



**MEDIA RELEASE: For Immediate Release**

## **Nelson Arts Festival turns 30: new era of growth and development ahead for Nelson Festivals Trust**

Monday 8 April 2024

2024 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of the Nelson Arts Festival – and a move towards a bold vision for the next 30 years of unmissable arts experiences. In support of the future of the organisation, the Board of the Nelson Festivals Trust are very pleased to announce the appointment of Ruth Roebuck as General Manager.

Roebuck (she/her/ia) brings extensive commercial experience, internationally and here in Aotearoa, to this role. Having most recently worked in the profit-for-purpose and charities sector spending four years as General Manager for the Spirit of Adventure Trust and three years as Manager of The Suter Art Gallery Te Aratoi o Whakatū, Ruth is well versed in navigating the ever-changing landscape of the non-profit sector, and the challenges of balancing strategic goals and organisational sustainability to profitable growth and audience development.

Ruth will report to the board and has responsibility across the Trust while working alongside Artistic Director Lydia Zanetti (they/them/ia). Zanetti started with the Trust in 2021 and has very successfully held both the Executive and Artistic Director roles since the beginning of 2022. They have led the team to deliver two hugely successful Festivals with over 110 events, increased festival partnerships and revenue streams, and attracted new audiences through progressive and diversified artistic programming as well as initiatives to increase event accessibility.

Zanetti is pleased to now concentrate on the Artistic Director function while Roebuck will lead the Executive Director aspects. With this recent appointment and structural change, Nelson Festivals Trust has a unique collective expertise across the gambit of skills necessary for strategic growth - resourcing the organisation to further develop in its vital role as part of the regional, national and international ecosystems, and continue to give back to the community of Whakatū and Te Taihu.

*“We are very aware of the importance of the Arts Festival to the Whakatū Nelson community and as an activator for the city and region. As the team prepares for the festival in its thirtieth year, it is great to have the structure in place to support Lydia as Artistic Director and for them to have total focus on the programme. We have recently undertaken a strategic review to ensure that we are in the best position to deliver for the next three decades, and this new structure and appointment of Ruth is key to making that happen,”* says Ali Boswijk, Chair of Nelson Festivals Trust (she/her/ia).

The 30<sup>th</sup> Nelson Arts Festival will take place from **Thursday 24 October - Sunday 3 November 2024**, with the beloved community street event Mask Carnivale returning on Friday 1 November. The full festival programme will launch in late August: [nelsonartsfestival.nz](https://nelsonartsfestival.nz)

#### About the Nelson Festivals Trust:

Following 24 successful years, in 2018 the Nelson City Council moved the Nelson Arts Festival into a community-based, autonomous organisation to continue its growth.

The Nelson Festivals Trust looks to the horizon, igniting sparks of transformation and inciting the power of creativity as a force for positive change. Now in our 30th year of delivering epic annual festivals with the support of core partners like Nelson City Council, our key offering Nelson Arts Festival continues as a bright beacon for the arts in Aotearoa and a strong pou for the Whakatū creative community. Every spring, we curate, craft and nurture 11 days of unmissable arts experiences for and with the people of Whakatū Nelson and Te Taihū - and beyond.

**ENDS.**

Selected images for use [HERE](#).

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