

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## AWARD-WINNING SHOW RETURNS FOR A SNEAK PEAK BEFORE HITTING THE EDINBURGH FRINGE

Trick of the Light Theatre and Zanetti Productions present

# The Road That Wasn't There

Written by Ralph McCubbin Howell | Directed by Hannah Smith  
Sun 23 July, 7pm | Whitireia Performance Centre, Wellington | Book at [www.thetheatre.co.nz](http://www.thetheatre.co.nz)

From the makers of *The Bookbinder* comes an award-winning dark fairytale.

In New Zealand there are some 56,000 kilometres of paper roads – streets and towns that exist only on surveyors' maps. Or do they?

After a sweep of awards across the ditch, local company Trick of the Light Theatre are back in town for a one-off fundraiser performance of their award-winning dark fable *The Road That Wasn't There* before they head off to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. From writer/performer Ralph McCubbin Howell and director Hannah Smith, *The Road That Wasn't There* will be staged Whitireia Performance Centre on Sunday 23 July – a captivating tale from the twitchy edges of children's literature for adults and older children (8+) in the vein of Neil Gaiman and *Pan's Labyrinth*.

A young woman strays from the beaten track and finds herself in a paper town. It seems a place of possibility, but she soon discovers that actions taken in the fictional world can have frighteningly real consequences...

Told by three actors and fifty-odd puppets, the show weaves between shadow play, live music, and a score by composer Tane Upjohn-Beatson. The story is rooted in New Zealand folklore; from lost moa roaming the foothills, to faeries drinking moonshine out of the back of Mitre 10. First staged as a work-in-progress at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2012, it returned home to sweep New Zealand's Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards in 2013, winning Outstanding New NZ Play, Most Promising New Director and Production of the Year. Last year the company took it overseas to two of the world's largest Fringe festivals where it won Best Children's Event at both Fringe World, Perth, and Adelaide Fringe.

The company are partnering with Zanetti Productions to rework the show for seasons at the Herald in Auckland with Auckland Live (July 11-15) and Expressions Upper Hutt (July 19), and in preparation for the world's largest festival, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, where they will perform as part of Creative New Zealand's NZatEdinburgh programme. Director Hannah Smith says "We first made the show on an absolute shoe-string budget, and after touring it for a couple of years it's been great to come back with a fresh set of eyes, kill some darlings, and get it road-ready for Edinburgh." This will be the company's fourth visit to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, where their show *The Bookbinder* has enjoyed sell-out seasons for the last two years.

Last seen in Wellington in 2013, the performance of *The Road That Wasn't There* at Whitireia will see a reworked script, fresh design, puppets made by Smith with puppet-maker Jon Coddington, and a cast of Elle Wootton, Ralph McCubbin Howell, and Paul Waggott who is returning from the UK for the NZ tour. McCubbin Howell says "We knew it was a long-shot to get Paul back, and we're delighted to have him back in the fold. This Wellington show is going to be special."

*The Road That Wasn't There* will play at Whitireia Performance Centre on July 23. Book at [thetheatre.co.nz](http://thetheatre.co.nz)

"Charming, funny and haunting in equal measure... a storytelling triumph." Word on the Street, Wellington

"If there is only one show that you can watch this Fringe, this one is the pick of the crop." ★★★★★ The Advertiser, Adelaide

Web: [trickofthelight.co.nz](http://trickofthelight.co.nz) Twitter: @stage Trick Facebook: /trickofthelighttheatre

For media enquiries contact Lydia Zanetti [lydia@zanetti-productions.com](mailto:lydia@zanetti-productions.com) or 027 341 3481

