsal process to make sure we meet everyone's needs. And flexibility in an employment relationship is undervalued, but it's really important and can and should be recognised.

For community theatre, we do this for fun, we're not paid for it. Whether you're onstage, you're the lighting designer, or you're me trying to direct something, we do it because we love it. That's it. So, it's got to be fun. For everything else, that has to be the ethos, in terms of the culture that you're trying to build.

Directing for the love of it, what are you getting out of Gasping, and what do you hope your audience gets out of seeing it?
Gasping is a classic Ben Elton show. It's full of satire and it's a comedy with a fairly overt message. In this case, it's lampooning and skewering corporate excess. There is a bit of a connection between what I do in my professional role and the play. In my professional role, I'm encouraging the voice of the little guy: advocating for small shareholders, and encouraging great corporate governance and corporate disclosure transparency in New Zealand. Bit of buzzword bingo there! But actually, what *Gasping* is all about is exactly that. It's about what happens when a corporation is not transparent. It's the exact opposite of the things that I advocate for and the things I promote in real life: the antithesis of how I'd expect a good corporate to behave. Maybe that helps form the relationship in terms of highlighting the viciousness of Lockheart Holdings – the protagonist.

I think what the audience will see onstage is a great production that shows us what happens when there's no balance: when the excess only goes one way. It's a great show with lots of themes to unpick: a black comedy, a really good night out, a good laugh, but with a message, as Ben Elton always has.

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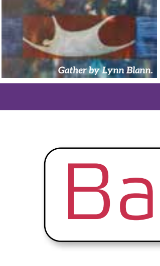

Gather by Lynn Blann.

Te Manu Muramura Exhibition
1 February - 30 April 2026
The new exhibition at Rydge's Wellington Airport (along the corridor connecting the hotel conference rooms and the terminal) celebrates the themes of flight, movement, the sky, waves and surf. The New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts invited artists to respond with works to complement the new sculpture celebrating the journey of bird spirit Te Manu Muramura and the story of taniwha Ngake and Whātaitai of Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington Harbour).

Flow by Lynn Blann.

Artist Showcase at Double Tree by Hilton, Wellington
Art Flow: Dine & Discover 18 April
An evening with featured artist Lynn Blann
Tickets at Eventfinda
Lynn Blann worked as a professional musician in Auckland during the late 1960s and 1970s, often in the café's adjoining art galleries. It was a vibrant and innovative time, driven by the Peace, Anti-War, Women's and Māori rights movements that inspired many musicians, poets, writers and artists.

Contemporary New Zealand art

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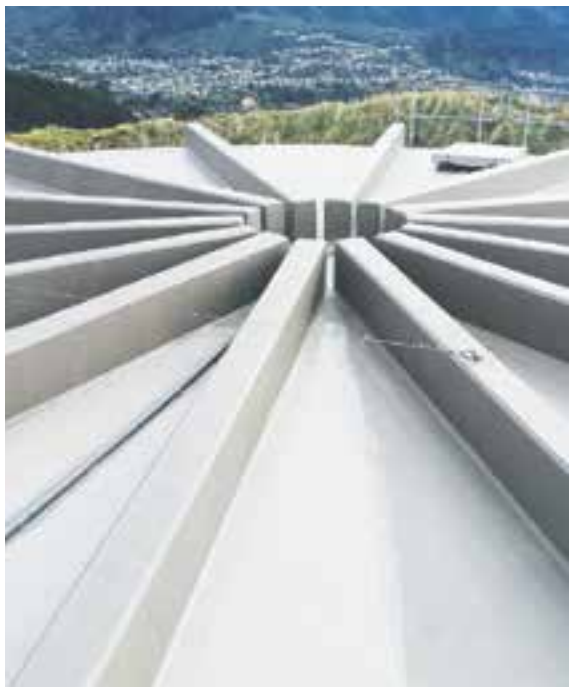
High Growth National Opportunity



Palmerston North - $1,650,000

Mastermix is a high performing business that manufactures and sells dry bagged concrete mixes and mortars, tailored for specialist applications. These aren't your standard DIY products - Mastermix supplies large scale civil projects, water infrastructure plants, councils, and even the rocket industry with premium, purpose made mixes.

The business has delivered consistent year on year growth with huge upside still to come. Demand is strong, and regions like Auckland and Waikato remain virtually untouched. With infrastructure investment booming, especially in water and roading, Mastermix is perfectly positioned to capitalise. While the manufacturing plant is based in the Manawatu, it's fully managed and operates independently - meaning a new owner can be based anywhere in New Zealand.

The real opportunity lies in growing the customer base, strengthening relationships, and driving sales and marketing efforts that have only scratched the surface to date. If you're looking for a scalable, in demand business with national reach and strong foundations already in place, this is it. Contact us to find out more.

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Managing Partner - Manawatu
Phone: 027 257 6856
Mobile: 027 257 6856
steved@abcbusiness.co.nz

Discover NZ by bike

Perfectly picturesque

By visiting Geraldine in autumn, you'll be transported to a world tinged in orange hues, carpeted in crunchy leaves, and framed by snow-capped mountains. This quaint little town glows golden during this season – like something from a movie, it's picture perfect and all kinds of cosy.

Nestled in the foothills of the Southern Alps, Geraldine is tucked between three rivers and surrounded by three beautiful nature areas. Stroll or bike the endless tracks that are perfect for admiring the tapestry of autumn foliage. The more adventurous can try rafting, horse trekking, canyoning, scenic flights, and more.

The jewel of South Canterbury is arty and relaxed, brimming with cafés, galleries, boutiques, museums, and award-winning eateries. After your serene cycle, while away an afternoon in the village centre enjoying the slow-paced life and taking in the beautiful season with a cup of hot cocoa in hand.

Amazing in autumn

Photo by Will Nelson.

Stretching from the Lake Roxburgh Dam through to Clyde, the Roxburgh Gorge Trail has the exciting experience of a quick jet boat mid-ride!

The Ngā Haerenga Great Ride of New Zealand is divided into two halves, meaning that not only will you get to enjoy Central Otago's incredible scenery from the seat of your bike, but also from the prow of a boat sailing along the Clutha Mata-Au River.

With epic sights to stop off at along the way, trail highlights include the Roxburgh Dam Lookout with stunning northerly vistas across the lake, the winding road through the narrow gorge, and swathes of bush and rolling farmland. Plus, riders can stop off at vineyards and farms along the way to sample local produce and vino harvested fresh off the vines.

With beautiful fall colours draped across the trees during autumn, Roxburgh Gorge Trail is sensational from start to finish.

Terrific trail

Photo by Will Nelson.

Cycle back in time along the Clutha Gold Trail. Weaving through historic hotspots in Central Otago, this Ngā Haerenga Great Ride of New Zealand is one of the most popular for good reason. Whether you want to hop on and off to enjoy the track in bursts or you're keen to take it in one go over a few days, the Clutha Gold Cycle Trail is a great bet for all ages, abilities, and interests.

Starting or ending at the Roxburgh Dam or Waihola, the Clutha Gold Cycle Trail snakes through the iconic Central Otago landscape past quaint towns, beautiful scenery, heritage sites, eateries aplenty, and the incredible flora and fauna Aotearoa is famous for. Shop off the old mining villages of Roxburgh, Millers Flat, Beaumont, Lawrence, Waitahuna, and Milton to recharge and refuel along the way.

From picturesque picnic spots to postcard-worthy panoramas, the Clutha Gold Cycle Trail is pure perfection.

Geraldine Vintage Car & Machinery Museum

Vast collection of over 2,000 vintage exhibits including a Spartan Biplane, over 100 Tractors from 1902 onwards and more than 50 Vintage & Veteran Cars from 1907 onwards.

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Discover NZ by bike

Boutique beauty

Located in the heart of Hokitika just off the bustling main street, Hokitika Fire Station is a luxurious and stylish base from which to explore the West Coast Wilderness Trail.

Hokitika Fire Station delivers apartment accommodation in a historic landmark building. Each room is intentionally decorated to reflect a different aesthetic while paying tribute to one of the fire chiefs who once commanded the station. The Chief Henshaw suite sleeps two to six, while the Chief Millard, Chief MacFarlane, Chief Shain, and Chief Thompson rooms sleep two to four, meaning you can enjoy the space whether you're flying solo, in a pair, with your pals, or you have the whole whānau in tow.

Apartments include a spa-like bathroom, plush king bed, air purifier, well-equipped kitchen, and eclectic décor, plus thoughtful touches that make all the difference. Double-glazed windows mean you'll stay cosy and cool and get a great rest in a quiet room. Shared spaces, including an outdoor entertainment area complete with a fireplace, complimentary parking, EV charging, laundry, and secure bike and gear storage are available to all guests, making Hokitika Fire Station an ideal spot for exploring the West Coast.

As for the location, you'll find Hokitika's shops, cafés, bars, and restaurants just around the corner, not to mention the iconic beach and driftwood sign down the road. You may even catch a famous West Coast sunset from your room!

Book your getaway at www.hokitikafirestation.co.nz

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Discover NZ by bike

Bridging the gap

In the heart of Central Otago, where the water carves its way through ancient rock in its coursing, roiling journey to the sea, the Kawarau Gorge Trail unfolds.

The 32-kilometre stretch of trail opening soon will bridge the gap between Queenstown, through Nevis Bluff and the popular Central Otago trails, to provide an adventure of unparalleled beauty, uncovering previously inaccessible segments of the Kawarau Gorge.

Crossing two suspension bridges and winding through sunlit sections overlooking the river, the Kawarau Gorge Trail captures the landscape from a new perspective that places nature at the forefront. But that doesn't mean human traces are forgotten. Along the way, cyclists and hikers will encounter relics from the past that will bring them face to face with the region's history, with world-class wineries inviting them to savour the flavours of the land here and now.

Discover something fresh and familiar along the Kawarau Gorge Trail.

Trail experts

With endless cycling adventures available in the lower South Island, it can seem daunting to plan an itinerary. Cyclists are spoiled for choice when it comes to selecting a trip and trail. Our cycling network covers the Queenstown trails including the new Kawarau Gorge Trail between Gibbston and Cromwell, the Lake Dunstan Trail, the Otago Central Rail Trail, Roxburgh Gorge Trail, Clutha Gold Trail, and Alps 2 Ocean Trail, which are all nestled within this strikingly beautiful region.

Trail Journeys organise biking holidays for cyclists of all ages, abilities, and interests. As locals, they know the trails like the back of their hands and have been crafting stunning tours for travellers since 2000. Tailoring each tour to clients' special interests, budgets, and time constraints, Trail Journeys will ensure your South Island cycling experience is everything you hoped for and more.

Find out more and plan your dream bike holiday at www.trailjourneys.co.nz

Enjoy the ride

Looking for a holiday destination that blends comfortable living with the rugged beauty of the Southern Alps?

Tucked away in the heart of the Southern Alps, Mt White Station spans 40,000 hectares of dramatic landscapes, native bush, and streams winding into braided rivers. Relax, de-stress, and explore nature with Mt White Station experiences that suit your group. Celebrate milestone birthdays in our newly built guest quarters or gather your hiking or biking friends and discover over 60 kilometres of exclusive high-country tracks with our backcountry experiences.

You'll find there is no shortage of activities to enjoy at Mt White Station. Kayak on Lake Letitia, unpack a live beehive, explore the High Country on horseback, or experience a station tour in our backcountry.

There's something for everyone to indulge in. Enjoy a slice of High Country living and book your stay at mtwhitestation.co.nz today.

Discover NZ by bike

Taste the flavour

On a hot Central Otago summer day in 2008, Quintin Quider of California and Stormalong Stanley from Stewart Island decided to cook their freshly caught fish in an old wine barrel. As soon as they tasted the oaky flavour of their smoked salmon, they knew they'd made a discovery like no other. Since then, many wine barrels have been transformed into patented, unique cookers and The Stoaker Room was born.

At The Stoaker Room, fresh local produce is grilled, baked, steamed, and smoked in French oak pinot noir barrel cookers. Designed for natural ingredients, oak and steam combine to create delicious feasts made for sharing and for savouring.

The Stoaker Room has locations in Cromwell and Wānaka, which are popular stops along the many bike routes criss-crossing Central Otago. For a fresh and tasty feed that will satisfy even the hungriest of cyclists, careen into The Stoaker Room along your next adventure.

Rest and recharge

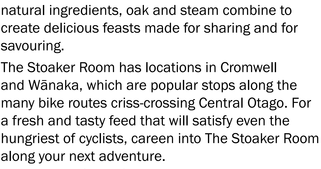


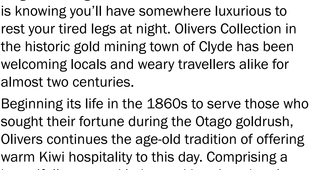
Photo by Miles Holden.

While pedalling across Central Otago by day is as good as it gets, what makes it even better is knowing you'll have somewhere luxurious to rest your tired legs at night. Olivers Collection in the historic gold mining town of Clyde has been welcoming locals and weary travellers alike for almost two centuries.

Beginning its life in the 1860s to serve those who sought their fortune during the Otago goldrush, Olivers continues the age-old tradition of offering warm Kiwi hospitality to this day. Comprising a beautifully restored lodge and boutique hotel, an award-winning eatery, a brewery, and a bakery, this luxury accommodation experience is ideal for those biking the Lake Dunstan Trail and the Central Otago Rail Trail, or anyone passing through.

Olivers Lodge & Stables offer two distinct styles, but regardless of which one you choose, breakfast will be served come morning to fill your belly before your next ride.

Central connection



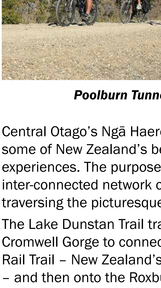
Poolburn Tunnel, Otago Central Rail Trail.
Photo by James Jubb.

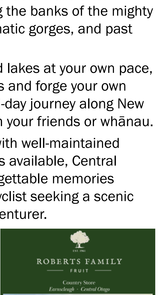
Central Otago's Ngā Haerenga Great Rides offer some of New Zealand's best walking and cycling experiences. The purpose-built trails span an inter-connected network of over 500 kilometres, traversing the picturesque landscapes.

The Lake Dunstan Trail traverses the spectacular Cromwell Gorge to connect to the Otago Central Rail Trail – New Zealand's original Great Ride – and then onto the Roxburgh Gorge Trail. The Roxburgh Gorge and Clutha Gold Trails offer spectacular journeys along the banks of the mighty Clutha River, through dramatic gorges, and past historic goldfields.

Explore the mountains and lakes at your own pace, venture into the wilderness and forge your own path, or go big with a multi-day journey along New Zealand's Great Rides with your friends or whānau.

Catering to all levels and with well-maintained paths and support services available, Central Otago trails promise unforgettable memories whether you're a leisure cyclist seeking a scenic escape or a seasoned adventurer.





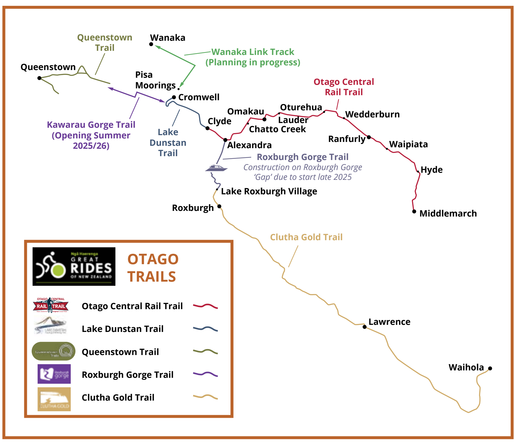
Discover NZ by bike

Pedal paradise

The beautiful trails, sweeping landscapes, and picturesque vistas of Central Otago are best explored by bicycle. Bike It Now! provides bike and e-bike retail, hire, workshop services, and self-guided tours in the region, so you can get pedaling on the adventure of a lifetime.

With locations in Clyde, Cromwell, and Wānaka, Bike It Now! offers door-to-door pick-ups from Queenstown and drop-offs leaving Clyde each day, which gives the passionate crew the opportunity to share the area's history.

Whether you're keen to jump into some of New Zealand's Great Rides, or you'd rather coast down the less-beaten tracks, Bike It Now! has a range of options to suit all levels, interests, and timeframes. Choose from any length (half-day to 10 days) or experience from Grade 1 up to Grade 3. Mix, match, and combine popular tracks like the Otago Central Rail Trail, Roxburgh Gorge Trail, Clutha Gold Trail, and the Lake Dunstan Trail with local routes crafted into a tailored adventure.



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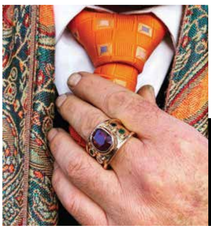

soigné
(adj.) possessing an aura of sophistication in dress, manner or design; presented or prepared with an elegance attained through care for finer details.

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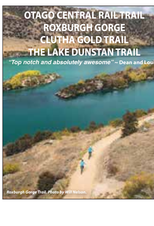

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Discover NZ by bike

Cycle your way

Tasman's Great Taste Trail.

The top of the South Island is one of New Zealand's most picture-perfect destinations. With iconic beauty, a temperate climate, an excellent culinary scene, and attractions aplenty, why not explore Nelson Tasman by bike?

Nelson has easy access to some of New Zealand's best cycle, mountain biking, and hiking trails, perfect for adventures in the great outdoors. Those who want to take it slow will love pedalling the golden beaches, sprawling gardens, and pristine parks, while adrenaline seekers will be spoiled for choice when it comes to exciting routes.

Tasman's Great Taste Trail is one of New Zealand's 23 Ngā Haerenga Great Rides. Meandering through the charming countryside and along the gleaming coastline, this relaxed one to four-day cycle gives riders a taste of the region in more ways than one.

As a top wine-making area, there are also plenty of cellar doors in Nelson Tasman. Vino and views!

Best of both

A coastal accommodation located in the heart of Pōhara, Ratanui Lodge is eclectic and elegant in equal measure. The newly refurbished lodge feels like a home away from home.

Just the thing for a party of two, Ratanui Lodge is perfect for a romantic getaway to Golden Bay. Just like this heavenly slice of Aotearoa, the lodge offers something for active and arty travellers alike, with a pool and plenty of gallery walls on the premises. Plus, the luxurious rooms come fitted with an ensuite, walk-in shower, and boutique furnishings and beauty products.

The onsite restaurant serves dinner made from seasonal and fresh local ingredients, while the bar serves local craft beers and ciders alongside an extensive selection of boutique gins.

Whether you're keen to get active or arty during your Golden Bay stay, Ratanui Lodge is a contemporary, stylish, and comfortable space from which to explore the area.

Tailored to you

Portage Resort is one of the most spectacular accommodations in Marlborough Sounds. Tucked into its own private cove and romantic beyond expectations, this secluded sanctuary has plenty of places to hide away in and while away the days with someone special.

Whether you're keen to relax and unwind by the pool, explore the endless tracks and trails by bike, or take to the Sounds in a kayak, Portage Resort offers an unforgettable experience designed with your desires in mind. Immerse yourself in a haven of tranquillity and natural beauty without compromising on the finer luxuries in life.

Paddle through the sounds encountering sea life and discovering secluded coves where it's just you and the birds. Portage Resort is committed to the preservation and enhancement of the natural world, employing cultural and environmental initiatives to ensure this haven stays beautiful for years to come.

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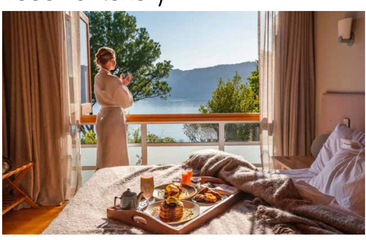
Touch of luxury



Biking the sounds is the kind of experience that is equal parts rewarding and relaxing. From jaw-dropping views of the turquoise sea to thick tracts of emerald ferns, you're never far from the beach or the bush thanks to the seemingly endless strings of coves.

Cycling and hiking the Queen Charlotte Track provides an excellent experience of this special section of Aotearoa, plus it passes one of the most luxurious accommodations in the country: Bay of Many Coves.

This five-star resort offers some much-needed relaxation to cyclists and trampers along the track, with the onsite Miritu Day Spa where one can rest their weary muscles. The well-appointed and thoughtfully designed rooms are private and inclusive of everything you may need during your stay. World-class cuisine, paddleboard and kayak rentals, a games room and library, and, of course, five-star Kiwi hospitality elevate the experience to exceptional.

Enjoy a touch of luxury during your adventure.

A cyclist's oasis

Lochmara Lodge is located on a little piece of paradise just three and a half kilometres from the Queen Charlotte Track. A potential start or end point to your cycling adventure and accessible only by sea or on foot, it's a secluded hideaway that once discovered can never be forgotten.

Whether you're biking the Queen Charlotte Track for a family holiday, romantic getaway, or solo adventure, Lochmara Lodge is designed to help you make the most of the Marlborough Sounds. The boutique resort features 14 beautifully appointed rooms that suit all types of travellers and budgets. Each space is thoughtfully decorated and inclusive of everything you may need to relax and unwind after a day of cycling, including a bath house and a delicious meal! Plus, they are connected with luggage transfer services to make your stay seamless.

More than just a place to rest your head, Lochmara Lodge is an oasis nestled on 11 hectares begging to be explored. Find your paradise and book your stay at
www.lochmara.co.nz

A rewarding romp

Located in the South Island's iconic Marlborough Sounds, the Queen Charlotte Track is punctuated by some of the most gorgeous, mystical, and unique vistas in New Zealand. Stretching from Ship Cove to Anakiwa, this 73.5-kilometre trail is simply splendid by bike.

The Queen Charlotte Track has been built on a network of pioneer bridle paths. Development started in the 1980s, and today it has gained a worldwide reputation as one of New Zealand's Ngā Haerenga Great Rides. The undulating terrain is punctuated by vast panoramas framed by the endless inlets and blue-hued mountains fading out into the distance. As the longest piece of continuous single track in the country, it is divided into three sections which can be ridden separately or one after the other. There are options to stay overnight on the track with accommodation options including camp sites and lodges along the way.

Queen Charlotte Track captures the spirit and beauty of Aotearoa.

Back to contents

Gallery news

by Alessia Belsito-Riera

Open your eyes

***The Requarium* by John Armstrong.**

For artist John Armstrong, it's the feeling that matters to him most. This rings true in his practice and in his newest body of work *In Memoriam*, a series of paintings created over the last year or so, during which his father passed away.

"In various ways, my father is in all these paintings. Moments we shared have become symbols of his life, and his illness, and his death," Armstrong says. "My father and I connected quite deeply through my art".

While there are strong symbolic elements with clear meaning throughout his oil paintings, there is also a lot that is "emotional or subconscious and not really prone to understanding", Armstrong adds.

As a whole, Armstrong describes his style as "surreagionalism", though he is reluctant to label it as he doesn't want to impose any limitations in what he might paint. He launches into his work by "making a mess" and then just playing until "something interesting emerges".

"Once I work out what the painting is, I'm a bit more deliberate and thoughtful about making the image as engaging and emotionally powerful as I can," he says, adding that he loves painting's forgiving nature and oil paint's slow drying that allows him to fiddle and change his mind.

In Memoriam follows this instinctive process at Exhibitions Gallery until the 21st of March.

"I am guided mainly by my emotional reactions," Armstrong says. "I hope that my paintings help to remind people that the world is an incredibly beautiful and mysterious place. The biggest gift my painting gives me is that it encourages me to keep my eyes open, and I hope it does this for viewers too".

Nourished and reflective

***Self Portrait* of Emma Hercus.**

The land gives with an outstretched hand and Emma Hercus composes from within it. Bush and beaches, fields and forgotten corners unfold in *The Foragers*.

At Twentysix Gallery, the rituals of gathering, preparing, and sharing food, and the landscapes that hold those memories come to life in oil on canvas until the 21st of March.

"Hercus' work invites you to reconnect with stories of sustenance and community, and to consider the emotional and cultural threads that bind us to place," curator Petra Scheuber says. "Foraging operates as both a literal and symbolic gesture. It speaks to a lineage of living from the land, but also to the act of collecting memories, fragments of childhood, and experiences of place".

The new portraits are wide-eyed and poignant, with rosy cheeks and head scarves and fur vests. They dip into rich, deep, layered colours for the skies and oceans, while foliage is vivacious, sharp, and encompassing.

For Hercus, "the landscape and its fauna are at her core", Scheuber says. She "composes her paintings much like a forager moves through landscape: attentive, intuitive, gathering what feels essential".

The Foragers captures a life sustained by the earth, a bloodline of foragers, and a childhood of lessons in how to continue to do so, Hercus herself adds. "Sustenance from the hunt – sustenance from the community that gathers around the table to share foraged, grown, caught, and collected kai. The gratification in sharing both a meal and a memory".

Life's little details

Carol Camden's father Tom "had a shed bursting with absolutely everything that he couldn't throw away. Just in case it could fix something".

In the two years since his passing, she has put his bits and bobs to good use by crafting dioramas in the old tea boxes her parents saved.

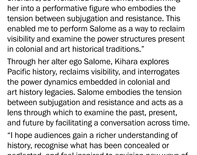
The result is *Worlds of Whimsy*, an exhibition of dioramas at Rice Pudding Gallery between the 20th and 29th of March.

"Nature is my biggest inspiration. My practice is very organic, depending on what I have to work with," Camden says. "I do love upcycling and recycling. It is so satisfying not to buy anything, especially plastic. Whether it be old tea boxes my late father collected, old windows, items found in a skip or on the beach, I look at how I can transform, paint, change their form or use as is."

The process of creating each diorama makes Camden look at the world differently, whether she's reconfiguring matchboxes into buses or pipe cleaners into trees. She starts with a basic idea but typically lets each world unfold around her. They offer peace, solace, and an escape from the turbulent world, she says.

"Dioramas to me are a surreal world to be drawn into. The viewer can make up their own story of the scene," Camden continues. "My intention and theme for my dioramas is to give a feeling of escape to whimsical, magical, peaceful, and sacred places. A moment in time to be still. Appreciate the simple wonder around us".

Conversations across time



***After Tsunami* Galu Afi, *Lalomanu* by Yuki Kihara.**

Yuki Kihara reframes dominant histories by giving voice to untold narratives that challenge cultural stereotypes and gender norms in *Salome: An Angel of History*, her New Zealand Portrait Gallery Te Pūkenga Whakaata exhibition. Running until the 10th of May, Kihara uses photography, video, and sculpture-like costumes to portray herself as a fictitious Samoan woman resurrected from the 19th century.

"I first came across the photograph of the *Samoan half caste* from Thomas Andrew's 1886 album while studying fashion at Wellington Polytechnic in the early 1990s and exploring the archives at Te Papa," Kihara says. "I was struck by the beauty of the woman in the image, dressed in a Victorian mourning gown – a detail that challenges the stereotypical 'dusky maiden' portrayal and hints at the complexities of power dynamics within colonial systems. I found Andrew's title for the woman offensive, so I renamed her Salome, transforming her into a performative figure who embodies the tension between subjugation and resistance. This enabled me to perform Salome as a way to reclaim visibility and examine the power structures present in colonial and art historical traditions."

Through her alter ego Salome, Kihara explores Pacific history, reclaims visibility, and interrogates the power dynamics embedded in colonial and art history legacies. Salome embodies the tension between subjugation and resistance and acts as a lens through which to examine the past, present, and future by facilitating a conversation across time.

"I hope audiences gain a richer understanding of history, recognise what has been concealed or neglected, and feel inspired to envision new ways of healing and transformation through their experience in Salome's world."

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Super Rugby Pacific 2026

Expect the best

The atmosphere is fizzing and tensions are high as the 2026 Super Rugby Pacific takes shape into the most exciting season yet.

Super Rugby Pacific is the world's best provincial rugby competition that sees teams from New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, and Tonga face off in 83 matches across 16 rounds over a 19-week competition window. With humble beginnings that trace back to 1986 – when just NSW, Queensland, Auckland, Canterbury, Wellington, and Fiji were part of the fray – Super Rugby Pacific has grown into a bigger and bigger phenomenon with each passing year, sweeping across Oceania and stirring rugby fans into a frenzy.

The next game of the 2026 Super Rugby Pacific season comes up on the 13th of March. With the Hurricanes versing Western Force in Napier and exciting matches from 2025 still fresh in New Zealand's collective memory, this year's season is bound to impress, excite, and enthral every fan – from the most seasoned veteran to the newest recruit watching their first game.

Last year, the Crusaders took home the title, making them three-time winners of the Super Rugby Pacific since 2022. The Chiefs and the Blues followed close behind in second and third place while Wellington's Hurricanes placed fourth in the championship. Kiwi teams filled four out of the top six places on the 2025 leaderboard.

Over 50 games are still to be played in 2026 across Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Tonga, with four exciting games set down in Wellington. The next Pōneke match sees the Hurricanes verse Australia's Reds in a home game on Saturday the 28th of March. The capital's Hurricanes and Blues match at Hnry Stadium on the 11th of April will be one for the books as teams from Aotearoa's two largest cities face off.

Experience the thrill of the game at the 2026 Super Rugby Pacific.

ROUND 5			
FRI 13 MAR	Hurricanes v Western Force	Napier	7:05pm
SAT 14 MAR	Fijian Drua v Brumbies	Ba, Fiji	4:35pm
SAT 14 MAR	Crusaders v Highlanders	Christchurch	7:05pm
SAT 14 MAR	Reds v Waratahs	Brisbane	9:35pm
SUN 15 MAR	Blues v Moana Pasifika	Auckland	3:35pm

ROUND 6			
FRI 20 MAR	Highlanders v Hurricanes	Dunedin	7:05pm
FRI 20 MAR	Brumbies v Chiefs	Canberra	9:35pm
SAT 21 MAR	Fijian Drua v Reds	Lautoka	4:35pm
SAT 21 MAR	Moana Pasifika v Crusaders	Albany	7:05pm
SAT 21 MAR	Waratahs v Blues	Sydney	9:35pm

ROUND 7			
FRI 27 MAR	Moana Pasifika v Highlanders	Albany	7:05pm
FRI 27 MAR	Brumbies v Waratahs	Canberra	9:35pm
SAT 28 MAR	Hurricanes v Reds	Wellington	4:35pm
SAT 28 MAR	Blues v Fijian Drua	Auckland	7:05pm
SAT 28 MAR	Western Force v Chiefs	Perth	9:35pm

ROUND 8			
FRI 3 APR	Crusaders v Fijian Drua	Christchurch	7:05pm
SAT 4 APR	Chiefs v Waratahs	Hamilton	7:05pm
SAT 4 APR	Reds v Western Force	Brisbane	9:35pm

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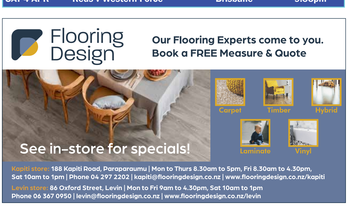

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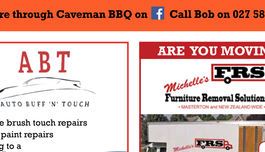

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Super Rugby Pacific 2026

ROUND 9

FRI 10 APR	Highlanders v Brumbies	Dunedin	7:05pm
SAT 11 APR	Moana Pasifika v Chiefs	Tonga	2:05pm
SAT 11 APR	Fijian Drua v Western Force	Lautoka	4:35pm
SAT 11 APR	Hurricanes v Blues	Wellington	7:05pm
SAT 11 APR	Reds v Crusaders	Brisbane	9:35pm

ROUND 10

FRI 17 APR	Blues v Highlanders	Auckland	7:05pm
FRI 17 APR	Waratahs v Moana Pasifika	Sydney	9:35pm
SAT 18 APR	Chiefs v Hurricanes	Hamilton	7:05pm
SAT 18 APR	Brumbies v Fijian Drua	Canberra	9:35pm
SAT 18 APR	Western Force v Crusaders	Perth	11:55pm

ROUND 11

FRI 24 APR	Crusaders v Waratahs	Christchurch	7:35pm
SAT 25 APR	Hurricanes v Brumbies	Christchurch	5:05pm
SAT 25 APR	Blues v Reds	Christchurch	7:35pm
SUN 26 APR	Highlanders v Moana Pasifika	Christchurch	2:00pm
SUN 26 APR	Chiefs v Fijian Drua	Christchurch	4:30pm

ROUND 12

FRI 1 MAY	Hurricanes v Crusaders	Wellington	7:05pm
FRI 1 MAY	Waratahs v Western Force	Sydney	9:35pm
SAT 2 MAY	Fijian Drua v Highlanders	Ba, Fiji	4:35pm
SAT 2 MAY	Moana Pasifika v Blues	Albany	7:05pm
SAT 2 MAY	Reds v Brumbies	Brisbane	9:35pm

QUALIFYING FINALS – 5-6 JUNE

1v6, 2v5, 3v4 with the top-ranked team hosting.

SEMI FINALS – 12-13 JUNE

Three qualifying winners plus highest ranked loser as fourth seed.

Super Rugby Pacific 2026

ROUND 13			
FRI 8 MAY	Crusaders v Blues	Christchurch	7:05pm
FRI 8 MAY	Reds v Chiefs	Brisbane	9:35pm
SAT 9 MAY	Highlanders v Waratahs	Dunedin	4:35pm
SAT 9 MAY	Moana Pasifika v Hurricanes	Albany	7:05pm
SAT 9 MAY	Brumbies v Western Force	Canberra	9:35pm
ROUND 14			
FRI 15 MAY	Chiefs v Highlanders	Hamilton	7:05pm
SAT 16 MAY	Fijian Drua v Waratahs	Suva	4:35pm
SAT 16 MAY	Blues v Hurricanes	Auckland	7:05pm
SAT 16 MAY	Western Force v Reds	Perth	9:35pm
ROUND 15			
FRI 22 MAY	Crusaders v Chiefs	Christchurch	7:05pm
FRI 22 MAY	Waratahs v Brumbies	Sydney	9:35pm
SAT 23 MAY	Moana Pasifika v Reds	Albany	4:35pm
SAT 23 MAY	Hurricanes v Highlanders	Wellington	7:05pm
SAT 23 MAY	Western Force v Fijian Drua	Perth	9:35pm
ROUND 16			
FRI 29 MAY	Crusaders v Hurricanes	Christchurch	7:05pm
FRI 29 MAY	Reds v Fijian Drua	Brisbane	9:35pm
SAT 30 MAY	Brumbies v Moana Pasifika	Canberra	4:35pm
SAT 30 MAY	Chiefs v Blues	Hamilton	7:05pm
SAT 30 MAY	Western Force v Waratahs	Perth	9:35pm

GRAND FINAL – 20 JUNE
Top-ranked semi-final winner will host the other semi-final winner.

All times, dates, and venues were correct at time of print but are subject to change.

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Super Rugby Pacific 2026

BLUES

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Captain: Patrick Tuipulotu

Home ground: Eden Park, Auckland

CHIEFS

Coach: Jono Gibbes

Captain: Luke Jacobson

Home ground: FMG Stadium Waikato, Hamilton

HIGHLANDERS

Coach: Jamie Joseph

Co-Captains: Timoci Tavatavanawai, Hugh Renton

Home ground: Forsyth Barr Stadium, Dunedin

HURRICANES

Coach: Clark Laidlaw

Co-Captains: Jordie Barrett, Du'Plessis Kirifi

Home ground: Sky Stadium - Wellington, McLean Park - Napier

WESTERN FORCE

Coach: Simon Cron

Captain: Jeremy Williams

Home ground: HBF Park - Perth, HIF Health Insurance Oval - Joondalup

REDS

Coach: Les Kiss

Captain: Fraser McReight

Home ground: Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane

FIJIAN DRUA

Coach: Glen Jackson

Co-Captains: Temo Mayanavanua, Frank Lomani

Home ground: HFC Bank Stadium - Suva, Churchill Park - Lautoka, Four R Stadium - Ba

MOANA PASIFIKA

Coach: Tana Umaga

Captain: Miracle Faiilagi

Home ground: North Harbour Stadium - Albany, Teufaiva Stadium - Nuku'alofa

CRUSADERS

Coach: Rob Penney

Captain: David Havili

Home ground: Apollo Projects Stadium, One New Zealand Stadium, Christchurch

NSW WARATAHS

Coach: Dan McKellar

Captain: Matt Philip

Home ground: Allianz Stadium, Sydney

ACT BRUMBIES

Coach: Stephen Larkham

Captain: Allan Alaalatoa

Home ground: GIO Stadium, Canberra

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Men in business

Achieve your goals

Robbie Schneider and the team at Succession First in Petone are specialised financial advisers who are dedicated to helping you achieve the financial future you want. Founded on a 45-year legacy, the business has built up strong relationships and established clients who have benefitted from their guidance for generations.

Robbie and the team can help you save and improve your financial security no matter where you may find yourself in life. From building your net worth and removing financial stress to helping you create a life you find difficult to imagine, they make tailored plans to suit your unique situation and goals.

Best and brightest

Barry Carr, the main man behind Eclipse Electrical, is dedicated to ensuring Wellington homes are at their best and brightest. Having been a fully qualified and accredited sparky for years, and with plenty of insider knowledge gained from working on all types of homes across the capital, Barry and his team are equipped to help you with whatever electrical solution you may need.

With a reputation built on customer satisfaction and long-lasting partnerships, what sets Eclipse Electrical apart is their dependability and five-star service. Thanks to Barry's friendly and communicative approach to every job, he exceeds expectations time and time again.

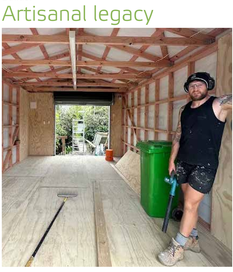
Exceptional results

Scott's skills have been built through years of experience, hard work, and hands-on knowledge. Operating across the region as Taylor Builds, he has cultivated a reputation for reliability, craftsmanship, and integrity thanks to his vast and varied projects.

Available for new builds and renovations alike, Scott understands Wellington's challenging weather, steep sections, and council regulations and can work with the terrain to deliver something that matches your lifestyle. Wherever your property may be, he can craft elevated indoor and outdoor spaces, bringing a high level of of craftsmanship and attention to detail.

Get in touch to build your vision with Scott of Taylor Builds.

Artisanal legacy



Nicolas Piveteau began his stonemason journey as a teen in France. Today, the proud Kapiti local at the helm of Le Maçon applies the centuries worth of knowledge garnered from the prestigious Compagnons du Devoir and his decades of hands-on experience to projects of all shapes, sizes, and styles across the district and beyond.

As an artisan stonemason, Nicolas has been an integral part of the Kapiti community since 2011. He has worked across the country, delivering results of exceptional quality. Whether restoring old, heritage buildings or crafting new, modern designs, Le Maçon is passionate about bringing your vision to life.

Delivering results

Bruce McGhie ensures the Property Brokers ethos is at the heart of his approach to real estate. His whole team will work together to deliver the results you set out to achieve. Born in Whanganui and based in Marton, he covers Bulls, Taihape, Marton, and everywhere in between.

With over 100 million dollars of property sales to his name, Bruce is a force to be reckoned with. He's been in the industry for years, and as a local, has strong connections that he uses to help both buyers and sellers. For a straightforward and stress-free experience, take the next step with Bruce.

Back to contents

Men in business – Kapiti

Heart of the home

Kapiti Woodfires began from a simple belief that warmth matters. Not just physical warmth, but the feeling of comfort and belonging that comes from a home that's done right.

"I care about getting the right fire into the right home because families live their lives around it," managing director and installation supervisor Kingsley Holdaway says. "It's where stories are shared and kids grow up. I never wanted to be someone who just sold products. I wanted to serve our community with honesty and care and help families create spaces they're proud to call home."

Diamond dealer

When it comes to cars in Kapiti, Delaney Mitsubishi has every base covered. The family-owned business operated by Brent Delaney has been providing five-star service since 2006 and has several awards to show for it, including a 2025 Diamond Dealer Award.

A third-generation Kiwi, Brent has been firmly entrenched in the automotive industry since he began his pre-apprenticeship course in automotive engineering at Wellington Polytech. He has worked across the region and the UK before taking the reins at the helm of his own dealership.

Whether you're in the market for a new car, a trade-in, or a WOF and service, Brent makes the experience hassle free.

A fresh approach

A local coaster himself, Charlie Goodyer of Property Brokers Kapiti knows the market inside and out. Possessing both energy and enthusiasm, he takes a fresh approach to real estate that uses a modern, multi-platform strategy mixed with traditional marketing – an asset to buyers and sellers alike.

Charlie's foundation is rooted in client relationships. He's passionate about helping people buy and sell and isn't afraid to roll up his sleeves to make it happen. Personable, diligent, and determined to make his mark in the industry and in his community, he is a great communicator who delivers an experience that exceeds expectations.

Shaping visions

Based in Kapiti and inspired by the beautiful coastal landscape, TCA Group is the family-owned and operated practice of Jeremy Clegg.

Through TCA, Jeremy and his team develop designs that are tailored to each client. He takes into account your needs, preferences, aesthetics, and property to craft a boutique design that complements your life. He is passionate about making clients' visions reality with solutions that seamlessly balance form and function.

Jeremy has hands on, hammer and nails experience as well as an extensive background in the field. He prioritises communication and collaboration with clients to deliver a result that exceeds expectations.

Proud legacy

Kapiti Garage Doors is owned and operated by Mark Brackenbury and proudly builds on the long-standing reputation of Fred Chapman's Garage Doors. For many years, Fred Chapman's Garage Doors serviced homes and businesses across the Kapiti Coast, earning trust through quality workmanship and reliable service.

The business later branched out with an exclusive Kapiti-based operation, now trading as Kapiti Garage Doors, to provide dedicated local sales, servicing, and repairs. Today, customers benefit from proven experience, strong local knowledge, and a continued commitment to dependable, professional service.

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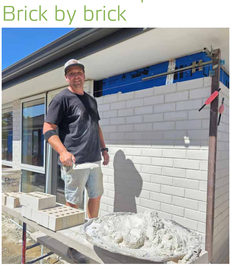
Men in business – Wairarapa

Brick by brick

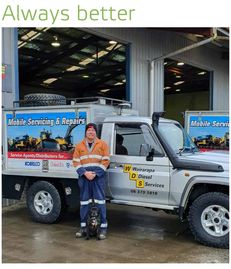


Since establishing Creative Brick and Block in 2020, James has been committed to precision, care, and excellence. His passion translates into every project, which is why his company has grown from strength to strength.

Just six months after going out on his own, James was at the helm of a team of five, and by 2021, the crew had reached the major milestone of completing 200 jobs. In 2022, James proudly became a G.J. Gardner Homes partner.

Now, with thousands of jobs under his tool belt, James of Creative Brick and Block leads one of the foremost masonry and bricklayer teams in the region.

Always better

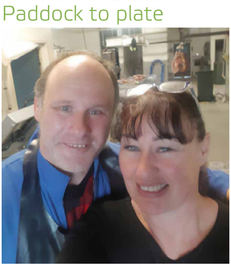


Wairarapa Diesel Service (WDS) has been keeping folks across the region moving for 25 years. Incorporated in 2001 by Brent and Jennifer Ward, they provide a comprehensive service at their garage.

Brent and Jen are passionate about their community, giving back by sharing their experience and knowledge with the next generation as mentors. Over the years, WDS has put over 10 young men through their apprenticeships, with two more currently working in the shop.

Concentrating on his passion for heavy machinery, hydraulics, and diesel engines, Brent offers an all-weather, 24-hour service. He loves what he does, and that's what set him apart as one of the best.

Paddock to plate



Passionate about taking meat from paddock to plate, Shane started his butchery journey when he was 18 years old, completing his apprenticeship in the early 90s. He went on to work across the Lower North Island before taking over Carterton Meat Processors' 30-year legacy in 2022.

He specialises in small goods, and he prides himself on creating his own recipes using fresh herbs. Homekill differs not just in cost but in the knowledge that the meat has been treated humanely and cleanly. Shane knows the process can seem daunting, but he will help you through it to ensure your experience is positive and professional.

The perfect match

Greg Gouws of Harcourts Masterton focuses on honesty, integrity, and genuine connection. Originally from South Africa, he moved to Aotearoa 12 years ago, settling in Wairarapa after growing up between Kapiti and Wellington.

He loves the region he calls home and wants his clients to as well, which is why he is dedicated to finding them the perfect home for their needs and lifestyle. His professional history is vast and varied, which helps him connect with people from all walks of life. A natural leader, patient, and a great negotiator, Greg's favourite part of real estate is meeting people and hearing their stories.

Stationery specialists

Lamb-Peters Print is Wairarapa's one-stop shop for high-quality printing. AJ Dawes has years of experience under his belt and is passionate about providing a diverse and comprehensive service no matter the project in question.

As Wairarapa locals, AJ and his crew can offer creative solutions with a quick turnaround. They're consummate professionals dedicated to bringing your vision to life and capturing the essence of your project. From packaging to printing, graphic design to stationery, copying to business cards, and a full commercial signage division, Lamb-Peters Print can take care of everything you need from concept to completion.

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Buy – build – renovate

Advice you can build on

Every successful build starts with understanding the ground. Geotechnical engineers investigate soil, rock, and groundwater to identify potential risks and provide practical advice tailored to the specific conditions of a site.

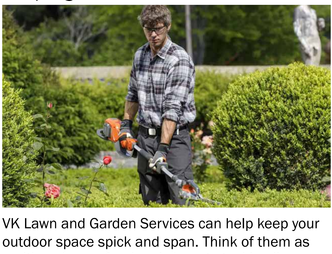
Cohesive Geotechnical provides practical site investigations and reporting for residential builds, subdivisions, and land development projects across the North Island.

Our team of experienced geotechnical professionals combine local geological knowledge with efficient field testing to deliver clear recommendations for foundations, earthworks, and site development.

Working alongside builders, developers, architects, and engineers, we focus on practical solutions, reliable reporting, and efficient turnaround times that help projects move forward with confidence.

Find out more at www.cohesivelimited.co.nz

Helping hands



VK Lawn and Garden Services can help keep your outdoor space spick and span. Think of them as multiservice professionals here to tackle all your garden maintenance needs, plus any odd jobs you may want done outside such as house washing, gutter cleaning, and water blasting. That way, you'll have more time to do what you love – the friendly, chipper, and knowledgeable team can take care of the rest.

Wellington based and family operated by Dave and Karen van Kampen, VK are passionate about providing top-quality services to maintain or fully transform a garden. The crew specialise in lawn mowing, weed eating and spraying, hedge trimming, tree pruning, and general section tidy-ups, but they're more than happy to lend their green thumbs and helping hands just about anywhere.

Get in touch with VK Lawn and Garden Services for a free quote today.

Proudly electrical

There are plenty of jobs that homeowners can do themselves around their properties, but electrical ones are best left to the professionals. Lower North Electrical service homes and businesses across the Wellington Region, no matter how big or small the project is.

The dedicated crew of friendly and enthusiastic electricians are passionate about their profession, which is why they take pride in completing every job on time and within budget. They prioritise communication and always pay close attention to detail, ensuring they've exceeded expectations.

"We love what we do," director Alistair says. "From fault-finding to new builds – every day is different. Finding the best solution to give a customer the outcome they want, and seeing the end result, gives us great satisfaction."

Whether you need help with lighting, hot water heaters, kitchen projects, electric vehicles, rewiring, alarm systems, or anything else that uses power, Lower North Electrical have got you covered.

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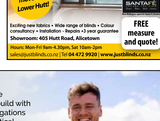

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LOWER NORTH ELECTRICAL

Buy – build – renovate

Peace of mind

A healthy home is one that is warm, comfortable, and dry. Before the cold and rain sets in, ensure your home is watertight with the DNA Waterproofing team.

From below-ground waterproofing to joint sealing, torch-on roofing to warm roofing, no project is too big or too small for DNA Waterproofing. They also offer double and single-layer membrane systems for roofs, decks, balconies, podiums, canopies, internal gutters, and more, with warranties lasting up to 30 years for top membranes. Plus, they have an array of colours to choose from.

Operating across the Lower North Island, DNA Waterproofing is built on experience and local connection. Helmed by Dan and Tu, the team of five have over a decade of hands-on experience under their toolbelts. They keep their finger on the pulse of new developments in the field and are always upskilling and using cutting-edge equipment to ensure they can provide the highest level of service. Communication and attention to detail is at the heart of their kaupapa. As reliable and knowledgeable professionals, they provide a tailored experience with every job.

By combining expertise with smart methodologies, DNA Waterproofing ensures that every project is executed with precision, speed, and sustainability. Their reputation is founded on honesty and integrity, with a slew of five-star reviews backing up their high-calibre workmanship.

Get in touch to protect your property from water damage and ensure lasting protection at www.dnawaterproofing.co.nz

Committed to quality

As your roof protects your home from the elements, it's one of the most important things to maintain. Now is the perfect time to start any repairs, maintenance, and replacements ahead of winter.

DNA Roofing are qualified professionals who can help with any and all of your roofing needs. The friendly and communicative crew combine experience, local knowledge, and attention to detail at every job, working with folks across the Lower North Island to ensure their home is up to code and comfortable.

Whether you're in need of a new roof on your new build, an updated roof for your current property, or some quick fixes for leaks, damaged flashing, cracked tiles, or general wear, the professional and highly skilled team provide practical solutions that are built to last. Plus, they also perform ongoing cleaning and inspections to ensure your home is never compromised. If you're not sure what you need, they also can carry out detailed assessments to give you the big picture.

Using durable, high-grade materials that stand the test of time, the DNA Roofing crew provide a comprehensive and custom solution. They work with you and your budget to come up with a plan that will be completed on time and within your means. Precise and punctual, they are passionate about ensuring your home or business is protected.

Your home is likely your biggest asset. Ensure it's at its best with a top-quality roof to shield it. Request your free quote at www.dnaroofing.co.nz

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Making memories

From the moment you bring them home, a pet becomes a loyal companion. For elderly people, their presence is constant and comforting, and they provide a kind of devotion that is pure, uncomplicated, and genuine. They love us unconditionally for who we are, keeping us company, bringing direction to our days, and making us smile. So when it comes to the end of their time with us, the impact can be overwhelming. As a team of animal-lovers, Soul Friends Pet Cremations understand that and are dedicated to providing comfort by creating beautiful memorials.

If your cat, dog, or bird companion needs attendance, rest assured they are treated as part of the Soul Friends family until they can be returned to yours. The Soul Friends team can answer the difficult questions with a transparent explanation of their process, because no area of this work is secret or taboo from their point of view. They also guarantee that the cremains (ashes) you receive back are that of your pet.

Most importantly arranging for your pet's afterlife care need not be difficult. Soul Friends will come to you, visit for a while to share stories, work through your memorialising ideas, and walk the journey with you every step of the way. Grief services are also available to help you before saying goodbye, on the day, and after until the joy of memory returns.

It may be hard now, but Soul Friends wants to help you keep the memories alive forever.

Bold, brilliant brass

Wellington Opera House will resound with joy and jubilation as the National Brass Band of New Zealand takes to the stage in the world-class gala concert *Brilliant Brass* at 2pm on Sunday the 12th of April.

Featuring guest artists Harmen Vanhoorne, Helen and Glyn Williams, and Celine Wu, alongside the band's principal trombone Aishah Leitner, the *Brilliant Brass* programme will include classic works for a large-scale ensemble like *Paganini Variations* and *The Kingdom Triumphant* among other outstanding pieces.

The concert serves as the finale to the annual New Zealand Brass Band Championships, with chamber and solo events running at Te Whaea National Dance and Drama Centre on the 8th and 9th of April and band events tuning up at the Opera House and Michael Fowler Centre on the 10th and 11th of April respectively. Free to attend, the championships are one of the oldest amateur music competitions in the world.

The National Brass Band of New Zealand was formed in 1953, and since then has risen to epic heights, soaring through Aotearoa's sonic landscape and further afield to international venues. The highly professional standard attained is especially impressive considering the members are mostly amateur musicians selected from 51 community bands.

Celebrating the bold and beautiful sound of brass at its upcoming Wellington concert, the National Brass Band of New Zealand will be at its brightest and most bodacious in *Brilliant Brass*.

Personalised learning

Whitby Collegiate continues to set the benchmark for academic success, with outstanding NCEA results for 2025 reaffirming our position as one of New Zealand's top-performing schools.

Our commitment to excellence is shown through top results in national and international scholarships and competitions like the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS), with achievements surpassing national averages. This success highlights our focus on small class sizes, personalised learning, and future-focused education.

Whitby Collegiate invests in the future by expanding beyond the classroom with a new artificial turf and high-performance sports facilities. These upgrades complement our state-of-the-art learning spaces, including the award-winning Ioane Fiso Pavilion, the Addison Block, and modern classrooms, ensuring students excel academically and athletically.

Holistic development is a cornerstone at Whitby Collegiate. We nurture the whole student, ensuring they thrive academically, socially, and personally. Our pastoral care system provides strong support, while peer mentoring and house initiatives foster belonging, resilience, and school spirit.

Our students don't just take part – they thrive. With opportunities to develop skills, build confidence, and take on leadership roles, they are encouraged to explore their passions and reach their full potential – whether on the field, stage, or in the community. At Whitby Collegiate, the goal is to expand every student's horizons.

Cheerful and supportive

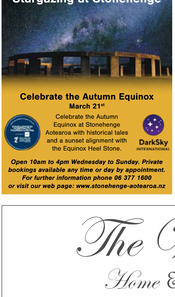
Choosing The Willows Home & Hospital means you can still be in the heart of the big city and nearby to family and friends while benefiting from all the perks that come with assisted living.

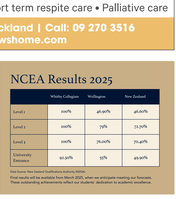
Tucked away in the neighbourhood of Ōtāhuhu, The Willows is well connected to everything Auckland has to offer. Shops, malls, parks, places of worship, a beautiful library, and various citizen clubs are just a short bus ride or walk away, ensuring you can continue to be social while enjoying extra support at home.

The Willows aims to foster a homely and cheerful environment that focuses on maintaining or restoring maximum independence while delivering quality, holistic care. The compassionate and highly skilled team of nurses and carers take an empathetic and dignified approach, treating residents with respect for their needs and wishes regardless of culture, race, or creed.

The top priority at The Willows Hospital is that residents feel comfortable and at home. The 11 beds each have access to a shared ensuite. Bringing your own furniture is encouraged and even your furry friend can join you during your stay, with all residents encouraged to offer personal input in the home. Several modern and sunny lounges and dining rooms with comfortable, quality furnishings are perfect for socialising and taking part in various activities.

Warm, friendly, and with all the assistance you may need, The Willows is a home away from home.




NCEA Results 2025

	Whitby Collegiate	Wellington	New Zealand
Level 1	100%	98.90%	96.60%
Level 2	100%	79%	72.70%
Level 3	100%	78.60%	70.40%
University Entrance	90.30%	75%	49.90%

Data from the New Zealand Certificates of Achievement (NCEA).
Final results will be available from March 2025, when we anticipate meeting our forecasts. These outstanding achievements reflect our students' dedication to academic excellence.

Rocket-powered school holidays

This April, Space Place is bringing back its popular school holiday programme Flight Club, where curious tamariki can spend the morning discovering the science behind how things soar, spin, and blast off.

Designed for ages eight to 12, this four-hour workshop takes young scientists on a hands-on exploration of the forces of flight: Gravity, Lift, Resistance, and Thrust. Through a series of experiments and demos, tamariki will put their engineering minds to the test as they launch rockets, fire vortex cannons, and even use a leaf-blower to send everyday objects skyward. The highlight of the day is always the 'marshtronaut' demonstration, where tamariki place a marshmallow-astronaut into a vacuum chamber to see the effects of pressure in real time.

During the school holidays, Space Place is open for longer hours and increases screenings of whānau-friendly films. In *The Navigators*, Moko dreams of becoming a master star navigator like her tūpuna and her koro Jack. In *We Are Guardians*, tamariki can learn about ecosystems, climate change, and how satellites play a vital role in understanding our planet. For the youngest star-children, *Te Whānau o te Rā* is a singalong planetarium film about Pluto trying to find her way home.

Next door, whānau might enjoy visiting Cable Car Museum to try out their new interactive tour, learning about the history of Wellington's iconic Red Rattler, and exploring the original winding room.

Learn more and book the workshop at spaceplace.nz

New play space opens

Nōku te Ao Capital E's eagerly anticipated new play space opens on Saturday the 14th of March.

Now located inside Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui, Wellington Central Library, the play space is designed for tamariki aged zero to 5 and is free to enjoy.

Themed around the story of Ngake and Whātaitai, the two taniwha that shaped Wellington harbour, the space features a large slide, a craft station, a pēpē baby area, dress-up costumes, and more.

Many will remember Nōku te Ao Capital E's beginnings in Te Ngākau Civic Square, where it operated as Capital Discovery Place beneath the City to Sea Bridge from 1990 to 2013. After an earthquake assessment, it moved to Queens Wharf, where it remained for the next 12 years.

The new play space will be open to the public from Monday to Saturday, 9:30am to 3:30pm.

There are already lots of events and workshops in the calendar for whānau to enjoy, including a Wellington Pride Festival flower-crown workshop, April school holidays workshops, and Korikori Nohinohi, a new play performance series on the first Saturday of every month.

On level two, Nōku te Ao Capital E also has two new digital learning studios, MediaLab and OnTV, which can be enjoyed by tamariki and rangatahi on school visits and at school holiday workshops.

All are welcome to visit on opening weekend, Saturday the 14th and Sunday the 15th of March. For opening weekend hours, details, and to learn more, visit ntace.nz

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Your very own utopia

In Latin, utopia is defined as an imaginary island with perfect political, social, and legal systems, while in Greek it means no place, somewhere unattainable and unreal.

Latin Cuirs will host a series of multidisciplinary events that are an exercise in political fantasy this Wellington Pride Festival. Creating a laboratory for imagination, *Cuir Utopia* makes space to collectively envision better worlds through art.

"We want to celebrate imagination as a powerful force for creating (other) realities and as a political exercise," María Belén Cupeiro of Latin Cuirs says. "At *Cuir Utopia*, artists will invite us to peek into their own utopias through different artistic forms."

The series will kick off at Ivy Bar & Cabaret on the 14th of March with *ANTIFaz*, a masquerade cabaret party.

On the 20th of March, UTU Collective will host a poetry night featuring Sri Lankan Māori poet Teirangi Klever, New Zealand's 2025 National Poetry Slam champion.

Closing out *Cuir Utopia* on the 22nd of March at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington is a film screening of the Argentinian documentary *El Laberinto de las lunas*. Directed by Lucrecia Mastrángelo, *Labyrinth of the Moons* follows the stories of Karla Ojeda (48) and Maira Ramírez (50), two trans mums going through adoption, and Gabriela Mansilla (42), the mother of a trans girl.

This Wellington Pride Festival, imagine your very own queer utopia to take the first step in making it a reality.

Chain reactions

Big Bike Film Night pedals into Wairarapa Events Centre on the 17th, Event Cinemas Coastlands on the 23rd, Light House Petone on the 24th, and Wellington's Penthouse Cinema on the 22nd and 25th of March with a feast of short films devised and designed for the two-wheel devotee.

"The power of storytelling is at the forefront of what we offer, and the belief that the humble bicycle can help improve our health and inspire people with where it can take them," curator Brett Cotter says. "It's a real privilege connecting communities with stories that captivate us, that uplift us, and most importantly of all, inspire us to get out and ride".

A highlight on the 2026 programme is the world premiere of *Queen of the Mountain*, a documentary following adventure cyclist Annie Ford as she attempts to break the Guinness World Record for the most vertical descent on a mountain bike in 24 hours – all to raise funds for reforesting the foothills of the Queenstown basin.

"Stories are at the heart of everything, and our dazzling 2026 collection features nine mesmerising films; each are as dynamic and diverse as you could hope for, and all ready to spin your wheels," Cotter beams. "Audiences will be transported from backyard adventures in New Zealand to the breathtaking landscapes of Norway, to the lush forests of the Canadian West Coast, and we'll crown things off on the slopes of the punishing Mont Ventoux in Southern France."

Have a wheelie good time at Big Bike Film Night.

Hooks across hemispheres

Photo by Titouan Massé.

The Datsuns frontman Dolf de Borst says it feels like an age since the band played anywhere below the equator, let alone back in the Land of the Long White Cloud.

"So we're extremely happy to announce a few shows back where it started. For many a year we've been foiled, fooled, and waylaid by emergencies, surgeries, and the general urgencies of day-to-day life, but finally, finally, we will make the pilgrimage home."

It'll be the first time the hard rock band, which formed in Cambridge in 1998, has come back to Aotearoa since 2018. Considering their first record in 2002 blazed them into global consciousness, topping New Zealand charts and hurling them onto stages with Metallica, The White Stripes, and Queens of the Stone Age, it's no wonder they've been busy. Over the past two decades, The Datsuns have released seven albums, worked with Led Zeppelin's John Paul Jones, and carved out a reputation as one of New Zealand's fiercest rock exports.

Wellington audiences can expect the full sweep of The Datsuns catalogue – from the anthems that scorched their early path to the first sparks of their forthcoming eighth studio album – at San Fran on the 20th of March. The gig will see Scandinavian drummer Adam Lindmark in the thundering seat, Phil Somervell on rhythmic weavings, and lead string wrangler Christian Livingstone joining de Borst to conjure hooks across hemispheres, bringing a lifetime of Datsun lessons to the stage.

Oops Sari I'm Indian

Design by Hamish Bowker.

In a souped-up solo show that's equal parts spicy and saucy, Jenice the Menace brings Diwali-cracker energy to the Circus Bar on the 14th of March. *Oops Sari I'm Indian* celebrates and cleverly dismantles Indian stereotypes.

Curry? Jenice will season it properly. Yoga? She stretches that too. Arranged marriage? Please! She's negotiated far tougher contracts.

As a proud Mango (that's what people from her hometown of Mangalore are called) now ripening into a Kiwi, Jenice mines the immigrant experience for sharp, self-aware comedy about belonging, bias, love, and the polite confusion of being asked where you're "really from" in a country built on migration. She turns assumptions into punchlines, reframing cultural misunderstandings into shared laughter.

"As an immigrant, comedy gave me something powerful: control of the narrative," Jenice says. "When people carry assumptions about you – including your name, your skin, your food, your culture – comedy lets you grab those assumptions, flip them, and get the last word. It turns awkwardness into connection. It turns stereotypes into shared laughter."

Jenice's warm style with a bit of bite is intelligent and observational. She invites audiences to laugh at the absurdity of stereotypes while recognising the very human stories underneath them.

Oops Sari I'm Indian is a bold, playful, and unapologetically brown show that proves identity can be both complex and comedic.

Puzzles

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

Across

1 - Shortened (11)
9 - Climbing shrub (3)
10 - Committee (5)
11 - Fabric with parallel ribs (5)
12 - Biblical king (5)
13 - Sign of approval (6-2)
16 - Unusual (8)
18 - Entirely tail (5)
20 - Make law (5)
21 - Furnish or supply (5)
22 - Horse shade (3)
23 - Unthinking (11)

Down

2 - Purchaser (5)
3 - Swift (5)
4 - Disappear (6)
5 - Unsurpassed (3-4)
6 - Creepiest (7)
7 - Outer part of the earth (11)
8 - Acting out a part (4,7)
14 - Superficial wound (7)
15 - Elevated plain (7)
17 - Surprise attack (6)
18 - Folded-back part of a coat (5)
19 - Remains somewhere (5)

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Aotearoa NZ Festival

SoundCathedral

From composer and artistic director
Michael Norris
Wellington Cathedral of St Paul, 1st Mar 2026
Reviewed by Ruth Corkill

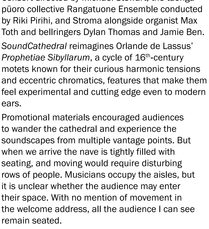

Photo by Nick George.

Tonight, the lofty pastel interior of Wellington Cathedral is transformed by a roiling haze of dry ice and shifting colour. *SoundCathedral* marks the 40th anniversary of The Tudor Consort with an immersive performance installation of remarkable scale. It brings together 56 musicians: The Tudor Consort directed by Michael Stewart, the taonga pūoro collective Rangatunoe Ensemble conducted by Riki Pirihi, and Stroma alongside organist Max Toth and bellringers Dylan Thomas and Jamie Ben.

SoundCathedral reimagines Orlande de Lassus' *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*, a cycle of 16th-century motets known for their curious harmonic tensions and eccentric chromatics, features that make them feel experimental and cutting edge even to modern ears.

Promotional materials encouraged audiences to wander the cathedral and experience the soundscapes from multiple vantage points. But when we arrive the nave is tightly filled with seating, and moving would require disturbing rows of people. Musicians occupy the aisles, but it is unclear whether the audience may enter their space. With no mention of movement in the welcome address, all the audience I can see remain seated.

Following a karakia and karanga, the choir enters through the central aisle, layering fragments from Lassus' opening motet, material that blossoms in a cathedral. Subsequent movements stretch and reframe the originals, drawing out new colours.

The most compelling moments occur when voices and instruments venture into the unfamiliar: quiet throat-singing from a walking soloist, the whirr of porotiti and pūrerehua, breathy winds billowing around the ceiling, a saxophonist clicking keys behind us.

Often, the deconstructed choral passages drift into meditative inertia. I suspect being able to move and find variations of resonance and distortion in the space would have kept these sections vivid. The range of taonga pūoro utilised is wonderful but I didn't feel that the composition meaningfully integrated these instruments into the overall architecture of the work.

In the finale, the cathedral bells sound as if from another century, astonishingly distant and ethereal. The hefty, almost menacing organ is wondrous, but we are given barely whiffs of it before returning to ennui. I feel that, tantalisingly, a sublime experience has just escaped us.

Nowhere

Written by Khalid Abdalla
Directed by Omar Elerian
Tāwhiri Warehouse, 5th Mar 2026
Reviewed by Ruth Corkill

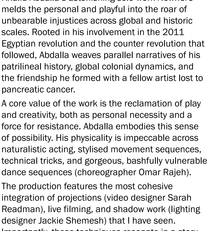

Photo by Helen Murray.

Khalid Abdalla's astonishing solo work *Nowhere* melds the personal and playful into the roar of unbearable injustices across global and historic scales. Rooted in his involvement in the 2011 Egyptian revolution and the counter revolution that followed, Abdalla weaves parallel narratives of his patrilineal history, global colonial dynamics, and the friendship he formed with a fellow artist lost to pancreatic cancer.

A core value of the work is the reclamation of play and creativity, both as personal necessity and a force for resistance. Abdalla embodies this sense of possibility. His physicality is impeccable across naturalistic acting, stylised movement sequences, technical tricks, and gorgeous, bashfully vulnerable dance sequences (choreographer Omar Rajeh).

The production features the most cohesive integration of projections (video designer Sarah Readman), live filming, and shadow work (lighting designer Jackie Shemesh) that I have seen. Importantly, these techniques resonate in a story invested in documentation, filmmaking, visual art, and resistance through online content. This means the form does more than support the material, it enacts it, creating a highly functional and coherent storytelling world.

Surrealism threads through the piece, evoking the unbearable stagnation of political hopelessness, and creating strange-wondrous avenues of escape. Abdalla looms over landscapes, is crushed in his Cairo flat, and dwarfed by crashing waves. He is subjected to his viciously critical inner monologue on loudspeaker (sound designer Panos Chountoulidis) and plays his father and grandfather conversing with each other about political imprisonment alongside English subtitles.

Pacing is expertly managed, with lightness and quiet breaking up the intensity. At one point we are invited to look under our seats, where we each find an envelope containing a mirror, pencil, and paper. Abdalla encourages us to draw ourselves by looking only into the mirror, letting the hand roam without correction. Donated drawings will join drawings from audiences around the world as part of a wider art project.

Gradually, more didactic passages develop, but these feel earned. Alongside regimes, colonists, and genocides the work insistently holds space for beauty, grief, love, and play at the scale of the individual.

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Aotearoa New Zealand Festival reviews

The Works

Presented by Briefs Factory
Tāhwiri Warehouse, 24th Feb 2026
Reviewed by Tanya Pīejus

Photo by John Tsiavis.

What a sparkly, sassy, spectacular way to open the 2026 Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts! Since 2008, Australia-based Briefs Factory have redefined cabaret with their own brand of queer burlesque, with The Works, they fling that open their archives with a dazzling, daring, and delicious celebration of flesh, flash, and hallyah. For a gold coin, you can buy raffle tickets at the start of the show with the promise of a fabulous prize to be won. It is suspected that prize turns out to contain more than a little cheek – and I don't mean the ones on your face. If naked tush makes you blush, this show isn't for you. If it makes you whoop and holler for the beauty and sensuality of the human form, then this show definitely is for you. From feathery stripping drag numbers to luminous trapeze over a bathtub, this is a glorious and gasp-inducing display of circus, comedy, crooning, and choreography. Sit in the front couple of rows and you're literally immersed. Kitty Bang Bang lights up the room with her whisky-fuelled fire-eating routine; her flaming nipples need to be seen to be believed. The Evil Hate Monkey jumps through fiery hoops, bounces on pointe in a spectacular manner, and does obscene things with bananas that give eye-popping creativity to the full-frontal nude nudity warning in the pre-show email. NASTIA's hand balancing, Captain Kidd and Benjamin Buttterfly's aerial antics, and Sir Serenity's head-swaying tumbling astound as much as Hollywood Stan's dance soundtrack, introduction, and hosting insipire. And, Fez Fanana, exactly where do all those red flowers come from?

Joining these top-notch performers from Australia, London, and New York are local ballroom troupe, House of Mamaia. Their powerful gothic routine is a stunning introduction to this US Black and Indigenous Brainbow Pacific Aotearoa for those unfamiliar with the local scene.

All the above is accompanied by a thumping soundtrack, intricate costumes, and bold haze-enhanced lighting.

Don your best briefs and get on down to the factory for the full works!

Mythosoma

Presented by Bold Island – Motu Tinana
Directed by Kelly Nash
Tāhwiri Warehouse, 25th Feb 2026
Reviewed by Zac Fitzgibbon

Photo by Nick George.

Imperfect, reverent, and poignant, Mythosoma invites us to feel, to reach into those wounded parts of us and be open. This theatre and dance piece is beyond interpretation, not because it is too high-brow, but because each audience member will have their own extremely personal reaction. I have no doubt that this is its uniting factor; that trauma affects us all differently.

This piece does not try to be perfect, but rather to illustrate the visceral feelings that occur after heavy-hitting moments that words fail to describe. Humour is used tactfully and tastefully, planted in the right moments to preserve emotional momentum. Under Kelly Nash's direction, the production settles but also stirs in unexpected ways.

I am in awe of how Nancy Wijohn, Jada Narikie, George Goater, and Caleb Heke move; the way they twist, turn, and navigate the memories that before hold. Every movement enthralls. We are called to lean in as observers, not to interpret what is placed before us. Likewise, Moana Rere's narration and vocals provide a sense of grounding, of realisation and revelations. All five of these performers work as one, yet they tell their own stories.

With production management and design collaboration from Rob Larsen, we are presented with a scenographic delight. Lighting and sound design by Nick Georgiou, Moana Rere's costumes, and Kelly Nash's direction, the production settles but also stirs in unexpected ways.

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Werewolf

Presented by Binge Culture
Circa Theatre, 25th Feb 2026
Reviewed by Tanya Pīejus

Photo by Lewis Ferris.

Three wardens (Joel Baxendale, Stella Reid, and Hannah Kelly) are in charge of 230 strangers with only half a day's training and a bag of onions. The incarthropy outbreak has begun. You have been summoned to the local shelter, along with other members of your community to wait for the all-clear. The containment period is one week and the nights are pitch black. As the moon waxes and wanes, the atmosphere inside begins to turn.

Inspired by the classic game of deception, *Werewolf* is a gripping blend of thriller and comedy that pulls you into an interactive world of suspicion, survival, and anxious laughter as part of the Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts. Your pandemic information booklet contains a piece of information or behaviour that you can include in the overall narrative if you wish (the short hats in the back row are a brilliant touch). The organic action stems from game elements and a semi-improvised script, which heaves the audience within a broader plot surrounding the relationships between the three wardens.

The assured cast keep the story moving briskly, deftly responding to the audience's interjections and reactions, and providing distinct characters to seriously love or hate. The three wardens members are called on to fulfil specific roles, with Daniel the timekeeper and his whiteboard becoming a favourite.

A deceptively simple set (Lucas Neal) of repurposed-wooden-proof-cover curtains, a plastic tunnel entrance, and some convincingly military-style equipment trunks is all that's needed to turn Circa One into Safehouse 656. Neal's lighting design makes excellent use of comforting orange for the safety of daylight, total blackout for the dread of night, and violent strobing pulses for the revolution.

The star of the technical show is Oliver Devlin's immersive sound design that fills the black nights with gunfire, screams, creepy voices, and a pounding heartbeat that makes the very fabric of the theatre vibrate.

Thrillingly funny and creepily immersive, *Werewolf* is a tantalising tease to your senses and guaranteed to send shivers down your spine.

Waiora Te Ūkaipō – The Homeland

Written and directed by Hone Kouka
Te Ohera House, 1st Mar 2026
Reviewed by Tanya Pīejus

Photo by Roc Torio.

This Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts sees the return of a powerful chronicle of the spiritual and cultural trauma of leaving home. Hone Kouka was commissioned to write *Waiora Te Ūkaipō – The Homeland* for the 1996 festival and its revival now is as deeply personal, emotionally affecting, and relevant as it was then. It's become a landmark piece of Aotearoa New Zealand theatre exploring the impact of colonisation, urban drift, and the tension between past and future that feels prescient in the current political climate of this country.

Set in the summer of 1965, the narrative concerns Hone (Regan Taylor) who has relocated his family from the East Cape to the South Island in search of a better life for them through his job at a sawmill. His wife Sue (Erina Daniels) holds everything together while older daughter Amiria (Kopanga Tickell) creates havoc and Boyboy (Te Mihi Potae) tries his best to please. As they gather near a beach for a birthday hāngi for their withdrawn youngest daughter Rongo (Tioreore Ngatai-Meltavan) with two Pākehā guests (Ben Ashby and Mycah Walsh), secrets, heartbreak, and cultural tensions bubble to the surface and spill in ways that will ripple through their lives forever. Watching, responding to, and echoing the emotional ebb and flow of the day's events are four tīpuna (Anatonio Te Maioha, Awerangi Thompson, Huia Rawiri, and Mathieu Boynton-Nata).

Working on Mark McEntyre's cleverly sculptured set under Nakisha James' brilliantly responsive lighting design, this cast is electric. Their family dynamics are clearly communicated through quick characterisations and the layering of Kouka's cracking dialogue. They particularly shine during the musical numbers (music and lyrics composer Hone Hurihanganui) that weave through the story to punctuate the emotional climaxes. Hurihanganui's music is singing voice is sublime, and her thread of the story stitches the whole together until it profoundly squeezes the heart of its audience.

As Kouka stated before writing the play: "Everyone has a homeland somewhere else." *Waiora Te Ūkaipō – The Homeland* is for all who have ever felt dispossessed.

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New Zealand Fringe Festival reviews

Decadence

Created by Marshall Lorenzo
BATS Theatre, 20th Feb 2026
Reviewed by Oliver Mander

Decadence is a frenetic, energetic, multi-layered romp that offers a merciless skewering of consumerism and excess.

Briscoes, Harvey Norman, and Uber are featured, with the focus of the satire less about the companies themselves and more about their target customer demographics. Lorenzo's persona as a Harvey Norman salesman notes that all of their couches look like they were designed in 2001, while Uber's younger generation customers money to their name, but don't have gather the service to using their legs. And as for the Briscoes boy, …I will never hear "You'll never buy better" in quite the same way ever again.

As consumers, regardless of age, stage, or demographic, we are all worldly and hilariously lampooned.

Lorenzo offers a masterclass in audience engagement, with direct eye contact and energy that is irresistible. His stage performance is well supported by a striking set that offers superb functionality through its simplicity, and a soundtrack of energetic beats that reflects his own performance while keeping the buzz alive amongst the audience.

It is the clever integration of all those technical and creative elements that create the underlying energy for this piece. Of course, we might expect that of every performing arts show, but it's the sheer variety of those contributions that make *Decadence* something special. Lorenzo uses movement and dance, lighting, voice and caricature, beautifully integrated with sound, light, and stage. His talent is there for all to see, and the talent is generally well focused on entertaining.

There are a couple of moments in the script that are unnecessary. Satirical commentary on capitalism is one thing, but making a personal slur against one within the show detracts from the wider satirical nature of the script. It's clear that Lorenzo has the talent to create the satire without resorting to insult; maintaining that satire would have offered far more scope for humour.

Regardless of my personal status as an unabashed capitalist, this was a great night out. Energetic, biting, and seriously funny, it left me wanting to see more.

The Night Ali Died

Written by Christopher Sainton-Clark
Directed by Rosanna Mallinson
Gryphon Theatre, 21st Feb 2026
Reviewed by Oliver Mander

Photo by Lasvegasmedia.

Wow.

The Night Ali Died is a gripping story beautifully crafted. Pre-show, we see a single central chair, with two distinct piles of clothing in each upstage corner. This simple staging creates opportunity for the sole actor, Christopher Sainton-Clark, to shine. And shine he does.

Each character in this criminal drama recounts the events before and after the death of mid-mannered criminal Alistair (Ali). As they unpick the events of that fateful night, each offers their own back story and perspective, from drug lords to detectives, motivations gradually come into focus.

For Alistair in particular, this is a simple and honest account that involves reflection on who matters in our lives – and the role we might play in theirs. Chances are, our actions or distance make each of us a hero to someone. In this story, Ali's actions define him as a hero to the daughter he will never know. Yet the invitation to reflect never feels like lecturing; it remains a confident, and forceful, a compelling story.

Sainton-Clark uses mime to accentuate key elements; from the recoil of a gun to the grip of a knife, we are left in no doubt as to what has occurred. His multiple characters are sharply differentiated through mannerisms, movement, and speech.

The technical precision of this production is almost cinematographic in nature. It's as if we're watching carefully constructed scenes from a movie, but performed live in one stick, classic style! Lighting cues, including the use of brief blackouts, heighten the drama, while sound and music underscore the mood (collaborative design by Sainton-Clark, director Rosanna Mallinson, and technical lead Daisy-Jane Pope-Ogden). A minor quibble is the placement of sidestage curtains allowing an open view of backstage. This was minor because once the performance gets underway, I never take my eyes off the action on stage.

Wellingtonians have experienced something special with this limited two-night run of *The Night Ali Died*. There's still hope for audiences in Christchurch, Oamaru, Nelson, and Dunedin over the next few weeks.

Magical Madness

Presented by Saksham Sharma
Roxanne Playhouse, 28th Feb 2026
Reviewed by Zac Fitzgibbon

Saksham's *Magical Madness* is exactly what the title suggests: a 60-minute magic show that is absolutely madness. A master of illusion, Saksham Sharma presents us with a multitude of tricks, some of which could confound even the most avid magic enthusiast. From classic sleights of hand with cards to predicting the future through drawings, this show has something that I am sure will pique the interest of all viewers.

Our magician in question is incredibly charismatic and charming, hooking us in from the moment he walks on stage until the moment he leaves. It is satisfying to see how many people he involves to participate in his tricks, including myself. Equally, it is refreshing to see all ages enjoying the show. There is loud cheering and clapping throughout, no doubt a reflection of the joy the audience feels. Saksham also reminds us that even though machines are rising up around us, they cannot take wonder away from us; we can still control the joy that magic brings. This is what epitomises the show: pure joy. Magical Madness is engaging and entertaining for the entire time, making us want more. At the same time, it is not your ordinary magic show. The show ends with coming out of hats, nor are there people sawn in half. Instead, Saksham uses technology to his advantage, utilising even our own cell phones to perform his tricks. The use of lighting and projection (show designed by Saksham and Christopher Ferran) heightens the tension and excitement, which builds and builds right up till the explosive grand finale.

I am in awe of Saksham's skill and how it lits the entire show together, from the disappearing key and note to the drawings of the elephant. This, *New Zealand Fringe Festival* show offers a fantastic night out that you won't want to end. Ensure you get tickets to Saksham's *Magical Madness* before it disappears from The Hannah.

A Complete Idiot's Guide to Great Britain

Created by Sully O'Sullivan
Circus, 26th Feb 2026
Reviewed by Oliver Mander

I'll admit at the outset of this review that I have a distinctly positive bias towards useless facts – especially when interlaced with delicious comedy. On that basis, I'm always likely to look favourably on a performance like this one.

It helps that New Zealand comedian O'Sullivan is unremarkably likable, driven by a punchy and energetic style. He has created a fast-paced script, supported by slides that accentuate the delivery and set the audience up for laughs from the start. Without giving too much away, we're entertained by the English nickname for people from Hartlepool, the national sonnet of England, Scotland, and Wales, and O'Sullivan's take on the most quintessentially British landmarks.

Of course, it's difficult to do a show containing facts without at least one person in the audience knowing the answer to the questions he raises. Sully's use of the audience to augment his performance is masterful. He doesn't let the involvement in the narrative overpower, instead balancing and blending it into his carefully crafted storyline, barely missing a beat. Information comes thick and fast from the audience that is then incorporated into the comedy.

The show itself is clearly premised on the widely known ability of Great Britain's populace to reflect on their own culture and laugh at themselves. There are more than a few British jokes in O'Sullivan's audience. On this basis, there is indeed some risk in the material; it is unlikely that A Complete Idiot's Guide to Putin's Russia would land with the same effectiveness. It's a reflection on his considered writing that the comedy never crosses the line from humour to insult, nor does it rely on negative personality tropes.

Interactive, intimate, and informative, O'Sullivan's *New Zealand Fringe Festival* performance of *A Complete Idiot's Guide to Britain* offers an entertaining journey across Great Britain with a different perspective.

Back contents

Horowhenua lifestyle

Dream big

Just over an hour from New Zealand's capital city is the beautiful Horowhenua, boasting long sandy beaches, pristine natural beauty, and quaint towns brimming with eateries, boutiques, and cultural centres, all framed by the picturesque Tararua Ranges.

With so much to see and do in the district – not to mention its proximity to Wellington, Palmerston North, and Whanganui – it's no wonder Horowhenua has become the place to be for young people, families, and retirees alike.

What's more, the property is more affordable than the city and set into some of Aotearoa's most beautiful landscapes. What was out of your budget before can be financially viable here, and there are whole teams of real estate agents, brokers, and finance advisors to help you take the leap. Whether you want to wake up in a beachfront bungalow or on your very own lifestyle block, your dream home can become a reality.

If you've stumbled on the perfect parcel of land where you know you'll want to stay forever, consider building a home. There are plenty of local professionals to manage your build from the ground up, so you can live where you love.

Heritage cottages and homesteads are dotted across the district. If you have the perfect character cottage, get in touch with nearby tradespeople to help you revamp, refresh, and restore it to its former glory.

Whatever your dream, you can make it come true in Horowhenua.

You're in safe hands

Natures Elements is a leading landscaping company with a proven track record of over nine years on the Kapiti Coast. They are focused on delivering structurally sound, quality workmanship with style and strong attention to detail.

Husband-and-wife owners Marty and Marie are passionate about their trade and local community. "We are a family-owned, Kapiti business creating stunning outdoor areas for clients, supported by our talented professional landscape team," they say.

They lead an experienced team that share the same passion and vision, ensuring a stress-free process and an end result to be proud of.

Marty has more than 25 years of landscaping experience throughout Wellington, Kapiti, and Horowhenua, as well as in the UK. This enables him to visit any outdoor space and visualise a stunning design.

Together, Marty and Marie take a holistic approach when walking through your outdoor area with you. Always considering the natural aspects of the environment, they suggest ideas alongside each client's vision and needs, budget, and preference of materials.

Their personable approach enables a thorough understanding between the homeowners and the landscaping team – who are reliable, open-minded, creative, adaptable, and highly skilled.

With Natures Elements, your outdoor area can become your personal sanctuary where you can slow the pace of life and embrace the natural world.

Harcourts Team Group

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18A Mckenzie Street, Levin
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Wellington Silver Screeners: Eva Brunel

In our Wellington Silver Screeners series, Alessia Belsito-Riera shines a spotlight on the movers and shakers working in the film capital of New Zealand.

L to R: Damien Wilkins, Eva Brunel, Gaylene Preston, Ken Duncum.

When she was younger, Eva Brunel loved making videos of everything.

"I would film myself baking or getting ready… and I loved editing. It made the most sense for me," she reflects. "And I always loved writing."

So upon graduation, she enrolled at University of Otago for her undergrad where she studied film theory and history before deciding to do her master's in screenwriting at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington's International Institute of Modern Letters (IIML). Here, she began writing a feature film exploring female friendship, which was recently awarded the 2025 David Carson-Parker Embassy Prize in Scriptwriting.

Described as a story that is "powerful, inventive, and original, combining psychological, romantic, and comedic genres with the occasional hint of horror", *Peephole* is still evolving, but Brunel tells me all about it, her process, and her inspirations below.

What sparked your interest in filmmaking?

I've always really loved film and media. I enjoy the way a film will make you feel regardless of what's going on. It's a form of escapism, and there are certain stories that latch on to you. I'd love to be a part of and create some of those stories.

Was there a specific movie that made it click?

Titanic. It was the most insane thing I'd ever seen when I was, like, 12. I couldn't believe that it was made – not much of it was actually filmed on a boat. That was my first unlocking moment where I was like, 'Wow, you can really do so much with this artform'. Then as I got older, it was more sentimental films. The ones that transform the way you see things and change how you go about your day and that you continue to think about.

What content and themes are important for you?

I focus on female friendship. I think the time between 18 to 25 isn't explored as in depth as it could be in film. I like smaller moments that are a bit more mundane but have so much meaning to them. I focus a lot on conversation, which, in screenwriting, is not actually ideal. You should technically be focusing on action and moving image – what you're seeing. But I think it's the moments that open up for conversation that are really special. I saw *Past Lives* and the whole film was quite silent, but there are three big conversations that happen that really grab you. It's those things that I like to focus on.

Tell me about Peephole. What inspired the winning script?

It's a thriller drama about a girl who lives with her friends, and she begins an affair with one of their boyfriends and they're also being stalked by an anonymous figure. The initial inspiration for *Peephole* came after I met someone who used to live in my flat. She explained that they named it Peephole after they discovered someone had been cutting holes in their curtains. This is where the majority of the thriller inspiration comes from as well as the mystery aspect as to who is stalking the girls throughout the story.

It has transformed into different things over time, but initially I wanted to write a story about my experience flatting with my friends. I ended up in a flat of 10 people at one point, so it was very busy and there was a lot going on, yet we were all super close, which is rare. I knew I wanted to write it down, and that I needed to capture it and keep it safe in some way. But writing a screenplay with 10 main characters isn't ideal, so I started with six and then went to five and then four. It's an interesting story that traverses friendships, friend groups, loyalties, fear, and it has a couple of jump scares as well. It's a mashup of everything that I enjoy the most in film. It's all about being under pressure and how you behave when you're always being watched.

What was your first reaction when you heard the news that you'd won?

I was so confused and shocked. I'm really grateful for it, but I just wasn't expecting it. My class was full of so many talented writers, so it was a pleasant surprise.

What's next for Peephole?

It's still only on its third draft, so, ideally, I'd like to redevelop it more. I'd like to complete two more drafts before I would say it was anywhere near ready. Some films go through, like, 20 drafts before they get to shooting or even pre-production, so at the moment it's just refining that story more and making it more impactful. I definitely want to do something with it. I don't want it to sit on a shelf. Even though I do think screenwriting is an artform on its own and doesn't need to be made to be complete.

What does the screenwriting process look like for you?

It seems massive when you sit down to a blank page and think 'I've got to come out with between 90 to 120 pages'. But I was mentored by Ken Duncum [at Victoria University] this past year and his teaching was incredible. The easiest way to do it is to try and not flesh out your whole story before you begin. You'll find that you get to know your characters and they'll do their own thing, regardless of you controlling them. Have a basic outline of three acts – where you want it to start, a middle point, and an end – and just go five pages at a time. Truly, it will write itself. You'll be really surprised at how the story will take shape on its own. You'll have an idea or see images of things happening and then figure out where in the script that would fit. Don't rewrite anything until you have finished the whole first draft. I don't even read back what I've written until I've done the whole draft because you'll get in this constant rewriting loop where one page is not good enough and you have to rewrite it and make it perfect before you move on, but you're not going to the end product without letting yourself write. Revising and drafting, that's what it's for. Don't be afraid to let the story take its own shape. You can always change it; it's just words on a page, but if you don't let it happen in the first place, then you can't fine tune it.

You said you enjoy editing as well. How do those interests intersect?

I think editing videos and editing writing is very different, but in a way, it's not. You're just cutting and pasting, really. I enjoyed going back and editing my script more than I thought I would. I'm not the best proofreader, but I've definitely learned how to do it much more this year. I think it's just about picking little things to focus on that makes the editing process easier. Sometimes I'll do a pass just for grammar or spelling, and then sometimes I'll do a pass for dialogue that I think isn't good or precise enough, or ways I can re-order scenes, which is really fun. But it's very different to editing video because that's so much more of a visual medium. With what you see you can convey so much, whereas with writing, you have to really set the scene. Editing out action is a lot harder than editing out dialogue.

If Peephole became a feature, would you direct it?

Oh, I would love to direct. It's always been a big dream of mine. I'm not sure how experienced I would be on something like a feature film, but I've directed short films on my own before. I think I would be really scared about handing it to someone else, but with the right director that I could trust, I would definitely hand it over. Especially if it meant that it would become something, I would love to direct it, but I'm not sure if I'm the best person for it, to be honest, at this moment in time.

What advice would you give someone who is just starting out?

Letting inspiration come from your daily life is really nice, letting your imagination run. And consuming media in short bursts. See what kind of opportunities are out there for you. Wellington is so amazing for film. There are many amazing companies and production studios that are so underrated. There are so many opportunities out there. Make things that you're not proud of because it's just a learning experience and it doesn't matter, really. If it's not going anywhere, then it's just a learning experience. That would be my biggest advice: not to be afraid to just do it, just write the screenplay. No one's going to see it if you don't like it, and it just gives you your first draft to revise. Just go for it. Don't be concerned about whether or not it's an artistic masterpiece if it makes you happy.

What's next?

The next draft! I really want to focus on getting, hopefully, two more drafts out this year. Just ready for what the future could be. I've been studying for a really long time, so I'm excited to end my academic. Not because I didn't like it, just because I'm ready for a break. So just focusing on those drafts at the moment and seeing what opportunities are out there. There are so many amazing fellowships and screenwriting residencies that I'd be really interested in.

21st Mar. Autumn Equinox: *Stonehenge Aotearoa, Ahiaruhe Road, Carterton* – 4:30pm. Celebrate the autumn equinox at Stonehenge Aotearoa with historical tales and a sunset alignment with the Equinox Heel Stone. Marking the moment days become shorter than night, the autumn equinox was an important yearly event for ancient cultures around the world.

13th Mar. UNDUBBED: *The Rogue & Vagabond, Garrett Street, Te Aro* – 9pm. This experimental and explosive musical unit combines elements of electronic, ambient, and breakbeat music with improvisation. Catch them in the heart of Wellington for a night of improvised jazz concoctions that will get your feet dancing and your heart beating.

13th Mar. Cantina Comedy: *Sunday Cantina, Poplar Avenue, Raumati* – 7pm.
From sharp one-liners to gloriously awkward overshares, encounter a mix of fresh faces and experienced comics bringing their best material in tight, high-energy bursts. Settle in for big laughs and delicious food and drink at an event that's cheaper than therapy and way more fun.

17th-22nd Mar. Fragrance on Paper: Discovering nature with a Chinese brush: *Thistle Hall, Cuba Street, Te Aro*. This exhibition in gongbihua and shumohua styles invites visitors to join artist Theresa Lo's journey into Chinese brush painting to see how using a brush, and a variety of mediums like paper and silk, can be the source of creation, joy, and discovery.

21st Mar. Castlepoint Races: *Castlepoint Beach, Castlepoint, Wairarapa* - 11am. Picturesque Castlepoint comes alive with the sound of thundering hooves for the annual horse race, which has been a recurring event since the first days of European settlement in the region. Pack a picnic, join the fashion parade, participate in activities, and get hyped for eight epic races.

21st Mar. Triske: *Hilltop House, Upland Road, Kelburn* – 7:30pm. Triske are a Wellington-based folk trio blending Celtic traditions with modern energy. Drawing on Irish, Scottish, and Breton influences, their music moves easily between lively dance tunes and reflective songs, creating performances that are warm, intimate, and richly melodic. ***Photo by Hannah Cross.***

What's on Wairarapa

14th Mar. Laura Collins & The Big Blues Band: *Wairarapa Events Centre, Holloway Street, Carterton* – 7:30pm. Expect blues, boogie, and swing from the singer known for her soulful delivery and upfront stage presence.

15th Mar. Holloway Hoopla: *Wairarapa Events Centre, Holloway Street, Carterton* – 10am. Circus arts, street performers, food trucks, craft workshops, music, and more collide at this outdoor, family-friendly festival.

20th Mar-15th Apr. Greytown International Cocktail Festival 2026: *Various locations and times in Greytown*. For a full month, bars, cafés, and restaurants draw inspiration from the great cocktail cultures of the globe, bringing iconic drinks and modern twists from far-flung places to Greytown.

21st Mar. The Warratahs: *Wairarapa Events Centre, Holloway Street, Carterton* – 7:30pm. Inducted into The New Zealand Music Hall of Fame in late 2025, The Warratahs are Kiwi music royalty.

22nd Mar. Trust House Children's Day: *Queen Elizabeth Park, Dixon Street, Masterton* – 10am. Enjoy a fun, informative, social, and no-screen day in the park for Children's Day.

Kapiti

14th, 15th Mar. Otaki International Kite Festival: *Otaki Beach, Marine Parade, Otaki* – 10am. Spectacular kites of all shapes, sizes, and styles take to the sky at this festival with plenty of fun to be had on the sand too.

15th Mar. Teddy Bears' Picnic: *Ōtaki Market, Main Street, Ōtaki* – 10am. This fun-filled day invites children to bring their favourite teddy bear to the market for games, storytelling, and special treats.

Events

14th Mar. Salo-Salo: A Filipino Food Fair and Charity Concert: *Johnsonville Masonic Hall, Phillip Street, Johnsonville* – 3pm. Help raise funds for Mary Potter Hospice while enjoying food and music from Wellington's Filipino diaspora.

14th; 20th; 22nd Mar. Latin Cuirs Presents: Cuir Utopia: *Various locations and times in Wellington*. Latin Cuirs will host a series of multidisciplinary events that are an exercise in political fantasy this pride season.

17th-25th Mar. Big Bike Film Night: *Various locations and times in Greater Wellington*. Have a wheelie good time at a screening featuring nine short films about cycling and adventure.

19th Mar. Book Launch: The Only Way Is Up: On Foot to Rome: *Unity Books, Willis Street, Te Aro* – 6pm. A meditation on how we move forward when life asks us to begin again, this long-distance walking memoir is structured as a series of daily stages, following the rhythms of pilgrimage life.

Music

10th Mar. Authority Zero: *Vaihalla, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. Champions of skate-punk for more than three decades, Arizona's Authority Zero are finally touching down in Aotearoa.

13th Mar. Beans and Don at Undercurrent: *The Undercurrent, Tory Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. The duo will play most of last year's *Bit Players* album, plus some new stuff and some oldies.

13th; 14th Mar. The Bates: *St Peter's Village Hall, Paekākāriki; Meow, Te Aro* – 7:30pm; 8pm. Fresh from a triumphant, room-crammed set at The Other's Way Festival, Aotearoa indie legends The Bats hit the road with their much-loved album *Corner Coming Up*.

13th Mar. HYABY: *San Fran, Cuba Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. Dutch New Zealand visionary trio MY BABY return to this half of the globe with their new album *Echo*.

19th Mar. Gooverider: *Meow Nui, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. From the pirate radio era to shaping the underground at Rage, Gooverider helped define the sound, culture, and future of drum and bass.

20th Mar. The Datsuns: *San Fran, Cuba Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. After years of wrangling riffs across distant lands, marinating in sonic experiments, and rebuilding the band's percussive backbone, The Datsuns return home.

20th Mar. The Antidote: *Red Square, Blair Street, Te Aro* – 10pm. Live techno beats from No Way Jose, Sibko, Narcotica, Dr. Dash, and Malware feature all night long at Red Square.

21st Mar. Jan Preston Boogie Duo: *Vogelmorn Bowling Club, Mornington Road, Brooklyn* – 5pm. Jan has created her own blues boogie style trademarked by exceptional piano playing, vibrant singing, and woven songwriting.

21st Mar. APEX: *Shed 6, Queens Wharf, Wellington Waterfront* – 6pm. Get ready for an immersive experience featuring a curated set of international DJs, including Delta Heavy, T & Sugah, and Krakota.

26th Mar. New Zealand Symphony Orchestra Presents: From the New World: *Michael Fowler Centre, Wakefield Street, Te Aro* – 6:30pm. Violin superstar María Dueñas and conductor Rodolfo Barráez make their Aotearoa debuts in a concert of lush, unforgettable music.

26th Mar. The Fab Four: *The Opera House, Manners Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. Experience a show from the greatest Beatles tribute band in the world, as dubbed by the *LA Times*.

Performance

14th Mar. Oops Sari I'm Indian!: *Circus Bar, Allen Street, Te Aro* – 7pm. Jenice the Menace delivers a joyfully spiced-up solo stand-up show turning stereotypes into sharp, self-aware comedy about belonging, love, and laughter.

16th; 17th Mar. Paper, Scissors, and Japanese Culture: The Art of Kamishiki: *Mihinraki Where Taonga, Upper Hutt; Penthouse Cinema & Café, Brooklyn* – various times. Kamishiki is a traditional Japanese performance art where the artist uses a pair of scissors to transform a blank sheet of paper into something extraordinary.

18th; 20th Mar. Menopause the Musical: *The Opera House, Te Aro; Southward Theatre, Paraparaumu* – 7:30pm. Set in a department store, four women meet while shopping for a black lace bra. Though strangers, they quickly bond over memory loss, hot flashes, night sweats, mood swings, and more.

18th-28th Mar. Wellington Repertory Theatre Presents: Gasping: *Gryphon Theatre, Ghuznee Street, Te Aro* – various times. When the Lockheart Corporation begins to bottle and sell air, the world gasps for more in this Ben Elton dark comedy that questions greed, morality, and the future.

18th-20th Mar. The Rocky Horror Show: *St James Theatre, Courtenay Place, Te Aro* – various times. The world's sexiest and most outrageous musical is back bigger, bolder, and brasher than ever after 15 years. Quite, quite mad.

20th Mar. Best in Class: NZ Comedy School Show: *The Fringe Bar, Allen Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. Super funny comedians who happen to be alumni of the NZ Comedy School make you laugh while raising money for the school's Diversity Scholarship fund.

20th-21st Mar. MX Capital Drag Heats: *Ivy Bar & Cabaret, Cuba Street, Te Aro* – 9:30pm. At New Zealand's longest-running drag pageant, the heats are where contestants show their mettle and talent in order to earn a spot in the final.

21st Mar. Burlesque Baby: *The Fringe Bar, Allen Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. Burlesque Baby showcases some of the greatest new talent the Wellington has to offer in a fun variety show.

22nd Mar. Hugo's Rainbow Show: *Newtown Community Centre, Columbo Street, Newtown* – 1pm, 3pm. An drag superstar Hugo Girl for a musical, magical adventure exploring the science of the skies above.

27th Mar. Paul Ego: *Abandoned Taproom Petone, Fitzherbert Street, Lower Hutt* – 8pm. In this show inspired by his PAK'nSAVE persona, Paul Ego will deliver maximum laughs as he talks stickability, sticky situations, and, of course, stickmen.

Sports

14th Mar. Macca's Match for Good: *Hnry Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Wellington Waterfront* – 3pm, 6pm. The Wellington Phoenix men's and women's teams will take to the field in a double header that raises awareness and funds for Ronald McDonald House Charities®.

15th Mar. Wellington Sanitarium Weet-Bix Kids TRYathlon™: *Kilbirnie Park, Kilbirnie Crescent, Kilbirnie* – 7am. Kids of all sporting abilities swim, cycle, and run their way around age-appropriate courses, either as an individual or as a team of two.

15th Mar. Tunnel Gully Kids Mountain Bike Day: *Tunnel Gully Recreation Area, Pākuratahi Forest, Upper Hutt* – 10am. Have a go at mountain biking with the whole family. Rent a bike, join a guide, or do it yourself.

21st Mar. Valiant Pro: Champions Challenge: *Upper Hutt Cosmopolitan Club, Logan Street, Upper Hutt* – 5pm. Featuring top stars from across New Zealand and around the world, this wrestling championship is a showcase of elite talent.

22nd Mar. White Ferns and Blackcaps vs South Africa: *Hnry Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Wellington Waterfront* – 2:45pm. Get ready for back-to-back action, big hits, fierce rivalries, and unbeatable summer vibes at these cricket matches.

Galleries

Until 21st Mar. In Memoriam: *Exhibitions Gallery, Brandon Street, Te Aro. In Memoriam* features a series of paintings created by John Armstrong over the last year or so, during which his father passed away.

Until 21st Mar. The Foragers: *Twentysix Gallery, Constable Street, Newtown*. Emma Mercus' new works celebrate life sustained by the earth, bloodline of foragers, and a childhood of lessons in how to continue the ancient practice.

Until 10th May. Salome: An Angel of History: *New Zealand Portrait Gallery Te Pūkenga Whakaata, Lady Elizabeth Lane, Wellington Waterfront*. This new exhibition follows New Zealand artist Yuki Kihara's exploration of Pacific history through her alter-ego Salome.

20th-29th Mar. Worlds of Whimsy: *Rice Pudding Gallery, Constable Street, Newtown*. Carol Camden presents an exhibition of dioramas crafted with found materials in old tea boxes.

Festivals

Until 15th Mar. Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts: *Various locations and times in Wellington*. Celebrating 40 years of the extraordinary, this festival promises three weeks of thought-provoking theatre and dance, brilliant minds, glittering cabaret, fresh sounds, and more.

19th-22nd Mar. Wellington Animation Film Festival: *Roxy Cinema, Park Road, Miramar* – various times. Celebrating the artistry, innovation, and storytelling of animation from around the world, WAFF screens nine feature films and five short film collections.

20th-29th Mar. CubaDupa: *Various locations and times in Cuba Precinct*. Join the end-of-summer party celebrating art, music, theatre, dance, food, and thousands of artists.

For your inclusion in the what's on listings email: whatson@regionalnews.kiwi. Close off for the next issue's listings is noon Tuesday 17 March

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
Connected Wellington

Answers to the puzzles on page 32

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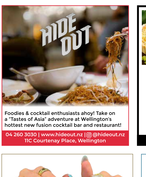

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Take some time out with us, and enjoy our great range of cabinet food, or choose from our delicious freshly cooked menu.
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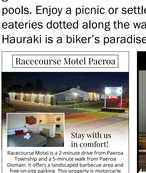
Biker's haven

Nestled into the gentle curve at the top of the North Island, the Hauraki District is defined by rolling hills, long sandy beaches, abundant nature and wildlife, and quaint towns chocka with charm. This beautiful and relatively gentle terrain makes it perfect for a cycle adventure.

Of New Zealand's 23 Great Rides, the Hauraki Rail Trail is one of the most laid-back options, making it perfect for cyclists of all ages and abilities. The 160-kilometre, Grade 1 cycle track follows along the old railway embankments and features five sections. Plus, there are plenty of other tracks and trails off the beaten track to discover as well.

Ride through tunnels and whizz across bridges. Hunt for old goldmining relics and stop off at glowworm caves. Chase waterfalls and hop into hot pools. Enjoy a picnic or settle into one of the local eateries dotted along the way. Whatever your style, Hauraki is a biker's paradise.

Raccecourse Motel Paeroa

Stay with us in comfort!
Raccecourse Motel is a 2-minute drive from Paeroa Township and a 5-minute walk from Paeroa Domain. It offers a landscaped barbecue area and free on-site parking. This property is motorcycle and family friendly. All are located on the ground floor and the accommodation in each room is equipped with a satellite TV.
raccecoursemotel@xtra.co.nz
Raccecourse Motel Paeroa
68 Thames Road, Paeroa 3600, New Zealand
07 862 7543 | Front Desk Hours 8am - 7pm

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