

NELSON FRINGE FESTIVAL

5 - 14 March 2026

www.nelsonfringe.co.nz

Get your Fringe on with theatre, comedy, cabaret,
music, poetry, improv, kids shows and more.

NELSON FRINGE

5 - 14 MARCH 2026

You can find more details for all shows, general info and links to buy tickets at
www.nelsonfringe.co.nz

HEY – ARE YOU FRINGE CURIOUS?

Does your life need a bit of a shake-up? Are you craving a distraction? Desperate for a laugh? On the look-out for something new? You, my friend, need Fringe. We guarantee that our shows are nothing like you've ever seen before (except for the one that was here in 2023). We promise you originality, weirdness, the sublime and even some stupendousness.

Welcome to Nelson Fringe – where (some of) your dreams (might) come true!

We've got theatre, music, comedy, improv, dance, puppetry, poetry and oh, so much more. This year is our biggest yet with around 60 shows in 7 venues, spread across 10 days, with all tickets just \$18 + booking fee (kids shows are even cheaper!). All our shows are about an hour long.

We've gathered together a fantastical line-up of locals, folk from around Aotearoa, and from across the world! We've got new shows, whizz-bang touring shows, and a heap of shows that will be seen at the magical trifecta of fringe festivals in Welly, Dunners and Nelson.

All we need is you.

Fringe is about life on the edge – it's stories and laughs and music that is happening right now. It's your chance to indulge your curiosity.

SOME WORDS FROM OUR LEADERS!

Nelson looks forward to hosting artists from around New Zealand and the world as well as those from our own creative region during the 2026 Fringe Festival from 5-14 March. For 2026, this popular, annual festival has close to 60 events over 10 days in seven venues, providing great entertainment, adding buzz to our streets, reinforcing Nelson's identity as a creative city and supporting our hospitality sector.

I encourage Nelsonians to get out of their comfort zone and experience something new and different. A big thanks to the artists, event organisers, venue managers, volunteers and sponsors. Let's enjoy this showcase of theatre, dance, comedy and musical performances.

**Hon Dr Nick Smith, Mayor of Nelson
Nelson City Council | Te Kaunihera o Whakatū**

2026 is the 10th showing of Nelson Fringe and this year we bring you a wider range of performances than ever before; more choice across a range of disciplines from Theatre through Stand Up to Music, Kids, Dance and more.

We have performers who are just starting out on their creative journey, to those with years of experience. There are shows that have travelled the world and those where you can see the first ever performance. Shows from your next-door neighbours alongside shows from as far afield as Africa and India.

When you look through this programme, some descriptions will be easy to understand and some will puzzle you, maybe you won't be entirely clear what you are being invited to – that's what Fringe is all about. For little more than the price of a glass of wine and an hour of your time, Fringe is about taking a risk and seeing something different.

Giles Burton, Festival Director

CONTACT US

FOLLOW US

info@nelsonfringe.co.nz



FESTIVAL 2026

FRINGE HQ

Exciting News! This year, we're setting up a Fringe HQ at Refinery ArtSpace from Monday 2 to Saturday 14 March. We'll be there every day from 12noon to 4pm. You can chat to us about shows (we'll have heaps of useful recommendations), order some merch, and buy lots and lots of tickets.

VENUES

Refinery ArtSpace
114 Hardy Street, Nelson

Yaza Comedy Club at Yaza! Café
Montgomery Square, Nelson

Red Door Theatre
95 Atawhai Drive, The Wood, Nelson

WAA! Club
183 Bridge Street, Nelson

Fairfield House Meadow
48 Van Diemen Street, Nelson South

Suter Theatre at The Suter Art Gallery
208 Bridge Street, Nelson

1903 Square
Top of Trafalgar Street, Nelson

BARS

We have licensed bars at Red Door Theatre and Yaza Comedy Club. Refinery ArtSpace, WAA! Club and Fairfield House will have a range of refreshing non-alcohol drinks and snacks. All bars open one hour prior the first evening show.

TICKETS

TICKETS ONLINE

Buying your tickets online is the simplest and cheapest way to happiness.
All tickets are available at www.nelsonfringe.co.nz

Tickets \$18 +booking fee
Kids shows: Under 16 \$10 +bf. Adults \$14 +bf.
Kids on knee free.
Youth shows: Under 16 \$10 +bf. Adults \$18 +bf
Any variation from this is listed on individual shows.

If you'd like to add a contribution, we encourage you to upscale your ticket price to \$28 as a direct donation to our artists.

BUYING TICKETS IN PERSON

You can buy tickets at the Fringe HQ before the festival. See above for more info.
We have Box Offices at Refinery ArtSpace, Yaza Comedy Club and Red Door Theatre.
The Box Offices open one hour prior to the show.
Eftpos and credit card preferred.

DOOR SALES

Tickets on the night are \$20 at the door (kids and youth shows vary).
Please note there is no Box Office at WAA! Club and Fairfield House Meadow.

All tickets are general admission. There is no allocated seating in any of the venues.

Please contact us if you require accessible access. Email info@nelsonfringe.co.nz

Once you have purchased your tickets, we are not able to refund them.
Due to scammers, we recommend being wary of buying resold tickets.



SPECIAL EVENTS



Free Fringe Outdoors

1903 Square, top of Trafalgar Street
Sat 7 & 14 March, 11.00am-1.00pm

Come on down for some free Fringe fun! Enjoy a fast-paced mix of bite-sized performances from Fringe artists and local community acts — think old-school variety show energy. Expect music, comedy, maybe a bit of juggling, and very likely some audience participation. Anything could happen... and it's completely free!

Check the website closer to the time for the line-up.

Keywords: family, variety, free

Age rating: family – bring the kids. Bring Great Aunt Frances!



Fringe Opening Gala

Red Door Theatre
Wed 4 March, 7.30pm

We've cooked up a brand-new event to give you a taste of our fantastical Fringe. Hosted by the utterly fabulous Jasmine Tease, the Gala features a handpicked lineup of Fringe performers sharing their best bits, plus a few special guests to get you well and truly in the Fringe spirit. It's all part of celebrating our tenth birthday!

Check the website closer to the time for the line-up.

Keywords: variety

Age rating: 18+

Tickets: \$18 +bf



Fringe Closing Party

Red Door Theatre
Sat 14 March, 9.30pm

Come and help us celebrate the end of another magnificent Fringe! Enjoy a final fling from some of our performers, find out who wins the coveted Spirit of the Fringe Award, and then dance it out with DJ Sarah Kerby spinning the tunes.

Check the website closer to the time for the line-up.

Keywords: variety, music

Age rating: 18+

Tickets: \$10 +bf

KIDS



Mad Hatter Magic

Mr Wizowski (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)

Red Door Theatre

Sat 7 & Sun 8 March at 1.00pm

Step into Wonderland with the Mad Hatter and The White Rabbit (who is always late), as they dazzle the audience with floating crystal balls, magical lights, and disappearing acts. This circus and magic show promises a spellbinding adventure filled with wonder and amazement. It's a magical journey you won't forget!

Keywords: kids, magic, puppetry, comedy, family friendly, circus, juggling

Age rating: Family (please note includes flashing lights)

Tickets: Under 16 \$10 +bf. Adults \$14 +bf. Kids on knee free.



The Bell

Naranjarte (Waikato / Spain)

Red Door Theatre

Fri 13 March at 6.00pm & Sun 15 March at 11.00am

The Bell is a wordless, cabaret-style puppet and circus show where hand-crafted puppets meet mesmerising juggling. Two performers unpack a suitcase of surprises: a flamenco dancer puppet with LED poi, a playful marionette with floating juggling balls, and a cheeky juggler puppet who invites audiences into a world of imagination, illusion and wonder.

Keywords: kids, theatre, cabaret, puppetry, circus, juggling

Age rating: Family (please note includes flashing lights)

Tickets: Under 16 \$10 +bf. Adults \$14 +bf. Kids on knee free.



YOUTH IMPROV



Four high-school kids who think they're kinda funny

Rosa/Roman, Aldo, Ella & Aspen (Whakatū / Nelson)

Red Door Theatre

Sat 14 & Sun 15 March at 2.00pm

Come and get trapped in a theatre with four nerds that have mediocre improvisation skills and watch them make up stories for your enjoyment! Watch improv games and ad-libbed scenes and get your ideas involved.
World premiere!

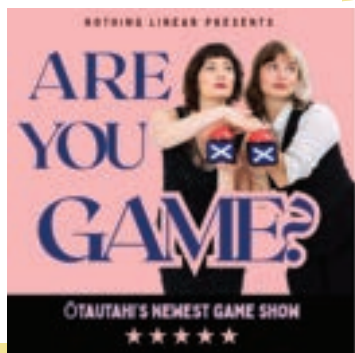
Keywords: youth, improv, theatre, physical, storytelling, comedy, family friendly, LGBTQ+ friendly

Age rating: G (non-graphic violent content)

Tickets: Adults \$18 +bf; under 16 \$10 +bf



IMPROV



Are You Game?

Nothing Linear (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)

WAA! Club

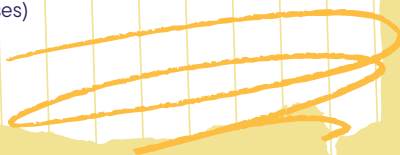
Sun 8 March at 5.30pm

Three performers with barely any chance to prepare will be brought to the stage, buzzers at the ready, to compete in the newest and most unpredictable game show. Who will prove they are the fastest? The smartest? The funniest? Who will win the revered Golden Nose?

Keywords: improv, comedy

Age rating: 14+ (language, loud noises)

Duration: 1hr 30mins



Your Journey. To You.

Macro Polo (Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland)

Refinery ArtSpace

Fri 6 & Sat 7 March at 7.30pm

A show that uses comedy, performance, improv, and surprise to satirise the whole life coaching industry. Our 'workshop' is all about beyonding yourself, not merely self-living yourself. "We utilise unique empowering technologies and techniques that clarify your current meta-state of self-being. Techniques include: 3 second meditation; Transformationality Dodecahedron; Circle of self-actualisation; Release Your Inner Bee. Our manifestationising workshop will change your life.

Keywords: improv, theatre, sketch comedy, comedy

Age rating: 14+



Your Stories

Tell Tales Collective (Motueka)

WAA! Club

Fri 13 March at 5.30pm

Who are you? Whoever you are, it's your story we'll be telling. Join us for a night of Playback Theatre – an international improvisational storytelling movement – and be amazed by the stories of the people around you. Or experience the magic of having your own story told.

Keywords: improv, theatre, physical, storytelling

Age rating: G

Duration: 1hr 10mins

DANCE/ PHYSICAL THEATRE



Born in the Mediterranean

Tarante (Whakatū / Nelson)
Red Door Theatre
Thu 5 & Fri 6 March at 6.00pm

A story of connection, culture and celebration told through dance. Follow Eva during her search for home and identity as she discovers the joy that dance can bring. With live music, swirling skirts and traditional dances from Italy, Spain, Greece, and France; dive into a journey across cultures.

World premiere!

Keywords: dance, physical theatre
Age rating: G



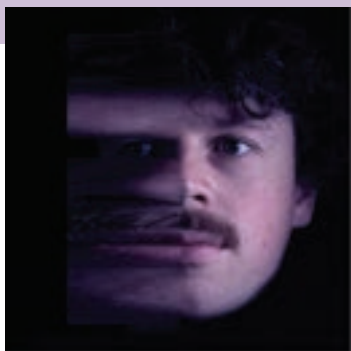
Dreaming of Lulu

Christopher Ulutupu (Whakatū / Nelson)
Suter Theatre
Sat 14 March at 1pm

Dreaming of Lulu is a collaborative performance exploring new storytelling through a fictional 1970s character, Lulu – a gin drinking, cigarette smoking, soap opera loving, romantic. Lulu and her friends reflect on heartbreak and loss through music which will draw audiences closer.

World premiere!

Keywords: dance, storytelling
Age rating: G



Motion Sickness

a2 company (Australia)
Red Door Theatre
Wed 11 & Thu 12 March at 9.00pm

This is an existential crisis at the rave. After winning a touring award and a Best Theatre nomination in Melbourne 2025, one actor and one musician take you through the three potential cosmic ends of the universe. This is avant-garde performance like you've never seen.

Keywords: dance, physical theatre, music, multimedia
Age rating: 18+ (language, loud noises, flashing lights, smoke/haze, discussion of war & genocide)

THEATRE



Alice in Retirementland

Lynnette Butler (Whakatū / Nelson)

Red Door Theatre

Mon 9 & Tue 10 March at 7.30pm

Alice has turned 65. On her party evening, she nods off watching late-night telly, and wakes in Retirementland. A wacky adventure ensues - the Rat Race sweeps her along and a wry cat asks difficult questions. A playful kiwi comedy about rediscovering identity, and exploring and embracing life beyond work.

World premiere!

Keywords: theatre, storytelling, comedy

Age rating: G



Alice May Connolly's BOX

Horse Bite (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)

Red Door Theatre

Thu 5 & Fri 6 March at 9.00pm

"A bonkers heartbreaker of a solo masterpiece". "Original and unique in absolute spades". Hot on the heels of her lead turn in NZ's festival hit film, *The Weed Eaters*, Alice May Connolly blends stand-up comedy and theatre into a mischievous, perverse and unforgettable exploration of identity, family, and grief.

Keywords: theatre, stand-up, comedy

Age rating: 14+ (language, loud noises, flashing lights, audience interaction)



BONES

Julian Noel (Tāhuna / Queenstown)

WAA! Club

Mon 9 & Tue 10 March at 5.30pm

A tour de force, raw, honest and unapologetically real. A gifted and fearless storyteller, Julian's powerful stories of what we inherit from our ancestors need to be heard in Aotearoa and beyond in order to set future generations free from the past. There is nothing more compelling than an actor standing alone on stage.

Keywords: theatre, physical, storytelling, new work

Age rating: 18+ (language, violence, discussion of sexual assault)

Duration: 1hr 30mins



THEATRE



Can't Hear Her Voice

Down With Mondays (Whakatū / Nelson)
Red Door Theatre
Thu 5 & Sun 8 March at 7.30pm



Dave has put his heart and soul into raising his only daughter. But what happens to him if something happens to her? By Jim Risner (*Only One Choice*, 2022 Nominee, Best of Nelson Fringe) looks at the pressures of an intense relationship and what happens when someone acts before thinking. **World premiere!**

Keywords: theatre

Age rating: 14+ (language, flashing lights, violence, discussion of sexual assault)



Crisps Lane

Maryam Zadeh (Whakatū / Nelson)
Refinery ArtSpace
Fri 13 March at 7.30pm & Sat 14 March at 9.00pm

Broadcast live from a Nelson alley, just past the brothel, this show-with-in-a-show goes deliciously off the rails. As the on-air light flickers, and the station manager melts down, reality glitches between Nelson, New York, and Los Angeles. Comedy, confession and chaos collide in a fast, funny love letter to reinvention.

World premiere!

Keywords: theatre, storytelling, comedy, multimedia, new work

Age rating: 18+ (language, loud noises)



Escapegoat

Nikkie Karki (Whakatū / Nelson)
Refinery ArtSpace
Sat 7 March at 4.00pm; Sat 14 March at 6.00pm



This development piece will begin to explore how addiction is not only a chemical dependency, but a desperate attempt to silence inner chaos, which if unresolved can be acted upon in all aspects of an addict's life. Thank you to Refinery Artspace and Nelson Creative Communities.

World premiere!

Keywords: theatre, storytelling, new work

Age rating: 18+ (language, discussion of sexual assault, reference to suicide, addiction, abuse)

THEATRE



Forbidden Love - the Tale of Oshichi

Akiko Miyamoto & Helen Moulder (Whakatū / Nelson)

Refinery ArtSpace

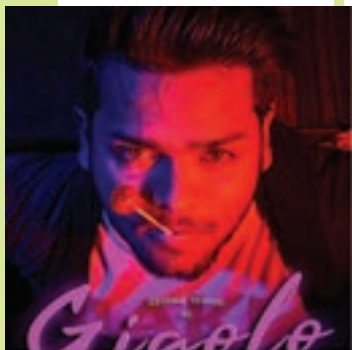
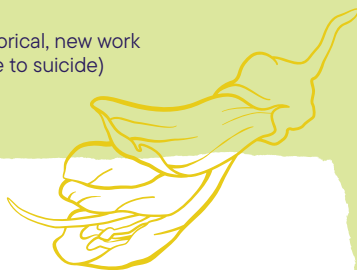
Thu 12 & Fri 13 March at 6pm; Sat 14 March at 4pm

In 17th century Japan, a 15-year-old greengrocer's daughter falls in love with the son of a Samurai. When separated from her lover, she concocts a wild plan that changes her fate forever. A true story with puppets, masks, actors and a NZ woman encountering the tale for the first time.

World premiere!

Keywords: theatre, music, puppetry, historical, new work

Age rating: 14+ (flashing lights, reference to suicide)



Gigolo

Nobody's Studios (India)

Red Door Theatre

Fri 13 & Sat 14 March at 7.30pm

After Best Individual Artist award at Prague and Colombo fringes, Devang Tewari delivers a raw, hypnotic, and unforgettable storm on stage. A boy runs away. The world breaks him. He learns to break it back. Based on true events, this one-man noir thriller pulls you into the mind of a charming psychopath. "Bold, beautiful, and bizarre" (Tychy Writes), ***Gigolo*** has electrified audiences in Edinburgh, Colombo and Tunisia.

Keywords: theatre, storytelling, international

Age rating: 18+ (language, flashing lights, violence, discussion of sexual assault)



My Adventure with a V8 Supercar

Kenneth Gaffney (Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland)

Refinery ArtSpace

Tue 10, Wed 11 & Thu 12 March at 9.00pm

While his family sorts his father's estate, a man's simple foray for dinner takes a wild turn. He finds a gleaming V8 Supercar in the garage. He sets out on an absurd adventure that will be weird and self-propelled, high octane blast into the past. A Comedy by Rumbleyoumumskin.

World Premiere!

Keywords: theatre, storytelling

Age rating: 14+ (language, flashing lights, reference to suicide)



THEATRE



Once An Actress

Charity Dlodlo (Zimbabwe)
Red Door Theatre
Fri 6 & Sat 7 March at 7.30pm

Experience the raw power of a solo revelation as a woman bares her soul. Bold physicality and evocative storytelling expose the highs and lows of chasing acting dreams in a poignant exploration of identity, resilience, and ambition's true cost. Thought-provoking, unforgettable and deeply moving.

Keywords: theatre, physical, storytelling, international

Age rating: 18+ (language)



Opera's Bad Girl: Anna Bishop, the World's First Daringly Defiant Diva

Canta Viva / Sarahlouse Owens (Australia)
Red Door Theatre
Mon 9 & Tue 10 March at 6.00pm

Seduction, shipwrecks, scandal and soaring arias. Before Melba, there was Anna Bishop — opera's original rebel. *Opera's Bad Girl* brings Anna's wild, untold story to life. This show blends the music she made famous, and drama in a fearless celebration of a woman who dared to defy her time.

Keywords: theatre, music, storytelling, historical, new work, international

Age rating: 14+

Duration: 1hr 10mins



Pro-CRUST-ination

Penny Taylor (Whakatū / Nelson)
Refinery ArtSpace
Wed 11 March at 6.00pm; Sat 14 March at 7.30pm

Two fin-tastic plays and a bit of nonsense.

1. Competition heats up in the crustaceous community as Chris the crab sets out to find his true love - speed dating under the sea.
2. A group of friends on holiday meddle with the mystical. Will it be fun or a net load of pollocks?

World premiere!

Keywords: theatre, comedy, new work

Age rating: G



THEATRE



The Circus* of Lord Azure the Miraculous (C*LAM)

Glad to Be Here NZ (Te Tai o Aorere / Tasman)

The Big Top at Fairfield House Meadow

Wed 11, Thu 12 & Fri 13 March at 5.30pm & 7.30pm

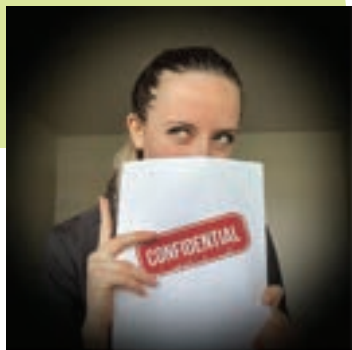
The star act have been murdered, but the show must go on! Right? Join *The Circus* of Lord Azure the Miraculous* as they pull a show together with the rag-tag remnants of their cast in a real-time comedic whodunnit.

*not a circus

Limited capacity. Seating provided.

Keywords: theatre, physical, comedy, new work, circus

Age rating: 14+ (language, smoke/haze)



The Meeting

Lola Houghton (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)

Refinery ArtSpace

Wed 11 & Thu 12 March at 7.30pm

One woman, seven characters: an explosion of political satire and hilarious farce. A top secret, future-defining meeting is about to take place. Everything falls on an overworked cleaner, three bumbling PAs, and a paranoid secret agent... Come along to a night of clowning, laughter and wit!

Keywords: theatre, physical, storytelling, comedy, family friendly, new work, satire, dark comedy, clown, New Zealand stories, solo, political, commedia dell'arte

Age rating: G



The Night Ali Died

Raising Cain Productions (UK)

Refinery ArtSpace

Sun 8, Mon 9 & Tue 10 March at 6.00pm

Ali is wanted dead by a vicious London Gangster. He is placed under police surveillance, yet for some reason, on one night, Ali decides to sneak out into the night and leave his family behind, sparking a bloody domino effect that ricochets through the sleepy streets of Norwich. Winner of Best Solo, Best Actor and Best Script at Nelson Fringe 2025.

Keywords: theatre, storytelling, international

Age rating: 14+ (language, descriptions of violence)

Chris is also performing the stand-up show *Pub Tales*.

THEATRE



The Sensemaker

Elsa Cuvreur (Switzerland)

Red Door Theatre

Thu 12 March at 6pm

Hate waiting on hold? Perfect. Spend an hour doing just that. In the multi-award winning solo-show ***The Sensemaker***, a woman battles an automated voice in a darkly comic bureaucratic dystopia. "An episode of Black Mirror live on stage." ★★★★★ West End Penguins Winner of Best in Fest, Outstanding Performer, Best Solo, Best Direction and Best Design at Nelson Fringe 2023.

Keywords: theatre, physical, international

Age rating: 18+ (language, nudity)

The Sensemaker and ***Embarrassed Naked Female*** are companion pieces. See either one, or for the full story, we recommend seeing both shows.



Embarrassed Naked Female

Elsa Cuvreur (Switzerland)

Red Door Theatre

Wed 11 & Sat 14 March at 6.00pm

A lecture-performance following a stolen video down the rabbit hole of internet creeps. The true story of five nude minutes sparking years of obsessive sharing, bizarre commentary, and surreal online encounters. A darkly humorous dive into consent in the digital age.

Keywords: theatre, physical, international

Age rating: 18+ (language, nudity)



THREE LITTLE PIGS

Magic Earth Theatre (Te Tai o Aorere / Tasman)

Red Door Theatre

Sat 7 & Sun 8 March at 6.00pm

Homeless pigs have found a haven where they can build their own houses. What could possibly go wrong? A wolf? Magic intervenes to reveal a surprising conclusion in this world premiere by local actors. This humorous retelling of a much loved folk tale is suitable for all ages.

World premiere!

Keywords: theatre, improv, comedy, family friendly, new work

Age rating: G (loud noises, flashing lights)

Tickets: Adults \$18 +bf; Under 16 \$10 +bf

SPOKEN WORD



3POETS - one dream and some words

Dry Crust Holdings (Mohua / Golden Bay)

WAA! Club

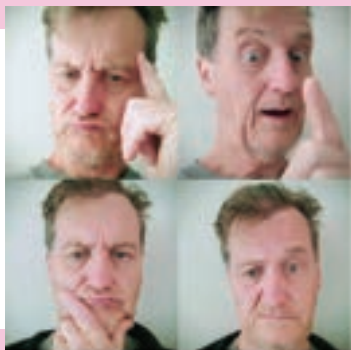
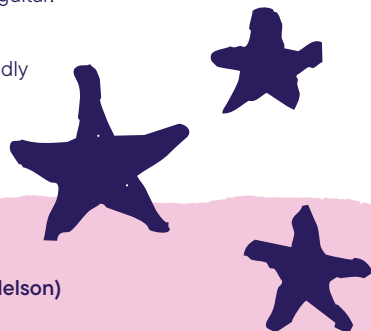
Thu 12 March at 6.00pm

Neal Bonner, Aine Barton and Mark Raffills, three Golden Bay poets whose words of dare and no reason, of praise and protest, sing on steel rails in a mix of spoken word, poetry and one guitar.

World premiere!

Keywords: poetry, music, family friendly

Age rating: G



Becoming Hazlito

Russell 'Hazlito' Black (Whakatū / Nelson)

WAA! Club

Wed 11 March at 7.30pm

How I died and my life since. Can you trust the advice of a mentally ill man on how to survive mental illness? Hazlito will squeeze you through an emotional wringer using storytelling, comedy and (ugh) poetry to examine his mental health and identity.

World premiere!

Keywords: spoken word, poetry, storytelling, comedy, LGBTQ+, new work

Age rating: 14+



My Name Is (not) Mum.

Whakati Productions (Whakatū / Nelson)

Whakatū Space

7.00pm; Tue 10 Mar at 7.30pm

Humorously honest truths of motherhood. By [unclear] from laundry monsters to genuine [unclear] experience truly changes you. [unclear] role means to them.

Join the [unclear]

World premiere!

Keywords: spoken word, music

Age rating: 14+



SHOW CANCELLED

WORDS & MUSIC



ASH, POEM & SONG

Dry Crust Holdings (Mohua / Golden Bay)

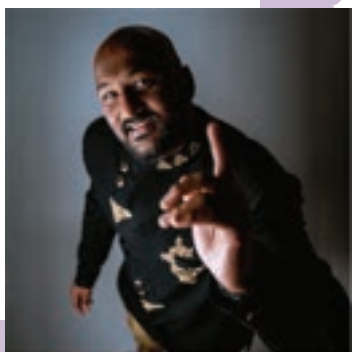
WAA! Club

Fri 13 March at 7.30pm

The songs of Leigh Strange and Mark Raffills' poems fill the space where the lonely wander, where the moon filters through the dark shadows in thin rays of light; where a small coin is sufficient to buy back a soul grown cold.

Keywords: poetry, music

Age rating: G



Finding Love, After All

Ravi the Poet (Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland)

WAA! Club

Fri 6 & Sat 7 March at 6.00pm

From first crushes to modern dating and the messy bits in between, this heart-forward show explores silly crushes, awkward almost-romances, and the moments that teach you what self-love actually means. A warm, funny, intimate story told through music and poetry.

Keywords: poetry, cabaret, music, storytelling

Age rating: 14+



Petit ChouX

Petit ChouX (Te Whanganui-a-Tara / Wellington)

WAA! Club

Thu 5 & Fri 6 March at 7.30pm

Petit ChouX is a French-born singer-songwriter who weaves romance and reflection into her music. Based in Wellington, her performances blend acoustic simplicity with emotional depth, inviting listeners to be present and immerse themselves in the beauty of her multilingual lyrics.

Keywords: music

Age rating: G

WORDS & MUSIC



Songs & Chats

Soulquest Limited / Anna Nicholas (Whakatū / Nelson)

WAA! Club

Wed 11 March at 6.00pm

Experience an evening filled with harmonious melodies, engaging conversations and rib-tickling humour. This unique performance will uplift your spirits, spark your curiosity and make you want to join in. It's a soul-stirring delight that you won't want to miss!

World premiere!

Keywords: music, storytelling, new work

Age rating: 14+ (language)



The Shape of Belonging: A Sonic Journey

Becky Siame (Whakatū / Nelson)

Refinery ArtSpace

Sun 8 March at 7.30pm

A spoken word and ambient music experience exploring identity, loss, and self-belonging. Through poetic storytelling and immersive soundscapes, Becky Siame invites audiences into a reflective, emotionally resonant journey that lingers long after the final note.

Keywords: music, storytelling

Age rating: 18+

CABARET



Up Late Cabaret - Friday 13th Edition

Jasmine Tease presents (Whakatū / Nelson)

Red Door Theatre

Fri 13 March at 9.00pm

You never know what lies ahead at **Up Late Cabaret**. Featuring fringy frippery and chaotic cabaret talent, this is a night with plenty of cheek and sauce. This year we are celebrating Friday the 13th.

Bring your superstitions and prepare to have them turned into good luck!

Keywords: cabaret

Age rating: 18+ (language, nudity)



STAND-UP



Ben Miller: Volcano

Ben Miller (USA)
Yaza Comedy Club
Tue 10 & Wed 11 March at 7.30pm

What happens when a comedian walks into a volcano? In 2023, Ben Miller was the Artist in Residence at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, the first comedian ever selected. This was probably a terrible idea on their part. Watch this scientist-turned-comic tell an hour of volcano jokes.

Keywords: stand-up, multimedia, science, international
Age rating: 18+



Bunny Boiler

Sarah O'Connell (Whakatū / Nelson)
Yaza Comedy Club
Sat 7 March at 6.00pm & Sat 14 March at 9.00pm

Sarah O'Connell is staring down the barrel of middle age with a smile and a slightly deranged glint in her eye. In her first stand-up special, she reclaims the colourful, bizarre and at times beautiful insults and labels that have been hurled her way, taking them as building blocks for her perfectly imperfect self.

World premiere!

Keywords: stand-up, storytelling, comedy, new work
Age rating: 18+ (language)



Dr Jo Prendergast is #coping

Jo Prendergast (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)
Red Door Theatre
Wed 11 & Thu 12 March at 7.30pm

Come laugh through the tough stuff: songs, sketch and stand-up about #coping with juggling work, relationships, kids, menopause, illnesses, and high maintenance indoor plants! From a multi award-winning comedian, psychiatrist, and fellow life juggler!

Keywords: stand-up, theatre, sketch comedy, dance, music, musical comedy, storytelling, comedy, new work
Age rating: 14+

STAND-UP



I Want Your Kidney

Callum Wagstaff (Ngāmotu / New Plymouth)

Yaza Comedy Club

Wed 11 & Thu 12 March at 6.00pm

I'm looking for my next organ donor and it could be You! In exchange I will provide a darkly humorous stand-up show full of heart. We'll cover growing up in Starship, Kidney Camp, and the time I got approached by the Make-a-Wish Foundation. Come, let me split open your side.

Keywords: stand-up, physical, comedy, new work

Age rating: 18+ (language)



Inspired Whimsy

Mr Wizowski Entertainment (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)

Yaza Comedy Club

Sat 7 March at 7.30pm

Come for a night of quirky kiwi comedy featuring a rising star of the stand-up circuit: Wazza. Delving into the big issues from brain rot to the modern masculine cowboy, this show will inspire you to inject some whimsy into your life.

World Premiere!

Keywords: stand-up, cabaret

Age rating: 18+ (language)



LaFev | A Comedy

Stephen Lefebvre (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)

Yaza Comedy Club

Thu 5 & Fri 6 March at 7.30pm

Dive into sharp, satirical comedy tackling bullying, toxic masculinity, religion, health, and geek culture. Honest, self-aware, and a little too revealing, Stephen will make you laugh, cringe, and overthink your life choices — all while dropping a metric ton of film references.

World premiere!

Keywords: stand-up, theatre, improv, storytelling, comedy

Age rating: 18+ (language, audience interaction, discussion of religion)

STAND-UP



Leaning In

Nothing Linear (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)

Yaza Comedy Club

Sat 7 March at 9.00pm

A stand-up comedy show highlighting some of the funniest people in Nelson and beyond, who all just happen to not be men!

Keywords: stand-up, comedy

Age rating: 18+ (language)



Me vs Myself

Gerard Dougherty (Ōtepoti / Dunedin)

Yaza Comedy Club

Mon 9 & Tue 10 March at 6.00pm

Me vs Myself explores the part of the mind that colours inside the lines versus the part that scribbles over everything. Returning from last year's ***Hang in There!***, Gerard Dougherty serves razor-sharp wit and spontaneous chaos. It's an argument with myself — and I'll need you to back me up.

Keywords: stand-up, comedy

Age rating: 18+ (language, loud noises)



My Life is Based on a True Story - Round 2

Heather Lindsay (Motueka)

Refinery ArtSpace

Thu 5 & Mon 9 March at 7.30pm; Sun 8 March at 4.00pm

Family and Friends provide us with ups and downs, good times and bad, and most of all stories to tell. I told a set of stories last year and I have more to tell this year. You will laugh out loud.

World premiere!

Keywords: stand-up, storytelling, comedy

Age rating: G (language)



STAND-UP



Nelson Comedy Cluster

Backroom Comedy (Whakatū / Nelson)

Yaza Comedy Club

Wed 11 March at 9.00pm

Wrap your laughing gear around our cluster of delicious, nutty, and crunchy local comics! **Nelson Comedy Cluster** promises to provide 100% of your daily laugh intake and 25% of your recommended daily fibre needs. Wholesomeness not guaranteed.

Keywords: stand-up, comedy

Age rating: 18+ (language, loud noises)



Nicola Brown: Space Invaders

Nicola Brown (Ōtepoti / Dunedin)

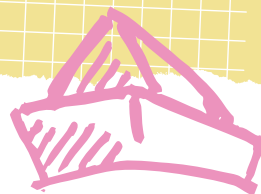
WAA! Club

Sun 8 & Mon 9 March at 7.30pm

A fearless, funny deep dive into mysteries we rarely talk about. Nicola Brown blends sharp stand-up with taboo-busting storytelling, transforming awkward truths into outrageous belly laughter. Award-winning, unflinchingly honest, and surprisingly uplifting, **Space Invaders** is the comedy show that sidesteps shame and lands squarely in your heart (and lap).

Keywords: stand-up, storytelling, LGBTQ+

Age rating: 18+ (language, references to mental health, sex and medical/surgical procedures)



old.

Snap / PHUCK Entertainment (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)

Yaza Comedy Club

Thu 12 March at 9.00pm; Fri 13 & Sat 14 March at 7.30pm

Time flies when you're increasingly aware of your own mortality. Despite being in his 30s, Snap is now physically, mentally, and spiritually an old man. Join him for an hour of jokes about it!

Keywords: stand-up, comedy, storytelling

Age rating: 18+ (language, reference to suicide)

STAND-UP



Oliver Pol: Featherbrained

Oliver Pol (Te Whanganui-a-Tara / Wellington)

Yaza Comedy Club

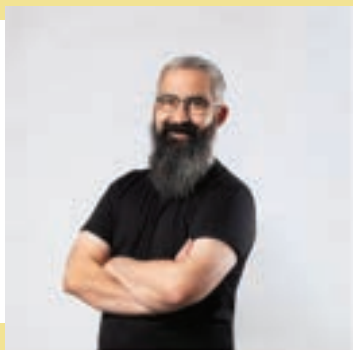
Fri 13 & Sat 14 March at 6.00pm

Join youngish, tallish, stand-up comedian Oliver Pol in his debut solo show exploring overthinking, self-doubt, and most importantly, geese. A fun, weird hour performed with irrepressible, limb-flailing energy.

Keywords: stand-up, comedy

Age rating: 14+ (language)

FRINGE



On Words

Jerome Chandrasen (Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai / Lower Hutt)

Yaza Comedy Club

Thu 5 & Fri 6 March at 6.00pm

From Foxton Beach to Fairlie, Jerome Chandrasen (as seen on *Wellington Paranormal* and the *NZ Comedy Gala*) has performed around Aotearoa for the past 15 years. A bit of good natured banter, some linguistics, and as always, plenty of laughs.

Keywords: stand-up, comedy, storytelling

Age rating: 18+ (language)



Peek-A-Boo Moments

Francesca Francina (Whakatū / Nelson)

Refinery ArtSpace

Thu 5 & Sat 7 March at 6.00pm

Be absorbed, engaged and have a good laugh at my *Peek-A-Boo Moments* in life that will make you think about freedom and will soften your heart. Have a lovely fun evening interspersed with beautiful singing, featuring guitarist Geerts Hermesen.

World premiere!

Keywords: stand-up, improv, sketch comedy, cabaret

Age rating: 18+

STAND-UP



PING PONG BALLER

Nextround / Wouter Moerloose (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)

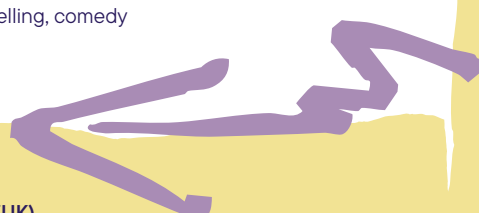
Yaza Comedy Club

Thu 12 March at 7.30pm; Fri 13 March at 9.00pm

Winning in life isn't about the size of your balls. It's about how you spin them. Wouter Moerloose presents his debut stand-up hour about the triumph of attitude over accolades. This Belgian raconteur shares his chaotic journey towards the thing he never knew he wanted: to make you laugh!

Keywords: stand-up, storytelling, comedy

Age rating: 18+ (language)



Pub Tales

Raising Cain Productions (UK)

Yaza Comedy Club

Mon 9 March at 7.30pm; Tue 10 March at 9.00pm

Pub Tales is an evening of musical comedy by storyteller Chris Sainton-Clark. Chris has consolidated his experiences of working in hospitality and has transformed those misadventures into hilariously sharp, witty and satirical songs that insightfully poke fun at pub culture and toxic masculinity in a harmless and tongue-in-cheek way.

Keywords: stand-up, cabaret, music, musical comedy, storytelling, comedy, international

Age rating: 14+ (language)

Chris is also performing the theatre show *The Night Ali Died*.



The Death of Rugby

Matt Lilley (Ōtautahi / Christchurch)

Yaza Comedy Club

Thu 5 & Fri 6 March at 9.00pm

Join Matt Lilley as he delivers the eulogy rugby never knew it needed.

The Death of Rugby is a hilarious yet heartfelt farewell to New Zealand's sacred institution. From the glory days to the crushing defeats, Matt mourns our beloved game with the perfect blend of irreverence and affection.

Keywords: stand-up, storytelling, comedy, historical

Age rating: 14+ (warnings: language)



WORKSHOPS



Naranjarte Puppet Workshop

Naranjarte (Waikato / Spain)

WAA! Club

Sat 14 March 12noon to 4.00pm

A hands-on workshop bursting with creativity and play. Dive into the magical world of puppet theatre as you learn the basics of puppet-making and discover how to bring puppets to life through movement, presence, and imagination. Build your own "dog rod" puppet, perfect for parades and outdoor performances, and leave inspired with practical skills and a solid foundation for future puppet-making adventures.

Keywords: workshop, physical, puppetry, family friendly, multimedia, free

Age rating: Aimed at kids age 6-12yrs

Duration: 4hrs

Tickets: \$30 +bf

Naranjarte are also performing the kids show The Bell.

We welcome WAA! to the Fringe fold!



WAA! is a messy year-long experiment of a "micro-venue" and clubhouse. Completely independent and taking no sh*t from no one - we're volunteer-run and funded by members who pay \$10 a week. This allows artists to take all ticket sales and lets us host niche acts, as well as providing a free space for environmentalist, progressive, marginalised and LGBTQ+ communities.

Upcoming events and weekly clubs include: Guitar Wolf (Japan), DROOK (USA), Moldover (USA), POWERS (Campbell Kneale), Adam Hattaway, WAA! HAA! Monthly Stand-up, Poetry Slams, Crafting, LoFi Line Dancing, Hip-hop & Chess, Cult Film Club, Repair Cafe, Time Bank, and the Arcade & Console Festival. And soon...late-night coffee!

If you have any unique ideas for a performance or a club night, hit us up. <https://waaclub.nz/>



NELSON FRINGE IS TURNING 10!

Order the pizza, bring out the chips-&-dip and ice-creams. 10 is a major milestone – how did we even get here?!

Welllll, the first fringe was in 1947. An international Edinburgh Festival was organised to bring people together after such tumultuous times, and a group of uninvited local artists simply turned up, took over some alternative venues and performed on the 'fringe' of the main event. Since then, Edinburgh Fringe has grown to be the largest arts event in the world and fringe festivals have sprung up everywhere.

Fringe has always been a breeding ground for new talent with a galaxy of stars getting their first break at festivals; actors, musicians and comics alongside playwrights, directors and producers. Fringes are also a chance for performers to take work outside their own region; bringing in shows from around the world and sending out work. This year two Nelson/Tasman shows are travelling to Wellington and Dunedin as well as our Fringe and in the past shows launched at Nelson Fringe have gone on to tour as far afield as the golden city of Prague.

And what about Nelson Fringe – where did we start? Back in 2015, Dan and Lisa Allan made a theatre space at the old Refinery building in Halifax Street. They did such a great job that Nelson City Council awarded them Nelsonians of the Year in Arts – such an auspicious and audacious start!

In 2018, dynamo Laura Irish took over as director, extending the number of venues to include Ghost Light Theatre in Bridge Street – remember that glorious space? In 2021, Giles Burton took the helm, and shaped the programme we have today, with local and NZ performers, and some internationals, presenting around 50 shows.

So the 2026 festival is our 10th outing (we had a little rest in 2019, when we were four). That's why our wee kea is sporting a pink rosette – and we'll looking forward to weaving a few celebratory treats into Fringe 2026.

A big thank you to Debbie Brooks who was there on day one, and has been chair of the trust for six years. And to everyone who has been part of this feisty and fabulous family through the years – the tireless folk behind the scenes, the champions, advocates and ardent fans, the artists, performers and those who just wanted to give-it-a-go. And the shows! The triumphs, the gems, the nearly-theres, the swing-and-a-misses, the outright disasters, the what-even-on-this-good-earth-was-that? We've loved every one of them. And best of all, we get to do it all again in 2026.

So here's to being 10, and to being properly big, and to hurtling towards whatever happens next.



THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO TAKES A WALK ON THE FRINGE SIDE

The Fringe Team

Giles Burton – Festival Director
Jasmine Turner – Operations & Box Office Manager
Sarah Wilson – Marketing & Communications
Scott Sumbly – Design
Arnott Potter – Technical Administrator
Robbie Burns – Venue Manager Red Door
Tamaterā Curtis – Venue Manager Refinery ArtSpace

Andy Meldrum – Venue Manager for Yaza Comedy Club & Fringe Outdoors
Alan Proctor-Thomson – Venue Manager WAA! Club
All our splendid volunteers!
Rachel Elizabeth Photography
Avoca Web Design



Nelson Fringe Arts Charitable Trust

Debbie Brooks, Chair Louise Morten, Secretary Cassa Grant Shanine Hermsen Jay Pierce

Thank You

Nelson Fringe relies on the energy and passion of an extraordinary extended whānau. We acknowledge and thank our volunteers for front-of-house and behind-the-scenes, and our technicians for making the shows happen. A special thanks to all our venues: Sam and the team at Red Door Theatre; Beth and her crew at Yaza! Café, Lloyd, Janja and Heidi at Arts Council Nelson/Refinery ArtSpace, Alan at WAA! Club, Toni and her team at the Suter Art Gallery, and Dani and Matt at Fairfield House. We totally love Rachel from Rachel Elizabeth Photography! A shout out to Royce and Linda at YHA for helping us with accommodation, to NCMA for some drapes, and to Amanda Raine for her eagle eye; and to all our sponsors and funders. Ka rawe!



YOU ARE
LOVED

SCAN HERE TO
BOOK TICKETS

