

Sincere Apologies



TE AHUREI TOI O TĀMAKI
AUCKLAND
ARTS FESTIVAL

2026

Sincere Apologies

**By Dan Koop, Jamie Lewis
& David Williams**

**Based on an original concept by
Roslyn Oades & David Williams**

Producer & Lighting Designer
Suzie Franke

Sound Designer
Gail Priest

An Alternative Facts production

Thursday 19 — Sunday 22 March 2026
Loft, Q Theatre

55 mins no interval

Contains occasional coarse language and
non-compulsory audience participation.

Sincere Apologies was supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, supported by the City of Melbourne Arts Grants, and assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body. This project was developed with support from Vitalstatistix.



About *Sincere Apologies*

Spoilers ahead! This is best read *after* experiencing the show.

We are really sorry that we can't be with you tonight. Our sincere apologies.

The original idea for this show was kind of an accident. Back in 2018, Roslyn Oades and David Williams were co-teaching a course at the VCA. When they discovered that neither of them was able to attend the first lecture, they crafted an 'auto-lecture' to be delivered by the students, filled with apologies. These ranged from the personal (they each apologised by proxy for not being physically present) to the formal (the Apology to the Stolen Generations) to the insincere (Alan Jones and many others).

This experiment went very well — so well in fact that in the student feedback at the course conclusion, many suggested that this was their favourite session.

Over the next few years, they continued to collect apologies — once you start looking, apologies are everywhere.

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In 2020, during the longest of the lockdowns, there was a chance for a new experiment — could this auto-lecture idea work as a performance? Working remotely, and reinforced now by Jamie Lewis and Dan Koop, the team spent a week experimenting with the apology form, and considered how we might be able to try and repair the world through acts of contrition and offers of restoration. This resulted in a performance remote-delivered to Vitalstatistix in Port Adelaide. A Zoom call introduced a package, left for the audience to open and 'perform' on behalf of the artists at home in lockdown. Again, it seemed to be a success, with the live audience in Adelaide finding the experience surprising and unexpectedly joyous. In 2023 we tried again, with a new version of the 2020 experiment, this time with a fabulous group of unsuspecting friends and colleagues, all of whom genuinely thought that we would be there in person. Sorry about that, friends.

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What you have experienced tonight is the result of many many experiments. What emerged through this long iterative process is a fully instructional work, performed by audience proxies on behalf of absent artists. As artists who make live performance, it is surprisingly difficult to create something that only works when we are NOT present. Presence is after all the fundamental defining characteristic of theatre and performance. You had to be there. But in this work we really can't be there, and we need you to step up and stand in for us, and all of the other real people summoned through their sorry utterances. Something transformative happens when all of these apologies are read by a group of strangers. Your collective investment in the seemingly-simple task of reading out apology after apology for a bit under an hour changes everything, even if just a tiny bit. It's a big show, made of lots of really small pieces. It's about everything that's been going on in the world, all at once. We structured the work in order to care for the

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audience — we ask quite a bit of you, and we want to make sure that there are pleasures and joys whenever they are most needed. We're all in this together.

We have consumed literally thousands of apologies in order to craft this show — carefully selected to finely tune the flow of emotional energy, the fragmented narratives and the unfolding of the show's major themes over its 50-card duration. *Sincere Apologies* is absolutely a show about how we say sorry, and how we really mean it. But ultimately the work is haunted by the future — all the things that we know we will need to apologise for, to our children and all those who come after. We are sorry that we haven't yet solved the environmental crisis that is now upon us. We are sorry that we haven't yet reconciled our colonial past. We are sorry that we don't yet know what to do. We are sorry that we haven't been better people at the moments that we needed to be.

Thank you for taking this journey. We hope that it stays with you.



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About the Artists



Jamie Lewis is a Singaporean-Australian artist, curator, dramaturg and facilitator. She creates and curates site-responsive performances that engage audiences as participants, and communities as artists; often through

autobiographical stories, conversation and food. Her solo projects include *Shepparton Culture Kitchen* (MAV 2019–23), *The Little Old Cooking Club That Could* (SCENES 2020 Drama Box), *The Long Lunch* (Art Gallery of NSW 2022; Museum of Brisbane; Arts House 2017), *Yesterday Tomorrow Here Today* (Plenty ACE Open 2018), 汤圆; 团圆 (Ritual Next Wave 2018), *Tropical Kitchen with ACCOMPLICE Arts Space* (Darwin Fringe Festival 2018; Darwin Festival 2017), *Saltwater* (Theatre Works & Brisbane Festival 2015; Bleach* Festival 2016), and 来, 吃 (*Come, eat*) (Darebin Homemade Food & Wine Festival 2017; SafARI 2016; exist-ence 5 2013). She has collaborated with Latai Taumoepeau in *Mass Movement for Refuge: Displacement* (Arts House 2019–21), with Dan Koop in *The Last Day of Summer* (in development), *The Market Record* (South Melbourne Market, 2019–20), *SALT WATER BAY* (2018 Creative State Commissions shortlist), *FLUX-KIT-MEL* (MEL&NYC, NGV; Open Spaces, Abbotsford Convent 2018), and *The Stream/The Boat/The Shore/The Bridge* (Next Wave Festival 2012; Junction Arts Festival 2013).



Dan Koop is an artist, curator-producer and facilitator working in public and unusual spaces. Creatively, he makes performance works in unexpected and public spaces that engage

audiences to become participants.

As an artist Dan makes performance works in public spaces and social situations that encourage participation, creating audience centred projects along and across rivers, at fresh food markets and for hotel rooms, receiving Green Room Awards for his works.

As a curator-producer Dan worked with Gold Satino on Front Beach Back Beach, was a Senior Producer for the Flash Forward program of 40 public art commissions in the City of Melbourne, and has previously worked in programming teams for Battersea Arts Centre (UK), Brisbane Powerhouse, Sydney Festival, Theatre Works St Kilda, Dancehouse Carlton and was the Creative Program Producer for commissioned works in the 2015–17 Melbourne Fringe Festivals.



David Williams is a theatre artist whose works open spaces for public conversation about political and social issues. He was the founder of version 1.0 and co-created and produced all the company's

work from 1998–12, including *CMI*, *The Wages Of Spin*, *This Kind Of Ruckus*, *The Disappearances Project* and *The Bougainville Photoplay Project*. He holds a PhD from UNSW and his works have won Helpmann, Green Room and Drovers' Awards. Over the past two decades he has crafted evocative performances from found materials such as interviews, archives, and transcripts of public inquiries. Recent works include *Quiet Faith*, built from conversations with Christians about religion and public life; *Grace Under Pressure* (co-written with Paul Dwyer), based on interviews with doctors and nurses about hospital workplace cultures; and *Smurf In Wanderland*, about football fandom and geographic belonging. *Grand Theft Theatre*, his recent collaboration with Pony Cam, was awarded Best Theatre, 2022 Melbourne Fringe, and played at the 2024 Adelaide Festival.



Suzie Franke is a seasoned professional with an extensive range of expertise in theatre production. With experience spanning over twenty years, she has excelled as a Producer, Production Manager, Lighting

Designer, Event Manager and Company Stage Manager. Her dedication and skill have allowed her to successfully produce, manage and deliver many national tours, making her a highly sought-after industry professional. Currently, Suzie is a Producer for CDP Theatre Producers, an award-winning theatre production house specialising in producing and touring theatre of the highest quality.

Additionally, she holds the position of Director and Executive Producer for Alternative Facts Pty Ltd, where she drives the company's mission of presenting works of social relevance, aesthetic rigour and emotional impact.



Gail Priest is a sound artist/ composer working across live experimental music, recording, sound design for dance and theatre and installation. Originally trained in performance, she frequently collaborates with directors

and choreographers including Andrea James (writer/ director *Sunshine Super Girl*; *Performing Lines*), David Williams (*Grace Under Pressure*; *Alternative Facts, Version 1.0*), Lee Serle and Jo Lloyd (*Time Portrait*, sound design nominated for a Green Room Award; *Myth Development*), Kaz Therese (*Playlist, They Will be Kings*) and Martin del Amo (*Champions, Under Attack, Unsealed, It's a Jungle Out There*; *Performance Space*). She has also performed and exhibited her own work nationally and internationally across Europe and Asia. **gailpriest.net**

alternative facts

Alternative Facts creates theatre works of social relevance, aesthetic rigour and emotional impact — theatre designed to change the world, one person at a time. Under the leadership of theatremaker David Williams and producer Suzie Franke, the theatre of Alternative Facts explores contemporary social life in all its complexity, messiness, beauty and strangeness. Recent works include *Sincere Apologies*, *Is Shakespeare in this Movie?*, *Democracy Sausage* and *Grace Under Pressure*. **altfacts.com.au**

Te Ahurei Toi o Tāmaki Auckland Arts Festival is a melting pot of shared experiences, whakaaro, live entertainment and kōrero every March.

Ko ngā mahinga toi whānui me te ahurea ki Tāmaki Makaurau o nāianei te pūmanawa o te Ahurei.

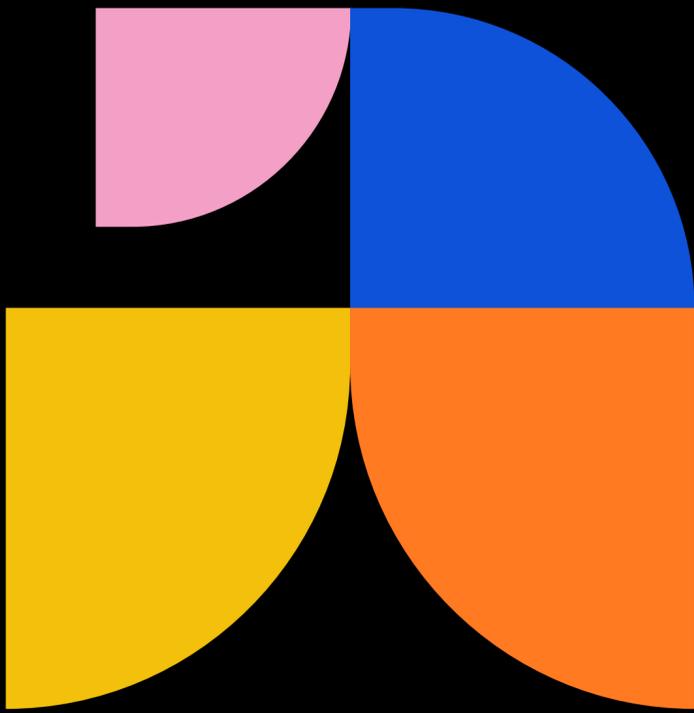
The Festival's lifeblood is arts and culture in contemporary Tāmaki Makaurau. We care deeply about celebrating artists and their kaupapa, serving the creatives and communities behind the works we present, honouring te reo and te ao Māori in all that we do, and contributing to a better city and society. That's us. Koia pū!

Every March you'll see a big reunion with our city's arts community alongside our mahi towards better accessibility and education opportunities for our audiences. We're also passionate about the works we curate and our collaboration with the many people who make those experiences happen. We strive to celebrate with generosity; human connection and manaakitanga will always be at the heart of what we stand for.

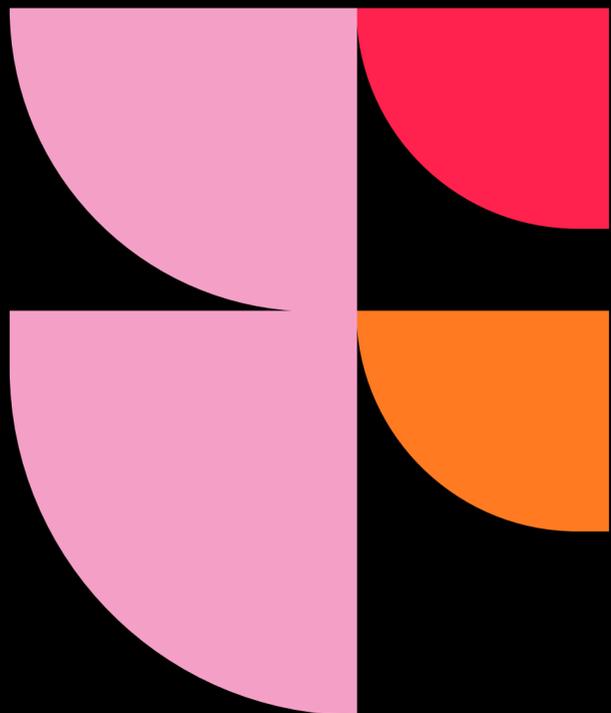
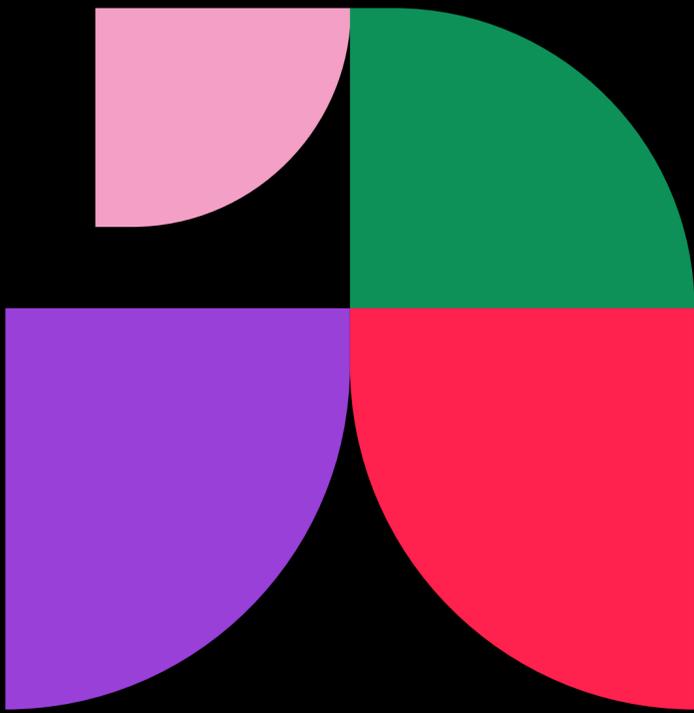
When we're on, we're on a mission to make Auckland an amazing place to socialise and be entertained in. Whether you're discovering the city for the first time or rekindling your love for its hidden gems, we truly believe that the Festival has something for everyone.

18 unforgettable days and nights.

For the ❤️ of TĀMAKI MAKĀURAU.



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TOI O
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AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL

5—22 o Māehe • March 2026

Core funders



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