

Everything You Wanted to Know About Troupe Waihi And Were Afraid to Ask

By Deva Courtney and Daniel Su

Mr. Devery, the leader of Troupe Waihi and the sole Drama teacher here at Waihi College, was kind enough to shed some light on what exactly Troupe Waihi is all about.

Troupe Waihi is a performance group that operates outside of Waihi College. Performances range from colourful puppet shows to acts in the Santa parade in Waihi, and incorporate an incredible variety of skillwork--from walking on stilts, handling fire, and juggling, to magic tricks, tying sausage balloons into orange poodles, and riding unicycles--all these skills are integrated into the characters acts.

There are many interesting and outlandish characters in the troop, to which Mr. Devery comments “the list is never complete. It (the characters) just keeps evolving with new people coming in.”

Some memorable characters include the Fallen Angels, Corpse Bride, Russell (the man made entirely of brown paper), Free Hugs, and the Headless man.

While there are a ton of characters to play, Mr. Devery tells us that different people suit different characters. One student in particular this year does an incredible job at playing the Corpse Bride.

Troupe Waihi is an entirely self funding performance group that operates outside of Waihi College, and accepts donations and koha payments from clients they perform for.

Environmental theatre is the bulk of what Troupe Waihi do, from performances ranging from the Uta Kaka Winter festival, to set shows like Sea Week from the Department of Conservation in Takapuna beach, where they did a black light puppet show to celebrate the newly opened tunnels.

In the pitch black of the tunnel, “Puppets seemed to be floating in the air doing incredible things.” Mr. Devery says it was a “really exciting gig to be a part of.”

Their performances continue to wow the audience and leave them in awe, which is something Mr. Devery is extremely proud of. His favourite thing to say about the troupe is that “everybody we’ve performed for has hired us again.” Sometimes they’re so booked they have to refuse gigs.

Troupe Waihi has a great reputation with companies like Free Lunch and a good association with Creative Waikato and the Mell Millers company, who have hired them repeatedly. They also used to do a lot of work with Greerton Mainstreet.

Positive feedback not only comes from those they work with, but from the community as well. Particularly people that have children at the troupe. They’re astounded at the good it has done for their kids.