The New Zealand International Arts Festival is New Zealand's premier cultural event and a leading multi-arts festival in Australasia. The Festival has an esteemed reputation among artists and audiences for bringing the very best from around the globe to Aotearoa, New Zealand. Every two years Wellington transforms into one of the world's great festival cities. For 24 days, its easily accessible theatres, concert halls, museums, galleries and open spaces come alive with theatre, dance and music, literature, film and visual arts. The Festival attracts 290,000 people to over 300 events across three Festival weeks. Enlivening New Zealand’s coolest little capital, Wellington, it is a national Festival for all New Zealanders. While the major focus of the Festival is on international works, it also showcases the best of New Zealand work, fostering creative and professional opportunities for many New Zealand artists. The Festival has commissioned a significant body of new work, producing more than 89 new plays, operas, music, dance and other events that tell our stories and reflect our culture.

Check out the [programme](http://festival.co.nz/) for New Zealand International Arts Festival 2012, including theatre, dance, visual arts, music and a week dedicated to Writers and Readers.

**Image credits:**
- Featuring a dozen international and New Zealand-based artists the show is an exploration of the Chinese Zodiac. Collected by guest curator Erica van Zon, the twelve contributing artists have been asked to consider and respond to their zodiac sign. *Image: Erica van Zon, Ritan Park Children's Zodiac Ride (detail), 2011. Digital image courtesy of the artist*
- With two wheels that look like they've been pinched off a giant’s bicycle and two fearless French performers, this is the jaw-dropping acrobatics of Arcane. *Image: Cie Les Philébulistes*