

MEET OUR GUEST CURATORS 2020 TEACHERS RESOURCE

CONTENTS

Lemi Ponifasio

Laurie Anderson

Bret McKenzie

Provocations and
Activities

What if we invited three incredible artists to help curate the Festival?

Traditionally arts festival programmes are selected by a single artistic director. The new model for the New Zealand Festival of the Arts brings in three artists to curate: Lemi Ponifasio, Laurie Anderson and Bret McKenzie. This new model offers students a diverse and rich array of work to experience, as well as to the opportunity to investigate what a festival is, can be, and who is it for.

“Our new Guest Curator model means the 2020 Festival has been shaped by three strikingly different artists – every week will have a different feel and flavour. The result is a programme of works that are more varied, surprising and inspiring than ever before. This Festival brings you arts that celebrate honesty, bravery and splendour and will bring an injection of creativity and debate into New Zealand.” Marnie Karmelita, Creative Director, New Zealand Festival of the Arts

Read, Listen and Watch, more about our guest curators:

[Watch the Festival trailer and get a taste for this year's programme](#)

[Sam Brooks from the Spinoff speaks with the guest curators about their unique visions](#)

[Listen to Laurie Anderson talk about her selection and the new format on RNZ](#)

**New Zealand
Festival** OF THE ARTS

Wellington
Community Trust
supporting community initiatives

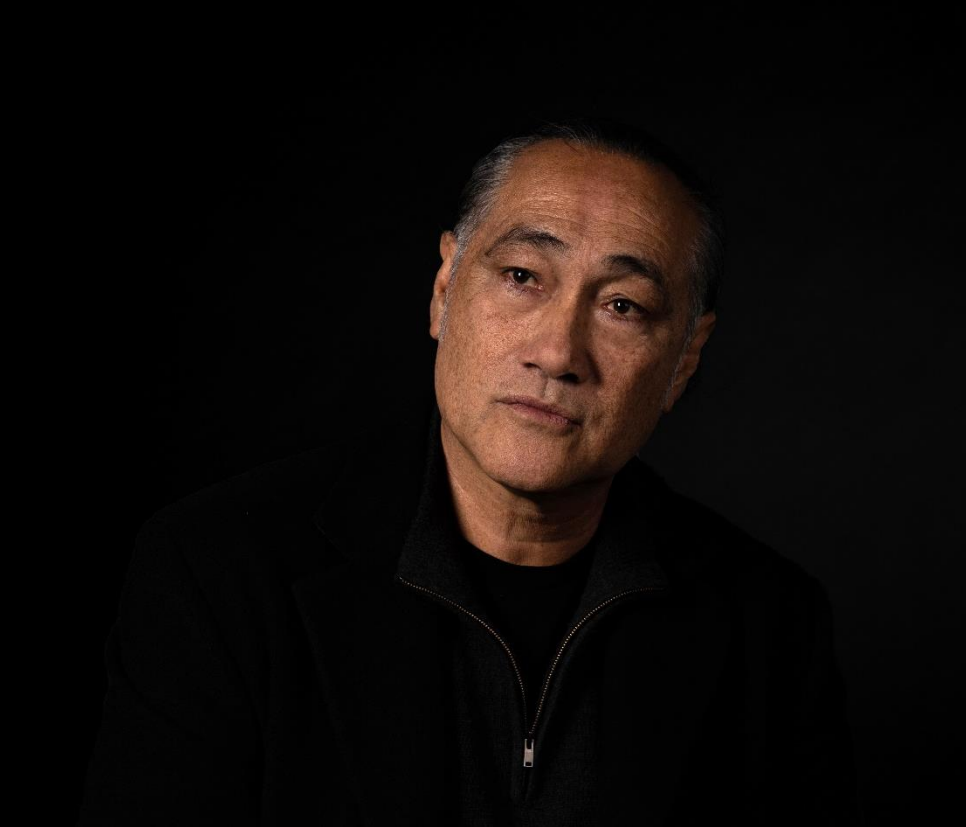


Photo: Harry A'Court

LEMI PONIFASIO

Director and Choreographer

Lemi (Sāmoa/ Aotearoa) is a sought-after theatre, opera, dance and visual artist, who has staged his ground-breaking works at prestigious arts festivals such as the Avignon Festival (2014, 2017), the Ruhr Triennale (2010, 2014) and the Venice Biennale (2003, 2007, 2015). For the 2020 New Zealand Festival of the Arts he brings together a group of seminal artists and collaborators, some of whom are long-time friends, including the legendary American director Peter Sellars, dancer and choreographer Faustin Linyekula (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and the soprano Racha Rizk (Syria).

The Festival begins with [Chosen and Beloved](#), a remarkable live orchestral experience, created by Lemi for the opening of the Festival with New Zealand Symphony Orchestra joined by Lemi's company MAU, who also perform the world premiere of Lemi's major new work, [Jerusalem](#).

A festival within the Festival, [Te Ata](#) will be held in Porirua – a city where nearly 45% of the population is under 25 years old. *Te Ata* invites young people to take the lead creatively, engaging in creative conversations with local communities and international artists.

“Arts festivals can stimulate a nation’s culture,” says Lemi. “Just as agriculture celebrates the planting and harvest, arts festivals enact the planting of new ideas and traditions, which, if tended, will grow into the cultures of the future.”

Join Lemi and sow the seeds to cultivate new cultural forms of life, and through this encounter with art take the chance to reimagine ourselves and our place together in the world.

Watch, Listen and Read:

[Watch performances by Lemi's company MAU on their YouTube channel](#)

[Read an interview with Lemi with DANZ \(Dance Aotearoa New Zealand\)](#)

SchoolFest events

Te Ata Porirua. The following events are part of the festival within the Festival:

O Matou Malaga, Our Voyage

Sat 22 Feb, 2.30pm

To'ona'i - Te Ata Picnic Sun 23

Feb, 1pm, Free

FLEXN Mon 24 Feb, 6.30pm

Goodbye Naughton Wed 26 Feb, 7pm

Jerusalem

Opera House

Sat 22 Feb, 8pm & Sun 23 Feb, 5pm

In Search of Dinozord

Soundings Theatre, Te Papa

Thu 27 & Fri 28 Feb, 7.30pm

MAU: House of Night and day

Free, booking not required

24 Feb – 7 Jun

Toi Art, Level 4, Te Papa



SchoolFest events

The Calling

Lower Hutt Events Centre
Wed 4 Mar, 6.30pm

Lou Reed Drones

Lower Hutt Events Centre, Free
Wed 4 Mar, 8 – 10pm
Thu 5 Mar, 6 – 10pm

Here Comes the Ocean

Michael Fowler Centre
Fri 6 Mar, 8pm

Concert for Dogs

Odlins Plaza
Free
Sat 7 Mar, 12.30pm

Photo: Ebru Yildiz

LAURIE ANDERSON

Musician and Multimedia Artist

Laurie Anderson (United States) has been described by *The New Yorker* as “America’s premier conceptual art/pop-music philosopher-monologist”, with collaboration also at the heart of her eclectic and boundary-pushing artistic practice. Laurie has created work with Kronos Quartet and Philip Glass, was an artist-in-residence at NASA, and collaborated most famously with her partner in art and life, the late Lou Reed from The Velvet Underground.

The 21 years in which the famous pair tangled minds and hearts are evident in [Here Comes the Ocean](#), a concert where Lou Reed's and Laurie Anderson's words and music are interpreted by an ensemble of musicians. Reed's presence will also be apparent in the installation [Lou Reed Drones](#), which features his guitars arranged into a sonically awesome feedback loop.

Laurie has a poignant personal connection to Aotearoa, where her niece lost her life in a traffic accident after relocating here. Returning to New Zealand will mark a kind of reconnection, and Laurie dedicates her improvisational and incantatory work [The Calling](#) to Thea Anderson.

Laurie sees every work of live art as a creation made as much by the audience as the artist – so be there to play your role in this extraordinary series with one of the most celebrated contemporary artists in the world today.

Watch, Read and Listen:

[Watch Laurie talk about her role as the Guest Curator at the New Zealand Festival of the Arts](#)

[Read about Laurie Anderson's stint as NASA's first Artist in Residence](#)

[Watch and listen to Lou Reed Drones at the Grace Cathedral in San Francisco](#)

[An interview, plus five sound works by Laurie Anderson, one per decade](#)



Photo: Sara Tansy

BRET MCKENZIE

Comedian, Actor and Composer

As you'd expect, music and comedy influence Bret McKenzie's (Aotearoa) programme, it's filled with hearty laughs, stinging satire and soaring melodies. Headlining the week is a theatrical coup he has scored for Wellington: a work in progress production of a new National Theatre (UK) musical adaptation of George Saunders' darkly funny [The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil](#). You'll see Phil before the rest of the world and can say "I was there when..."

Bret wants families to come out in force for the Festival. He'll be taking his kids for an arts adventure on the Kāpiti Coast and around Wellington's green spaces in search of the [enchanted miniature huts](#) created by artists Kemi Niko & Co. Free for three weeks, this is a must-do whānau activity – take the train, the bus or walk for a great day out.

From the Netherlands comes the virtuosic musical comedy group [Släpstick](#), with a show perfect for all ages. They were a hit at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and their hilarious five-star show, raved about the world over, comes to New Zealand for the first time.

In the 2020 Festival's final week, lovers and dreamers of all ages will see their city transformed by a touch of McKenzie magic.

Watch, Read and Listen:

[Watch Bret talk about his role as Guest Curator for the New Zealand Festival of the Arts](#)

[Explore Bret's diverse body of work at the NZ on Screen website](#)

[Read an interview with Bret on the Guardian](#)

[Bret McKenzie on working with Kermit, Miss Piggy and the gang on the latest Muppet movie](#)

Listen to Bret's music with [Flight of the Conchords](#) and 'Life's a Happy Song' from [The Muppets Movie](#)

SchoolFest events

Urban Hut Club

Free, Locations along the Kāpiti Coast
21 Feb – 15 Mar

The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil

Shed 6
Tues 10 & Wed 11 Mar 7.30pm

Släpstick

Opera House
Fri 13 Mar, 7pm

Young Minds Take the Library

Free, National Library
Sat 14 Mar, 10am – 3pm

PROVOCATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

A curator selects, interprets and presents performances, artists and events that will feature in an exhibition or festival. It can be important to decide on a common theme or purpose when curating to help select and join the events together for an audience.

How would you curate your own festival week? Is it a music festival, film festival, visual art festival, theatre festival or all the above? What is your theme, what thread holds the performances and artworks together?

Surrounding each curator's selection are a selection of provocations, designed to lead us further into concepts surrounding the performances they chose for their week.

Choose one of these provocations to respond to, in writing, a performance, or visual art.

LEMI

How can artists lead in constructing a kinder, more caring and truthful world?

Are you listened to and heard by older people? What are you saying that isn't being heard?

How do we heal ourselves?

How do we heal our society?

How can you find peace amidst extreme love and hatred?

Can our dreams help shape reality?

LAURIE

What would you take to the moon?

Has a place ever beckoned you?

What's the difference between sound, noise and music?

What music does your dog want to hear?

BRET

Where is a special place you escape to?

What makes an artist original?

What role do you as the audience have in making new artworks?

What does collaboration look like? What can we create when we work together?

If you were to curate a week of the festival – what question would you want to ask?

Need something more? Contact your SchoolFest team with any questions about the performance.

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