

2019 AGM Welcome

E ngā rangatira ra, tēnā koutou. E te whare e tu nei Tena Koe. Tēnā koutou katoa kua hui hui mai nei I tēnei wā ki te whakanui i ngā toi whakakatakata. E ngā hoamahi, tēnā koutou. E ngā manuhiri, tēnā koutou. E te whānau watea, tēnā koutou tena koutou tēnā koutou katoa.

Welcome to you all and thank you for being here for the 2019 AGM. We will start with the Chair's Report.

2019 AGM Chair Report

Kia ora e te whānau and thank you for attending the 2019 Annual General Meeting for the Comedy Guild.

In a way, I sort of fell into the role of Chair for the Guild when Debs McSmith left after 3 years of dedicated service to this amazing community and they have been big shoes to fill. I am very lucky to have a fantastic group of people behind me made up of Bec Sandys, Brendon Green, for a while Tim Batt and for a while Urzila Carlson. Tim Batt moved upwards (or sideways depending on who you ask) to the Trust Board and Urzila moved on to Netflix.

I started writing this speech and struggled to write what we had done for the year since Debs left. She was an incredibly strong leader and I read over her minutes and went oh fuck. But then I remembered that yes, she was amazing but also she had a really strong team behind her. We have also achieved some great things in the past year. And although I may not be able to accentuate it as well as her, here goes:

One of the main things we do as a Guild Board is mediation. We have done a number of these in the last year and due to the confidential nature of these, we cannot talk too much about it. Bec did some amazing work with cyber safety earlier in the year and the details for this are on our website.

One of the main issues that I would especially like to work on the coming year is the safety and mental health of comedians. Of course, we have Whariki Hauroa, which is a fantastic service that was facilitated by Richard, that is a donation-based/free counselling service for people in the arts' industry. Richard and I had a number of meetings with Borni Tukiwaho in order for the Guild to be part of this. I would like to

emphasise here that the Guild and myself are always here for anyone who needs help and wants to talk, whether you are a member or not. We have lost too many people, brothers, sisters, kids and partners in this industry to fuck around any more. Let's look after each other. Please.

On that note, there are some people doing incredible mahi in the industry at the moment! Rose Matafeo, having won the Comedy award in Edinburgh, is about to start work on Taskmasters, Urzila Carlson has her Netflix special and is selling out shows left right, and also centre, our own Scott Blanks got his OBE, Jamie Bown has his special coming out 1 August, and we have Golden Boy, Mean Mums, and Have You Been Paying Attention starting up on TV as well as long serving 7 Days and The Project.

We had a successful Comedy Festival this year which the Trust Board will talk more about soon. From our end, things seemed to go very smoothly minus a couple of hiccups with ticketing. On that, Richard became aware that iTicket were charging an outside ticketing fee to the customer, which under the Basement venue hire agreement isn't supposed to happen in order to encourage sales.

This was raised with the festival who looked into it and agreed that it was a mistake.

The resolution was to add the additional \$2 per ticket sold to the performers settlement. If you had a show at the Basement, there will be a line item "Web booking fees" in the box office summary which shows this income.

There are about 4% were for multiple bookings and weren't able to be passed on. Yay for having Richard!

Due to the expanding nature of the lower North Island comedy scene, we have decided to have 2 reps for the area effective from this AGM. Jerome has continued to lead the community down there and we are very lucky to have him.

His report is as follows:

A quick run down of some happenings in Wellington

Neil Thornton's NZ Comedy School has seen many new performers start over the past year. The five week courses have been well attended and well received. He has recently expanded the courses to Auckland. The graduation shows are regularly sold out.

The Wellington Raw Quest were another success with a sold out final at San Fran hosted by Justine Smith.

There are now three regular open mic nights during the week in central Wellington. Rob Harris and Frankie Vallis are running Wednesdays and a monthly Friday night at Fringe Bar.

George Fowler is running regular themed shows each month, a monthly Saturday pro-show, storytelling, female performers showcases, and drag/burlesque shows.

Humorous Arts are looking to bring on a couple of new board members over the next couple of months to join Greg Ellis, Brad Zimmerman, and Jerome. We've had several successful funding applications come through which have gone to production and publicity costs. Thanks to Grand Mercure who have helped out with accommodation sponsorship, and Wellington City Council, One Foundation, Hutt Mana Trust for their financial support.

The Guild have helped out with a few issues around contracts and payments throughout the year. We are going to bring down Scott Blanks for his annual comedy talk, and it has been raised that we should also invite the Comedy Fest staff down to introduce them to new acts before Festival application time.

Thank you Jerome for your hard work.

At the start of the year, our South Island rep, Simon Kingsley-Holmes resigned and Bec Sandys took his place. It has been a full on year for Bec and she has worked tirelessly as representative for the South Island. She has had a hard year and I would like to acknowledge how far beyond her volunteer description she has gone. Her report is as follows.

It's all go in the South Island.

There's regular gigs happening in Christchurch and Dunedin and it's been really cool to see new comedy scenes popping up and growing in Queenstown, Blenheim, Nelson and Methven.

Most issues brought to the Guild this past year have been around behaviour of comedians at gigs, payment for gigs and general enquiries to do with guild rates. One incident brought up the issue of cyber safety. Advice and guidelines from Netsafe have been uploaded to the Guild website under the resources tab.

A lot of time has been spent on issues that could easily be solved with clear communication between performers/promoters and venue managers.

A code of conduct and performance agreement are available on the same resources page.

South Island membership is super low - which doesn't reflect the amount of complaints coming in.

Perhaps the new rep could look at why this is - it could be a lack of understanding as to what the Guild is for, or perhaps it's a feeling of disconnect for those based in South Island to Guild events (like the guildies).

I've tried to encourage nominations for both guildies and guild exec, but numbers weren't as high as expected.

It would be great to see some form of guild activity or event for South Island members - again this could be something the new rep can look at - maybe a survey amongst South Island comedians as to what they see the guild to be, how it can help them and what they'd like to see happening in the South Island.

There is a lot of opinion about this on Facebook, it's a shame those who are the most vocal about guild activity or planning aren't running for rep or becoming members - so they can have a say.

I look forward to handing over this role to the new South Island rep and wish them all the best for the following year.

Bec Sandys

Outgoing Temporary South Island Rep. Thank you Bec.

At the moment we have 82 members across Aotearoa. 56 of those are in the Auckland area, 8 in the South Island and 18 in the Lower North Island. I would really like to see those numbers increase, especially in the regions, and hope to make that happen in the next year. The other things I would like to focus on in the coming year are organising development workshops for members and increasing discounts and so that members get for their Guild cards - which is helped by the community - if you have any great ideas tell us or, even better, organise it! I would also like to relook at the Code of Conduct and what our options are in terms of disciplinary procedures. I am aware of some recent incidents and I would like you to know that they have not been looked over. They are very much in the forefront of my mind. The Guild is more than the Guildies and we're not just for stand-up. We're for the community and the industry. I run this Guild because I believe in this community. Although we are based in Auckland, we are actually here for all of Aotearoa. I know that a community can make great change. I have seen it with what Rich has done with Whariki Hauora and I've seen it in what Bec does in the South Island. I've seen it with what Livi and Amanda have done with Get me

Home Safe which is echoed in Australia. We are you and we are here for every one of you. Whether you do stand up, improv, characters, magic, it doesn't matter. I will do what I can in the next year to make this the best and safe community it can be.

Lastly, I would like to thank my colleagues, Dan Crozier and Richard Carrington, for their dedication and hard work these past 1000 years. Thank you so very much.

Gifts.

I would now like to invite Richard Carrington to deliver the Financial Report.