

## What is theatre?

Even if it is almost impossible to answer, it doesn't hurt to ask ourselves this every now and again. Recently I tackled it as part of my Masters research, as I situated my concept of cyberformance (live performance on the internet) within the wider field of theatre; and I found myself asking it again as I rushed madly around Wellington trying to see as much as possible of the numerous and diverse theatrical offerings of October.

Whether you call it 'theatre' or 'performance', there are as many definitions as there are practitioners and theorists. My research led me to the definition of a theatre/performance hybrid as all live work where an action is performed with a specific intention, otherness, or sense of remove from everyday life, and witnessed by a spectator in real-time. The real-time relationship between the artist and spectator is essential, as it enables the magical sense of complicity between participants that is unique to theatre.

Not everyone agrees with this; for example, Gabriella Giannachi in her book *Virtual Theatres* (a key text for my research) prioritises the relationship between the spectator and the work of art, rather than the spectator and the artist. I wasn't surprised to find a similar approach at a recent exhibition at the Adam Art Gallery that was also called *Virtual Theatres*. Despite aiming to expand "the spectator's own sense of being present at a performance", only two of the works (all pre-recorded video installations) invited the audience into the space of the installation, and none involved the real-time presence of the artist(s). To me, theatre requires the simultaneous live presence of spectator and artist - even if that presence is technologically mediated in some way but still live, as in cyberformance. A recorded presence is significantly different to a live-but-remote presence.

The great diversity of theatre on offer in Wellington in October ranged from the debut of Acting Up Special Stars (page 7) and *The Outing* (page 8) to Deborah Pope's finely crafted *Adagio* (page 7); at BATS the audience sat at *Apollo 13 Mission Control* consoles and solved tricky sums to bring the astronauts home safely, while in the basement of Toi Whakaari we were led between three separate spaces to witness three perspectives of *Aoterroroa*, and up at Vic we witnessed the blend of

### Inside this issue:

#### \* Recharge: the Gathering, 9-14 April 2009

- read all about it on pages 3-4, and use the form on the inside back cover (page 13) to register!

\* Acting Up Special Stars (page 7)

\* Playing Jane Mander (page 9)

\* Farewell to Cristina Wistari (page 12)

Indonesian and Western theatre traditions in *The Seven Ages of Man* (page 11). All of these shows generated a sense of community between performers and audience, achieving for me much more of a sense of presence and participation in a theatrical event than the exhibits of *Virtual Theatres* (which, as video installations, were undoubtedly thoughtful and well-executed).

The shared experience of theatre is, of course, happening all around us - we are witness to highly

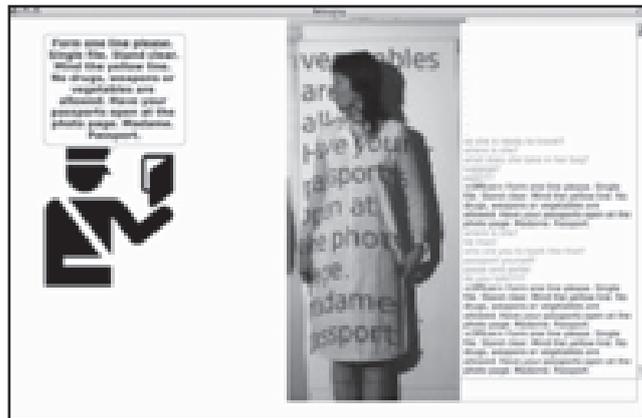
scripted and managed election performances here in Aotearoa and in the U.S.A; and the demise of capitalism, despite being presented as an improvised spectacle, is likely just as managed. I only wish they'd get better scriptwriters - how many times must we listen to the newsreaders pronouncing "growing fears of a global recession"? What fears we artists should be harbouring is unclear as yet, but it seems likely that the impending financial doom and gloom

will be a shared real-time experience for all (unlike the boom), with the relief of lower interest rates inevitably offset by job losses and funding cuts. Those of us nearer the bottom of the economic ladder may have less distance to fall than those further up, but the arts will soon suffer from less disposable income and belt-tightening all round.

Financial storms aside, dramatic hurricanes wreaked havoc in the Caribbean during September. Roxana Piñeda, organiser of the Magdalena Sin Frontiers festival in Cuba, which I attended in January, writes that the situation is dire - agriculture devastated, houses destroyed, thousands of people have lost everything. Food is scarce and the country is in a state of emergency that is likely to last into the new year. And they know that they have no hope of a bail-out like the U.S. financial sector.

What is theatre, then?

Helen Varley Jamieson



Cyberformance - presence that is remote but still live .  
Screen capture from a rehearsal of *Belonging* by  
*Avatar Body Collision*; screen capture by Suzon Fuks.

At its September meeting, the Trust confirmed the appointment of a new trustee, Janet Dunn, who has enthusiastically embraced the role of Post Mistress. A finance committee, consisting of Janet, Lisa Maule and Madeline McNamara was formed to analyse past spending and make a budget forecast.

The meeting also decided that this newsletter will be published twice a year from now on. The next issue will come out in late May and will include reports of the 2009 Gathering.

Trustee Helen Varley Jamieson returned to Wellington in August after completing her Master of Arts (Research) at QUT in Brisbane, and is now busy developing an online membership database for the Trust. This will result in much more efficient systems and involves a redesign of the web site as well.



October was a busy month: we toasted the safe arrival of trustee Jessica Latton's second child, Margot Tui Rose, on the 6th of October. Lilicherie McGregor was in Wellington directing *The Seven Ages of Man* at Victoria University, and the Acting Up group presented their debut performance, *The Dream Working*, under the direction of Madeline McNamara.

The Trustees are now all working towards the 2009 Gathering.

*A director's work is never done ... Lilicherie McGregor mops up after The Seven Ages of Man (below).*

## Post Mistress Report

I need to be clear here. I completed my Master of Design at Massey and graduated in the middle of the year. So Helen is more accurately Post-Masters (-Mistress) than I am, as she has more recently completed her Masters (Mistress) studies. But I am the Post-Mistress who holds the keys to the Post Box. This was a task that I took on when I was Post-Masters (-Mistress) in the study sense, and after the hugely inspiring Gathering where I presented my Masters (Mistress) thesis. My appointment as Post-Mistress led to an invitation to become a Magdalena Aotearoa trustee and I was delighted to accept.

I bring to Magdalena experience in the material side of making theatre. I have designed costumes for theatre, film and television. Theatre is my first love but if you work with what you love most you do it mostly for love, while if you work with what you love less you might make a half-

way decent living. For a while, that is, until you are no longer flavour of the month.

When I was no longer flavour of the month I had a brainwave. I had been making my name as a recycled costume designer so what if I was to apply the same idea to fashion? A recycled fashion designer! Years later, after much refining of terminology and technique, I'm still clawing my way to personal sustainability, with a refashion label called ReDunn.

I also continue to do selected theatre projects. Recently, I worked with Madeline et al on the Acting Up Special Stars show. The rehearsals I was able to attend proved to be one of the highlights of my week.

Fashion shows are also a kind of performance. I have a great champion in Margaret Austin, Wellington's best dressed woman (Capital Times) and tango dancer

**The Magdalena Aotearoa Trust is a charitable trust that aims to encourage and promote the work of women in the performing arts.**

### Co-founders

Madeline McNamara & Sally Rodwell

### Trustees

Madeline McNamara, Lisa Maule, Dale Ferris, Helen Varley Jamieson, Jessica Latton, Lilicherie McGregor, Janet Dunn.

### Accountant

Julie Lamb & Associates

### Newsletter & web site

Helen Varley Jamieson

### Post Mistress

Janet Dunn

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*Newsletter contributions are welcome, but may be edited. Email contributions as an attachment or in the body of an email to: [magdalen@actrix.co.nz](mailto:magdalen@actrix.co.nz)*

**The deadline for the next issue is 30 April 2009**

extraordinaire. She made a pitch to the mayor that we might do a show in the mayoral chambers. We were a little nervous about whether Kerry would be receptive to this pitch, considering that Austin did topple Kerry as best-dressed, but the pitch has been accepted and the show will take place in mid-November. Pinky Agnew has agreed to be Mistress of Ceremonies and we shall compile poetic descriptions of the outfits.

I look forward to my ongoing involvement with Magdalena, and in particular the 2009 Gathering.

*Janet Dunn*

*This inspirational annual event is a chance to indulge yourself - nurture your craft, recharge your creative batteries, and contribute to the development of the work of others.*

## **Recharge: the power of theatre**

We were thinking about a name and a theme for the Gathering. Concerned that too specific a theme might limit or exclude current work or thinking, we wanted both name and theme to be something necessary, useful, relevant in these very troubled times but broad enough to encompass a variety of contributions and be stimulating to thought and actions in the theatre.

A discussion of the S word arose (sustainability). What does it mean when applied to the making of our theatre? How big a carbon footprint does a fully staged theatre performance leave? What cost to light the lights? Mention was made of an upcoming STAB production (*Heat*, by Lynda Chanwai-Earle) that is going to be totally self-sustainable, powered off-grid with lights, sound and electronics all powered as far as possible from low drain and/or renewable energy.

The words 'the power of theatre' took on new meaning. As did other words often associated with theatre such as energy, charged, electric, and atmospheric. But the Gathering as an event is also about recognising that our own resources can become depleted too if not renewed, topped up, replenished. Hence Recharge.

We hope the action will be two-way, energy both taken in and given out. The individual artist absorbs the energy of the surrounding atmosphere in a way that restores their strength and faith in themselves and their work, at the same time the artist's purpose and will is strengthened and clarified so that they might regather their forces for the necessary onward charge.

*Madeline McNamara*

### ***What about MEN?***

What, indeed! Men are most welcome at the Gathering - as participants, performing in works-in-progress, giving feedback, networking, learning, sharing. The Magdalena Aotearoa Trust was formed to encourage and promote the work of women in the performing arts, and that in no way means that men are excluded. What it means is that we are interested in supporting work where the primary creative voice is women.

We warmly invite men who wish to enter into this spirit of rich generosity and creative nurturing to join us at the Gathering.

## **Recharge: The Gathering Magdalena Aotearoa 2009**

9-14 April 2009

Newtown Community & Cultural Centre,  
Wellington

*5 days of works-in-progress, facilitated feedback,  
presentations, networking and exchange*

Register now - use the form at the back (p 13)  
of this newsletter or register online at:  
<http://magdalena.actrix.co.nz>

**Register before 31 January**  
to propose a work-in-progress

**Register before 27 February**  
to get the early bird discount!

## **Draft Programme**

As before, the programme will not be finalised until the opening of the Gathering, in order to accommodate the needs and contributions of the participants. We already have a number of proposed works-in-progress and other offerings - turn the page to get inspired ...

If you wish to present a work-in-progress, register **BEFORE 31 JANUARY** with details of your proposal.

The Gathering will open on Thursday evening (9th) with a round, shared meal and finalising of the programme.

Each day will begin with a physical or vocal warm-up or training session, at which participants can share their own techniques. This will be followed by the morning session, consisting of two work-in-progress presentations, then lunch and the afternoon session, with another two works-in-progress.

Each work-in-progress session is broken into two parts - the presentation of the work, and a facilitated critical discussion. Some proposals already received are on the following page.

The evening programme, which is also open to the public with koha entry, will include work presentations, video screenings, and an outing to see Helen Moran's performance *The Bone Keeper's Story*; this show was presented as a work-in-progress at the last two Gatherings and will be on tour next year, with a season in Wellington to coincide with the Gathering.

On Sunday morning we will have an excursion (weather dependent), sleep-in, church or free time for networking.

The Gathering will conclude on Tuesday 14th with a closing round, evaluation and final shared lunch.

*We invite proposals for works-in-progress and other presentations, to be given at the Gathering.*

*The deadline for work-in-progress proposals is 31 January, so that those selected have time to prepare, including communicating with the facilitators and anyone else who they may want to see their presentation and give feedback.*

*For other proposals - such as a presentation about your work, a panel discussion topic, or a training session - there is no deadline, but we would like to hear your idea before the Gathering so we know what's coming; this part of the programme will be finalised on the first evening, with all participants.*

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## Offerings so far (in no particular order)

\* **Janet Dunn:** "I am interested in workshopping with costume, props and set according to the theme and connected to the Recharge grid."

\* **Madeline McNamara:** *Finding Form*. "Phase 2 of my solo is inspired by the feedback I received at the 2008 Gathering and by comments on form from the book *Bobby Baker, redeeming features of daily life*. It involves 'marshalling materials and inert matter', 'setting boundaries', 'relating of inner shapes to outer limits', and 'abolishing of excessive content and materials'.

\* **Jack Trolove:** *Transparent Shadow* is a work-in-progress developed from a visual arts root. She is excited to see how the work is ingested in a performance context. The work will stem from ideas around (critical) whiteness, bodies and power.

\* **Lilicherie McGregor** has offered to lead a vocal circle each morning to start the day's work. This is based on her experience at ISTA (International School of Theatre Anthropology) sessions in Europe, where the vocal circle has a special ritual significance.

\* **Helen Varley Jamieson:** discussion topic: What constitutes a good critical review? Why is it so hard to find people to write reviews? What can we do about it?

\* **Dr Megan Collins** - Randai presentation and workshop; Randai is a traditional dance form from Western Sumatra.

\* **Judith Jones:** a storytelling: *Watch your tongue young lady* - "which may include foot binding and *Mexican Rose - the 54 stone Fat Girl* exhibited in the Odditorium in the funpark at New Zealand's 1940 Centennial Exhibition in Wellington. And an egg beater. And maybe a kitchen maid in a castle."

\* **Moira Aberdeen:** 45 minute session of Yoga Nidra (psychic sleep) - "a delicious guided lying relaxation/meditation. This ancient and powerful practice works at a very deep level to regenerate the body and brain, and works with the layers of the subconscious and unconscious minds."

\* **Rachel Baker:** *Drowning bird plummeting fish* - "a devised show I am working on for Fringe in the light of what it means to be told you are a generation without a future, as an exploration of the working principles of UK theatre company Forced Entertainment." Or further development of *The Watermelon Woman*, the seeds of which were seen at the 2008 Gathering.

*and there will be more ...*

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## Finding Inspiration

In 1939 the wife of a Denniston miner - I know her name but I'll explain later why I won't use it - wrote to Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage. "Dear Friend," she wrote. She told him she'd heard him "on the wireless" saying he'd like everyone to see the Centennial Exhibition on in the capital, celebrating New Zealand's progress since 1840. She told him about the strike her man and others were part of, how tough it was; they could barely find a meal, let alone travel to the capital.

I first heard her words at Easter 08, at a celebration of the centennial of the landmark Blackball miners' strike. I went down to the West Coast with Choir Choir Pants on Fire to be part of this celebration. I learned a whole lot about coal mining, about the Blackball strike, what it was like for miners and their families, above and below ground, then and since. My lungs choked on the coal smoke and the chill. I sang the songs we'd learned in Wellington with a new understanding. "The coal black dust sticks to the skin like a burn'd pie crust. We curse each day that the miner must go down in the Brunner Mine." Her words stuck in my head.

When I got home I searched the full reference with help from the Trade Union History Project - and I noted that at the very end she asked, if he used the letter, that Savage did not use her

name. Then, it would have been unsafe, and life was already unsafe enough - "I suppose we shall have to starve, children included". Perhaps she'd feel different about me using it now, here, given the nature of our company of readers. Perhaps not.

I found out a lot about the Exhibition, about what New Zealand was proud of at the time. It felt such a long way away from her day-to-day experience. I wrote a song with her words - force fitting them with the words and music of *Come to the fair*, a heigh ho rallying cry played every morning by the Exhibition's radio station. I discovered the NZ Music, Sound, Audio-visual collection at the National Library. They were really helpful and searched me out the sheet music of the Fair song. It's a wonderful resource - with knowledgeable and helpful staff. It's lovely to see the actual sheet music, who held it, who sang this.... I haven't made music for the woman's words yet, but I have a few ideas. It awaits its first outing as a sung piece.

And another story or song lurks: in Playland at the Exhibition there was the Odditorium with its "human freaks", such as Mexican Rose "the world's fattest girl" (weighing 343kg). In its six months, the Exhibition was attended by more than 2.6 million people. That's a lot of looking, an abundance of staring. I shall find out more about Mexican Rose.

*Judith Jones*

## Christchurch's new Red Theatre

You may have heard that there is an initiative to build a new theatre in Christchurch ... RED THEATRE!

The great thing about this new theatre is that it will run along the same principles as BATS in Wellington, making it so much easier for people to put theatre on in this city, and offering heaps of support at very low cost.

Much funding has been secured and building will soon begin in the location in Ash street (near the Twisted Hop).

Red Theatre is looking for small donations from supportive people in its community - you can buy a brick for \$50, \$100, \$175 or \$250. This is a one-off donation that would really help at this stage of development - and you get your name on a brick in the foyer of the theatre!

How? Visit [www.redtheatre.co.nz](http://www.redtheatre.co.nz)

Thanks for your interest!

*Lucette Hindin*

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## Wellington Arts Forums

A series of arts forums were held in Wellington in August, hosted by the Wellington City Council's new City Arts unit of six people. The forums aimed to bring together people from the local arts industry, the Council and other parties such as Creative NZ and The Big Idea to contribute to a shared vision for the arts in Wellington.

Several Magdalena trustees and members were amongst about 60 people attending the performing arts forum on 29 August. The day included presentations, small group sessions and facilitated discussions.

One of the key issues to emerge from the performing arts forum is the difficulty of finding affordable rehearsal space that can be hired for a production period without having to pack up every day for other groups to use the space. While no immediate solution was proposed, many people voiced concern that the Wellington Arts Centre (funded and managed by the WCC) does not cater for the needs of performing artists. The summary from the forums includes the "setting up of a Venue Study including an audit of current spaces and needs, an analysis of future needs, recommendations for increasing access to existing spaces and developing new spaces" as one of 18 possible actions that could be initiated either within the sector or by the WCC. City Arts is now looking at which actions it may be able to pursue within the WCC, and will use the findings from the forums to contribute to the Council's Cultural Well-being Strategy and its Long Term Council Community Plan which will be put out for consultation in March / April 2009.

For further information, email Briar Munro at [arts@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:arts@wcc.govt.nz)

## Kilda Northcott Honoured

Congratulations to Kilda Northcott, who was awarded the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2008 Queens Birthday Honours, in recognition of her contribution to dance over her extensive and glittering career. Kilda was accompanied to her investiture by her first dancing teacher Ruby Conway, her mother Maggie Northcott, her younger sister Arran and her son Iharaira. Says Kilda, "all of [them] have been an incredible help and inspiration throughout my life as well as all the amazing people and family, past and present that I have loved, lived and worked with over the years and could not have got to where I am now without them - I accepted the honour on behalf of all of us who are still at the coal face doing what we do ... let's all be inspired to help and support one another in sickness and in health and on into whatever we encounter throughout our lives together."



*Above, Kilda takes a bow as Dunedin dance pioneer Lily Stevens in Lily, the new Bipeds production.  
Photographer: Chris Sullivan*

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## The Bone Keeper's Story

*The Bone Keeper's Story*, devised by Helen Moran and Kathleen Gallagher and performed by Helen Moran, will have a season in Wellington at the same time as the 2009 Magdalena Gathering.

Crucial to the success this show has enjoyed was the feedback and critiques given by many of the participants at the two previous Gatherings. As such, we would love to invite you all to a special discounted showing as part of the 2009 Gathering, followed by drinks, nibbles and discussion. Come and see the role you have played in the evolution of this exciting piece of theatre.

*The Bone Keeper's Story* will be on tour in the South Island during March and the North Island during April and May - and we are looking for North Island contacts. Please contact Kim Georgine:

[ageorgine@yahoo.com](mailto:ageorgine@yahoo.com)

H: 03 326 4115 Mob: 021 187 0609

2/54 Wakefield Ave., Sumner, Christchurch

### Changes to Creative NZ Funding Rounds

Creative NZ has announced significant changes to its funding process, taking effect from February 2009. Forums are being held around the country in November and December to explain the changes. For information about the changes, new application guidelines and deadlines, and dates of the forum in your area, visit the CNZ web site: [www.creativenz.govt.nz](http://www.creativenz.govt.nz)

## Letter from Dunedin

Hi Magdalenas,

Life (and theatre) is a funny thing. It is my eternal return. After seven years of not performing on stage - thinking that my body and voice had clapped out on me too much - I was asked to act in Emily Duncan's play, *Palliative Care*, as part of the Otago Festival of the Arts. Timewise, I had a small window of opportunity to get involved with Emily's work, a wonderful ensemble cast, and with the creative care of Richard Huber's direction. It was a healing process to walk the boards again at the Globe Theatre, not least as my part was as a district nurse who extended the idea of care and comfort outside the restrictive medical model. The traverse staging made for intimate and raw storytelling - ideal to tour RSA halls around central Otago me thinks (perhaps a future project).

But my day job remains as Festival Coordinator for the Dunedin Fringe Arts Trust and, after the 2008 Fringe and Midwinter Carnival, I am now back into organising the 2009 Dunedin Fringe Festival. Life and art is good - I have a dream job! As Artist Liaison, I have the great pleasure of communicating with amazing artists from all over Aotearoa and the globe, building up relationships, not least becoming familiar with artists' projects and works, and finally meeting the artists and seeing their work in performance. I am very privileged to meet such wonderful people - many of whom have become friends. I am very excited about the 2009 Fringe. Not only am I in the role of Festival Coordinator and have an internship to the Director, but have been fortunate to be able to run

The Dunedin Fringe is now an annual event, with the dates for the 2009 festival **26 March to 5 April**.

The change of dates (from October) is designed to facilitate a touring circuit, so that shows can travel from the Wellington and Adelaide Fringes, as well as the new Auckland Fringe (27 February to 22 March - [www.aucklandfringe.org.nz/](http://www.aucklandfringe.org.nz/)).

Artist registration is open until 5 December, and all the information is available on the recently upgraded and updated web site: [www.dunedinfringe.org.nz](http://www.dunedinfringe.org.nz)

with the project of curating and nurturing the Festival Club during the Fringe, which will hopefully become the hub and hang-out for artists, crew, staff and audiences; where artists entertain each other, network and have a lot of fun, laughter and sharing.

As the Fringe falls prior to Easter in 2009, I am hopeful that I will be able to participate - at long last - in the 2009 Gathering and connect with the many wonderful people up north. I'll look forward to that. In the meantime, I would love to hear from anyone who would like to be involved in the Dunedin Fringe - either as an artist or volunteer.

Best wishes.

*Karin Reid*  
Festival Coordinator & Artist  
Liaison, Dunedin Fringe Festival



## Jade Returns

Dear Magdalenas,

Last Easter, during a 6 month stay in NZ, I had the pleasure of participating in the Magdalena Aotearoa Gathering in Wellington, and for those of you who I wasn't able to meet, my name is Jade. I'm American, a singer/songwriter, performance artist, writer, living for many years in Hamburg, Germany. The Gathering was truly inspiring and I was delighted to be able to present some of my own work and ideas from projects I've been working on. Now that I have returned to Wellington, I'd love to be able to put some of the inspiration I found into a one woman show. And I'm writing to you all because, well, no woman is an island, even if she lives on one, and it would be great to be able to work with other women in putting the piece together; to have creative input, to brainstorm, feedback and any other kind of encouragement/support you might be willing/able to give. I'd be so grateful.

The working title for the piece is *Salomé, Jade ov Arcc, and How I Ended Up In Aotearoa*. I'm a storyteller at heart and my life for the past ... oh, 12 years or so especially, has been especially 'in motion' - taking off in directions I never expected to be going in - so I'd like to do the piece as a kind of fantasy autobiographical of those years, using my own music (*Jade ov Arcc*) and

writing (the novel and screenplay I have co-written, titled *Salomé* - which is a totally new, sci-fi/fantasy retelling of the Salomé myth that has fascinated me for some 40 years now).

I'd like the piece to follow (in a zigzag sort of way) the thread of events/passions/inspirations that led me from Joan of Arc to my love of Strauss/Wilde's opera *Salome* to the production of my first album, *Jade ov Arcc*, and eventually to the writing of the screenplay *Salomé* whose completion took me on my first journey to Aotearoa in November 2003 - because our male protagonist was inspired by one of the actors in ... *The Lord of the Rings!*

Trials, tribulations and amorous adventures in between; all manner of silk scarves (the Seven Thousand Veils); a gleaming plexiglas sword named Moonfire; a didgeridoo - and the biblical *Song of Songs*.

Have I tickled anyone's curiosity, hopefully? If so, please do contact me, either at this email address ([jade.ov.arcc@freenet.de](mailto:jade.ov.arcc@freenet.de)) or phone 021 293 2117. I met some incredibly creative women last Easter and I know there are even more of you out there, so thank you all for listening and please be in touch. I'd be delighted to meet you.

Blessings and warmest wishes,

*JadeValour*

## Acting Up Special Stars

An audience of more than 200 adults and children packed into the Newtown Community and Cultural Centre in Wellington on Saturday 18 October to see the pioneering performance of *The Dream Working* by Acting Up Special Stars.

The show was the first Wellington production in which all the cast members had learning or intellectual disabilities. It was the result of two years of regular drama and music sessions.

The group will perform excerpts from the show on Saturday 6 December at Te Papa as part of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 Dec).

Director Madeline McNamara describes the project as a big, wonderful experiment – partly improvised, partly structured. “Throughout the process, we encouraged the cast to be autonomous. It was also a chance for the audience to experience something special.

“The most wonderful thing was seeing the cast share a new theatrical culture with their audience, breaking some conventions and inventing new ones. I loved the freedom they had to work with the audience. There was sheer magic and moments of comic genius.”

The show included music, dance, drama, comedy, clowning and audience participation. There was also an exhibition of artwork, inspired by the characters that each actor plays in the show.

Audience member Caroline Newson described the show as an “innovative, touching and very funny” presentation. “Some of the actors were natural performers but for others, it was obviously a challenge to be up on stage. However, they all seemed to be enjoying themselves. I

couldn't be quite sure what was scripted and what was impromptu but the unexpected moments were wonderful. It was also really special to hear from some of the performers at the end of the show, which illustrated how important Acting Up is to them.”

The story of *The Dream Working* was initially inspired by the Banana Boat Song (Day-O!). The characters land a job in a banana warehouse but after a while, the thrill turns to drill, and the workers start day-dreaming. What would be the perfect job? We meet an angel, an opera singer and an op shop owner, a policeman, a drummer, a doctor and a dancer, a cheer leader, a cat and a burglar. Acting Up artistic directors Madeline McNamara and Andreas Lepper created *The Dream Working* with co-direction by Jo Randerson, and tutoring and training assistance by Noel Meek. The costumes were designed by Janet Dunn.



Director Madeline McNamara takes a bow with Special Stars, from left: Piri Kohu, Victor Wilson and Martin Kerschbaumer.

Voluntary assistance was provided by dancer Merrin Cavel and directing student Sharon Van der Vreede, and Alpha St Art Base tutors Aroha Clarke, Sandra Schmidt, Laurin Houghton-Paranihi and Elizabeth Elwood.

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## Adagio

### Seriously Sophisticated Circus

Concept and direction: Deborah Pope

Music design and original music: Jonathan Crayford

With: Mason West, Rowan Heydon-White, Angela Green, Jenny McArthur, Rosie Langabeer and Vicki Jones.

If ‘seriously sophisticated’ has any useful meaning here, I think it’s indicative of the way Deborah Pope approached developing and delivering a tight and terrific piece of work. Deborah pays close attention to the big picture and to the smallest details and I love that. All the elements of this performance are well considered both together and alone.

*Adagio* is ‘circus’ or ‘arthouse’ theatre, but that doesn’t mean it’s a series of tricks strung together with a narrative, or a piece of theatre that uses tricks as add-ons. There is no reliance on spectacle for its own sake, in fact the aerial and other ‘traditional’ circus tricks, like trapeze and chair balancing, are not especially startling, although

very satisfying in this context. *Adagio* is a kaleidoscope of theatre, music, dance (contemporary and ballet in this case), mime, illusion, magic, comedy and circus skills. The audience can find the story or theme which threads in and out, making sweet sense but never intruding ... or not ... watchers can take in the assemblage of images and/or scrutinise each action as it unfolds. There are moments of memsmerising stillness, some lovely daft slapstick and flamboyant vigour. The performers bring staunch focus and a varied and balanced range of skills to the stage - it would have been nice to know some more about them in the programme.

The music is great too. People commented on it as we left, how perfectly it fitted at every moment. Another example of carefully considered integration of individual pieces into a satisfying whole.

Let’s hope the success of this work - they extended its run - means we get to see a lot more of Deborah’s creations and to experience more of this sort of performance skills.

Judith Jones

## No Pouting at the Outing!

Viewed in the context of community theatre, *The Outing* (The Front Room, James Cabaret 16–18 October) was an audacious, inclusive undertaking that successfully brought together many people onstage and off.

This massive jolly romp, interspersed with thoughtful and witty moments, followed the plot line of a big pink bus tour through Wellington to a gay dance party and gay fair with stories and drama along the way.

There were some shortcomings in the level of development and rehearsal, as well as markedly varied performance abilities of the players. Yet, despite these, and sound problems which compounded a shaky start on opening night, energy and interest were swiftly lifted and sustained through some stand-out performances, fairly skilled pacing, fabulous music and endless variety. While most transitions needed work, two were of exceptionally high quality and integrity – the entrance of the drag queens and their leashed (invisible) dogs, and the spectacular headwear and costume parade – both delightfully unexpected, inspired and carnivalesque.

*The Outing* managed to fill seats and give its audience a spectacular and memorable experience – a tandem feat that professional theatre often fails to achieve. Whatever reservations I have about the ticket price set at \$35 (with conditional matinee concessions) – pitched high for the level of performance, yet closer to the mark for the venue – you have to applaud the extensive cast and crew (the majority of whom also work full time) for the sheer hard work, Herculean energy and sustained vision required to pull off a performance of this scale as well as

they did.

While Wellington's theatre scene is vibrant and varied, offerings are largely underfunded and small scale. Though the work of professional theatres may not be as under-rehearsed, too frequently it is equally under-developed.

The locally-specific nature of the work is both one of *The Outing's* strengths and its weaknesses – its abundance of inventive and current visual icons and textual references



*Cast and crew of The Outing after the show's premiere.*

would make it difficult to tour, though its themes of love, heartache, romance and homophobia are universal.

Given it was a musical, a song list would have been a welcome inclusion in the programme.

Among what I consider to be the stand-out performances were:

- \* Margaret Tolland's 'Chick Magnet' Shane (who also delivered a breathtakingly haunting whiff of déjà vu to those of us old enough to remember the Digger and Nudger duo from *Hens' Teeth*);

- \* Anny Freitas and Kerina Deas' *Cherry Chapstick* bus stop scene – brilliant in its structure, timing, vocal qualities and unified delivery of performance;

- \* The *Cell Block Tango* sequence

after the gay bashing with its strong white theatrical motifs – a beautiful expression of physical, image-based theatre, referencing back to enslavement, and the percussive build up with sticks that preceded it;

- \* The drag queens, including the stunning portrayal of a drag queen by Debbie Ferrere (yes – give up your day jobs!!);

- \* Tiwhanawhana - polished and beautiful;

- \* Aaron (Hans Landon-Lane) and Justin (Jaki Trolove) who kept the fire burning and lit up the stage every moment they were on it;

- \* the divinely inspired pairing of the voices of Hans Landon-Lane and Ben Paulsen, and weaving this segment with unbeatable saxophone accompaniment from Jenni Bedford;

- \* the exceptional musical direction throughout;

- \* the one-liners, script, and unifying theme of the

bus driver (Jac Lynch);

Hats off to Toni Regan (origination), Cherie Chapman (director), Clyde Clement and Louie Brandon (musical directors) and hearty applause to every one of the cast and crew, in front of the stage or behind it, not otherwise specifically mentioned.

While *The Outing* would have benefited overall from more of an 'outside eye' to strengthen some of its weaknesses, all credit to Red Boots Productions and everyone involved for a remarkable accomplishment. Who knows where it will lead in terms of further development or inspiring others who, in having seen it may dare to not just dream, but take the risk of staging their own bold and ambitious production.

*Moira Aberdeen*

*Diane Spodarek writes about her experience of performing as Jane Mander, New Zealand's first woman novelist. This Living History event was created, scripted and directed by Lilicherie McGregor and performed by Diane on September 13, 2008, at the Heritage Museum in Whangarei.*

Mander is best known for her first novel, *The Story of a New Zealand River*, published in 1920 in New York (and subsequently in London). It is a turn of the century story about Northland, colonialism and the felling of the great kauri trees, as well as a love story.

It is said that the similarities of the movie *The Piano* and Mander's novel are very close. I would say, after reading the book that yes, they are close, (with the exception of the violence, which is not in the book) but synchronicity in the arts is common and the director of *The Piano* says it is a coincidence. Mander wrote seven novels, many essays and was a journalist in Dargaville. Most of her writing was about New Zealand, with the exception of *The Besieging City*, which is based on her life in New York and is a very radical and incisive view of a young woman's point of view about relationships, work and social and political opinions of the times.

In New Zealand Mander was a teacher and a journalist. She left New Zealand in 1912 at the age of thirty-five to attend Columbia University. She was one of two women in the school of journalism at the time. In New York she worked for the Red Cross, did research on prison reform and gave speeches at suffrage rallies. After living in New York for ten years, she went to London where she lived for another ten years and then returned to New Zealand.

Mander's novels were warmly received at the time they were first published, but there are also references to her work being too radical and much of her writing was censored for young girls because of the author's views about social and political reform. Through her writing Mander presented a strong voice for young girls and women who believe life can be lived to the fullest without marriage and dependence on men.

Walking around in period costume at the Heritage Museum I played Mander to a varied audience. It was

great to have children in the audience, in particular the girls who were fascinated with my costume. "Didn't they have colour back then?" one girl asked. Rather than being put off by something "old" these girls, along with the adults, were truly interested in New Zealand's first female novelist. Sadly, only one person in the audience that day had heard of Jane Mander before. However, after the performance all were appreciative of hearing about her and hearing various excerpts from her novels and essays.

Lilicherie did a marvelous job in researching all of Mander's writing and the background of her life to create a script that is entertaining as well as an important document about New Zealand literature and about the first woman novelist. Although other writers are better

known, Mander is an important link in the history of New Zealand literature. Bringing real New Zealanders to life through 'Living History' is an excellent way to support the arts, support this country's heritage and entertain as well as educate.

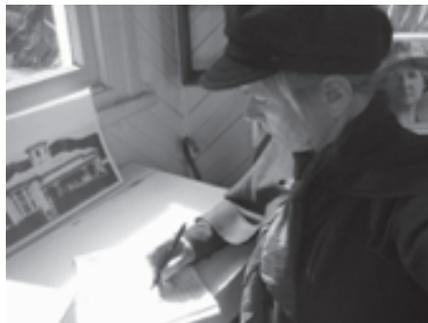
Mander was passionate about the felling of the kauri trees; she wrote extensively about the country's natural resources. In *Pins and Pinnacles*, published in 1928, she wrote:

"This nomadic civilization, which is altering human nature so profoundly ... throws upon personal relations a stress greater than they have ever borne before. Under cosmopolitanism, if it comes, we

shall receive no help from the earth. Trees and meadows and mountains will only be a spectacle, and the binding force that they once exercised on character must be entrusted to love alone. May love be equal to the task!"

This was my favorite passage in the script because it clearly illustrates Mander's talent and passion for New Zealand. Mander never married or had children, but her love for New Zealand was equal in passion as any love story in literature.

*Diane Spodarek*



*Diane Spodarek performing as Jane Mander, in the original tower from Mander's house, where she used write. The tower is now at the Whangarei Heritage Museum; a photo of the house Mander lived in is on the desk.*

### **Magdalena Aotearoa will soon have a sparkly new online membership database!**

The new database uses CiviCRM, a free and open source online database system that has been specifically developed for community groups and NGOs to be able to manage their constituent databases via the web. Concurrent with the database development, the Magdalena Aotearoa web site is being redesigned using Drupal, an open source content management system. This will facilitate content input from registered members - you will be able to post notices about your work and contribute to online discussion forums. We don't have an exact go-live date yet - hopefully it will be before the end of this year and definitely before the 2009 Gathering.

**Watch this space: <http://magdalena.actrix.co.nz>**

*Eko Theatre is developing a participatory arts project within the southern suburbs of Wellington; Newtown, Berhamphore and Island Bay. The Southern Corridor Project (working title) will bring together the local Maori community with another local ethnic community and an artistic team including Director (Heather Timms), Maori Advisor & Composition (Mihaere Kirby), Producer (Lisa Maule), Dramaturg, Performance Designer, Photographer, Sound Designer & Composer. The central concern of the project is the personal perspectives of tangata whenua and other ethnic groups within the community on identity and their relationship with one another and the land. The participating communities will drive the content of the new theatrical work and the artistic team will frame, shape and realise the artistic vision. Arts Access will umbrella the project and currently Eko Theatre has several funding applications in the pipeline, is working to research and develop sponsorship partners and is working on ongoing community engagement. Heather, Mihaere and Lisa talk about the project; its focus, inspiration and way of working, their involvement and Eko Theatre's kaupapa.*

*Mihaere:* Ngaro noa aku tau i te huakanga ata, te whakarewatanga mai i tera ki maumahara, paakinikini ai te mamae, maringiringi ai te wai i te kamo, i muri nei, taiaha ha taiaha ha.

E nga mana e nga reo e nga karangarangatanga maha tena koutou katoa.

He nui ake nga taonga maori I kite e au, ki roto I tenei kaupapa, a, ko te Kotahitanga o nga tauwi ki nga maori, kia whakawhanaunga, kia honoa, kia piri kia tata, ano nei ki te whakamarama atu ki nga tauwi anei matou a maori e tiaki e manaaki e whakatau nei i a koutou ki runga I to tatou whenua.

Mauri ora

*Heather:* The drive to set up Eko Theatre came from a desire to better clarify my practice and vision. Eko aims to bring into the public arena, through artistic excellence, the voice of people; marginalised communities, communities experiencing conflict or people involved in critical national issues. The inspiration for this inaugural project has grown from many things, from a bigger perspective it draws from my background working with participatory processes. More immediately it has grown from my experiences and conversations while with Te Rakau Hua O Te Wao Tapu and working with migrant communities here in Wellington with Voice Arts Trust. At its core is my belief that excellence in participatory arts practice creates an important platform for discussion, dynamic community development and exciting new artistic work.

*Lisa:* The subject matter for performance being driven by a wide variety of people really attracts me. Increasingly I am interested in how voices can be heard and how a group dynamic can be very rich – in fact more so when focussed under quite specific aims or methods. In Heather's pilot model of creating work there is a rigour in planning that can allow so many possibilities. I love that people can be involved in a small ways – taking some photos, having a chat – this involvement can trigger the essence of the art with the creative decision making team.

*Heather:* Yes, because people engage differently we want to offer options as to how this can happen; photography, performance, visual art, sound recording, community meetings. Keeping this process dynamic

is also really important so integral to the community processes is mentorship across a range of creative roles; building capacity and creating alternative pathways for emerging artists. Then all the material gathered in the community phase will contribute to the devising process and the community will view and feed into the work as it grows.

*Mihaere:* In all phases of the project we will be working within a Tikanga Maori framework. It sets the parameters, the guidelines and structures, from a Maori view and perspective. These structures keep us all safe, Maori and non-Maori. And these structures are transferable to any context, engaging with community or building a performance work, it's really no different. For the new artistic work it means that essential cultural artistic forms will communicate the core values of te Ao Maori and these are inclusive of all.

*Lisa:* I also want to use that term 'safe' that Mihaere refers to. I think a lot of that comes from having a perspective that is wider than the specific task at hand. It especially means that relationships between people are carefully considered. Currently we are building and seeking partnerships with people who share our values.

*Heather:* Eko's artistic vision is to play around with the way we can work inter-art. In this project we will be marrying the new theatrical work with two visual installations that give insights into the participating communities and the project's processes.

*Lisa:* It's really going to take over the world this project (we will start local...). Because the end product is varied it can be picked up in different ways by different people. Ok so words like product and project are not very descriptive. But the product is both the resulting work and the process used to create it. This pilot project will possibly introduce some new perspectives on 'indigenous' to some people and it might foster pride in others. Heather and I think the show will be visual and poetic. I believe there is an intelligent audience for this who can see the value of using arts to dialogue around a more inclusive New Zealand culture. First step Whanganui-a-Tara - then onwards (ki Te Ao!).

*Mihaere:* Hei iringa i te kete korero, he whakatauki mutunga maaku.

Nou te rourou noku te rourou ka ora tatou katoa.

## The Making of *The Seven Ages of Man*(kind)

*The Seven Ages of Man* (Adam Concert Hall, 4-5 October 2008) was a culturally diverse performance incorporating new work by three composers, Balinese and Javanese gamelan orchestras, Randai dance, Balinese puppetry techniques and New Zealand singers and actors. The motto of the republic of Indonesia is 'Diversity in Unity' and the performance was an experiment in embodying this.

In this devised work, the starting points were: Shakespeare's text, "All the world's a stage"; the people chosen



for the team - three composers to create nine pieces of music with two gamelan orchestras, three NZ actors and one Balinese actor, the director (me) and the producer; the space the Adam Concert Room; and the time of one month from start to finish.

The musicians and actors rehearsed separately and it was not until the final week that everyone was gathered together in the ACR to create the montage that had been imagined in my mind. Working within limitations creates certain solutions and compromises. Choices have to be made. Early on one of these choices was to use Randai dance form as the structural basis for the performance. Randai is the popular folk theatre of the Minangkabau people of West Sumatra, a form that has evolved from silek martial arts, storytelling, folk songs, music and acting and is performed in the round, a dance between



each of the scenes. A new Randai group was forming as we began rehearsals and I asked the actors to join and learn the four dances that were used in the performance.

The music was originally thought of as interludes to be played between the scenes, however, some of these interludes became the major contributor for a scene, while others remained as interludes, often accompanied by the shadow puppetry of the gunungan. which represents the sacred centre around which the play of divine and demonic forces develops. The puppet is in

the shape of a mountain with winged doors to represent a 'passing-through' from this world to the supernatural world in which the drama takes place.

The text was sung and recited in four languages - Javanese, Balinese, Mingangkakau and English. The performance began and ended with death, representing the cyclical nature of life, played in Butoh acting style.

Fragments of other text were inserted, for instance text from *Romeo and Juliet* for the scene of the Lover – text which focused on the diversity of the performers: "Tis but thy name that is my enemy – O, be some other name! What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet".

In devising the work, the idea of ceremonies or rituals throughout one's life was a starting point - birth, baptism, initiation rites on first day of school, circumcision, wedding, war, death - which in some cultures are marked with more ritual than in others.

The School Boy scene represented the first day at school, initiation; secretly attaching a monkey tail to the back of a class mate is a common game played in Bali – laughing and making monkey sounds and actions to tease a class fellow. This scene was brought to a close with the kecak – the monkey dance – which in Balinese dance tradition is a highly rehearsed and practised performance form, and becomes a battle between two groups of monkeys. The form was adapted and used to emphasise the issue of bullying which is rampant in our schools.

In other scenes there was a lovely collaboration between the Balinese and Kiwi actors, sharing their different performance forms. For Nyoman this was a relatively new experience – after being trained in traditional performance styles in Bali, to work within the form but extending it, and something which gave him pleasure.

For the scene on Justice, I chose to incorporate text from *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, juxtaposing the ironies of Brecht and Shakespeare. The scene also reflected court cases between parents over custody of their beloved children, the children caught in the cross fire.

The action from the first scene reversed at the end, in strict order, back to the single gunungan, and the revolving shadows on the upper gallery of the man and woman holding a globe between them - sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

Lilicherie McGregor  
Photos from the  
performance by Robert Catto



## Cristina Wistari 1945-2008

When Jill emailed me in July with the news that Cristina Wistari had died, it was a big shock. I had known that Cristina had been sick with typhoid fever in January, but she had made a full recovery and I had last heard from her in May when she was about to go on tour in Europe. We were making plans for her to come to New Zealand later this year, to teach and perform and for me to collaborate with her on her solo show. Cristina had asked me to work on her solo when we were both at Transit V in January 2007; she had sent me her texts and we were finding ways to spend some time together to work on it.

Originally from Italy, Cristina studied classical Indian dance in India and later became fascinated with Balinese dance. She lived in Bali since 1983, where she trained in the traditional Topeng style of dance and studied other forms including Gambuh, the most ancient dance drama form in Bali. In 1993 she initiated the Gambuh Preservation Project and she published a book on Gambuh in 2000.



Throughout this time, she regularly returned to Europe where she taught workshops, collaborated with various artists and theatre companies and participated in the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA).

I first met Cristina at Transit III in 2001; she was there with Bali's only all-female gamelan, and at later festivals she performed and taught with the Balinese singer and puppeteer Ni Nyoman Candri. Only in 2007 did I see her present her own creative work - the beginnings of her solo show. It was fascinating to see someone who had devoted so much of her life to mastering incredibly precise traditional forms now clearly speaking in her own voice. It's so unfair that she did not have the opportunity to continue this work. However, at Transit VI in 2009, I will meet with her student Cristina Galbiati and Rossella Viti, who Cristina had asked to direct her solo, with the intention to make something from the material Cristina left with us.

Cristina died peacefully in her home town of Milan on 19 July, having been diagnosed with cancer only a few weeks earlier. She is greatly missed.

Helen Varley Jamieson

(Tributes to Cristina can be read online at [www.themagdalenaproject.org/archive/cristina\\_wistari.htm](http://www.themagdalenaproject.org/archive/cristina_wistari.htm))

## Transit VI

women on the periphery  
festival of women's performance

6-16 August 2009

Odin Teatret, Denmark.

More information: join the Magdalena Project  
email list or keep an eye on:

[www.themagdalenaproject.org](http://www.themagdalenaproject.org)

## Lorae in London

Playwright Lorae Parry has recently had a season of her play *Kate and Mrs Jones* at the Pacific Playhouse. The play is a reworking of her script *Frontwomen*, which has been produced several times in New Zealand since 1989.

*Kate and Mrs Jones*, set in the run-up to the 2008 NZ elections, is "a comedy, a love-story, and a reflection on the problems women face on the path to power."

Lorae has established the Shebang Theatre Company specifically to present New Zealand, Australian and Pacific theatre in London. Recent productions include *Fucking Parasites* by Ninna Tersman, *The Pioneers* featuring the beautiful voice of Angeline Conaghan, and *Bloomsbury Women & The Wild Colonial Girl* - a collection of readings focussing on Katherine Mansfield's relationships with women. Visit <http://web.me.com/lorae-parry/Shebang/> for more information.

## The Open Page

new issue:

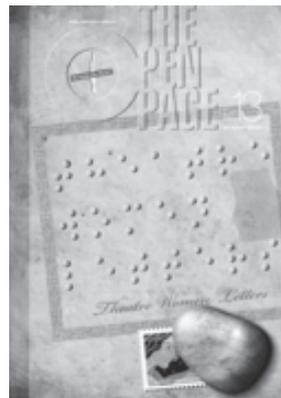
**Theatre - Women - Letters**

[www.theopenpage.org](http://www.theopenpage.org)

limited copies available through

Magdalena Aotearoa

"Letters are personal and secret forms of communication, characteristics which enable us to hear the voices of some seemingly silent women on the past and present. The design of individual letters and of different alphabets, seen as paintings or graphic design, emerge in this issue as action, inspiration, sound, awareness, availability and rhythm to emphasise the individuality, age, tradition and cultural circumstances of each author."



Julia Varley

**To register for Recharge: The Gathering 2009, please complete this form and return it with your cheque to the Magdalena Aotearoa Trust, P.O. Box 27-300, Wellington.**

*Don't want to destroy your newsletter? Visit our web site, <http://magdalena.actrix.co.nz> where you can either download a copy of this form, or complete an online registration (you will still need to post us the payment, unless by a miracle we have our online payments set up!)*

Name: .....

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Phone number(s): .....

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- Full participation (Thursday 9th to Tuesday 14th)
- Day participation – tick which days you will attend:

- Friday 10th
- Saturday 11th
- Sunday 12th
- Monday 13th
- Tuesday 14th

The fee includes all workshops, panels, presentations, and evening entertainment, as well as morning/afternoon teas and lunches. Dinners will be at local restaurants, paid for individually. NOTE: if you propose a work-in-progress and it is selected, a lesser fee will apply; but please pay the full fee now and you will be refunded the difference.

	Early bird (before 27 Feb 2009)	Late bird (after 27 Feb 2009)
Waged - full	\$300	\$350
Unwaged - full	\$150	\$180
Waged - day fee	\$80 per day	\$100 per day
Unwaged - day fee	\$50 per day	\$60 per day

Cheque for \$ ..... enclosed (payable to Magdalena Aotearoa Trust; GST receipts will be provided).

Special needs - please indicate if you have any of the following special needs:

Vegetarian  Vegan  Other dietary needs (specify): .....

Other special needs (note – the venue is wheelchair accessible):

.....

Do you require assistance in finding billet accommodation? (no promises but we will try to find you a billet)

.....

**If you have a proposal for the programme, please provide the details on a separate sheet.**

# PLAYING TRUE 2009

## RESIDENTIAL SUMMER TRAINING INTENSIVE TUTUKAKA COAST, NORTHLAND 4 – 11 JAN 2009

**Playing True** is a workshop designed to explore 'living' physical and vocal actions. This inaugural Summer Training Intensive will focus on: Physical and Vocal Training; Contemporary Dance; and Devising Performance. Led by internationally trained tutors who are leaders in their fields in Aotearoa NZ:

- Kilda Northcott (Bipeds Productions)
  - Madeline McNamara (Acting Up, Magdalena Aotearoa)
  - Lilicherie McGregor (Kore Theatre)
- + invited guest tutors

### Limited to 20 participants

The aim of this 7 day workshop is to develop the performer's physical, vocal and ensemble skills. It is a training both personal and professional. Begin the year by shaping your craft and meeting fellow artists.

Marae style accommodation, meals provided, 100m to beach. Open to all levels of ability, to energise and extend you for the year ahead.

7 day Summer Intensive fee \$700  
(\$675 early bird rate if paid prior to 30 Nov 08)

Registration forms available from:

koretheatre@gmail.com

Dr Lilicherie McGregor

2031 Ngunguru Road, RD3, Whangarei, 0173

phone 09 955 1170 or mobile 021 2 962 910



Sally Rodwell's monologues, *Gonne Strange Charity*, can be purchased from Magdalena Aotearoa for \$25 (includes postage & packaging). All proceeds go to Ruby Brunton. Send cheques along with postal address to Magdalena Aotearoa Trust, PO Box 27-300, Wellington.

# BLOW FESTIVAL

7-22 November, Massey University Wellington

A showcase of art and design by tertiary students and staff. Organised by the College of Creative Arts at Massey University, with contributions from the New Zealand School of Music, Toi Whakaari New Zealand Drama School, the New Zealand School of Dance, Massey University's School of English and Media Studies and Weta Workshop.

The performance programme will be of interest to theatre-goers, and there is a lecture by scenographer Dorita Hannah, looking at "the complexities of trans-disciplinary practice and inter-cultural performance".

For more information, visit [www.blowfestival.co.nz](http://www.blowfestival.co.nz)

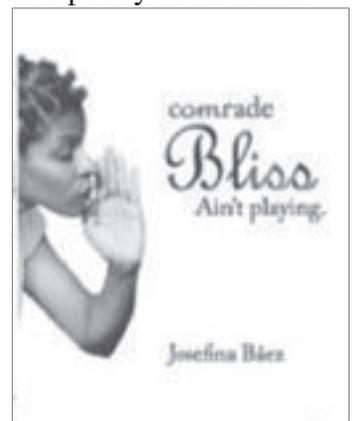
**BLOW.08**  
Nga hau e wha

*Jessica Aaltonen in The Seven Ages of Man;*  
*photo Robert Catto.*



***Comrade, Bliss ain't playing*** - a new book by Josefina Baez: performance poetry of an urban devotee; a dominican-york inner journal. Art work by Paulina Cortés.

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