Welcome to the fourth volume of New Zealand Journal of Research in Performing Arts and Education: Nga Mahi a Rehia.

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It is an indication of the growing academic confidence of teachers of drama and the other performing arts in New Zealand that we have ten articles in this volume and that they are all by New Zealanders who are engaged in researching aspects of our collective work of teaching in the aesthetic space. The development of drama teaching in our While we always value the contributions of our international colleagues and hope to continue receiving and publishing their work, it is also an important mark of the growing strength of New Zealand scholarship in this field that it is our own investigations and our own evolving platform of knowledge that fill this particular volume. Our journal provides a platform for the work of experienced researchers, like the authors of our first two articles, doctoral students and classroom teachers reaching out to investigate their own practice. It aims to speak to both academics and classroom teachers and the articles in this volume meet that dual challenge.

The first two articles, by Viv Aitken and Terry Locke, are two halves of a rich and detailed case study of a upper primary school production, an activity which involves teachers and students year after year, but about which there is little published research. Together the articles provide a substantive and excitingly readable contribution to remedying the lack.

Next Adele Staples, a primary teacher, reports how she has adapted for her own classroom the literature that describes how process drama can be used to develop literacy and how she has used one of her own process dramas to meet the criteria of the National Standards.

Also speaking from the perspective of a classroom teacher, this time secondary, is Jane Luton, who reports how research previously published in this journal prompted her to
examine Mulgan’s historic plays and to introduce them to her Level 3 NCEA class, who brought them new life in live performance.

The next article is also concerned with our aesthetic history. Trevor Thwaites offers a very comprehensive account of how the performing arts carry the memories of social as well as artistic change. He examines how these arts both reflect and shape philosophical and educational thought, and how the duality of Apollonian and Dionysian, self-restraint and self-expression, continue to influence our art.

History is also addressed by Zoe Brooks who traces New Zealand classrooms and shows how the tensions between the process of making and evaluation of a completed product have been played out in that history and this impact on teachers today.

Esther McNaughton, an art gallery educator describes how she used identity puppets to make the portrait works of Rita Angus accessible to visiting students and relevant to their own lives. She describes how the use of puppets engaged students’ motivation and prompted their concept development, and how the process as a whole allowed them to see the art gallery as ‘their kind of place’.

Linda Ashley, an independent choreographer, describes a study from her doctoral research in which she examined use of video critique for professional development in the teaching about the contextual aspects of dance and draws on Eisner’s concept of educational connoisseurship to analyse developments in understanding.

Coming from the perspective of an experienced teacher of English as a second or foreign language, Abdullah Mohd Nawi explores how creative processes, particularly the use of role, can extend and enrich the language teacher’s repertoire and provide interesting and meaningful contexts for learners who sometimes see English belonging inside a textbook and fluency a characteristic of other people.

James McKinnon and Ralph Upton note that while creative and critical thinking are both recognised as important, they are sometimes often seen as in opposition with each other, and describe sued them as complementary processes in the first stages of an experiment with adaptive dramaturgy in tertiary classrooms.

Finally come two reviews: one by Christine Morgan of a teaching unit for senior classes by Melissa Newton-Turner: Outside the Square; the other by Jane Luton of the 2012 IDIERI Conference in Limerick.
I hope you that enjoy reading these articles, and that you think about which aspects of your own investigations you might like to share in a future volume. We are still an emerging academic community in this filed and we grow by learning from each other. Nā tō rourou, nā tāku rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.

In the editorial to our last volume Alan Scott and I described how the many earthquakes had impacted on the work of everyone in Christchurch in 2011. While the earthquakes lessened in intensity their impact remained throughout this last year, and one among many of their unwelcomed consequences is that Alan has had to leave Christchurch and his role as Associate Editor of this journal. Alan has been a dynamic and influential teacher at the College of Education for many years and he is greatly missed by his colleagues and by the theatre community of Christchurch. He is also missed for his input into this journal. I want, therefore, to take this opportunity to thank him for the long hours of work he put into editing and the mixture of scholarship and practical classroom awareness that he brought to that work.

It is four years since the launced this journal, and Alan’s departure is not the only change in the ways people have been involved. Many of our original reviewers and editorial advisors have changed their circumstances and so their involvement and new reviewers have come on board. Sincere thanks to all of them for the work they have done. Thanks also to Safayet Alam, who took on the administrative work of peer review and communication with authors, and to Ian Allan, Drama New Zealand’s webmaster, who has done such thorough and indispensable work in putting each volume of this journal on line.

At the next Drama New Zealand Conference a new website will be launched and the Journal will continue to be found there but with a new look. At that time also we will hope to introduce the new members of our advisory board and our review panel.