

# Signature event a parade of wit and satire

Ahh Christchurch, you missed another good one.

The Canterbury Tales parade – the signature event of the four-day Festival of Transitional Architecture – concluded Sunday night before a crowd of fewer than 2000 people.

Those who did attend were treated to a masterly performance.

The five huge puppets – notably the 6-metre-tall Wife of Bath – were fabulous creations and best of all was the 5m-tall Scholar puppet.

He was the most sophisticated mechanically and voiced by the

## REVIEW

The Canterbury Tales parade, Sunday night, Festival of Transitional Architecture. Reviewed by Will Harvie.

most sophisticated performer and ad-libber on the night, Canterbury Tales project director George Parker.

The six lesser puppets – depicting friars – almost stole the show.

Few would have missed that one friar strongly resembled

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Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee and another was almost certainly Prime Minister John Key.

The puppeteers didn't act these

personalities necessarily.

All of the friars were full of antics, embracing the audience with huge hands, high-fiving children and making small disputes with other characters.

The audience was allowed among the parade and puppets.

We were free to cross the street, walk alongside the floats and interact with the puppets (and some wolves and a warg on stilts).

Of the dozens of parade marshalls, only one really tried to keep the audience in its place.

At installations along the way, the audience was lightly

challenged. The Angel of History was balanced by an earthquake of horrible sound.

Maori had symbolically occupied Cathedral Square and questioned the puppets and audience about colonial history.

But these Maori also gave way to the puppets, all British in origin, and the parade ended in peace.

Last year, the Festival of Transitional Architecture gave us LuxCity, the fabulous light show.

This year Festa gave us Canterbury Tales, a fabulous procession. Don't miss whatever they come up with next year.