Regional News

Eyes ington

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News

The beauty in the bold

Photo by Casey Orr.

After touring the North Island to rave reviews in 2025, UK broadside ballad singer Jennifer Reid is returning to New Zealand. What's a broadside ballad, you ask? Starting in 16th century England, lyrics of popular poems and tunes were printed on one side of a single sheet of paper and distributed to the public for a penny. Also known as penny ballads or song sheets, they bore news and nonsense, prophecies and philosophies, advice and arguments and were performed by travelling ballad singers on street corners, in town squares, at fairs… and surely within the hallowed halls of a pub or two!

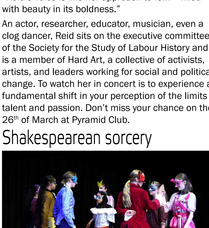
Reid is a folk musician dedicated to preserving the rich heritage of 19th century music. She performs Lancashire dialect and Victorian broadside ballads, often a cappella, carrying on the traditional role of music as a social provocation. A champion of the industrial revolution work song, she bridges past and present with expertise and ease.

Named in *The Guardian*'s Top 10 Folk Albums of 2025, Reid's fourth collection *The Ballad of the Gatekeeper* weaves together working-class narratives with contemporary edge. Also featuring political originals, it is a striking mix of a cappella and instrumentation – "soft percussion, layered harmonies, and birdsong" that give "old stories like *Spinning Shoddy* and *Poor Little Factory Girls* a powerful new impact", *The Guardian* writes.

"Reid's voice is like her approach to folk – filled with beauty in its boldness."

An actor, researcher, educator, musician, even a clog dancer, Reid sits on the executive committee of the Society for the Study of Labour History and is a member of Hard Art, a collective of activists, artists, and leaders working for social and political change. To watch her in concert is to experience a fundamental shift in your perception of the limits of talent and passion. Don't miss your chance on the 26th of March at Pyramid Club.

Shakespearean sorcery



***Romeo and Juliet* by Newlands College. Photo by Brian Scurfield, Memory of Light Photography.**

"Why do we always want more? Can greed and glamour ever fill the void of the ambitious soul? The call to royalty and fame selfies are a driving force. These images cannot be undone. Sorcery exists in the algorithm that drives us to madness."

So reads an achingly familiar synopsis of a scene set to be performed in the upcoming Shakespeare Globe Centre New Zealand's Victoria University of Wellington Regional Shakespeare Festival. When you consider another scene that's set to pitch Shakespeare's romantic heroes against each other on a heated hit reality TV show, and a third that "explores the idea of intergenerational women feeling the actions of men as a collective", you have a relatable and resonant premise. Students are interpreting the Bard's works through their own lens: one that sees the misogyny pervading the world, the 'influence' of the small screen, and the power that corrupts, too often with deadly outcomes.

Taking place over the course of three evenings from the 30th of March to the 1st of April at Wellington East Girls' College Hall, the SGCNZ VUW RSF will see rangatahi from across the Wellington district present five and 15-minute scenes from plays spanning *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet* to *Macbeth* and more. With many scenes led by student-directors, the festival provides a valuable opportunity to develop skills in project and time management, communication, confidence, creativity, and tangential thinking.

2026 is a very special year for these students to get onstage. At the end of March, Shakespeare Globe Centre New Zealand will begin celebrating the 35th anniversary of its founding and festivals.

Cover: Armageddon Expo

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Bigger in every way

Brace yourself, Wellington: our precious Armageddon is back this Easter weekend, Friday the 3rd to Sunday the 5th of April, to turn Hnry Stadium into pop culture paradise.

When it comes to celebrities, this is the one expo to rule them all. Andy Serkis from *The Lord of the Rings* and Graham McTavish from *The Hobbit* are set to paint the town gold, while Walkers will make a beeline straight for Chandler Riggs and Ross Marquand from *The Walking Dead*. YouTuber Brandon Rogers (*Helluva Boss*), and Kiwi actor Temuera Morrison from *Star Wars* bring the star power. Renee O'Connor will stir up the *Xena: Warrior Princess* in all of us. Joining the bill are talented voice actors from shows such as *Critical Role!* and *Avatar: The Last Airbender* – including Zac Tyler Eisen, who plays our cover star Aang, and Jack DeSena as Sokka [pictured].

Armageddon Expo director William Geradts notes the lineup announcements have received a great response – and we can't say we're surprised!

"We've got an awesome mix of guests from gaming, YouTube, TV, movie, and anime stars, so fans are pretty excited", Geradts delights, adding this will be the biggest show Wellington has ever seen.

"It will be bigger in every way. The guests, the gaming, the cosplay. We're taking over 100% of the ring around the stadium, which means space for more gaming and events that make Armageddon what it is."

On top of the boosted gaming capacities – which will include everything from tabletop and board games to the Kiwibank Augmented Reality zone – the expo will showcase the latest in tech developments and interactive digital experiences. Brand new in 2026 is The Side Quest, where players can scan QR codes around the venue, build points, climb a live leaderboard, and go in the draw to win some awesome prizes.

As ever, a huge range of stalls will sell art and apparel, comics and collectibles, garb and gadgets, and more.

"We've been working hard behind the scenes to make sure these Armageddon Expos are the epic celebration of pop culture for people of all ages to enjoy."

Kaleidoscopic joy

This month the CubaDupa beams are gonna blind us, shining like the sun. Put on your solar eclipse glasses as the whole Cuba Quarter lights up in a spectacular collision of community, creativity, and celebration on the 28th and 29th of March.

This year's free street festival will see over 210 acts, 70 food vendors for the Street Feast, and 220 performances across a whopping 48 stages and creative zones. An exciting new partnership sees Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington throw open the doors of its Te Aro Campus, which will be transformed into an immersive visual arts sanctuary where festivalgoers can have a moment of calm in the eye of the creative storm. All around Whanga (The Cove), exhibitions, installations, and creative activations led by students and staff will swirl.

As part of the partnership, the Glover Park stage will be renamed the Vic Uni Glover Park Stage. Here, you can party to the likes of punk-rock band Dick Move, who spit out short and sharp hot takes about the increasingly messed-up world around them; Elly Mae, who crafts atmospheric folk-noir songs that encapsulate the bittersweet ache of growth, the quiet unravelling of time, and the soft glow of nostalgia; Samoan-founded indie-rock project LEAO; and many more wicked artists.

"CubaDupa captures the spirit of Wellington: a city built on connection, collaboration, and bold ideas", Victoria University vice-chancellor Nic Smith says. "As the university at the heart of the capital, we're proud to help shape and support the cultural life that sets Wellington apart."

More than 120,000 people are expected to attend the vibrant street festival that caters to all tastes, no matter how niche – from heavy metal and jungle to dub, hardcore, and back again. Join them in turning the Cuba Quarter into a living, breathing, heaving kaleidoscope of communal joy.

SNIPS

Bus replacements

Buses will replace trains on the Kāpiti, Hutt Valley, Johnsonville, and Wairarapa lines over the Easter and Anzac Day long weekends. From Friday the 3rd to Monday the 6th of April, and Sunday the 26th to Monday the 27th of April, KiwiRail will continue strengthening the network for the new trains coming to the Wairarapa and Manawatū lines in 2028/29. Check timetables ahead of travel at metlink.org.nz

Creative residencies

TAHI NZ Festival of Solo Performance has announced the four artists selected for its 2026 Creative Residencies. Anna Barker, Anna Bailey, Mamaeroa (Mo) Munn, and Zody Mārino Takurua will receive support to share their work as part of September's TAHI festival.

National survey

Wellingtonians can take part in a national survey exploring how New Zealanders give and what makes giving easier or harder. Take the survey and enter the draw to direct a $1000 donation to your charity of choice at community foundations.org.nz by the 27th of April.

News

As above, so below

Photo by Katya Brook.

Midway through last year, Aotearoa queen of disco Lou'ana unveiled the five-track EP *So Below*. In October, she released a further five tracks called *As Above* – Side A, if you will. Combined, both sides reveal the full picture: her highly anticipated 10-track sophomore album, aptly titled *Disco Witch.*

Apart, the contrasting works take "the listener on a journey through light and shadow; heart and groove, with each song revealing a different layer of transformation and self-expression," Lou'ana says. Together, with each note carefully curated and intentionally crafted, they paint an immersive, soulful, and cinematic picture. The result is magnetic.

One of Lou'ana's favourite tracks on the album is the titular *Disco Witch.*

"It celebrates love as a transformative force, a kind of ecstatic surrender to connection, creativity, and spirit. It dances between worlds of myth and magic, drawing on Greek archetypes like Eros and Venus while embodying the freedom of the disco era."

Another favourite is *Supernova,* which the award-winning nu-disco, soul, and funk artist says embodies feminine rage.

"It has this explosive, powerful energy to it. It feels electric and alive. I can't wait to play it live with a full band."

A gig is imminent, as electric as they come. Lou'ana will play the Wellington Airport Ngā Taniwha Stage this CubaDupa on Saturday the 28th of March at 6:45pm.

Advice from Alan

The gateway test

by Alan Knowsley, consultant, Rainey Collins Lawyers

The New Zealand Government has passed a new law which has considerable implications for contractors. This comes in response to the Supreme Court's decision which found that Uber drivers were employees rather than independent contractors as argued by Uber.

While the previous approach to ascertaining status was an analysis of the 'real nature of the relationship', the new law introduces a five-part gateway test, alongside existing employment law. An individual will be considered a contractor if:

1. A written contract exists, which specifies that they are a contractor or that they are not an employee;
2. They are free to work for another employer;
3. They are not required to work at specified times, on specified days, for minimum periods; or they otherwise have the ability to sub-contract the work;
4. The working relationship cannot be terminated if the worker declines work; and
5. They had a reasonable opportunity to seek independent advice before entering into the contract.

This change narrows the scope of the law on who is an employee and who is a contractor but more clearly defines the types of arrangements that don't come under a usual employer-employee arrangement.

If an existing agreement satisfying the gateway test was in place before the 21st of February 2026, it will be accepted as a valid contractor agreement from that date. The law applies retrospectively no matter how old the agreement. The only exception is if the person had commenced proceedings to determine their status before the 21st of February 2026, so those Uber drivers held to be employees remain employees, but that only applies to those particular people, not every Uber driver.

If an existing agreement was in place before the 21st of February 2026 but does not satisfy the gateway test, the 'real nature of the relationship' test as applied by the Employment Relations Authority and courts continues to apply.

For new agreements after the 20th of February 2026, if the gateway test is satisfied, they will be contractors. If the test is not satisfied, the 'real nature of the relationship' test will apply.

Music news

A joy ride with Steve Poltz

by Madelaine Empson

Photos by Jay Blakesberg.

Veteran North American troubadour Steve Poltz first made his bones as frontman for underground legends The Rugburns. In the 30-odd years since, the Halifax-born singer-songwriter and guitarist has magnetised fans and acclaim both as a solo artist and through collaborations with the likes of Billy Strings, Molly Tuttle, The Wood Brothers, Andy Frasco, and Jewel – an ongoing creative partnership that saw him co-write the platinum hit *You Were Meant For Me*.

To date, Poltz has 14 solo studio albums to his name – "not counting The Rugburns records, live things, and bootlegs floating around", he notes – that rep his inspired brand of rockin' countrified folk Americana. The latest is *JoyRide*.

Poltz is thrilled – which might be an understatement – to be heading down to our corner of the world to celebrate the new album with his Aussie and Kiwi fans.

"Australia *and* New Zealand?" he writes, inserting several incredulous, ecstatic question marks and exclamation points. "Are you kidding me?"

Hailed by *American Songwriter* for "his unhinged live performances", Poltz is "calling all freaks" to join him across Aotearoa on a national tour that includes a Wellington gig at Meow on the 28th of March at 4pm.

"Calling all freaks. Come in, freaks. Come in. Is this mic on? Plan ahead – we're going down under! Let's have a blast, meet new freaks, and become lifelong buddies. Look at all these shows – it's happening! This will be my 23rd trip to the land down under and my third to NZ. I can't wait!"

Please tell me about your new album JoyRide. What would you say it's about, and how are those themes represented sonically?

It's about life. A raucous unpredictable existence wrapped around an acoustic guitar being plucked and pounded on.

If you could describe it with a colour, a sound, a scent, a texture, and a feeling, which would you choose?

Chartreuse mixed with the feeling of a sideways grin after the rain stops and the scent of petrichor in the air.

How do you think it compares and contrasts with your earlier work?

It fits right in. It's a new member of the family with its own opinions yet the same DNA.

What else has changed – in your music and the industry at large – over the nearly-30 years since your 1998 debut album, One Left Shoe?

Everything's changed and nothing's changed. I'm still road-dogging it and selling t-shirts and records and hopefully making folks smile.

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

It's been way too long since I've seen your fine city. I can't wait to return.

He told you he was freaky

Photo by Izzie Austin.

GRAMMY® and Academy Award-winning songwriter, composer, and performer Bret McKenzie is about to play two New Zealand dates in support of his latest album *Freak Out City*.

One half of Flight of Conchords with Jemaine Clement, McKenzie has built an acclaimed solo career that has seen him tour internationally and build an impressive portfolio as a music writer and supervisor for the screen. His songs have been sung by the likes of Celine Dion, Benedict Cumberbatch, Lizzo, Homer and Lisa Simpson, SpongeBob SquarePants, Ricky Gervais, and, of course, Miss Piggy and Kermit the Frog. In 2012, he won the Best Original Song Academy Award for his ballad *Man or Muppet*, but his success story starts much earlier than that.

In 2000, McKenzie was cast as an extra in *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. As a background elf, he garnered an abnormal amount of attention that catapulted him to fame as the fan-named Figwit. The acronym stands for 'Frodo is great, who is that?'

It was around the same time that Flight of the Conchords were emerging from Wellington's prolific artistic community, and the rest, as they say, is hippopota-history.

In 2022, McKenzie released his solo debut *Songs Without Jokes*. *Freak Out City* (2025) is his sophomore album, co-produced with his longtime collaborator Mickey Petralia and comprising songs shaped on the road with his eight-piece band The State Highway Wonders. Hailed as upbeat, well made, and refreshingly smart by *Daily Mirror*, the record highlights McKenzie's ever-evolving artistry and craftsmanship.

Catch the new work alongside old favourites and hilarious anecdotes from his colourful career when McKenzie plays Meow Nui on the 1st and 2nd of April.

Fly like Frank

Catch Kauri Theatre Company if you can this April… they'll deliver the Tony Award-nominated musical *Catch Me If You Can* from the 8th to the 18th at Gryphon Theatre.

Written by the team behind *Hairspray*, Terrence McNally's book about the notorious Frank Abagnale Jr is brought to life by a stellar cast. The stage will crackle with the sounds of a swinging live jazz orchestra delivering Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman's score. The show follows the extraordinary conman who successfully posed as a Pan Am pilot, a medical doctor, and a lawyer, all while being pursued across the country by determined FBI agent Carl Hanratty.

Stepping into the irrepressible Frank's shiny shoes is Jackson Stone, who will be stalked across the stage by Alex Rabina as Carl. The role of Brenda Strong is shared in a dual casting between Katherine Keane and Lily Tyler Moore, supported by Carl Johnstone, Tania Parker, Drew Naika, and Matilda Wickbom alongside a vibrant ensemble of Wellington performers.

Catch Me If You Can is directed by Alistair Davies, who pitched it to the Kauri Theatre Committee while starring as Sky in Capital Theatre Trust and G&T Productions' 2025 season of *Mamma Mia!* – a creative leap from leading man to director that feels entirely in the spirit of the show itself. Davies is joined by choreographer Stacey Neale and musical director Emma Salzano, whose live jazz band and orchestra will be among the evening's great pleasures.

With only 11 performances in the season, fly like Frank and join the chase now!

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From the heavens

Five stars are hard to come by. Unless you're the Soweto Gospel Choir, which has amassed a galaxy of stars across the globe for their stratospheric sound.

Scintillating and sparkling in equal measure, the Soweto Gospel Choir will bathe Wellington's stellar St James Theatre with a sonic sensation on the 31st of March in what will be the penultimate stop along their Aotearoa-wide tour.

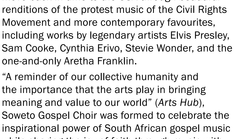
With their new concert, the multi-GRAMMY® and Emmy Award®-winning ensemble will perform a joyful programme of South African freedom songs, traditional spirituals, and some classics, celebrating the anthems of Nelson Mandela's Freedom Movement in South Africa and the Civil Rights Movement of Dr Martin Luther King's America.

Beginning in South Africa, the repertoire will move back in time to the USA through beautiful renditions of the protest music of the Civil Rights Movement and more contemporary favourites, including works by legendary artists Elvis Presley, Sam Cooke, Cynthia Erivo, Stevie Wonder, and the one-and-only Aretha Franklin.

"A reminder of our collective humanity and the importance that the arts play in bringing meaning and value to our world" (*Arts Hub*), Soweto Gospel Choir was formed to celebrate the inspirational power of South African gospel music while sharing the joy of faith through music with audiences around the world.

Take a trip to the stars to experience their heavenly sound for yourself.

Mythological meanderings



Alexander Wright, Megan Drury, Phil Grainger.

Shimmering, shining, silvery, and sauntering onto a stage near you, *SELENE* shares a story that will take audiences to the moon and back again. The radical retelling of an ancient Greek myth from storytelling legends Wright&Grainger is an intimate epic, reflecting our godliness and our humanity.

Over 70 spellbinding minutes with solo performer Megan Drury, a young girl watches the moon landing on repeat, entranced by the astronaut's weightlessness. A bunch of teenagers swim under a lunar eclipse, lost in what might happen next. A mismatched couple watch a horror film at a drive-in cinema, about to take the next step.

Told through the eyes of Selene's child Pandia and propelled by an original cinematic score reminiscent of Fleetwood Mac, this is a human story about the power of the universe and where we fit within it. It's about our lightness and our darkness, our understanding of reality and ourselves, and the ambiguity we must embrace to grow.

SELENE soars with awe and intrigue around the moon yet remains grounded in our own bodies and ever-changing realities, capturing similar coming-of-age nostalgia and sparkling storytelling to its sibling show *HELIOS*.

SELENE embarks on an 18-date tour of Aotearoa, stopping off in BATS Theatre between the 7th and the 11th of April and Wairarapa Events Centre on the 12th of April. Venture to the dark side of the moon at *SELENE*.

Grunge tribute

Calling all Stone Temple Pilots diehards for one night of 90s and early 2000s rock nostalgia.

Stoned Templar Pirates will be returning to Abandoned Brewery Taproom in Petone on Saturday the 28th of March for an evening of high-fidelity grunge brought to you by one of Wellington's most authentic tribute bands.

Expect all the bangers you love, like *Vasoline*, *Interstate Love Song*, *Creep*, and *Plush*. Stoned Templar Pirates will be sure to entertain, bringing that sludge-driven grunge blended with 70s psychedelic guitar textures that makes the STP sound so recognisable and distinctive from the other bands sitting in the 'grunge' box.

Stoned Templar Pirates' lead singer, Arlo Baylis, known for his hazardous flailing limbs, can hit all the notes of Scott Weiland's impressive vocal range. Mike and Jeremy on bass and guitar stay true to Robert DeLeo's complicated parts with precision and soul, while Joe hits the drums with a *Big Bang Baby*, and Carrie sprinkles keyboard magic where needed.

Opening the evening up with other huge songs from the same era will be One Man Band Mark Hanify. Expect hits from other grunge luminaries including Nirvana, Pearl Jam, and Alice in Chains. One Man Band works with the latest tech to create the sound of a full band so you want for nothing when it comes to a grunge-fuelled wall of noise.

Get out your band tees, your ripped jeans, or even your glam-rock suits, and head to the Abandoned Brewery taproom to hear the Stoned Templar Pirates, dedicated musicians who are guaranteed to do your favourite eclectic grunge band justice.

Majestical film returns

March 2016 was a big year for New Zealand. The month hosted the second stage of the infamous flag referendum, as well as the opening night of Taika Waititi's comedy-drama *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*. 10 years on, we have the same flag, but a new opportunity to view what has become a cult classic once again on the big screen.

Based on Barry Crump's book *Wild Pork and Watercress* (1986), *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* follows Ricky Baker (Julian Dennison), a defiant city kid, on the run with his grumpy foster uncle Hector (Sam Neill) deep in New Zealand bush, with authorities hot on their heels. It became the highest-grossing locally produced film in NZ history, won seven awards at the Moa Awards, and instantly entered the collective cultural consciousness: preserving the terms 'skuxx', 'nummies', and 'majestical'.

On the 31st of March, to celebrate its 10th birthday, the film is being screened across the Wellington region, playing at various times in Wellington Central (Empire Cinema, The Embassy), Porirua (Reading Cinema), Waikanae (Coastlands), Upper Hutt (Monterey Cinema), Lower Hutt (Queensgate, Light House Petone), and Masterton (The Screening Room). Piki Films invites friends and whānau to come along dressed as their favourite character. There will be spot prizes, food, themed drinks, and commemorative merch to grab on the day.

All screening times can be found on local cinema websites or on the Madman website. Choose the skuxx life with *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* this March.

Shaped by contrasts

André de Ridder. Photo by Marco Borggreve.

Internationally renowned Dutch trombone virtuoso Jörgen van Rijen makes his long-awaited debut with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZSO) at the Michael Fowler Centre on the 9th of April.

Resonance will see van Rijen perform the premiere of a thrilling new concerto written especially for him by celebrated American composer Andrew Norman, co-commissioned by the NZSO. He has performed with top orchestras around the globe, currently serving as principal trombone of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam, and inspired new works by leading composers.

Norman will also be in Aotearoa as part of the premiere of *Slip: Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra*, which will be led by acclaimed German conductor and NZSO music director designate André de Ridder.

Additionally, *Resonance* will feature two powerful and deeply moving works: Maurice Ravel's *Pavane pour une infante défunte* (*Pavane for a Dead Princess*), inspired by a courtly Renaissance dance, and Dmitri Shostakovich's immense and tragic Eighth Symphony, which will see 94 NZSO musicians on stage conducted by Maestro de Ridder.

"From the ethereal glow of Ravel's luminous sound world to the towering emotional force of Shostakovich, this is music that confronts darkness and insists on the triumph of light," NZSO chief executive Marc Feldman says. "At its heart is a world premiere showcasing the extraordinary artistry of trombone virtuoso Jörgen van Rijen."

Vibrant, local ensemble

Promising colour, contrast, and music to delight all audiences, the Wairarapa Community Orchestra will perform their new concert, *Sounds and Solos,* this week in two picturesque church settings.

The WCO will perform at St Luke's Church in Greytown at 7pm on the 27th of March, before travelling further north to St Matthew's Church in Masterton for a matinee concert the following afternoon, the 28th of March at 2:30pm.

Sounds and Solos features a thoughtfully curated and varied programme, selected by Ruth Eckford, conductor and musical director of the WCO, and inspired by the concert's central theme. There will be a rich mix of classical and popular works from all over the world, including Vivaldi, Dvořák, Grieg, and Alfvén, as well as various dances and polkas.

The performance is sure to be vibrant, uplifting and textural, celebrating local musical talent. It features a newly composed recorder solo from Masterton musician Stephen Schulz, and a powerful rendition of *Andante for Flute* by Mozart, with local Julie Knauf playing the flute.

The WCO has been around for over 20 years and has over 40 members. As a community ensemble, the orchestra provides a platform for school students to take part, helping them to build their skills and encourage them to continue performing in concerts beyond their school years.

Spend an evening in the pews, soaking up the immersive magic of orchestra music and supporting the musical talent of the Wairarapa Community Orchestra.

News

A Kiwi abroad

Island time

by Alessia Belsito-Riera

Sand and sea, coconuts and cocktails, palm trees and pink skies probably come to mind when you think about island life. While in a way this rings true here on Catalina Island, our day to day is a bit different from what you may expect.

Living on an island sounds and is romantic, with sunshine, sea breeze, and silvery moonlight, but there is a trade-off for living in paradise. The town of Avalon – Catalina's biggest settlement – is about one square mile in size and home to roughly 4500 residents. The rest of the island, which is double the size of Waiheke, is a nature reserve – aside from the odd camp along the coast, two ranches in the middle, and our wee airport. In town, we have one grocery store, one pharmacy, one small clinic, one post office, one school, and one utilities provider.

Just an hour by ferry to the metropolis of Los Angeles seems close, but the logistics of getting there and back, renting a vehicle, finding accommodation, and shoving doctor's visits, shopping, and unsavoury administrative tasks into each trip can feel like playing Tetris.

Currently, my partner, mum, and I are working on fixing up the family home. With limited, very busy builders, plumbers, and electricians – and island time being a well-ingrained part of Catalina's daily rhythms – it can be hard to get projects underway. Plus, building materials are tough to come by and often need to be shipped over on the barge. Ironically, it's also difficult to get rid of things here. No popping down to your local op or tip-shop; options include a garage sale or that aforementioned barge, but you'll have to pick it up on the other side and find somewhere to take it. Unique problems require creative solutions! We reuse, recycle, and share a lot in Avalon.

Despite some of the tricky aspects of island life, we are truly blessed to call Catalina home. Every trip into town is met with a hello from friends, our community calendar feels straight out of *Gilmore Girls*, our loved ones are just a stroll away, after work we can take a dip in the sea, and, of course, we live in one of the most beautiful places on Earth.

Cosmic conversations

Looking back in time

by Richard Hall, astronomical communicator

Imagine our ancestors, yours and mine, huddling around a campfire 100,000 years ago. The sun has set and the stars are beginning to appear. In the dark they felt very vulnerable. Throughout the night they would hear the call of wild animals: the lion, the leopard, and the wolf. However, the flames of the fire comforted them. In addition to providing warmth and light, the fire helped to keep the predators at bay.

As they listened to the crackle of the fire, they looked upwards and watched the stars. What, they wondered, were these mysterious lights in the sky? Some of the brighter stars flickered just like the campfire. Perhaps they imagined that they were the distant campfires of other wanderers.

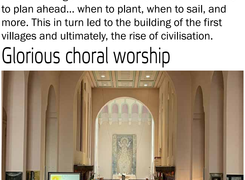
The bright stars and the patterns they formed would have been very familiar to our ancient ancestors. While their world was full of uncertainty, the stars had a permanence and predictability that must have offered some reassurance. It was here, by the campfire, that the journey along the path of knowledge began, a journey that would change their way of life and form a cornerstone to the rise of civilisation.

After a while certain individuals noticed that they could, by observing the stars, predict important events such as the coming of the rains and the migration of wildlife. Now, this all works because as the Earth travels around the Sun, we experience the same seasonal events in the same part of the Earth's orbit.

As the Earth travels around the Sun, we observe an ever-changing panorama of stars. If you go out tonight and time exactly when a particular star rises or sets, then the same star the following night, you will discover that it rises or sets four minutes earlier than it did the day before. This is due to the motion of the Earth around the Sun. Consequently, every season, every month of the year has its own pageant of stars. Now, our ancestors knew nothing about the Earth going around the Sun. But, what they did learn is that when particular stars rose in the pre-dawn sky, they predicted a seasonal event.

This knowledge of the stars allowed our ancestors to plan ahead… when to plant, when to sail, and more. This in turn led to the building of the first villages and ultimately, the rise of civilisation.

Glorious choral worship



You are invited to Wellington Cathedral of Saint Paul for our Holy Week and Easter Services to join in an ancient liturgical worship that walks through every part of the human journey via the betrayal, persecution, and crucifixion of Christ. Wellington Cathedral presents the most glorious choral repertoire, sung by some of Wellington's most accomplished singers.

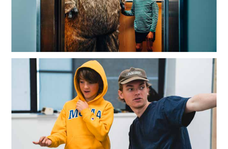
We begin at Parliament steps with Palm Sunday; the triumphal entry where the congregation acts out the joyous welcome of the crowds to their Messiah. Continuing with Maundy Thursday, commemorating the last supper and institution of Holy Communion. The service ends with the fleeing of the disciples following the arrest of Jesus. The symbolic stripping of the altar is accompanied by the powerful setting of *The Lamentation* by Edward Bairstow.

The Service of Shadows on Good Friday is a feast of music, ranging from plainsong and Renaissance polyphony right through to the colossal *Messe Solennelle* of Jean Langlais, facing the crowds' fickle betrayal and the death of God. On Saturday the congregation gathers for the Easter Vigil featuring the *Exultet*, a seven-minute piece of plainsong and responses led by the Very Reverend Katie Lawrence.

On Easter Sunday we are led from darkness into light, joined by Assistant Bishop Anashuya Fletcher. Through liturgy, prayer, and glorious choral worship, we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord at the 10am Festal Eucharist. The service features some of the city's finest brass players alongside our three Cathedral Choirs.

Wellington Silver Screeners: Tom Field

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.



Drawn to filmmaking from an early age due to its worldbuilding and complex characters, Wellington filmmaker Tom Field loves "that full immersion and escapism from what's going on in normal life".

What began as a passion in school quickly grew into a university degree and blossomed into a full-blown career in the industry. Today, he works at Park Road Postproduction doing restoration work on old film, but that doesn't mean Field doesn't sow creative passion projects of his own, the most recent of which is the short film *monster & me*. Made as part of the 2025 Day One Shorts collection and having screened at the Show Me Shorts Film Festival, the project is now viewable on YouTube, RNZ, and MĀORI+.

But something tells me *monster & me* has a bit more screen time in store seeing as Field is currently working on expanding it into a feature film. The Welly creative tells me all about the process and his plans in the interview below.

What do you love about filmmaking?

How creative people can be in the medium and how it can be all tied together with music, sound, and acting. I didn't really understand how movies were made as a kid and so I was like, 'Oh, I think you have to be an actor'. I went into theatre and I hated the spotlight so much. Then I realised there was more behind the scenes.

Tell me about your career so far.

I started in school making short films on my own and with mates. One of the teachers put me onto a competition and it was my first exposure to film festivals and the opportunities that they can provide for people. I ended up winning it with my mates, which was really cool. It was at NZ On Screen. I went to university (at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington) and did the film production course, which was really good. I had some really awesome teachers like Paul Wolffram and Adam Brown and Bernard Blackburn. They were so encouraging and supportive. Even with the most recent thing that I've made, they helped. I found university quite good for just meeting likeminded people and being in the sphere of creating things. It was like a training ground for networking and building relationships in film. Then I went on to work for NZ On Screen for about a year doing video editing. That was like a small step into the industry and getting to see how it operated. It was good because it taught me a lot about the history of New Zealand film, which I felt was very valuable and still serves me today. After that, I did a tiny bit of freelancing, but I actually took a break from film and went and worked for an after-school care with neurodiverse and behaviourally challenged children as well as neurotypical kids. It was focused on integration and mentorship for those who needed it. I found taking a break and doing something different recharged me. It was a really good life experience to see how other people live and have it harder than I do. Now, I work at Park Road Postproduction doing restoration work on old film. It's been really great to get my hands in some proper production stuff. I've always been really interested in editing, as well as directing but that's not a very fruitful line of work; you have to grind constantly. From my experience, whether you're young or old, it doesn't really matter in the film industry, but people in more important jobs are 50s-plus, so I'm like, 'I've got heaps of time to learn, so what's the rush'.

What do you love about editing?

What I love and what I hate [laughs] is the freedom of choice. If it's something that I've been on set for and am now editing, there's massive satisfaction seeing it all laid out in front of you and going, 'Oh my God, we did it. Now all I have to do is edit it. That's easy'. It's never that way, but it feels like you're over the hump at that point. It's here now, it's materialised. I quite enjoy that you can really stretch your muscles. I feel like there are just so many different ways you can be creative with editing – whether that's the conventional straight narrative story or whether you want to cut something really flashy, it just offers up so much creative thinking and problem solving as well. It is kind of like a puzzle. Like creative tinkering.

Can you tell me about some of your creative projects? I saw some of your short films went to festivals and did really well.

The first one that got me started was *Big Kids*. It's documentary, which I'd never done before. For me, I need to motivate myself more to watch a documentary versus a fiction film. I like fictional worlds and stuff. So with *Big Kids*, it was quite a fun challenge to bring the fiction aspect to documentary and working out what story I was passionate about and how to tell it in a way that kept me interested. Once I found that, I loved the process and loved working with the people who I got to work with as well, particularly Dan, who was our subject. Once we'd crafted up that story, we put it through a few festivals, and it did well, which we were really pleased about. We went on to a few international film festivals, then New Zealand Youth Film Festival picked it up and gave us best documentary. So we were really pleased with the outcome, and it felt really nice to cover the topical issue of men's mental health and New Zealand male culture, like not opening up and talking about feelings.

Something I co-wrote recently with Elora Battah, the producer of *Big Kids*, is *monster & me*. It's about a big fluffy monster [Mot Mot] and his mundane, boring nine-to-five life getting flipped on its head by what he would probably think is an alien but actually is a human boy who arrives in the world and changes his life. It was quite a challenge to make that film because I was really keen to hone in on practical filmmaking and effects. The monster itself is a full creature costume with puppet mechanisms inside the head to allow for minute things like blinking. It goes a long way to add that sense of realism. The idea for that came from working in childcare. I was in a place where I was quite burnt out and planes were shifting, you know, jobs weren't there for him and I was like, 'Oh God, is this my career? Am I going to still do this?' Working with those kids recharged me and showed me a different way of thinking. It was a really enlightening experience. If you take this story or this relationship between me and some of these kids and reskin it in a way that's captivating, that's where the idea for *monster & me* came from.

What content and themes are important to you?

I would say mental health is a big one that I have kept coming back to. I've felt recently, just with *Big Kids* and *monster & me*, and maybe it's just the phase of life I'm in at the moment, but I don't feel like telling stories that are dark and don't have a nice outcome. We need a reality check with the world we're in, but I'm also, like, 'God, the world might just need a hopeful movie'. Films that show you can be kind to others. I'm still pretty keen to explore neurodiversity, highlighting the importance of that community and not feeling outcasted or othered.

How would you describe Wellington's film industry?

It's pretty small… and that's a good thing! Everyone knows each other. It comes in really handy if you're looking for crew because you're so well connected. And, like, 99 percent of people are really supportive and encouraging. It's astounded me the generosity that some of these big people have for young filmmakers.

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

Just meet people, but it's hard. It's an industry catered towards extroverts, I think. Find your niche, find what you're really into, whether it be puppet-making or editing or sound design, and just keep practising, keep honing. And don't be afraid to collaborate with other people, even if it's in other industries. Any exposure is good and also sometimes not working in film might actually be quite helpful. You might learn something that you wouldn't have learned in the industry. I wouldn't have come up with the idea for *monster & me* if I had stayed working in film. We're all very creative people that work in this industry and I don't think there's a strict linear pathway to follow – you just take it as it goes, you know?

What's next?

This is the first feature going this out loud, but I've spent a while fleshing out *monster & me* into a feature script, which has been really challenging because I do not like writing at all, but I've been told that it's not going to happen if I don't do it. The short film was meant to be a teaser. It's taking me a while, but I think I'm halfway through the first draft. When a story comes along that I'm keen to do, I would really love to shoot something on 16mm film and start moving away from digital. So to answer your question, just practising writing and seeing if anything comes up!

Conferences – venues – events

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Vidcom New Zealand is a premier audio-visual specialist transforming events with cutting-edge technology and expertise.

Vidcom delivers tailored solutions for conferences, dinners, AGMs and ASMs, results calls, and business events. Offering a range of AV products and services – including well-equipped onsite studios that can be used for virtual and hybrid conferences, interviews and panel discussions, video conferencing, podcasts, and more – we ensure seamless execution of events of all scales.

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Cobblestones oozes Victorian charm and timeless elegance. Guests can wander amongst mature trees and beautiful gardens, and enjoy drinks and nibbles on the Village Green. Two venues are available, the indoor Carriage house (up to 90) or the outdoor White Marquee (up to 100).

The charming white walls and timber pews of the historic Victorian church (1865) are a timeless traditional setting for small weddings of up to 50 people. Other heritage listed buildings, complete with Victorian gazebo, offer unique settings for photoshoots.

Flexible indoor and outdoor options means Cobblestones is suitable for all types of weather. Whether a cocktail function, awards night, corporate event, private party, workshop, photoshoot, or wedding, this is a magical and memorable venue for guests to enjoy.

Cobblestones is open seven days and located on Main Street in Greytown with plenty of street parking available. Contact cobblestonesmuseumgreytown@gmail.com

Ōtaki functions

Nestled between the Tararua Ranges and the Kapiti Coast, Ōtaki Māori Racing Club is the perfect place to host your next event. Now the only Māori racing club in the world, the course is well over a century old – with the first horse race in the grounds taking place in 1910. You too can be a part of its rich history.

The OMRC grounds have also been host to various festivals and concerts, including the Māoriland Film Festival, Matariki Mardi Gras, Whakairo Whakaaro Carving Symposium, Demon FMX Full Throttle, and Kiwi Grooves. Just 45 minutes north of Wellington and 45 minutes south of Palmerston North, the OMRC is an excellent place to host functions and events of all different types: from concerts and conferences to private birthday parties and weddings.

With a number of different rooms and areas, and access to outstanding local caterers, the OMRC can help you host events of any shape and size.

Venue for events & weddings

Enjoy our beautiful gardens and our heritage village set in the boutique village of Greytown.

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Conferences – venues – events

The perfect event

Across Wellington through coastal Kapiti to sunny Wairarapa and beyond, you'll find many fantastic venues that can accommodate conferences and events of all shapes and sizes. Whether you're a small team of four or a corporate office of 100-plus, whether you have your extended family in tow for a fabulous 50th or you want to get married in an intimate ceremony at a quirky museum, everything you need for the perfect event is right at your fingertips.

Key considerations when choosing the right venue should include accessibility, layout, quality of gear (if you require AV or lighting), catering (in-house or otherwise), and accommodation options. You can hire anything additional you may need thanks to the many service providers nearby who can also help you plan your event from the ground up. Of course, as they say, location, location, location is key.

If you haven't booked your company's annual conference yet, now is a great time to get your ducks in a row as the end of the financial year is approaching.

Serious about fun

Welly Fun is serious about fun. Whether you're hosting an event for five or 500 people, the staff are literally trained to party – and they're there to organise the entertainment, so you don't have to. With a wide range of services, Welly Fun can take the reins on your end-of-year parties, team-building events, hens and stag dos, or any other reason to celebrate.

Welly Fun events take the pressure off drinking and focus on engagement and inclusion. With a range of entertainment options, they can take you on an amazing race around Wellington, host late-night stand-up, organise bingo, quiz nights and casino events, and high-energy games that rock your corporate socks off. If you need a spot to party, you can hire the Pow Wow Room in the heart of Courtenay Place, and if you want to add some spice to your night, they can help you out with a photobooth or karaoke machine. Welly Fun is not joking around, seriously. Get in contact today to get the party started.

Work and play

Attending a conference in Hawke's Bay comes with a wealth of opportunities for exploring what's on offer in the region. The diversity of towns and landscapes means there is something there for everyone that will make your work visit even more worthwhile.

Admire the architectural beauty of port city Napier, art deco capital of the world and home of the National Aquarium of New Zealand. Head further south to Havelock North, known for its boutique shopping, incredible food, and as the gateway to the Tukituki Valley. Beneath the picturesque, craggy slopes of Te Mata Peak, take a tour of some of Aotearoa's finest wineries.

For the outdoorsy types, replace your suit and tie with a helmet and bike to explore the well-connected Hawke's Bay Trails, or whip on your togs and spend your day off at Splash Planet in Hastings or at one of many idyllic beaches along the beautiful, wild coastline.

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Escape the city

While busy bees will find life in the big smoke active and exciting, there's something special about the wide-open spaces, rolling hills, and star-studded skies of the countryside. Venture out of the city and you'll find so many wonderful towns that offer a different kind of lifestyle and action all of their own.

Pop on your gumboots to explore Rangitikei District, home to unspoilt land steeped in history with panoramic views every way you turn. Whanganui is New Zealand's only UNESCO City of Design and has so much to discover – from history and heritage to art and adventure with a vibrant events calendar to boot. Brimming with cosy cafés, eclectic galleries, charming towns, and breathtaking natural wonders, Manawatū is a vast and varied district perfect for families and intrepid explorers.

Further down the North Island just shy of the capital you'll find Kapiti and Horowhenua, where beaches and bush, culture and cuisine, flora and fauna, suburban hubs and scenic hotspots collide. With some of the country's earliest European settlements, a roaring river, and a vibrant food and brew culture, Hutt Valley offers a snapshot of New Zealand's past and future just a hair's breadth from the CBD.

Whichever region you've fallen in love with and wherever you want to move, make sure to entrust a local real estate agent – they'll know the town like the back of their hand and will have you calling it home in no time.

Taihape

Elisabeth Bunn

027 282 4895
elisabeth.bunn@bayleys.co.nz

BAYLEYS

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Taihape sits among rolling hills, on the outskirts of the Central Plateau, with views of Mount Ruapehu as a still day. Tucked between the Rualhine Range and the Rangitikei River, it's no secret to the locals what makes this town a picturesque place to call home.

Born and raised in Taihape, Bayleys real estate agent Elisabeth Bunn is the perfect advocate for the charm and beauty of the Rangitikei. With her dedication to finding the perfect residential or lifestyle property, working with Elisabeth isn't a real estate transaction; it's the forging of a relationship built on trust, expertise, and a love for the area.

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Wainuiomata is known for its tightknit community, and easy access to verdant forests, rivers, and rugged coastlines. A 15-minute drive from Lower Hutt or half an hour from Wellington Central, it feels like a private getaway in the heart of the city. Des Smith, Ray White's number one salesperson in Lower Hutt, is here to help you find your perfect property. He has a reputation, in the top one percent of performers, as an experienced real estate agent who can provide you with expert and honest advice. Client service is paramount, and he has a simple model to keep it that way. Stay committed, keep everyone informed, keep things moving, and #letsgetSOLD.

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Feilding has repeatedly been named New Zealand's most beautiful town, and for good reason. On the beautiful Manawatū Plain just 20 minutes out of Palmerston North. Feilding is known for its Edwardian-style architecture, gorgeous gardens, unique shops, and friendly community. It is the perfect place to consider buying your new home.

No one knows that better than Feilding local, Jo Keddie. Known for her wealth of experience selling in Feilding for over 20 years, and her consistency in delivering for her clients, she has always been in the top echelon of Property Brokers. Connect with Jo to buy and sell in the town that she knows best.

Ōtaki

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Nestled between the Tararua Ranges and the Kapiti Coast, Ōtaki is a thriving village just 45 minutes north of Wellington. This pocket of sunshine has it all, a slower pace with all the trimmings. Plenty of cafés, places to walk and bike, art and events. But what it has most in supply is community.

Julita Manning, Ōtaki's trusted and well-respected real estate agent, knows this, and is dedicated to finding you the perfect property. Known for her experience and next-level service, Julita believes real estate is so much more than a transaction. Instead, it is about connecting with people and turning their dreams into reality.

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Escape the pace of city life and discover a better way of living in Whanganui. Known for its vibrant arts culture, Whanganui boasts a thriving network of galleries, studios, and creative spaces, alongside an ever-growing selection of cafés and restaurants. With significantly more affordable housing and a relaxed lifestyle, it's an ideal place to put down roots. Enjoy easy access to breathtaking natural attractions, from the majestic Mount Ruapehu to the iconic Whanganui River and the stunning coastline. Make the move with Harcourts Whanganui and start living the lifestyle you've been waiting for.

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In the heart of Horowhenua, Levin offers a slow pace and room to breathe while providing all the services, amenities, and community that one needs. No one knows why it's a great spot to live more than local Property Brokers agent Fran James.

Moving an hour and a half up the coast from Wellington, Fran has lived and raised her children in Levin for over two decades. Known for her sincere passion, 30 years of sales experience, and client focus, she embodies the three C's of real estate: communication, commitment, and care. Connect with Fran to see why Levin is the perfect move for you and your family.

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Family – school holidays

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Foxton Easter fun

The Easter Bunny is coming to Foxton on Sunday the 5th of April from 9am to 3pm, filling Easton Park with over 200 stalls that will keep attendees of all ages entertained.

With crafts and kai, handmade pieces, art, and anything in between, the market has been a favourite Easter activity for visitors and locals alike for over 30 years. Bring along a picnic blanket and make a day of it with nonstop fun for the whole family. Bouncy castles, rides, and face painting will keep the kids entertained while you peruse the stalls and grab your favourite sweet treat, or perhaps a cup of Joe, while chatting to passionate creatives and humming along to the live music.

The entertainment programme will accompany guests the whole day through. Opening the Foxton Easter Fair at 10am is Foxton regular the Deco Jazz Swing Band, followed by local legend Irene Wakefield. The music will pause for the official opening of the fair and the annual kids' lolly scramble, before the volume is dialled back up at 12:15pm with a set from Pop, Hip Hop & TXT. The afternoon will be rounded out by acoustic duo Sjan and Ria from 1:45pm until the fairgrounds close.

All proceeds from your small entry fee will go straight to local community groups. Put Foxton Easter Fair on your calendar, and come rain or shine, enjoy a fun time with whānau and friends. Who knows, you may even be so lucky as to spot the Easter Bunny while you're in town!

9am, Sunday 5th April at Easton Park, Johnston Street, Foxton
$2 for adults, pre school free | Music, arts, crafts, entertainment and food

For children everywhere

9-year-old Kleidimar is drawing in Guasdualito, Venezuela.

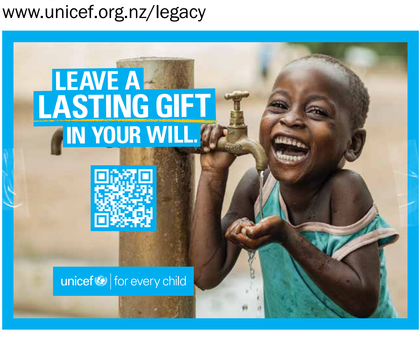
Many of us hope to leave the world a little better than we found it. One meaningful way to do that is by including a gift to a charity such as UNICEF in your Will. Bequests to UNICEF make a powerful difference for children around the globe, helping ensure they have the essentials every child deserves – clean water, nutritious food, education, healthcare, and protection.

Wellington UNICEF donor Geoff Wane says he chose to support the charity because he's concerned about how growing social and economic pressures impact children worldwide. "UNICEF has a proven record of success that few can match. I hope my legacy can help add to that and bring some smiles back to the faces of children who have done no harm themselves," he says.

A legacy gift doesn't require great wealth. Many supporters choose to leave a percentage of their estate, allowing families to look after their loved ones first while still contributing to a cause that reflects their family's values and hopes for future generations.

UNICEF is marking 80 years of work for children, operating in over 190 countries. Legacy gifts help UNICEF act quickly in emergencies, deliver lifesaving supplies anywhere in the world within 48 hours, and support long-term programmes that break cycles of poverty. They fund vital vaccination, education, and nutrition initiatives that reach millions of children every year.

Writing your Will with UNICEF in mind is always free. Protect your whānau and the next generation by getting started at www.unicef.org.nz/legacy



Family – school holidays

Sun, sea, safe

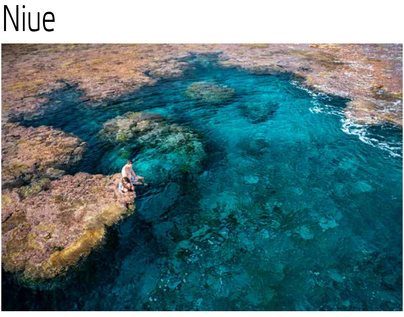
Summer may be winding down, but it's still hot out there! On any sunny weekend, you'll see Kiwis heading to the beach, the lake, and the river to cool off. Paired with the smell of sunscreen and the sound of laughter, swimming is synonymous with this time of the year for many of us, but the sobering reality is that with more time on the water comes more drownings.

There were 78 recording drowning fatalities in New Zealand last year – four more deaths than the previous year, but eight fewer than the 10-year average. According to Water Safety's 2025 Drowning Prevention Report, the decline is being led by people under the age of 25. Meanwhile adults, particularly men without lifejackets and those gathering kai, continue to be overrepresented in drowning numbers. Even one drowning death is too many. Each of the 78 people lost are our family, friends, and loved ones.

So, what can you do? Brush up on water safety before you dive in. Some key things to remember are to wear a well-fitting lifejacket when aboard a vessel, always swim with a buddy, assess weather and current conditions, look out for hazards in the water, recap swimming and boating practices, know your limits, and don't go in if you aren't sure. Enrolling your tamariki in swim classes is always a good idea, too.

A day on the water is only fun when you get to come home when the sun sets. Be safe and have fun!

Next level family adventures in Niue



There comes a time when a family holiday shifts from kids' clubs to creating lifelong memories experiencing epic adventures together. This is where Niue takes active family holidays to the next level – both above and below the water!

Swimming with whales, catching huge fish, diving or snorkelling in gin-clear water, caving, great walks, and nighttime hunts for the giant coconut crab are just a few of the family experiences on offer in Niue.

After a quick three-and-a-half-hour flight from Auckland, you are greeted with not only warm temperatures all year round, but a warm and hospitable welcome. Driving or biking the 64-kilometre ring road is easy and discovering the tracks and sites becomes an addiction. Niue is only one island, so one giant resort to uncover.

As the world's largest raised coral atoll, Niue is unlike other Pacific Islands with amazing giant rock pools within the reef to snorkel in, as well as caves and chasms to discover and explore. Guides take you outside the reef to dive, snorkel, and swim with the resident dolphins and seasonal whales. Most days, you'll find yourself packing your snorkelling gear and setting off on your own adventure down the 30-plus sea tracks Niue has to offer.

Families have a choice of different accommodation types, from resorts to self-catering homes. As your adventure comes to an end, you'll start planning your next trip to this diverse paradise. It's a destination you'll be drawn back to... just like the migrating humpback whales. Find out more at www.niueisland.com

Family – school holidays

A year of adventures

Photo by Phoebe Mackenzie via Wellington NZ

The school holidays can feel endless when you're trying to keep the kids entertained. Just five minutes from central Wellington, Zealandia Te Māra a Tāne offers the kind of outing that ticks all the boxes: it's fun, affordable, and gives the whole family a chance to get out into nature together. What makes it even better is the family membership, which gives two adults and up to three kids the chance to step into another world all year round. With its predator-exclusion fence keeping native wildlife safe, kākā whistle and 'skrark' from the treetops, tuatara bathe in the sun, and tīeke/saddleback call from the forest floor with their distinctive raucous chatter.

Over the school holidays, the team at Zealandia have turned things up a notch with activities especially for younger visitors. Kids can get stuck into craft projects or settle in for one of the energetic puppet shows by the talented Stringbean Puppets, or explore the sanctuary with the return of Zealandia's Egg-cellent Adventure scavenger hunt! It's the kind of wholesome entertainment that sparks curiosity while giving parents a breather, or a chance to join in the fun. And for hungry bellies, Rātā Café is right there with cabinet treats, hearty lunches, and great L'affare coffee to restore the grownups.

A day at Zealandia is a chance to enjoy fresh air outside and share experiences that will stay with your kids long after the holidays are over. And with an affordable family membership in your back pocket, you've got a whole year of adventures waiting right here in the heart of the city.

Put on your red shoes

These school holidays, bundle up the littlies and head off to see the wizard, the wonderful *Wizard of Oz*! The Pantoloons will give L. Frank Baum's beloved story the wacky pantomime treatment at Wairarapa Events Centre in Carterton on Friday the 10th, Te Raukura ki Kāpiti in Paraparaumu on Saturday the 11th, and Little Theatre in Lower Hutt on Wednesday the 15th and Thursday the 16th of April.

Join the fabulous foursome along the Yellow Brick Road to find out if the Scarecrow gets a brain, the Tin Man gets a heart, the Lion gets some courage, and Dorothy gets… home! This magical, madcap story is bound to have you cheering for Glinda the Good Fairy and booing the evil Wicked Witch of the West while you tap your ruby red sequined slippers along to the songs and roll down the aisles with laughter.

Written and directed by Amanda Stone, *The Wizard of Oz* is filled with upbeat song and dance numbers, traditional panto one-liners, topical humour, and more gags than you can shake a tin can at. The show is a firm Pantoloons favourite, with some cast members loving it so much, they're reprising their roles for the third time! James Barnett returns as the Lion, Jel Pollock as the Scarecrow, Warrick Alan as the Tin Man, and Tanisha Wardle as the nasty witch (boo!). They are joined onstage by Mischa O'Brien as Dorothy, Sera Devcich as the Wizard, and Ingrid Corby as the sparkly fairy Glinda. There's no place like the stage for this fabulous theatre company that's been making pantomimes for children for 14 years.

Family – school holidays

Look to the skies

Who has seen the nest of the kuaka? Who has ever held a nest, an egg, a kuaka?

In *The Boy With Wings*, as the kuaka (bar-tailed godwits) set out on their extraordinary migration from Aotearoa to Alaska, young Jack-the-Everyman contemplates a journey of his own to seek the treasure that will save his dying orchard. Created and performed by Bridget and Roger Sanders of the award-winning theatre company Birdlife Productions, this comic, touching, and environmental story inspires us to trust our inner map as it helps Jack to find his wings.

Brought to you these school holidays by KidzStuff Theatre for Children, who will present the special show from the 4th to the 11th of April at 10am at the Tararua Tramping Club Clubrooms in Mount Victoria, *The Boy with Wings* sees stage magic take flight. The ageless wonder of puppetry combines with live music and exquisite, hand-crafted sets that unfold miraculously out of boxes, seemingly out of thin air.

Live puppet theatre is Birdlife Productions' specialty. Together with KidzStuff, they aim to bring wonderment to New Zealand children's lives. In this high-tech, fast-paced digital world, kids need a counter to screentime. And so, they strive to carve space for kids to experience, watch, listen, and reflect in real time. When it comes to *The Boy With Wings,* the result is an epic fable that promises laughter, tears, and above all, a thrilling adventure.

Join the flock and witness the miracle of migration these school holidays!

Monstrous fun

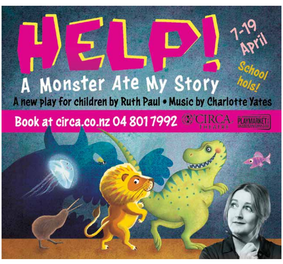
Help! Ruth Paul's fantastic picture-book characters are about to leap off the page, right onto the stage at Circa Theatre! Can Ruth and her friends Lion, Jellyfish, T Rex, and Kiwi save the land from the mischievous Mish Mash Monster before it gobbles up all the stories?

HELP! A Monster Ate My Story is a joyous school holiday adventure for children and families that will stomp into town from the 7th to the 19th of April. Directed by acclaimed theatre-maker Jacqueline Coats, the delightful show stars Tadhg Mackay and Toi Whakaari graduate Te KuraHuia Henare-Stewart alongside the story's multi-award-winning author and illustrator in the flesh.

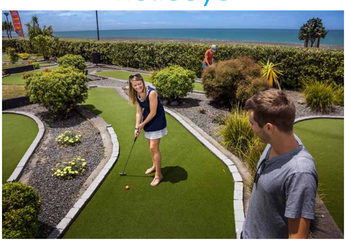
Based on a small farm just outside Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Ruth's hand has danced across 28 children's books published in Aotearoa and beyond. Working from her straw bale studio, she dreams up popular books like *Lion Guards the Cake*, *I Am Jellyfish,* and *Stomp* – stories that feature many of the beloved characters you're about to meet.

Hold onto your hat as you get swept into the spectacular world of *HELP! A Monster Ate My Story*. Packed with original songs by Charlotte Yates and brought to life through the bold design of World of WearableArt® veteran Fifi Colston, it will be a feast for the eyes, ears, and heart that is sure to spark your imagination.

"This show is about that moment when ideas feel just out of reach," Ruth says, "and how play, teamwork and a bit of courage can bring them back."



Family – school holidays



Par2 Minigolf

Minigolf has been a staple of Napier's Marine Parade since the 1940s. What began simply as a large putting green has developed into Par2 Minigolf, guaranteed fun for you and the kids. Located adjacent to the local isite, you'll enjoy panoramic views of the coast of Hawke's Bay while you compete on one of two courses: Pacific Pro-Am or Deco Drive. The former is a quintessential minigolf course, full of wacky angles, tricky water hazards, and tree obstacles. Deco Drive is a complex course with organic curves and harsh slopes.

MTG Hawke's Bay

There is always something new and exciting to discover at the MTG Hawke's Bay. This award-winning museum is made up of three distinct buildings – an art deco masterpiece, a modernist gem, and a light-filled gallery that looks out across the Pacific Ocean. The museum's collections tell historic stories of the region and beyond, including the 1931 earthquake that devastated the region and the legacy of art deco architecture that is still celebrated today. Their fabulous shop also sells a range of beautiful cards, gifts, books, and mementos.

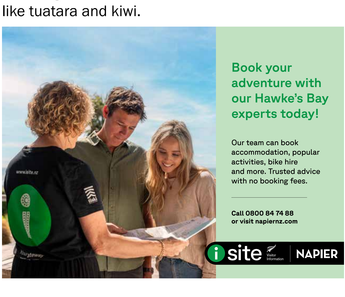
Faraday Museum of Technology

Ignite your imagination at the Faraday Museum of Technology, where hands-on adventures await visitors of all ages! Discover interactive exhibits where you can touch, play, and explore the wonders of science, technology, and history in exciting ways. From historic appliances and engines to energy sources and games, there's so much to see and uncover. A magical place where history comes to life anew, the Faraday Museum of Technology offers an experience you won't forget that's perfect for families and anyone with a curious mind!

Photo by Molly Rose Nilsson.

The National Aquarium of NZ

The National Aquarium of New Zealand is home to saltwater, freshwater, and land animal exhibits from New Zealand and around the world. The 1.5-million-litre Oceanarium, which you can experience with a walk through an underwater viewing tunnel, showcases the variety of aquatic species that exist in Hawke's Bay, including stingrays, kingfish, hāpuku, snapper, and more. Watch the famous little penguins feed and play in the Penguin Cove, and connect with native wildlife like tuatara and kiwi.



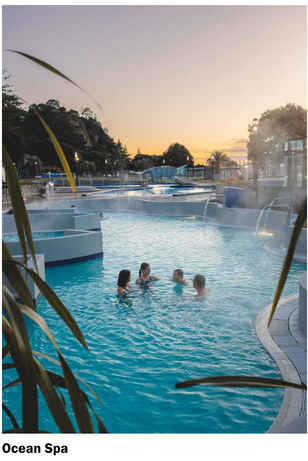
Family – school holidays

Kennedy Park

Located near the heart of Napier, Kennedy Park is an accommodation option that's fun for the whole whānau. There is so much to do onsite that you'll be tempted to spend entire days on the premises. Kids and adults will love the heated swimming complex, basketball half court, and giant outdoor chess board. Stroll the gardens or relax at the café while the tamariki let loose at the adventure playground and on the colourful jumping pillow. Spend time in the games room playing pool, table-top games, or air hockey together as a family.

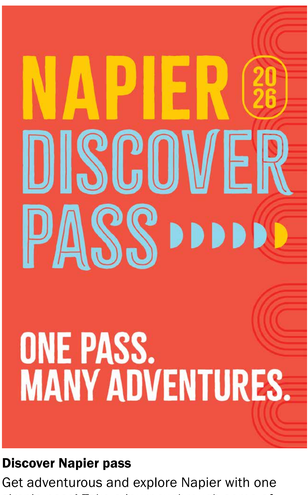
Napier Aquatic Centre

You don't have to wait for hot summer days to enjoy a day in the water. Napier Aquatic Centre is open year-round for water-based exercise and fun. Three pools means everyone can jump in – choose from the five-lane 25-metre lap pool for walking and lane swimming, the disability-friendly six-lane Ivan Wilson Pool, or the learners' pool complete with toddler pool and mini waterfall. The complex also features waterslides, a spray park open from October to March, a beautiful outdoor area, and relaxing spas. Jump in and have fun!



Ocean Spa

Ocean Spa is Napier's premier heated pool and fitness complex located on Marine Parade. Boasting open-air, heated, and chlorinated pools and spas with panoramic ocean views, visitors can enjoy a range of options from the toddler pool to therapeutic pools with water fountains and pool jets. Visitors can unwind in spacious outdoor spa pools and refuel with a coffee or bite to eat at Bach Café. Centrally located, Ocean Spa is the perfect spot to relax and re-energise, rain or shine.



Discover Napier pass

Get adventurous and explore Napier with one simple pass! Take a journey through some of Napier's favourite attractions, from relaxing coastal experiences to hands on discovery and family friendly fun. Visit five iconic venues across Napier, uncover marine life, roll into skate sessions, tee off by the sea, and bring fascinating machines to life. Choose where to return for a bonus visit and make the most of every experience.Get your pass at www.napiernz.com or instore at the Napier isite.

Family – school holidays

Inside your imagination

A little secret about Rotorua is that from this Kiwi town you can travel through time and space, around the world and to places unknown... photographically, that is! 3D Trick Art Gallery is the only one of its kind in New Zealand and features over 50 life-size, realistic 2D paintings that come alive through your camera and your poses, changing them to 3D imagery. All you have to do is jump in to create epic pictures and fun memories.

There are five themed sections in the gallery. In Classic Art, visitors can step inside famous paintings. Kiwi Life is inspired by New Zealand culture and history. Visitors can explore glaciers and outer space while putting their creativity to the test in the Challenge section. Create your own mythical story in the Fantasy area. Grand Nature celebrates New Zealand's natural landscape.

Escape from the jaws of a giant crocodile, make a break from a great white shark, or leap from the clutches of a goliath octopus. Scale mountains and traverse waterfalls. Fancy a trip to the Moon? Or perhaps you'd prefer to explore Venice, a glacier, or fly away in a hot air balloon. Talk about an Instagram-worthy vacation!

Located on the grounds of Rotorua Heritage Farm just an eight-minute drive from the centre of town, 3D Trick Art Gallery is a fun, family-friendly activity come rain or shine. From within the dry and heated gallery, you can embark on countless once-in-a-lifetime adventures all in one day – the only limit is your imagination and creativity.

A taste of Kiwi heritage

Much of New Zealand's history is tied to farming and agriculture. These industries were instrumental in the early years of our nation and remain a huge part of Kiwi life to this day. Our fertile soil, abundant rain, and gentle rolling hills make our country perfect for growing tasty fruit and veggies and raising animals for produce or food.

If you'd like to experience life on the farm, see what many Kiwis do on a day-to-day basis, and learn about where our food comes from, hop on The Farm Tour in Rotorua.

Rotorua Heritage Farm is located just outside the town centre alongside the famous 3D Trick Art Gallery. Established in the 1930s, the working farm first started hosting tours in the 1930s to show visitors what life in Aotearoa was like, and has recently started them up again, using the iconic red covered trailer towed by a tractor to guide people all the way around the farm.

During the one-hour guided experience, visitors will hear stories about life on the farm and be introduced to all kinds of farm animals, including sheep, cattle, deer, ostrich, and alpaca. Not only will you be allowed to get up close to all the creatures, but you'll get to pat and feed them too!

As a working farm, Rotorua Heritage Farm is open regardless of weather – so pull on your gumboots and roll up your sleeves to get stuck in on The Farm Tour.

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Family – retirement

Intergenerational ecosystem

This month, RockPool Collective is celebrating one year in Kāpiti – a year of cups of tea shared, practical help delivered, and relationships built across generations.

The organisation was founded by local mums Libby McCarthy and Masina Taulapapa after noticing a simple but common gap: many older community members don't need medical care, but benefit from reliable, practical help at home from someone they know and trust. At the same time, many stay-at-home parents and active retirees struggle to find meaningful work that offers the flexibility to fit around their life. The idea was simple. Combine practical, everyday help with genuine relationships. RockPool's model connects local stay-at-home parents and active retirees, known as RockPool Reps, with older community members to provide practical, non-medical support in their homes. Reps can bring their children along to visits when appropriate, creating natural intergenerational connections members cherish.

Three years on, with more than 2000 hours of support provided, RockPool is quietly reshaping how communities think about ageing at home – showing that consistent, thoughtful support from big-hearted locals can make a difference to independence and peace of mind. Visits can be as short as 15 minutes for small jobs like changing beds, sorting out technology, or taking the rubbish out. For others, it might be a regular weekly visit that helps keep life running smoothly – meal preparation, a trip to the supermarket, light gardening, or simply sharing a cup of tea and conversation. What matters most to many members is consistency. RockPool carefully matches each client with a Rep based on personality, interests, and practical skills, so the same person returns each visit. Families say the value goes beyond getting jobs done. Kristen, whose family member receives support, says, "It's not just about someone doing the chores – it's the company, the warmth, the reliability, and knowing someone has checked in. RockPool is a part of life for us now."

For many Reps, the work is relational rather than transactional. Sara says, "I think what I love most about this job is that it's all about people. It's not just about helping with tasks – it's about getting to know someone, hearing their stories, and making sure they feel seen and valued."

For Olivia, the most unexpected part of the experience has been sharing it with her five-year-old daughter. "My clients love it. They are always asking if she can come along too," she says. "I don't have extended family nearby, so it's been lovely for my daughter to have those connections. While I'm wiping down the bench, I can hear her and my client chatting away. It's beautiful."

With strong local momentum, RockPool is operating in Wellington, Hutt Valley, and expanding its presence in Kāpiti. For those looking for support at home – including those eligible for the Carer Support Subsidy – or for people seeking flexible, meaningful work in their community, RockPool welcomes enquiries.

Rosebank

A community built around people.

- Rest Home & Hospital
- Serviced Apartments
- Villas

Choose community – Ashburton

Rosebank Lifecare offers a place of tranquillity, security, and care. It encourages residents to find what makes them happy and provides them with the support they need to build the life they want.

The goal at Rosebank Lifecare is for all residents to retain their independence while living life to the fullest, regardless of their health or condition. Named Aged Advisor People's Choice Awards for Best Small Retirement or Lifestyle Village in 2019, Rosebank ensures everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Rosebank residents enjoy a sense of community, with the freedom to choose their level of involvement in village life. A centrally located hub provides a space for family members to gather, and for residents to meet and enjoy each other's company. With access to a hospital, rest home facility, and more independent arrangements, as well as palliative, rehabilitative, and convalescent services, there are options available to suit all kinds of circumstances.

27 two and three-bedroom villas and 22 serviced apartments are also available. These studios and one-bedroom suites offer extra support without compromising freedom. Here, residents can live privately while receiving the added benefits of daily meals, laundry, house-keeping assistance, and care options. The villas are large, spacious, and the best of both worlds – independence, with companionship and help just seconds away.

If life is what you make it, Rosebank Lifecare could be the best decision you've ever made.

Phone: (03) 308 0111 | Email: manager@rosebanklifecare.co.nz | 77 Walnut Ave, Ashburton | www.rosebanklifecare.co.nz

Electric, independent

In 2019, the owner of EV Bikes NZ travelled to China and was stunned by the number of people travelling on electric bikes. Standing on the corner of a busy street, he glimpsed the future of New Zealand transportation: one full of electric trucks, cars, passenger vehicles, and importantly, bikes.

After visiting dozens of electric bike stores and negotiating with many manufacturers, EV Bikes NZ chose TailG to lead the way in electrifying bikes in NZ. Seven years on, they are still working with TailG and have introduced over six electric bikes into the market.

EV Bikes NZ offers a wide range of mobility bicycles and tricycles that are sustainable, energy efficient, and can keep you mobile and independent; no matter the weather or your abilities. EV bikes require no licence or registration and almost no maintenance. But with popularity soaring, there are loads of local repair shops, support, and bike parts to keep you and your bike on the move.

Access for all

On the golden beaches of Wairarapa, brilliant blue water reflects the sunshine all year round. With its reef, lagoon, and lighthouse, Castlepoint is a spectacular stretch of Wairarapa coastline. The beach is often visited by dolphins and fur seals, while the skies are full of the songs and squawks of white-fronted terns, red-billed gulls, and black shags. It is widely hailed as one of New Zealand's most stunning beaches.

Castlepoint 4 Beach Wheels Charitable Trust wants everyone to be able to access this special slice of Aotearoa. They're thrilled to announce two new beach wheelchairs and a balloon-wheeled walker that ensure anyone with mobility requirements can still get round the grass, sand, and sea as they explore the beach and surrounds.

The free gear is proving a hit. Paul writes that he and his students had a fabulous visit to Castlepoint Beach, where everyone "was able to fully participate (get in the water, see the stunning fossils up close, etc.) because of the chair that you provided".

Community and care

Ropata Lodge is perfect for those who need assistance with daily activities, while still enjoying a vibrant lifestyle. The architecturally designed facility offers supportive assisted living in a boutique environment.

The 35 studios and lifestyle suites are spacious with ensuite bathrooms. Most offer a kitchenette space, and many have a private courtyard area or balcony.

A place where neighbours become friends, Ropata Lodge is celebrated for its tight-knit community. Families can find comfort in the provided 24-hour care, homecooked meals, flexible visiting hours, and activities promoting socialising and connection. Activities are driven by our residents and provide options for all interests and abilities.

Ropata Lodge goes to great lengths to ensure residents feel at home. They prioritise quality of lifestyle, connection, comfort, and dignity at affordable prices.

Book a tour today to visit the place where you, or your loved one, can enjoy the next stage of life.

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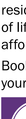

Artist Showcase at Double Tree by Hilton, Wellington
Art Flow: Dine & Discover 18 April
An evening with featured artist Lynn Blann
Tickets at Eventfinda – art-flow-dine-discover
Flow by Lynn Blann.

Te Manu Muramura Exhibition
1 February - 30 April 2026
The new exhibition at Rydge's Wellington Airport (along the corridor connecting the hotel and terminal) celebrates the themes of flight, movement, the sky, waves and surf. Various artists. Entry free.
Gather by Lynn Blann.

Contemporary New Zealand art

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Sunlea & Travel Expo, Auckland & Tauranga, North Harbour Stadium, Albany, 28th March - 1st April, Mercury Baypark Stadium, TRH - 5th March
Better Homes & Living Show, Napier, Centennial Event Arena, 27th - 29th March | ASB Easter Show, Auckland, Auckland Showgrounds, 1st-5th April
Auto Extravaganza, Hastings, Lind Park, 5th April | Home and Garden Show, Taupo & New Plymouth, Great Lake Centre, 10th - 12th April, TSB Stadium, 17th - 19th April

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New Zealand by bike – North Island

Boutique river lodging

Inspired by the Mangawhero and Mangateitei rivers near the property, and Mount Ruapehu in the distance, Two Rivers Ohakune is a charming heritage home and boutique B&B on the edge of the Tongariro National Park. The name Ohakune means 'an opening to a new world' in te reo Māori, and staying at Two Rivers offers luxury accommodation that makes for the perfect base while exploring the world of the Central Plateau – be it completing the Ngā Ara Tūhono – Mountains to Sea cycling trail, walking the Tongariro Crossing, or visiting the Tūroa and Whakapapa ski areas.

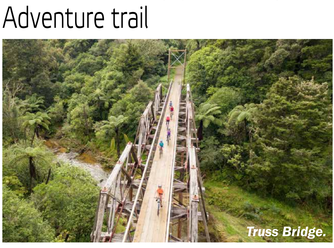
With three carefully designed queen suite rooms to choose from (two with private hot tubs), the rivers and birds as your soundtrack, and only a short walk to the village where there is great food and coffee, Two Rivers is the perfect place to relax; made all the more comfortable with the care of your hosts, Scott and Ula.

Adventure trail

For intrepid nature-lovers, the classic Ngā Ara Tūhono – Mountains to Sea bike trail is a 231-kilometre adventure crossing two national parks and some of New Zealand's most vast and exciting landscapes. The three to six-day ride is steeped in history. It begins on the slopes of Mt Ruapehu, crosses the volcanic Central Plateau, goes through rolling hills, valleys, forests, and river gorges, and arrives at the Tasman Sea just outside the Whanganui township. Each section of the trail is joined up, save an action-packed 32km stretch aboard a jetboat along the Whanganui River.

There are options for everyone: cyclists wanting a challenge can take the longer 278km adventure route, and those wanting to do just a section can enter and exit at various points. With plenty of lodgings – from luxury stays to DOC campsites – and cafés along the way, this free and flexible trail can accomodate any spirited itinerary.

Adventure trail



One of Aotearoa's most storied, exciting, and accessible bike trails, the 87-kilometre cross-country Pou Herenga Tai – Twin Coast Cycle Trail takes you from coast to coast – from Opua in the Bay of Islands to Hōreke in the Hokianga Harbour (or the other way around). Through native forests and rolling hills, along the coast, past lakes and some of NZ's earliest Māori and European settlements, this sub-tropical ride is open year round, and includes a memorable 5km section aboard a vintage train.

With plenty of different options for accommodation, the trail is divided into four sections and passes through Kawakawa, Kaikohe, and Ōkaihau. Enthusiastic riders can complete the entire Trail in just two days, but it is best enjoyed as a multiday ride, stopping off at restaurants and cafés along the way while exploring sites such as the colourful Hundertwasser toilets, Matakohe Kauri Museum, and Wairere Boulders.

Arrive to fresh alpine air, wake up to birdsong

At Two Rivers Ohakune, relax and comfort New together. Our boutique accommodation offers three luxurious suites, each with its own private entrance, ensuring you can return back from to the summit of Mt Ruapehu. Welcome to a space where mountain, forest, and nature shape your experience.

PROMO Code: Verify & available for stays until 20th Dec 2026

022 022 7763 | 84 Burns Street, Ohakune, Ruapehu
www.tworiversohakune.com

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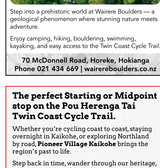

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Phone 09 405 0816
www.pioneervillage.org.nz

Discover New Zealand

Preserving stories

Photo by Richard Wotton.

Aotea Utanganui Museum of South Taranaki is an immersive experience that plays an important role in the community preserving its rich history.

The latest exhibition, *Puanga Kai Rau – Puanga Hao Tangata* provides an in-depth explanation of Matariki, and Puanga – the star also known as Rigel – which marks the new year for South Taranaki.

Other exhibitions include *Oral Histories of South Taranaki,* which plays 51 stories from South Taranaki communities; *Turuturu-mōkai*, which tells the story of the pā site located near Hāwera; and *Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the South Taranaki Land Wars,* which features nine copies of te reo versions of Te Tiriti, the translation by Hugh Kāwharu, and tells the history of the arrival of Europeans and the resultant wars fought to control Māori land.

Located on State Highway 3 in Pātea, call in to learn about the history of South Taranaki and what makes it a popular tourist destination.

Go by bike

Remutaka Cycle Trail.

Panoramic beauty can be found around every corner, up every staggering mountain, down every glacial valley, and flowing through every crystal-clear river of Aotearoa. It reflects off our mirrored lakes and glints in the golden sands on the shore, whispering through the trees on a breeze to land amongst the leaves and pine needles lining the forest floor. Here, two wheels collect it in their spokes and carry it with them on their journey across the North Island, home to 10 of the 23 Ngā Haerenga Great Rides of New Zealand.

There is nothing better than travelling Te Ika-a-Māui by bike. Not only is it a great way to spend quality time in the great outdoors with the people you love, but you'll get the chance to pop into new establishments, supporting local as you explore nooks and crannies you'd only find by cycling our gorgeous countryside.

If you're tackling one of the Great Rides, be it a breezy daytrip or a multi-day backcountry trail, you'll find plenty of operators standing by to support you along the way.

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New Zealand's premier freshwater centre is waiting. Tongariro National Trout Centre is a not-for-profit charitable trust that supports freshwater conservation and education efforts. Located just south of Tūrangi township on State Highway 1 in an attractive bush setting, the centre offers something for every family member to learn about and enjoy.

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Puanga Kai Rau
Puanga Hao Tangata

This exhibition provides an explanation on Matariki and Māori celebrations over different seasons of the year.
Puanga or the star Rigel marks the new year for South Taranaki where it was for honouring the ancestors and the previous year's achievements. The exhibition shows how significant star constellations relate to food sources in the area and which therapy ceremonies were conducted during different months, to ask for guidance and blessings for the four pillars of the year.
Come along and immerse yourself in the experience.

127 Egmont Street, Pātea
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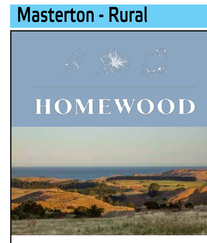

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New Zealand by bike – North Island

Land before time

Between the western shores of Lake Taupō, Taumarunui, and Te Kūiti, deep inside the heart of the ancient Pureora Forest Park, spans the unforgettable 85-kilometre Timber Trail. Home to some of the rarest and most precious stands of native forest giants in Aotearoa, the two-day Timber Trail is a journey back through time.

You will cross eight towering suspension bridges and walk beneath enormous podocarps, teeming with birdlife. With options to bike, walk, or run the track, and accommodaton along the way, this intermediate-level trail is the perfect adventure to connect with nature and the stories of the land.

You can ride in either direction, though it is recommended to begin in Pureora and exit at Ongarue, where you can visit Nevalea Alpacas, the largest alpaca farm in Aotearoa, and finish your trip with some knitwear for those crisp autumn days on the trail, or experience an encounter with a baby alpaca.

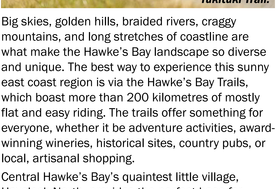
Wairoa Fashion

Cycling is a wonderful way to explore the rolling hills, towns, and shops of Hawke's Bay. The town of Wairoa in Northern Hawke's Bay, located on the river of the same name, is no exception. On the outskirts of town sits a 26-hectare mountain bike park, with seven kilometres of trail ranging from easy Grade 2 gradients to more challenging Grade 4 routes.

While the kids spend the day at the Wairoa Mountain Bike Park, just an eight-minute bike or five-minute drive away is the centre of town and Local Living, Wairoa's fashion and footwear store. Located on Marine Parade, Local Living offers affordable and top-quality clothing, footwear, and accessories to help every woman look good and feel confident on any occasion.

Home to labels including Lemon Tree Design, Vassalli, Skechers, Eb & Ive, and Isle of Mine, Local Living is sure to find you the perfect outfit. Pop into Local Living while you're biking through town.

East coast ride



Tukituki Trail.

Big skies, golden hills, braided rivers, craggy mountains, and long stretches of coastline are what make the Hawke's Bay landscape so diverse and unique. The best way to experience this sunny east coast region is via the Hawke's Bay Trails, which boast more than 200 kilometres of mostly flat and easy riding. The trails offer something for everyone, whether it be adventure activities, award-winning wineries, historical sites, country pubs, or local, artisanal shopping.

Central Hawke's Bay's quaintest little village, Havelock North, provides the perfect base for taking day trips, with an impressive array of boutique shops and accommodation. Cycle through the stunning Tukitukī river valley, with views of Te Mata Peak and Craggy Range, or head to Clifton, a beach settlement near the famous Gannet Colony. Further north, stay in the art deco capital of the world, Napier, and bike along the coast to visit the National Aquarium. It's no secret from the locals; the Hawke's Bay really does have it all.

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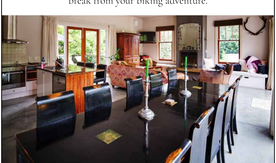

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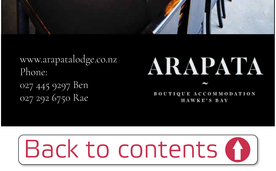

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Gallery news

by Isabella Smith

When contexts collide

***Doie House* by Ming Rangiuai. Photo by Samuel Hartnett.**

Ihi is described as an inner force. A type of internal magnetism that emerges from an individual to drive their endeavours.

Three tactile, emerging artists Axel Iva, Te Ara Minhinnick, and Ming Rangiuai bring their physical manifestations of ihi – embodying the way artists draw us in through their artworks – to the upcoming exhibition at Pātaka Gallery in Porirua, on display from the 28th of March to the 13th of July.

Curated by Israel Randell and Ioana Gordon-Smith, each of the artworks on display play with familiarity and unfamiliarity, and involve a change in position – lifting, suspending, shaping, rebuilding.

Ihi is a transformative energy. It reminds us that the apparent stability of an object can be made to shift and move when put under pressure. Whether this be taking it out of its original environment or creating known objects out of unlikely materials: a marae made from pink satin smock, a fale umu made of sheets of polycarbonate twin wall, muka (flax fibre) becoming a belly button.

"All of the artists are interested, in some way, in transitions and transformation. All of them consider how forms, and the meanings of those forms, shift when contexts collide, whether through migration or colonisation", Gordon-Smith says. "Similarly, this is at play when a fale umu is constructed here in Aotearoa, when marae are erected in Australia."

It is clear what makes the work of these artists a compelling and natural expression of ihi. A designer hailing from Samoa, Iva's work is a hybrid of contrasting variables, blending graphic design with craft to explore semantics, semiotics, and Samoan life.

Ranginui (Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi) specialises in raranga (weaving) and is known for her gaudy sculptural works, blending customary fibres and contemporary fabrics.

Minhinnick (Ngāti Te Ata) is a ringatoi (artist) who works deeply with uku and whenua. She has taken whenua from her tūrangawaewae in Waiuku and brought it to Porirua – to the rohe of another iwi – where she has added a further layer to that shift by suspending the whenua from the gallery's ceiling, where it levitates from magnetics strung across the space.

Not only do meanings transform under pressure, Gordon-Smith tells us, but in turn, "transformed objects have the power to change the contexts around them: a bit like a constant feedback loop".

The curators strategically positioned the artworks in the gallery space so that it is not just a backdrop but a further iteration of the premise. "We've thought of the gallery space in three zones: floor, middle space, ceiling. The placement of works in those zones both fits the intention of those works but also deliberately indicates that some of the artworks aren't in the space *you* might expect them to be. There are similar size shifts at play in the works, for example smaller works occupying huge walls."

With the gallery in a seeming state of flux, as the objects, space, and experiences of the visitors all collide, bounce, and reflect off one another, the exhibition is sure to be an immersive and deeply thoughtful show that is well worth visiting.

New expressions

***Buchanan* by Mitch Manuell.**

Mitchell Manuel, a Kuki Airani, Māori, Scottish, Tahitian, and Portuguese digital artist has journeyed into his own whakapapa to explore the convergence of Pasifika and Scottish Highland histories. His exhibition *Tartan Meets Koru* is now on display at Toi Pōneke Arts Centre until the 17th of April.

The resonant and symmetrical works feel immediately familiar, drawing from visual symbols of Scottish tartans, Māori koru patterns, and Cook Islands Tivaevae. It is the positioning of these traditional images, and the reimagining of them onto a new plane that interrogates the complex shared histories between these cultures, shaped by displacement, resilience, and deep ties to land and language.

An estimated one million New Zealanders claim this intertwined whakapapa. Behind the images sits extensive research into Scottish Clearances (1750-1860) and the Battle of Culloden (1746), revealing a profound diaspora, carrying Gaelic ancestry deep into the Pacific. Conversations with people who share similar roots provided further meaning and depth to the artworks.

Manuel employs digital vector programmes to weave tartan threads and clan colours, then integrates koru to create a mathematically accurate fusion where each element respects the integrity of both cultures.

Digital mediums are a fluid space to breathe "new life into traditional imagery while honouring the stories embedded in them", he tells me. "As these layered histories of Gaelic and Pasifika ancestry find new expression, AI offers a compelling lens."

"Exploring how AI can amplify Indigenous voices rather than diminish them [is] a timely discussion in Aotearoa." On the 11th of April, Manuel will be in conversation with Te Awanui Reeder (Nesian Mystik) to explore these themes and how they extend more broadly into music and the arts.

On the 28th of March, Manuel will also host a whānau-friendly workshop, guiding you through transforming a simple pen drawing into a digitised porowhita – a Māori mandala woven with tartan.

Life portraits

***Self-Portrait (circa 1970)* by Joanna Margaret Paul.**

For mother and daughter artists Janet and Joanna Paul, their work was always intensely personal. *Only Connect: Portraits by Joanna Margaret Paul and Janet Elaine Paul*, their first-ever joint exhibition, showcases portrait paintings and drawings from the duo, revealing the affinities and contrasts between the artists' distinct approaches to their work.

Janet (1919-2004) was a successful modernist artist, art historian, and pioneering publisher. She drew on the things she saw and consistently painted portraits, leaving behind hundreds of detailed sketchbooks full of pen and ink drawings of her friends – artists, writers and intellectuals – her four daughters, and the complex dynamics of family life.

Joanna (1945-2003) forged her own path with a multidisciplinary approach to her work as a painter, poet, photographer and filmmaker. Her innovative works were a kind of visual diary of her rich interior life. She captured life's smaller moments, using colour sparingly. Although people were present in her work, including a series of elegant pen and ink drawings of fellow artists Ralph Hotere and Hone Tuwhare, she later moved away from portraiture to focus on still life, capturing the beauty and quietness in the ordinary.

The exhibition invites us to witness the way the works talk to each other, telling a story of a mother-daughter relationship and the broader evolution of Aotearoa art. Curator Helen Kedgley tells us *Only Connect* is the central motto of E. M. Forster's novel, *Howards End* and a favourite quote of Joanna Paul's, who interpreted it as the need for more intimate connection between humans.

"It's just over 20 years since both artists died," she says, "so I was very pleased to have the opportunity to showcase the work of this exceptionally talented mother and daughter."

The exhibition is showing at the New Zealand Portrait Gallery Te Pūkenga Whakaata until the 7th of June.

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In great company

Trust builds confidence

Whether it be deciding on who to call to help you with your finances, your property, your car, or which guy to get round to mow the lawn or unblock the drain, the thing that people look for in any service is trust. Trust takes a while to build, but the word lights up any company review. It suggests competence, consistency, honesty, and that the job will get done.

It can be difficult to know which service providers to trust when there is such a smorgasbord to choose from, but there are companies that consistently demonstrate their reliability and stand out from the rest.

Small acts build up over time and word of mouth spreads. Companies and clients are rewarded by a relationship built on trust, where the job runs smoothly and everyone gets what they bargained for. The businesses below have demonstrated their trustworthiness time and time again, so use this page as a compendium of where to go next.

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With more than 25 years in business, Totalspan are New Zealand's leading steel building experts. Totalspan Wellington have gone from strength to strength after the local operation was purchased by Kapiti owner-operators Jamie and Nicola Hanna in early 2023.

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In great company

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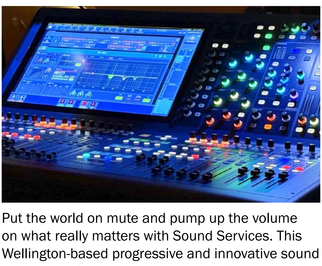

Put the world on mute and pump up the volume on what really matters with Sound Services. This Wellington-based progressive and innovative sound system integration company covers the entire Lower North Island, working within the live concert, corporate, festival, and house of worship markets. With a rich history in live sound, studio production, remote recording, system design, installation, and equipment sales, their proven track record with artists, clients, and audiences goes back more than 25 years.

Sound Services provides high-quality professional and personalised services. There's no cookie-cutter, one-size-fits-all approach here. Instead, it's about attention to detail and taking a flexible approach to meet your needs, budget, and timeframes. Whether you're running a live event or need a permanent venue installation, the Sound Services solution sounds like... peace of mind!

Get in touch with Sound Services for your next conference or event and you'll be the talk of the town.

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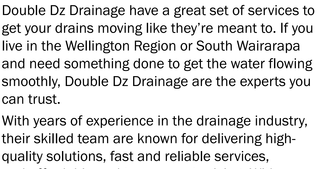
Find financial freedom



Whether you're buying your first home or adding to your investment property portfolio, a mortgage broker is invaluable. If you're just stepping foot in the market, the process (and paperwork!) can be overwhelming. A mortgage broker will be there from day one and for years beyond; from preapproval to signing on the dotted line and structuring your loan in refixes to come. If you're an old hand, you'll know that your mortgage broker will negotiate with their extensive network of lenders to secure the best interest rates on the market today.

When it comes to mortgage advisers, Jason Hurdle of Beyond Mortgages is as experienced and decorated as they come. With 25 years and multiple awards to his name, his passion for the industry remains. "I enjoy dealing with people and helping them grow their net worth," he says.

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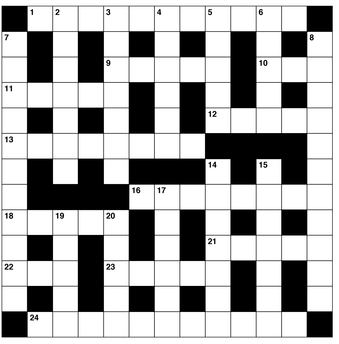

Across

1 - Type of artist (11)
9 - Select group of people (5)
10 - Slippery fish (3)
11 - Requirements (5)
12 - Doctor (5)
13 - Direction; general help (8)
16 - Prosperous; wealthy (4-2-2)
18 - Waggish (5)
21 - Welsh breed of dog (5)
22 - Born (3)
23 - Musical times (5)
24 - Examine in detail (11)

Down

2 - Character in Hamlet (7)
3 - Day of the week (7)
4 - Like vinegar (6)
5 - Unit of heat (5)
6 - Pay out money (5)
7 - Air sport (4-7)
8 - Branch of physics (11)
14 - Positioning (7)
15 - Deluge (7)
17 - Free from a liability (6)
19 - Body of water (5)
20 - Supple (5)

The stage as a storybook

by Madelaine Empson

When it comes to starring in *Caburlesque,* Wellington's longest-running variety night that blends burlesque with cabaret to delectable effect, one of Pip E-Lysaah's fondest early memories is "performing as the Spider Queen Shelob in a Middle-earth-themed show".

"I was draped in villainy while my students moved as fallen elves – dramatic, eerie, and deliciously theatrical. It perfectly captured what *Caburlesque* does best: turning a stage into a storybook and performers into living myth."

A living myth itself, *Caburlesque* celebrates its 75th show at The Fringe Bar on the 5th of April.

"75 shows in and I'm still shimmying," E-Lysaah beams, "which feels equal parts rebellious and satisfying. It's a reminder of how much I've evolved: from pure belly dancer to full-scale performance artist and burlesque storyteller. With every show, the work gets sharper, the choices bolder, and the confidence quieter but far more dangerous."

Pip E-Lysaah and The Red Queens [pictured] will celebrate the milestone onstage in *Caburlesque 75th Show* amongst a dazzling lineup of artists who have been there from the start and others who have joined along the way. With Sadie Von Scrumptious in the MC seat, look out for drag and dance, comedy and crooning from Midnight Mistress, Felix Goodfellow, Wilhelmina Weeds, Miss $$ Billz, Blue Virtue, Constance Craving, and Ellie Kat.

"When a show reaches 75 performances, it means it's doing something right – bringing together amazing performers, great audiences, and a lot of passion behind the scenes," Midnight Mistress says. "I'm just thrilled to be a small part of celebrating it."

Feel free to get in touch with cartoonist Kate Garnyk at katykamf@gmail.com

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Walk the soul back home

by Isabella Smith

Stills from The North.

Before embarking on Te Araroa, the 3000-kilometre hiking trail traversing the length of Aotearoa, *The North*'s director Bart Schrijver had never hiked for more than a few hours or finished off a long day in the bush inside a too-cramped tent.

Fast forward 10 years and Schrijver has released his second hiking film, described by *The Guardian* as "perhaps the ultimate hiking film".

The North follows two old friends as they work to rekindle their friendship and discover themselves while walking 600 kilometres through sheet rain across the wild and isolated Scottish Highlands.

I spoke to Bart ahead of his return visit to Aotearoa to promote the film. There will be a special Q&A Screening at Light House Cuba cinema on Monday the 30th of March at 7pm.

How did the Te Araroa walk inspire you to create the film?

A year before going a friend and I were sitting together having a beer. He said he wanted to travel and be out in nature for three months. We found Te Araroa and he said, 'Maybe I'll do that.' Two beers later, I said, 'We should do it together.' And that was the end of the discussion.

We slept together in one tent, which was very cosy and at times awkward. Of course, there were a lot of little frustrations that arose from living with someone so closely. This was nine years ago, we were 26 or 27, an age where people's paths start going in different directions. He was getting a job and I was still trying to figure out what I was going to do. I loved being out there. For four and a half months our job was walk, sleep, walk. We got so strong so quickly. Mentally it was nice, I had so much time to think about myself and about what I wanted to do. Afterwards, I went to Norway by myself for a month, and that's when it all really started. I thought, okay, maybe I want to make a film about this.

That's interesting that you went on this walk in your mid-twenties but chose to include characters who are in their thirties. Why did you choose that age bracket for The North?

I thought it would drive even more of a wedge between the two people. The early thirties is such a weird place. Six, seven years ago, you were all on the same level. Then all of a sudden paths diverge really quickly. At that age I was trying to make films, my financial situation wasn't great, I was doubting myself a lot. I had friends telling me that maybe I should do something else. Friends who had already bought a house, gotten married, got a dog.

I was interested in how people who look very different in terms of their outlook and where they are in life, can actually both be stuck in who they are in very similar ways.

When you grow up, your family and society tells you to act a certain way, and you create an image of yourself which often isn't reality. For some that's 'I need a job, I need security'. For others it's 'I don't know what to do.' But it's the same kind of structure. When you walk, whether you like it or not, people have to confront themselves.

If you take people out of the real world, and put them in nature where there's nothing else – no job or boss or things that take priority – the stuff that is important at that moment in their life comes up.

You described the fluid process of filming, which is so antithetical to a typical film set. Everyone walked the trail and carried the gear. What were some of the problems you came up against?

Not a lot of people I know actually like being on a film set where you work 10 or 12 hours, there isn't a lot of time for creativity. And why would I want to do that? Let's do something that we actually enjoy and create something fun.

The financial side of making films is one of the most important things. I realised I could do this with a low budget. With these films set out in nature, we don't need any lighting. The film crew was six people compared to a normal crew of 50 or 100 or 1000. We decided if we're actually going to do this, let's go to places where other people can't get to. The scenery and the weather play a giant part in the film. If it rains, it rains and we have to shoot the scene in the rain.

We also had to keep on moving, we'd shoot for three or four hours a day. The rest of the day we're walking. That's so much time to talk to each other and be creative. It happened often where new scenes were added because something happened. Or scenes got killed because we felt like the film was going in a different direction. It also meant carrying all the gear. Our backpacks were usually between 25 to 35 kilos. We had a certain amount of batteries so we had to be specific and take care to turn the camera off and on to ensure the batteries didn't run out. It was like we were filming on film like in the old days. If you ran out of film, you're done.

One night, Carl's (one of the actors) tent broke and it was in the middle of a storm, and he just slept in the rain. This way of working definitely isn't for everyone.

Do you have any hopes of what the audience will get out of the film?

I showed it in Netherlands, Belgium, and London and all their reactions have been so different. I'm just interested to see what people get out of it. It's not a film where in the end you know who killed who, or what the heist was. It's a film about the experience of being out in nature and the relationship between two people. Hopefully that reflects on people in the audience. If they don't get that, I hope they just think it's beautiful.

Movement and gender

Eve, a contemporary dance piece – choreographed by National Dance and Drama Master's Student Janina Smolira – situates the audience in one of the most politicised and over-sensationalised sites in the modern day: the bathroom. It asks the question, can the bathroom ever become paradise?

Taking place between the 25th and 27th of March at Te Whaea Theatre, *Eve* draws together ancient and modern ideas of gender, exploring how archaic mythology – particularly the historical roots of gender essentialism in Christian mythology – influences today's heated debates on gender that erupt online, in the media, in politics, and around bathrooms.

Expect pulsing beats that blend renaissance Catholic aesthetics with rave sensibilities, ravers decaying into snakes, the bathroom transforming from altar to pulpit to confessional, and prayers splayed across the walls.

Through movement, *Eve* explores the mechanisms of gender, the beauty of fluidity, and interrogates contemporary 'TERF' (trans-exclusionary radical feminist) and 'gender critical' movements, which have exacerbated trans moral panic in public discourse, seeking to legally define womanhood and restrict gender expression.

Both dance performance and research project, the show seeks to understand how audiences derive meaning from contemporary dance, and how performance can influence connection to – and reflection on – politicised subjects. After each show, audience members are invited to stay and participate in a rotating panel discussion, where they can reflect on their experience of the work and how they interpreted its content.

Bite the apple and watch *Eve*, allowing the fluidity of movement to break down existing structures of gender.

Aotearoa NZ Festival reviews

Goliath

Presented by Julia Deans
Tāwhirī Warehouse, 8th Mar 2026
Reviewed by Tanya Pīejus

Photo by Amanda Billing

Wellington rock legend Julia Deans received news none of us ever wants to hear: that she had a stage 4 malignant tumor in the roof of her mouth. For a consumate chanteuse who has built her life around her voice, this news was catastrophic. Cancer not-withstanding, Goliath traces her personal journey with cancer from diagnosis to recovery and lays bare its highs and lows in raw-edged song.

With an inauspiciously late kick-off, which Deans ascribed to "the mouth thing in my brain telling me it was an 8 o'clock start", we were underway once the hastily summoned latecomers – including the other two thirds of Fur Patrol – had scurried in. The muttered grumbles from the raw behind me soon turned into murmurs of recognition as Deans began her story. While ruggedly truthful, Goliath is a passionate ode to the people she met along the way, her friends and family, medical experts, and her fellow wayfarers.

Ranging from aching ballads to fiery rock, each song describes a waypoint along the emotional road of cancer that will be familiar to everyone who travelled it or supported someone who has. For those lucky enough to not be among the one in four who will experience cancer first-hand, *Goliath* is an education in resilience.

With unbridled authenticity, Deans held her audience captivated. Clearly, the disease that could have ruined her career was unremittingly obliterated as her vocal range is exceptional, soaring from throaty rock notes to soft soprano to Julia Andrews-opera moments. Thanks to her guitar for accompaniment, the stripped-back songs and spoken commentary in between revealed for the first time in public the weight of what Deans has been through.

Shared forwards on the large Tāwhirī Warehouse stage, the intimate performance was augmented by beautifully impressionistic interpretation into NZSL, large pot plants, and lovely lighting that vibed with the emotions of each song.

Goliath and Deans' honest delivery of it demonstrates wholeheartedly that the cancer 'battle' is so much more nuanced than that cliché can ever express.

Voices at the End

Presented by Sue Massey University, 7th Mar 2026
Reviewed by Zac Fitzgibbon

The Great Hall of Massey University adds another layer of gravitas to this Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts show. From the high ceilings to the great acoustics, we are fully immersed in the multimedia performance of *Voices at the End*, which offers a social commentary on our shared future and the present day through the lens of composition, the written word, and cinema.

In the hands of London-based pianist Dean Hardwick, Greek New Zealand composer John Psathas' compositions – the titular *Voices at the End* and *Second Nature* – come to life. Psathas' score encapsulates key emotions, from sardonic undertones to all-encompassing dread to a heartfelt sense of hope.

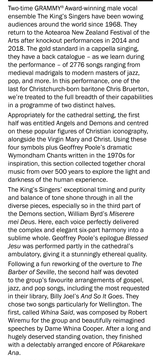
The pieces take us on a journey through the present and potential future. The musical performance works well on its own, yet pairs perfectly with Kenyon Sharpe's film and visual works. Both are timed impeccably; when urgency is presented visually, we can also hear it through Hardwick's performance.

Voices at the End will move you and get you thinking about not just the world we live in, but the world the next generation will inherit. It provides us with a sense of immediacy to take action whilst instilling hope that we can endure the ever-increasing impact of conflict and climate change in the present day. The production raises critical concepts we should all consider, such as how violence has become entertainment and the idea of citizenship in today's world. My one criticism is that during the first act, it becomes difficult to read the text that is set low down on the screen, as it is sometimes obstructed by taller audience members.

This is the only planet that we inhabit in the entire cosmos, and if we destroy it, we may never find another place to call home. Voices at the End begs us to make haste to enact change, but not in a way that is overwhelming. It is a wake-up call that I hope everyone can experience.

Close Harmony

Presented by The Kingsmen Singers
Wellington Cathedral of St Paul, 7th Mar 2026
Reviewed by Tanya Pīejus



Two-time GRAMMY® Award-winning male vocal quartette The King's Singers have been wowing audiences around the world since 1968. They return to the Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts after sold-out performances in 1994 and 2018. The gold standard in a cappella singing, they have a back catalogue that we learn during the performance – of 2776 songs ranging from medieval madrigals to modern masters of jazz, pop, and more. In this performance, one of the most for Christchurch-born baritone Chris Bruerton, we treated to the full breadth of their capabilities in a programme of two distinct halves.

Appropriately for the cathedral setting, the first half was entirely sacred and dedicated to concert on these popular figures of Christian iconography, alongside the Virgin Mary and Christ. Using these four symbols plus Geoffrey Poole's dramatic Wymondham Chants written in the 1970s for inspiration, this section collected together choral music from over 500 years to explore the light and darkness of the human condition.

The King's Singers' exceptional timing and purity and balance of tone shone through in all the diverse pieces, especially so in the third part of the Demons section, William Byrd's Miserere mei Deus. Here, each voice contributed equally, the complex and elegant six-part harmony into a sublime whole. Geoffrey Poole's unpalatable *Dabar* was performed partly in the cathedral's acoustic, giving it a stunningly ethereal quality. Following a fun rendering of the overture to *The Barber of Seville*, the second half was devoted to the group's favourite arrangements of gospel, jazz, and pop songs, including the most requested in their library, Billy Joel's *And So It Goes*. They chose two songs particularly for Wellington. The first, called *Wina Sawi*, was composed by Robert Fennell for the group and beautifully reimagined speeches by Dame Winina Cooper. After a long and hugely deserved standing ovation, they finished with a delectably arranged encore of *Pōkarekare Ana*.

Fully living up to their reputation for unrivalled technique, musicianship, and versatility, The King's Singers delighted and excelled yet again.

Gloria – A Triple Bill

Presented by The New Zealand Dance Company and ACB Contemporary Dance Australia
St James Theatre, 12th Mar 2026
Reviewed by Tanya Pīejus

Photo by John McBermott

Gloria – A Triple Bill brings together six dancers each from New Zealand and Australia in a triptych of contemporary dance works for the Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts.

The first work, *Lament*, is a premiere choreographed by The New Zealand Dance Company artistic director Moss Te Urunga Pomroy with a startling original score composed by Shayne P Carter. It reflects on memory, resilience, endurance, and the enduring spirit of Aotearoa through the performers from The New Zealand Dance Company. In loose, comfortable-looking suits (Charlotte Edwards) and with the usual dynamic choreography, they are mesmerising to watch as they bring whakapapa to life several being under elegant golden light (Mark Haslam).

Part two, *A Moving Portrait*, is an equally engrossing meditation on aging and vulnerability choreographed by Co3 Contemporary Dance Australia founding artistic director Raewyn Hill. Moving to the haunting beauty of Arvo Pärt's Tabula Rasa Lulos II, Silentium, the Co3 dancers are deliberate, slow, and intimate in their gestures and interactions, flowing over and around one another in diaphanous white tunics (Ella Wise Hughes) that emphasise the collective nature of the piece. We're moments of tenderness and grace, then gentle resistance and even violence. It's a beautifully absorbing piece. Haslam again provides beautiful illumination, while the music is beautifully performed in the confined space of the soft light from an occasional doorway.

The final piece, *GLORIA* by renowned New Zealand choreographer Douglas Wright, is a joint commission by both companies. It is accompanied by a contingent from the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dr Joseph Nolan, and a 16-strong Voices New Zealand choir led by choremaster Michael Dowse. Wright masterfully perform Antonio Vivaldi's *Gloria in D Major RV 589*. This dance work speaks to the stages of life through a series of short pieces featuring recognisable moments from playful childhood with human sculpting poses, to two young men locked in a wrestling match, sensual procreation, and more chaste, finally, death. More expansive than the two previous works and with a looser synergy between classical music and modern choreography, this work was less immediately engaging than the first two, but no less successful as a glorious example of contemporary dance.

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Reviews

Music Portrait of a Humble Disabled Samoan

Written by Oscar Wilkes
Directed by Maiava Nathaniel Lees
Tawhiri Warehouse, 12th Mar 2026
Reviewed by Madelaine Empson

Music Portrait of a Humble Disabled Samoan provides a vivid picture of its lead creative and performer Fonofi Pati Uinaga. Bold and brilliant choreographies layer live music, storytelling, dance, and visual design upon the blank canvas of Tāwhiri Warehouse, set up as a theatre-in-the-round with Uinaga at its heart. Around him, five performers (Mere Boynton, Paris Tuimaseve-Fox, Lavinia Kwan, Albert Lasalosa, Fatherson Tai) and four musicians (Meka Nemaia, Hayden Nickel, Anga Kaufusi, Isitolo Alesanco) circle, each dedicated to helping him share his story. Above him hangs a large screen, a wide drum lampshade across which celestial lights dance (Jane Hakaraia) and projections play AV content by Delainy Jamahl, Ella Kate Jessiman-Wall. The faces of his people who have shaped his life swim overhead like stars in the night sky.

The story starts in the 70s, spiralling galactically through Uinaga's adolescence to the fall that left him tetraplegic at 48 and the battle with depression and addiction that followed. Through music, faith, and force of will, Uinaga emerged victorious. Today, he is a respected leader and advocate for the Pacific and disability communities.

Under the direction of Maiava Nathaniel Lees, *Music Portrait of a Humble Disabled Samoan* is a masterclass in balance. Achingly vulnerable moments – such as the cast's seated, writhing dance (choreographer Neil Ieremia) to drum and bass music – cause sharp intakes of breath across the audience. A collective breath is held. Then, suddenly these humour is injected into the dialogue (Oscar Kightley). Uinaga laughs – tender, gentle, with strength in his vulnerability. Tears inevitably soften. In these instants of ease, our lungs deflate. They are buoyed once more by uplifting, stunning choreographies (musical director Matapo Kapeli-Pouesi Mavaega) or the joyous interaction of instruments and voices (which reduced Boynton – a scene that will stick with me forever and that I did not want to end.

As we experience the highs and lows of Uinaga's journey, it feels as if we, too, are cared for by everyone onstage and behind it. Music Portrait Collective (creative producer Sasha Gibb) choreographs this beautiful, gentle, and courageous Oscar Kightley). Uinaga laughs – tender, gentle, with strength in his vulnerability. Tears inevitably soften. In these instants of ease, our lungs deflate. They are buoyed once more by uplifting, stunning choreographies (musical director Matapo Kapeli-Pouesi Mavaega) or the joyous interaction of instruments and voices (which reduced Boynton – a scene that will stick with me forever and that I did not want to end.

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Ten Thousand Hours

Directed by Lachlan Binns
Presented by Gravity & Other Myths
The Opera House, 13th Mar 2026
Reviewed by Tanya Pisjos

Malcolm Gladwell famously wrote: "It takes ten thousand hours to truly master anything." Australian circus troupe Gravity & Other Myths have clearly taken these words to heart as their pinpoint acrobatics, tumbling, and balancing acts need to be seen to be believed this Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts.

What starts out looking like a casual rehearsal session with nine athletic people in black and grey gym gear stretching and swigging from their drink bottles soon turns into an expertly choreographed and mind-blowing exhibition of human capability. With a giant LED display providing visual accompaniment and a musician adding drums, synthesised beats, and occasional commentary, the crew performs a set of unibiball, small group, and whole-team routines that take modern circus to a whole new place.

The audience gets in on the act too, with invitations to give one tumbler 'in the style of' suggestions for how to perform the move – pirate, chicken and a skydiver – which she incorporates with humour and ease. Another audience member is taken on stage and asked to draw in stick figures the shapes of some of the crew make, then her drawings are hilariously recreated by the other crew members who have had their backs turned to the original. Later, one tumbler tries to balance on another's shoulders and turn 360 degrees without ever falling off. Another audience member is taken on stage and asked to draw in stick figures the shapes of some of the crew make, then her drawings are hilariously recreated by the other crew members who have had their backs turned to the original. Later, one tumbler tries to balance on another's shoulders and turn 360 degrees without ever falling off. Applause! They have 10 (unsuccessful) goes at it and a wonderful organic moment ensues when they decide to make a young voice shouts, "Nice try!" from somewhere in the stalls.

There's more humour here besides. A routine in which the performers become grumpy cats and refuse to reach other on the hours becomes an audience favourite and reminds me of a puzzle have called Cat Stax.

Balancing three-high, throwing each other blithely around like ragdolls, and doing things that no human body can do without dislocation *Ten Thousand Hours* of practice. Gravity & Other Myths make the implausible look like a walk in the park.

Gasping

Written by Ben Elton
Directed by Oliver Mander
Pasifika Theatre, 18th Mar 2026
Reviewed by Zac Fitzgibbon

Gasping is set in the corporate world we all know and despise, where Lockheart Holdings is devising yet another scheme to make ordinary citizens pay for something they shouldn't have to: air. Of course, by presenting this necessity as a gift, some serious problems will arise that one might need to take a breather for advice.

You'll be gasping with laughter, yet it has to be said that many of the jokes in this Ben Elton play which first opened in 1990, have not aged well and read as misogynistic, homophobic, and racist. Some of these jokes do make one feel cringing uncomfortable. Despite some of the script's problematic underpinnings, the actors perform *Gasping* with the kind of vigour you can only get from a full tank of oxygen.

Mere Boynton is a master of physical comedy and likewise provides great emotional intensity in the role of Phillippa Sterling-Sands, a junior at Lockheart Holdings. Joseph Corbett provides many of the show's gags. Lydia Verschaffelt makes many out of laugh as the strong-willed and ambitious Kirsten. Of course, these subordinates must have a superior to answer to: Sir Bonting (Jack Hanson). Tony Burton plays the character as uptight as any person I know that works in accounting. Another highlight is Billie Cleeve, who provides great bursts of humour dispersed by the lungful as Nina Hodges and others. Each of the actors is compelling in their own right.

The scenic design by Tamara Pejus' set design, with moving pieces and a colour palette reflecting the 1990s, this set will make you want more. The lighting design Jamie Bayliss is dynamic and engaging, while the sound design (Brian Byas) resonates well in each setting, especially during the squash scene, convincingly choreographed by Matilda Reeves.

Whilst the show is a comedy, it does provide thought-provoking commentary on the way that corporations conduct themselves and the damage that they cause, giving us a stern warning about what the world could look like if we continue to carry on their ways. There is a strong market for this show, and I would recommend heading to Wellington Repertory Theatre's production of *Gasping* before the world is completely bankrupt of breathable air.

The Bride!

126 minutes
R18
★★★
Reviewed by Isabella Smith

As of 2026, there are over 450 versions of Frankenstein's monsters on screen – making it a brave thing to try do differently. Maggie Gyllenhaal's *The Bride!* is a fierce, ferocious, and ambitious take that brings a different story to life: that of the monster's bride. Replete with a stellar cast, it makes for a gritty, action-packed, at times almost pantomime, but overall enjoyable watch.

Frankenstein's monster (Christian Bale), back with his familiar stitched-up forehead and oversized bolts, visits the mad scientist Dr Euphronius (Annette Bening) to seek a remedy to his eternal loneliness: a bride.

Enter the bride (Jessie Buckley). A rowdy girl reinvigorated from the dead, whose unshakable pent emnedied in the mortuary, criminal underworld of 1930's Chicago follows her back into the land of the living. What unfolds is a Bonnie and Clyde type spirint as monster and bride outrun the Chicago police department (Peter Sarsgaard and Penélope Cruz).

A rage-filled feminist critique of violence against women with echoes of the Metoo movement, the film is jam-packed with conspiracy and corruption, ensconced in the gritty and glamour of show biz, with a literary metaverse in the mansion of Jekyll and Hyde to boot. Author Mary Shelley, infuriated by the patriarchy and desperate to write a female antihero disrupt the status quo, defies death to take possession of the bride, resulting in violent attacks on many men. Terrorising and murdering men (musings to both amusing and annoying effect) follows from her violent rampage.

If you haven't already gathered, *The Bride!* is a hodgepodge assembly of plotlines. Violence again women, rage, rampage, social upheaval, police corruption, possession, murder... it also manages to cram in a lot of second Shakespeare's question, what is in a name?

In the end, the inclusion of Mary Shelley in the film feel more like a device to justify her decision to make a spinoff, and the picking up and putting down of themes at times felt shallow (the monster overcoming loneliness and the bride's lack of choice being reinvigorated from the dead would've been enough to chew on).

Without Buckley's incredible performance, I am not certain the film would hold. She is a rambunctious and outrageous character with her frizzy white hair and gothy glam. While the plotlines are overcooked, the movie moves quickly and the costumes are fabulous. Couple that with Bale's humanity as Frankenstein's monster and Buckley's impressive physical performance and you have excellent cinema that is well worth the watch.

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Pick Paul's brain

Wellington Comedy – which digs up all the stand-up, improv, musical, and sketch comedy laughs and distributes them round the capital – regularly hosts Q&A sessions with well-known comedians. Having featured the likes of Paul Douglas, Tony Lyall, Jonny Brugh, and Jeremy Elwood in the past, the sessions give fans and budding practitioners a chance to rack the brains of comedy stalwarts.

The next Comedy Q&A will be with Paul Yates, who will speak on his career before opening up the floor for questions at The Fringe Bar on Saturday the 28th of March at 2pm.

Yates is an award-winning TV comedy writer and actor who has worked in the industry for nearly three decades. His love of British comedy runs deep in his bones, having grown up devouring episodes of *Monty Python's Flying Circus* and *Not the Nine O'Clock News*. Emigrating to New Zealand at age six, he tormented his teachers at Palmerston North Boy's High with impersonations and "silly voices".

While he has always been committed to comedy, in recent years, he has branched out into directing and producing, most recently with *Wellington Paranormal*. He's willing to give any format a go, having written for children's TV, drama, and scripted factual TV shows. Living proof that you have to be willing to try anything to have a career in New Zealand television!

Any funds raised from Wellington Comedy's Q&A sessions go to the umbrella Humorous Arts charitable trust.

Run for rangatahi

Celebrating 25 years of fostering community spirit and supporting organisations that encourage young people, the 2026 Kāpiti Run for Youth is a lively, family-friendly event and fundraiser that all ages and abilities can enjoy.

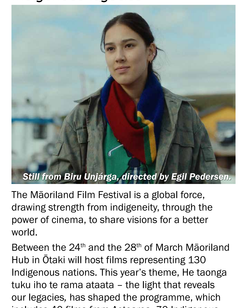
"We have been raising funds for rangatahi in Kāpiti since 2011, and in that time, we have raised $280,003," Web Genius founder Richard Calkin says. Web Genius CEO Steve Jandrell adds that over a decade on, "the event has proven to be a sustainable, well-loved community tradition. It attracts participants from all walks of life who come together each year to support youth while enjoying the inclusive, welcoming atmosphere".

There is no entry fee to participate in the run or walk event, but choosing a fundraising partner is essential, as everyone is encouraged to raise $20 or more. The 11 selected organisations each contribute to the community in their own way by providing essential resources and mentoring to creating spaces where young people can thrive.

All funds raised are split 70-30, meaning the fundraising partner you choose will receive 70 percent, while the remaining 30 will be allocated towards the costs of running Kāpiti Run for Youth.

There is still time to register for the event before it kicks off on Sunday the 29th of March. Choose to run or walk the six or 12-kilometre stretch along the beautiful coastline to join the community, rain or shine, in an epic fundraiser. Sign up at www.kapitirunforyouth.co.nz

Indigenous legacies



Still from Biru Unjárga, directed by Egil Pedersen

The Māoriland Film Festival is a global force, drawing strength from indigeneity, through the power of cinema, to share visions for a better world.

Between the 24th and the 28th of March Māoriland Hub in Ōtaki will host films representing 130 Indigenous nations. This year's theme, He taonga tuku iho te rama ataata – the light that reveals our legacies, has shaped the programme, which includes 40 films from Aotearoa, 70 Indigenous language films, and 52 wāhine filmmakers.

Festival director Madeleine Hakaraia De Young says the festival illuminates Indigenous legacies "through stories of resilience, resistance and imagination, gathering communities to reflect, to feel, and to soar forward together as we build the futures we deserve."

The festival opens with *Uiksaringitara – Wrong Husband*, a love story set in Igloolik, Nunavut in 2000 BCE, directed by Inuit filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk. It closes with a special screening of *Mārama*, the debut feature from Taratoa Stappard (Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga, Ngāti Tūwharetoa). Set in 1959, this gothic tale of colonial reckoning follows a young Māori woman summoned from Aotearoa to North Yorkshire where she confronts the violence of empire while illuminating Indigenous resistance.

Other screening highlights include *La Hija Cóndor* (*The Condor Daughter*), a film about Quechua midwives from Bolivian director Álvaro Olmos Torrico, and *Biru Unjárga* (*My Fathers' Daughter*), directed by Egil Pedersen, which follows Elvira, a Sámi teenager who believes she was conceived at a Danish fertility clinic [pictured].

Alongside screenings, visitors can enjoy Indigenous art showcased on the street and in Toi Matarau Gallery, food trucks, live music, and more.

Comedy takeover

The Fringe Bar will experience a comedy takeover the weekend of Friday the 27th and Saturday, the 28th of March.

Starting the evening with some sanitised comedy, *Clean Laughs* kicks off at 6:30pm both nights to offer up an hour-long showcase of clean, clever comedy with some of Aotearoa's hottest comedians: Dave Wiggins, voted Best Newcomer by the NZ Comedy Guild; Brendon Green [pictured], multi-award-winning crowd favourite and writer for *7 Days*, *Taskmaster NZ*, and more; internationally acclaimed Scotswoman Samantha Hannah, described as "one of the funniest ladies on the planet" by Remote Goat; and local comedy stalwart Jerome Chandrahasen, regular NZ International Comedy Festival performer who has taken his shows to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

At 8pm, *Weekend Laughs* gets its hands dirty with two more hours of comedy, showcasing some of Aotearoa's favourite comedic acts all bringing the big laughs. Wiggins will make a double feature, returning to the late-night stage with his unique, energetic, observational standup. He shares the stage with Paul Douglas, one of the best stand-up comedians in Aotearoa. Douglas has been winning over audiences for over 10 years. He is known to be a frenetic yet laidback master storyteller, as seen on *7 Days*, *Guy Montgomery's Guy Mont-Spelling Bee*, and five of the last six Best Foods Comedy Galas.

With more acts to be announced, this top-tier comedy weekend is guaranteed to get tears streaming and bodies shaking with those deep belly laughs.

11th Apr. Jake Baxendale: *Bedlam & Squalor, Garrett Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. Wellington-based saxophonist and composer Jake Baxendale brings together a remarkable collective of Aotearoa's leading jazz and comtemporary musicians to perform his new album *Waypeople,* a luminous work of art inspired by Ursula K. Le Guin's English-language version of the Tao Te Ching. ***Photo by Nick George.***

11th Apr. The Mountain Goats: *Meow Nui, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. These veteran indie-rock storytellers are making their highly anticipated return to a stage in Wellington for the first time in 16 years. Coinciding with the unveiling of their 24th album, *Through This Fire Across from Peter Balkan*, the concert will showcase their most conceptually detailed and musically elaborate project yet. ***Photo by Jillian Clark.***

28th Mar. Riiki Reid: *Wellington Airport Ngā Taniwha Stage, Cuba Precinct, Te Aro* – 10pm. Dream pop powerhouse Riiki Reid will be gracing Pōneke with her electric live performance at CubaDupa. Weaving together a range of genres and mashing up vocals with eclectic dance, she effortlessly commands the spotlight and leaves her fans spellbound. ***Photo by Matt Hurley.***

3rd-5th Apr. Wellington Game Review: *Hnry Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Pipitea* – 10am. Play-test some incredible in-progress games created by Wellington game developers and be a part of shaping their development. With different genres and styles, there is sure to be a game for everyone. Games are free to play with an Armageddon pass, and developers will be present to chat and take notes.

13th Apr. Musicking Together: *Evaro, Cuba Street, Te Aro* – 6pm. As part of Music Therapy Week, *Musicking Together* is a free community music circle run by Sophie Sabri, a registered music therapist. Musical instruments are provided and no musical experience is required to enjoy a night of Capoeira rhythms, song, and dance with special guest Michael Person.

Soprano Emma Pearson. Photo by Kurt Sneddon.

18th Apr. Mozart Requiem & Christopher Tin's To Shiver The Sky: *Michael Fowler Centre, Wakefield Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. Experience two masterpieces in one exceptional concert as Orpheus Choir Wellington present Christopher Tin's *To Shiver the Sky* alongside Mozart's *Requiem*. Spanning five centuries of imagination, it is a sweeping musical history of human flight, from imagined wings to the Moon landing.

What's on

Wairarapa

27th; 28th Mar. Sounds and Solos: *St Luke's Church, Greytown; St Matthew's Church, Masterton* – 7pm; 2:30pm. Immerse yourself in the magic of the Wairarapa Community Orchestra's latest concert and celebrate local musical talent.

4th Apr. Mr Fungus: *Wairarapa Events Centre, Holloway Street, Carterton* – 11am. "New Zealand's Loudest Mime" Mr Fungus' silly show will amuse kids of all ages, featuring visual and verbal comedy, juggling and mime, and scrumptious backing soundtracks.

Kāpiti

24th-28th Mar. Māoriland Film Festival: *Māoriland Hub, Main Street, Ōtaki* – various times. The largest Indigenous film festival in the world, Māoriland Film Festival will screen 19 feature films and 89 short films, representing 130 Indigenous nations.

28th Mar. MELODOWNZ: *Māoriland Festival Hub, Main Street, Ōtaki* – 8pm. At the forefront of Aotearoa hip-hop, MELODOWNZ will be ringing out the Māoriland Film Festival at their annual Red Carpet Party. Dress to impress in your best frock, suit, op-shop find, or Indigenous regalia.

29th Mar. Kāpiti Run For Youth: *Maclean Park, Paraparaumu Beach* – 8:30am. Whether it's a leisurely stroll or a mad dash for six or 12 kilometres, get your Sunday moving for a good cause, fundraising for groups who work to uplift local kids.

Events

25th Mar. Secret Cinema 'Big-Screen': *Massey University Theatrette, Block 10, Buckle Street, Mount. Cook* – 6:30pm. A blind date with a movie, each month AroVideo selects a mystery film to screen at Massey University's National Academy of Screen Arts.

25th Mar. Say The Thing – Open Mic: *Meow, Edward Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. Come and be heard with your spoken word. On the last Wednesday of every month, head to Meow to read or listen to stories, poems, and personal essays.

29th Mar. NZEIDDAY – Eid al-Fitr: *Hnry Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Pipitea* – 10:30am. A large-scale festival bringing together Muslim communities and the wider public to celebrate Eid al-Fitr with food stalls, games for kids, and amazing community vibes.

30th Mar. The North Q&A Screening with Director Bart Schrijver: *Light House Cuba Cinema, Wigan Street, Te Aro* – 7pm. Watch the film and chat with the director of *The North*, a film depicting the intricacies and challenges of friendship and internal human struggles against the backdrop of the beautifully stark landscapes of the Scottish Highlands.

Music

25th Mar. Solo Banton: *Havana Bar, Wigan Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. A leading voice in reggae and bass music, UK reggae dancehall champion Solo Banton will be in session in Wellington for the first time backed by local cutters Jstar and Crazyeye. Known for his vintage DJ style, lyrical ingenuity, and charisma, this one will be special.

26th Mar. Jennifer Reid: *Pyramid Club, Taranaki Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. Rooted in archives and oral histories, the Lancashire dialect folk singer braids 19th century music with the present, dealing with memory, land, history, and modernity.

27th Mar. Taiki Nulight: *Meow, Edward Street, Te Aro* – 10pm. A night of multi-stranded dancefloor sounds with Mongolian-British producer and DJ Taiki Nulight, joined by special guest Cesco (UK) and other supporting acts.

27th-28th Mar. Pantera Tribute: *Valhalla, Vivian St, Te Aro* – 8pm. High-energy, raw, uncompromising. Australia's Pantera tribute, By Demons Be Driven, will deliver a faithful recreation of iconic album *Official Live: 101 Proof.*

28th Mar. Steve Poltz: *Meow, Edward Street, Te Aro* – 4pm. Returning for the first time in over 20 years. Join US/Canadian folk singer Steve Poltz for an Americana evening. Known for holding and captivating his audience, he will have you swinging from laughter to tears and back again.

31st Mar. Soweto Gospel Choir: *St James Theatre, Courtenay Place, Te Aro* – 7pm. The multi-GRAMMY® and Emmy Award-winning Soweto Gospel Choir return to Wellington to perform rousing and joyful protest music, ranging from anthems from Nelson Mandela's Freedom Movement in South Africa to music from the Civil Rights Movement in the USA.

1st-2nd Apr. Bret McKenzie: *Meow Nui, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. Celebrating the release of his latest album, *Freak Out City*, McKenzie returns to his hometown for two nights. Catch the new work alongside old favourites and hilarious anecdotes from his colourful career.

2nd Apr. Big Runga and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra: *Michael Fowler Centre, Wakefield Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. Sublime music legend Bic Runga and her band will be accompanied by the NZSO to perform some of her greatest hits alongside music from her new album *Red Sunset.*

8th Apr. The Pogues: *St James Theatre, Courtenay Place, Te Aro* – 8pm. Promising a rousing celebration, the folk-punk Irish band are returning to Wellington after 35 years to celebrate the 40th anniversary of their most famous album, *Rum, Sodomy & Lash*.

9th Apr. New Zealand Symphony Orchestra Presents: Resonance: *Michael Fowler Centre, Wakefield Street, Te Aro* – 6:30pm. From the ethereal glow of Ravel's luminous sound world to the towering emotional force of Shostakovich, this is music that confronts darkness and insists on the triumph of light.

Performance

Until 28th Mar. Speed is Emotional: *Circa Theatre, Taranaki Street, Te Aro* – 7pm. Local creative powerhouse Jo Randerson ONZM bares their soul in this "funny as hell" theatre extravaganza, sharing the exhilaration, exhaustion, joy, and absurdity of living and parenting with neurodivergence this Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts.

25th-27th Mar. Eve: Welcome to the Bathroom of Eden: *Te Whaea Theatre, Hutchison Road, Newtown* – 7pm. A contemporary dance performance blending renaissance Catholic aesthetics with rave sensibilities to draw together ancient and modern ideas of gender.

27th-28th Mar. Clean Laughs: *The Fringe Bar, Allen Street, Te Aro* – 6pm. An hour-long showcase of clean, clever comedy with some of Aotearoa's hottest comedians: Dave Wiggins, Brendon Green, Samantha Hannah, and local comedy stalwart Jerome Chandrahasen.

27th-28th Mar. Weekend Laughs: *The Fringe Bar, Allen Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. Two hours of comedy sure to get the big laughs. Dave Wiggins takes the stage again with one of the best in Aotearoa comedy, Paul Douglas, and more acts to be announced.

4th-11th Apr. The Boy With Wings: *Tararua Tramping Club Clubrooms, Moncrieff Street, Mount Victoria.* – 10am. Brought to you these school holidays by KidzStuff Theatre for Children, Birdlife Productions' show combines puppets with live music to share a comic, touching, and environmental tale featuring some feathered friends as they migrate to Alaska.

5th Apr. Caburlesque 75th Show: *The Fringe Bar, Allen Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. Wellington's longest-running variety night, blending burlesque and cabaret to delectable effect. Enjoy a dazzling lineup of artists including MC Sadie Von Scrumptious, Midnight Mistress, Felix Goodfellow, Wilhelmina Weeds, and more.

6th-12th Apr. Sydney Hot Shots: *Various locations and times in Greater Wellington and Wairarapa*. Australia's hottest six-packs are touring Aotearoa with an all-new, high-energy production with explosive choreography, cheeky charm, and jaw-dropping physiques.

7th-11th Apr. SELENE: *BATS Theatre, Kent Terrace, Te Aro* – 7pm. A radical explosion, *SELENE* is a story about the goddess, and the dark side of the moon. A young girl watches moon landings on repeat, teenagers swim beneath a lunar eclipse, a mismatched couple watch a horror film at a drive-in cinema.

8th-18th Apr. Chicago: *Pātaka Art + Museum, Parumoana Street, Porirua* – 7:30pm. Brought to you by Porirua Little Theatre, *Chicago* sizzles onto the stage, bringing the glamour, grit, and scandal of the roaring 1920s. There is a special matinee performance on the 12th of April.

8th-18th Apr. Catch Me If You Can: *Gryphon Theatre, Dixon Street, Te Aro* – various times. Kauri Theatre Company brings the notorious story of conman Frank Abagnale Jr to the stage, accompanied by the sounds of a swinging live jazz orchestra.

10th; 11th; 15th-16th Apr. The Pantoloons Present: Wizard of Oz: *Wairarapa Events Centre, Carterton; Te Raukura ki Kāpiti, Paraparaumu; Little Theatre, Lower Hutt* – various times. *Wizard of Oz* gets the pantomime treatment. Expect upbeat dance numbers, tradional panto one-liners, topical gags, and a wonderful trip down the Yellow Brick Road.

Sports

28th Mar. Hurricanes vs Queensland Reds: *Hnry Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Pipitea* – 4pm. This Super Rugby Pacific clash promises physicality, speed, and attacking rugby. Both sides will bring flair and firepower to the pitch for the Hurricanes' passionate home crowd.

1st, 4th Apr. White Ferns vs South Africa. *Basin Reserve, Mount Cook* – 11am. Experience the intensity of one-day international cricket as the White Ferns take on South Africa in two of the three-match ODI series.

Galleries

Until 17th Apr. Tartan Meets Koru by Mitchell Manuel: *Toi Pōneke Arts Centre, Abel Smith Street, Te Aro.* Digital artist Mitchell Manuel looks at his Scottish clan heritage through a Pasifika lens to explore shared histories of displacement. He uses digital mediums as a fluid space to breathe new life into traditional imagery while honouring the stories embedded in them.

Until 30th Apr. Te Manu Muramura: *Concourse at Rydges Wellington Airport, Stewart Duff Drive, Rongotai.* Bringing the outdoors inside, the exhibition displays the works of local Wellington artists, who took inspiration from the airport's surroundings to produce a collection that reflects flight, movement, sky, waves, and surf.

Until 7th Jun. Only Connect: Portraits by Joanna Margaret Paul and Janet Elaine Paul: *New Zealand Portrait Gallery Te Pūkenga Whakaata, Shed 11, Pipitea.* The joint exhibition *Only Connect* showcases the work of mother and daughter for the first time to celebrate two of Aotearoa's most renowned artists.

28th Mar-19th Jul. Ihi: *Pātaka Art + Museum, Parumoana Street, Porirua.* When something moves, its meaning can shift. Artists Axel Iva, Te Ara Minhinnick, and Ming Ranginui explore the concept of ihi, a transformational inner force, which is present in the encounters artists create, emerging out from the maker through their material to the viewer.

Festivals

28th-29th Mar. Cuba Dupa. *Various locations and times.* Cuba Street and the surrounding area experience a takeover as the city comes alive with this beloved two-day party celebrating local performances, music, dance, theatre, and food.

3rd-5th Apr. Armageddon Expo. *Hnry Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Pipitea* – 10am. The one expo to rule them all. Armageddon returns to Wellington with a mix of gaming, YouTube, TV, movie, and anime stars to bring you more gaming and cosplay than ever before.

For your inclusion in the what's on listings email: whatson@regionalnews.kiwi. Close off for the next issue's listings is noon Tuesday 31 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.

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Connecting Wellington

Answers to the puzzles on page 32

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Be in to win 1 of 2 family passes to

THE BOY WITH WINGS

6th-11th April 2026
Show Time 10am
4 Moncrieff St, Mount Vic

Name .....
Address .....
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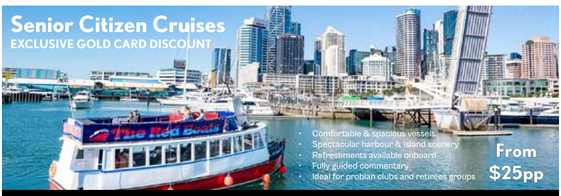
Phone .....

Email entries to:
admin@regionalnews.kiwi or post to:
Competition, PO Box 15163,
Miramar 6243.
Entries close Monday 6th April 2026.



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