

# Arts Grants 2016 | Round 1 Application

Date generated: 2/11/2016

Application Status: Processed

## Applicant details

Primary Applicant:	Theatreview
Primary Contact Person:	John Smythe (Wellington)

## What: the idea

Project title:	Theatreview editorial and website manage	
Brief description:	Towards Managing Editor, Associate Editor and Web Master fees and Web hosting overheads.	
Artform:	Theatre	Funding type: General Arts Fund
Strategic outcome:	New Zealanders experience high-quality arts	

Explain the central idea or kaupapa of your project and how your project will deliver to the Creative New Zealand strategic outcome that you have selected above. You will be assessed on how strong and how well-developed your idea is and how well your project will deliver to the selected outcome:

If relevant to your project you should also explain:

- ☐ how the practice and results of the project are culturally diverse OR based on Mātauranga Māori OR based on Kaupapa Pasifika.\*
- ☐ the way in which your project is innovative in the creation and/or production of the work.
- ☐ how your project benefits community arts participation.

\* Required for all Pacific Arts Fund, Māori Arts Fund, Kava New Leaders Grants and Toi Ake Fund applications.

Theatreview: The New Zealand Performing Arts Review and Directory is New Zealand's pre-eminent review site for professional performing arts nationwide. Theatreview's mission is to review the full array of forms and content within the culturally diverse spectrum of New Zealand professional performing arts practice in order to:

- inform prospective audiences through timely Reviews (and the Coming Up facility)
- provide informed feedback to practitioners
- welcome audience and practitioner commentary, feedback and debate, and
- build a comprehensive and readily searchable heritage archive of professional performing arts practice in NZ.

Theatreview reaches out into smaller regions to review local professional productions, touring productions and the ever-growing regional festivals.

Often Theatreview is the only publication to review the work of emerging artists, Fringe shows, return /developed seasons and successive seasons of touring productions. This keeps the site topical by informing visitors to Theatreview what is playing where and when. It also offers a regional perspective to shows that original in the cities. And our reviews are not constrained by arbitrary word limits. We also post links to other media reviews (provided they are published under reviewers' real names).

Over its first 10 years (given content dating from January 2001) Theatreview's reviewing reach has grown as follows (figures are for calendar years):

2006: 233 reviews | 2007: 314 | 2008: 359 | 2009: 448 | 2010: 530 | 2011: 568 ...

2012: commissioned 623 reviews of 569 productions;

2013: commissioned 832 reviews of 681 productions (published 1,127 reviews in total);

2014: commissioned 813 reviews of 719 productions (published 1,082 reviews in total);

2015: commissioned 840 reviews of 680 productions (published 1,075 reviews in total).

Theatreview seeks to maintain a healthy and sustainable operation which accurately reflects professional performing arts practice from year to year. If that output increases, so will ours; if it shrinks, so will ours. What does grow, however, is the heritage resource of reviews, commentary, news and debate. It is a stipulation of the planned re-design and upgrade that the heritage resource will remain accessible.

Theatreview has created a nationwide sense of community within the performing arts world, being the hub of performing arts critical discourse, a virtual meeting place for the performing arts community and the 'go to' place for people from diverse sectors seeking informed commentary on current and past productions. Social media links to Theatreview through Twitter updates from our honorary Tweeter (Kris Wehipeihana) and Facebook updates from connected individuals spreading the word in their own communities.

International seasons of New Zealand works are also reviewed wherever possible – e.g. The Edinburgh Festival and Fringe (2013; 2014; 2015). NZ productions staged in London and New York have also been reviewed, including the 2015 La Mama season.

The site is in constant use by practitioners, the general public, politicians and their advisers, teachers, students, researchers and a wide range of arts and creative industries organisations. Producers and directors refer to the Theatreview record when casting new productions and creating production teams. The website averages 11,500 unique visitors per month, visiting an average of 37,972 pages per month (Google Analytics). There is a strong demand for its work to continue and the heritage resource to grow.

Based on 2015, if we paid a modest \$200 per review, the commissioned reviews would cost about \$168,000 per annum. This is the value of professional work donated by the reviewers. (See 'People' below.)

April 2nd 2016 will be the 10th anniversary of Theatreview's launch (although it went live with content from January 2006). A process is currently

underway for commissioning a re-design and upgrade of the site, for which separate funding will be sought (conditional on this application securing Theatreview's viability from 1 July 2016 for at least another year). One result is that we are re-evaluating the Performing Arts Directory (PAD) feature in its current form. Although a number of organisations have maintained membership, subscriptions have dwindled among individual practitioners. The opportunity to donate by way of showing support and appreciation will remain (although many performing artists already see themselves as 'in kind' sponsors of the arts).

To inform this project we commissioned a Theatreview User Survey in January 2016. This has provided some very valuable information and insights.

[Attached: Letter of support from David O'Donnell, Comments for Website Users, Summary of support 2011-2015.]

## How: the process

Start date for project:

1/07/2016

End date for project:

30/06/2017

Project location(s):

National

Explain where, when and how you plan to deliver the project:

John Smythe (who trades as Words for Action) is the founder and Managing Editor of Theatreview. He works from his home office in Wellington (which he provides to Theatreview free of charge) to manage all administrative aspects of the Theatreview operation and manage theatre reviews nationwide. He:

- receives, edits and uploads production information and images;
- schedules theatre shows for review;
- commissions and liaises with theatre reviewers;
- receives, edits and publishes theatre reviews;
- receives, formats and publishes relevant news items, adding teasers and links under 'Headlines' and 'Deadlines';
- deals with all enquiries re Theatreview operations (including the NZ Performing Arts Directory)
- applies for funding as required;
- supports the Associate Editor as and when required.

Raewyn Whyte (who operates as All My Own Words) is the Associate Editor Auckland (Dance & Comedy). She works from her home office in Auckland (which she provides to Theatreview free of charge). She:

- receives, edits and uploads dance production information and images;
- schedules dance shows for review;
- commissions and liaises with dance reviewers;
- receives, edits and publishes dance reviews;
- attends to Auckland issues as required and appropriate;
- applies for funding as required;
- supports the Managing Editor as and when required.

Sascha Monteiro (PureJS), the Webmaster, remains on hand to undertake routine maintenance, troubleshoot any technical issues as they arise and improve the site as required.

[See further details, over, and letters of acceptance and résumés, attached.]

The pool of voluntary reviewers are mostly experienced practitioners with tertiary qualifications in the related areas.

## Who: the people

Tell us about the key people/organisations involved in the project:

Add a new record for each person/organisation.

### Name of key individuals or organisations

John Smythe
Raewyn Whyte
Sascha Monteiro
Reviewers
Kris Wehipeihana
Audience Members

### Brief background information relevant to the project

JJohn Smythe, Managing Editor and Theatre Editor has a Bachelor of Dramatic Arts from the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) in Sydney and has previously been a theatre reviewer for the National Business Review, Theatre Australia Magazine, The Australian, The Melbourne Times. His most recent play, <i>Where There's a Will</i> , was produced at BATS Theatre in April 2015. His non-fiction book titles include <i>Downstage Upfront</i> (VUP, Nov 2004) and <i>The Plays of Bruce Mason – a survey</i> (VUP & Playmarket, Nov 2015).
Raewyn Whyte, Associate Editor Auckland (Dance & Comedy), has an MA from the School for Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University, Canada; major in dance criticism; thesis topic: Writing dancing - the scope and limits of contemporary modern dance criticism. She also she manages NZ Dance News Information Service (unfunded) and contributes to DANZ Magazine.
Sascha Monteiro, the Webmaster, is skilled in Java, PL/SQL, Servlet, JSP, PHP, HTML, CSS, SOAP, REST Linux, Oracle, Apex, Tomcat, VMWare, MySQL.
Theatreview has a dedicated team of experienced reviewers nationwide, including in many small regions (see attached list). - Most have practical performing arts experience (unlike many print media critics) - Most have relevant tertiary qualifications or are undergraduates in related areas. - Many are lecturers, teachers or post graduate students.  New reviewers are recruited as and when required by putting the call out through the existing network of reviewers, the Theatreview Audience Member database and social media.  All Theatreview reviewers share a passion for the performing arts and are generous enough to contribute to the critical discourse for two complimentary tickets. (The Trust would love to pay everyone properly but has agreed we can only do so when a funding source is secure and sustainable.)
Our honorary Tweeter is Kris Wehipeihana (manager, Nola Millar Library, Toi Whakaari).
Theatreview's Audience Members are at liberty – and welcome – to engage in 'conversation' and debate via the Comments threads and the Forum facility. This generates healthy dialogue on a range of topics and is known to generate robust debate among undergraduates (see David O'Donnell's letter of support).

## How much: the budget

Amount requested:

Total cost of project:

Have you applied for funding for this project from another source?

Have you received funding for this project from another source?

## Budget Notes

<p>'Total cost' + the total value of the project (including what is volunteered).</p> <p>In the relatively recent past, funding from CNZ has been enhanced by 'top-up' funding from Infinity Foundation (\$3k towards fees for Mar, Apr 2015 – prep for comedy festival); NZ Community Trust (\$10k towards fees for Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec 2015 – meeting the shortfall in Managing Editor fees); Wellington City Council Arts &amp; Culture Fund (\$2,500 towards fees for Feb, Mar 2016 – prep for NZ Fringe &amp; NZ Festival).</p> <p>A Quick Response application is currently lodged with Foundation North to add \$3,300 towards the Associate Editor Auckland's operating costs.</p> <p>As in the past, towards making up the shortfalls (as per the budget) we</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- have applied to the Infinity Foundation for NZ Comedy Festival 2016 funding;</li><li>- will apply to NZ Community Trust for the balance of the Managing Editor's fee (after the result of this application is known – note: this is a very tenuous source of funding given their focus on sport.)</li></ul>
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# Support Material

The following information has been added to this application:

Support material type	Name/description	Web-link
Project budget	CNZ Project Funding Budget - Theatreview	
Support material for 'What: the idea'	Letter of support from David O'Donnell	
Support material for 'What: the idea'	Comments from Theatreview website users.	
Support material for 'What: the idea'	Support summaries for Theatreview at March 2016	
Support material for 'Who: the people'	Raewyn Whyte availability	
Support material for 'Who: the people'	John Smythe availability	
Support material for 'Who: the people'	Sascha Monteiro - purejs - letter of acceptance	

## Sign

### Declaration

Subject to its statutory obligations, Creative New Zealand treats all information in funding applications as confidential. The personal information provided is used solely for the purpose of administering and assessing the application. (Contemporary popular music applicants should note that Creative New Zealand, NZ On Air, the New Zealand Music Commission and Te Mangai Paho share information on applications to ensure that there is no duplication of funding) We hold any personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act 1993 and, in particular, the Privacy Principles contained in that Act. Personal information is stored in a secure environment accessible only by authorised persons for legitimate purposes. You have the right to access your personal information and ask for the information to be updated or corrected where necessary.

If you are offered a grant, one of the conditions is that Creative New Zealand has the right to publish your name, a description of the project, and the amount of funding. We may also include a brief description of your project in our media releases and publications, including on the Creative New Zealand website. Creative New Zealand is subject to the Official Information Act 1982 and we may have to release information under that Act to third parties if requested. Creative New Zealand is also subject to the requirements of the Public Records Act 2005; this includes seeking permission from the Chief Archivist to destroy records or transfer records to Archives New Zealand.

Signing this application

I confirm that I am logged in to the Creative New Zealand portal and signing this application as myself, and not on behalf of any other individual.

Signed by:

Applicant	Signee	Date signed
Smythe, John : Theatreview	John Smythe	25/02/2016