

20th June 2024

centrepoin T THEATRE

Thank you to The Arts Heart Grant for enabling our Basement Series workshops to be realised.

The Project:

Monthly masterclasses lead by recognised Industry Professionals held at Centrepoin Theatre that are open to all people aged 15 - 17 to register.

The workshops are free to attend in an attempt to make accessibility the key however numbers to each workshop may be limited due to safety reasons.

Received \$2000.00 towards tutor costs

Background:

Centrepoin Theatre is the only professional theatre company in regional New Zealand and the second oldest behind the Court Theatre in Christchurch. We have run a youth theatre company (The Basement Company) since 2005. The commitment required for performance which has been a large focus or, attendance to the weekly maintenance sessions paired with students needing to work, their current studies and extracurricular school activities have informed us that we need to re look at the structure of the programme we offer. The Basement Company began as an exclusive group of students that were put forward by the local high schools drama teachers to spend a year "in training" with Centrepoin Theatre. Over the years this evolved to being a paid programme making the course less accessible. We are proposing a different structure that will be a lot more inclusive, less taxing on the participants and offering maximum exposure to Industry experts for less commitment and pressure than a year long programme that we have found students do not have the time, energy or mental capacity for post covid. With the proposed new programme we can offer a variety of specialist areas to any young person who is interested, removing cost barriers and commitment restraints. Anyone can register for one or more workshops, they do not have to commit to the year programme.

We aim to bridge the gap between the professional world and the young people of Manawatū. We are working in the professional world on a daily basis. Staff at Centrepoin Theatre are Industry professionals with a vast network who have trained at leading establishments. We want to bring opportunities to our Rangatahi that they would otherwise not have. To be able to work with the best in an area that was once a pipe dream, this could be a life changing experience.

We engage the professionals, market the courses through our channels administering the registrations and, provide the venue and support staff for the workshops.

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Students have the opportunity to build their own networks within the participants and also the tutors opening the possibility of further engagement with the visiting companies.

Workshops we have completed this year with the assistance of the Arts Heart Grant:

Four full day workshops -

Prop making with Weta Workshop designers \$800

Puppetry making and manipulation with Stringbean Puppets \$1300

Acting For Camera with two of NZ's top casting directors (Liz Mullane and Rachel Bullock) \$2500

Special effects makeup with WETA \$800

46 participants attended these workshops with 90% of the students having never been to Centrepoint Theatre before, or having been to anything like the workshops presented.





Battle scars at [@centrepointnz](https://www.instagram.com/centrepointnz) class today! It always an honour for Darren and I to teach you all.



Feedback from students who attended the three courses this year:

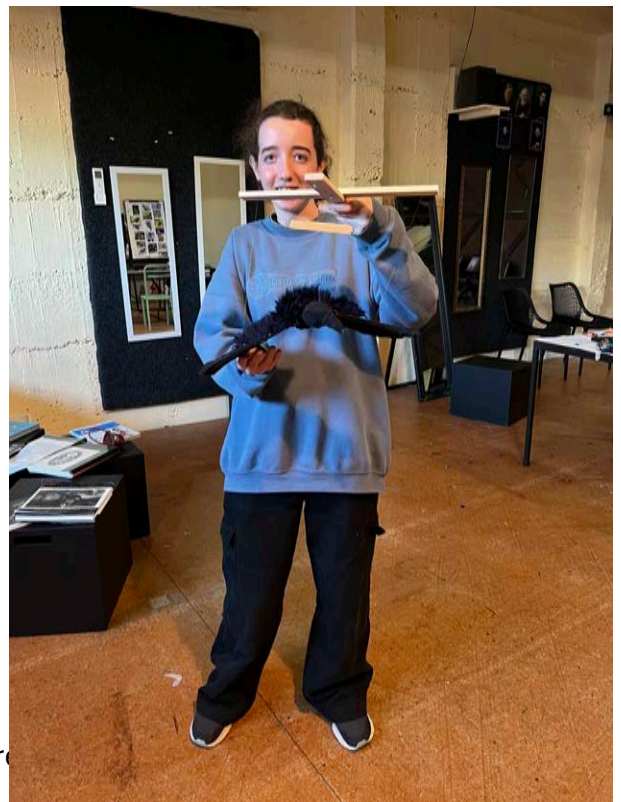
I can not thank you enough Leona.

Poppy was buzzing when I picked her up and her mask is pride of place in her bedroom. I popped into her room yesterday to find where all our cups had gone and saw the beginning stages of two masks she has been working on. I asked her if she had shared them with you and she said not until they're finished. Poppy is a perfectionist so this could be a year away. Explaining that the process is as interesting as the final product didn't change her mind. So, without her immediate permission, I am sharing her progress with you. Please be in touch with any other classes. It was nice to see her glowing, if just for awhile. – Amy Cudby (parent)

I loved the Puppetry workshop. I have always had an interest in puppets but no opportunities have come to learn more about them in Palmerston North – Prya (participant)

Dear Leona, Centrepoint Theatre, Darren and Sanit. I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the incredible time you gave my son at today's

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Prototype Helmet workshop.

My son is autistic, loves to draw, design his own characters, weapons, costumes, and he loves movies. So when I saw that Centrepoint Theatre were offering this workshop opportunity, I thought that he would love it, but was also, as I always am, concerned about whether he would be considered or welcomed.

But from the first email response from Leona, my son was made to feel welcomed, understood, valued, important and a part of something. She acknowledged him, asked about him, about his needs, and made a connection.

The workshop itself was excellent!! The new skills he learnt were impressive, Darren and Sanit were passionate, inspiring and genuine, and showed great patience when sharing their talents and imparting their knowledge.

The atmosphere during the day was so warm, accepting and joyous.

Thank you so much for making such a wonderful opportunity so accessible for all.

My son said this to his father when he got home "I had the best day I have ever had! It was fun and I got to be creative, and to hang out and learn from famous guys. Turns out I'm quite good at it! Also, they all got me, and they liked me, it's cool when I can be myself."

So again, with much love and gratefulness, I say thank you. – Andrea Cawood (parent)

