

Tajume

PROGRAMME

**WRITTEN AND
DIRECTED BY SANI
MULIAUMASEALI'I**

WORLD PREMIERE
12 November 2018
Penthouse,
New Zealand High
Commission, London

GAFA
ARTS COLLECTIVE


NEW ZEALAND
HIGH COMMISSION

CLEARPOINT


Beautiful
SAMOA

Foreword

Since 2012 GAFA Arts Collective (GAC) has brought not only a welcome Samoan voice to British arts, but also a multicultural voice – a blend of Pacific and other cultures in which participants work together, learning from each others' lived and inherited experience and, in doing so, come to better understand their own. These newly-appraised cultures are critiqued in the telling and re-activated for the 21st century in the sharing. Bringing together aspects of Open Space, traditional and non-traditional opera, European and Polynesian music and dance, GAC's unique mix has created some astonishing work, from the 2012 'layered art performance' of 'GAFA A Family called Samoa' remounted in 2013 and 2016, through to Kava Girls with seasons in London and at the Edinburgh Festival 2014/2015/2016 UK Pride Tour to 2015's rugby-opera mash-up 'R'Otello' complete with choir, band and full orchestra, all in the gymnasium of a youth centre in urban London. Several concerts, pOera sustains the world #OSTW, to Messiah Paziflk 2017 and a new musical for children, Baba the bad Baboon 2018. There are two reasons for the company's huge and varied output – the first, of course, is progenitor's Sani Muliaumaseali'i phenomenal drive, energy and ability to bring together the most disparate groups of people. The second is even more rare and harder to define. It is something to do with welcome. The GAC facilitates strangers and old friends to come together in order to create something new, something made of the many working together. This many includes those who have gone before, by welcoming the ancestors to be part of our work. This shows up in the form of a playful yet always-respectful recognition of our personal, familial ancestors; in the present-day incorporation of learning from our artistic elders and colleagues; as well as the more basic acknowledgement that each of us comes to the work of creation – as artist or audience – carrying the load of our lived and handed-down past. By bringing the past into the present in this way, we create a new present from which to walk together into a co-created future. It is this multifarious yet united future that GAC's work offers to everyone involved in the company's productions, on any level. By acknowledging the contribution of each person's individual skills and passions, by valuing our differences and welcoming us to bring those differences to the act of making, GAFA Arts Collective is able to create performative work that transcends the traditional – and tired – us/them dichotomy of artist and audience. This is work that is as comfortable in a warehouse as a dance space, as likely to show up at an outdoor stadium as on a main stage. It is work that puts people first, recognising the creative spirit in all of us, and the huge range of possibilities that open up when we welcome everyone's contribution to the work we make. It is work worth making. For seven years GAC has welcomed artists and audiences alike to speak, sing, see, sway, strut – to which we can now also add collaborate, collate, design and publish. The next few years should be very interesting.

Stella Duffy OBE
Associate Artist,
GAFA Arts Collective

Talune

Overview

Talune is a powerful dramatic work with choral music, inspired by the tragic impact, particularly in Samoa, of the SS Talune's deadly 1918 voyage through the Pacific islands.

Incongruously played out against the political backdrop of preparations for the celebration of Armistice Day, the drama is seen through the eyes of a young Samoan girl who survives the pandemic.

This intimate work cleverly combines scenes of everyday life, familial relationships, history, humour, pacific culture, mundane bureaucracy and personal heartbreak – a varied and beautiful mosaic which, taken together, is both a potent indictment of the causes and a profound tribute to the victims of this avoidable disaster.

**The night
before my
return I had a
magnificent
dream.**

**I dreamt that
my whole
village came
down to the
wharf to meet
me...**

www.gafasamoa.com

Play Summary

Talune

SCENES 1 TO 6: The Calm Before

The initial scenes of Talune convey a sense of everyday life in 1918 in the months before the arrival of the ship SS Talune in Apia. Feelings of optimism at the end of World War I and a strong dose of island humour dominate, with little to portend the catastrophic turn of events to come.

SCENES 7 TO 12: Colony

This portion of Talune explores the varied aspects of colonial rule which came to influence life in Samoa and the wider Pacific. Trade, geopolitics, education and religion all had profound impacts on traditional cultures and value systems. This cultural hybridization set in motion a new trajectory of 'development' in the islands which continues to this day.

SCENES 13 TO 20: Goodbye

The dramatic climax of Talune commences with a family sending off the young girl on a trip to visit relatives. The tension builds quickly as the blitzkrieg of the influenza pandemic sends calm island life reeling into an abyss – a result of incompetence and deception, but also of tradition and love.

SCENES 21 TO 25: Power

The final scenes of Talune explore a range of political dynamics and their relationship to the influenza pandemic. The varied perspectives presented in these scenes consider the wider impacts of power at all levels – international and national, local, familial, personal and spiritual.

Thank you! Peter Rice, Faautu Talapusi (Comms), Jacob Corn (Stage Manager), Masina Maleapai Frost, Luana Asiata, Geoffrey Cox & Dimson Lodge, Ceilidh Dunphy, Bronwen Stephens & Rogue opera, Tania Bearsley, Stephen Anthony Brown, Lyndall Dawson, David Harrod, Chris Taylor, Danita Strickland, Loretta Vui, Tania Bearsley, Kerryn Beeching, Samoa Tourism, Clearpoint, Stella Duffy, Charlotte Everett, John Halin & London Bar Hire.

Directors Notes



Sunday Massive & Talune

A heaviness has lived near me since learning of the influenza tragedy as it pertains to Samoa. I watched a documentary on the influenza pandemic in 1995 and an existence has ensued blighted with a niggling that only an injustice can engender. This is probably why I wrote my 'playing' *Talune* - the story inside me had to come out. We negotiate our way through life a day to day, not acknowledging that had events been different - the world would indeed have been a very different place. In my case it may not have been at all. My great grandfather I'iga Pisa escaped the flu tragedy. He was exiled to Saipan in 1909 for his part in Samoa independence movement, the Mau a Pule. Whole families were exiled by the German administration and then repatriated when New Zealand took over in 1914. I'iga Pisa did not return to Samoa with the rest of the exiles, opting to go to Guam instead. He missed the pandemic altogether, many others died. Survivors' guilt was not a 'thing' back then and I'm not sure if I'iga had felt this - but lone survival can create feelings of a nowhere, a purgatory that can sometimes last a lifetime. Many of the fallen ended up in mass graves, and with Sunday MASSive, I wanted to give these victims in particular, the dignity of ritual. The Dream of Gerontius tells the story of a pious man's soul through death, judgement and settlement into Purgatory, so it was a good place to begin. The programming of the Verdi and Brahms requiems were chosen not

only for their beauty, but also for their peculiarities e.g The German composer Johannes Brahms' work is sacred and non liturgical - and the text is not in Latin, but German: 'A German requiem' The Verdi is liturgical though the work is mostly performed in concert.

Le Fa'ama'i (the sickness)

'The future of the Samoa will not be of our own making.'

Papa, Talune.

Talune

The story of Talune, and how the flu arrived in Samoa has lain for the most part in limbo. One hundred years to the day that the SS Talune docked into Apia, with passengers stricken with the fa'ama'i, influenza virus we bring this story into the light. Uncomfortable truths resurface and are examined. The playing, is borne of anecdote, historical documents and imaginings. I reference the music of the masses in the Talune as a nexus and to highlight art/music as propaganda, and art/music and as an opiate. What the flu virus was to humanity, so can art be to culture. My work, the *Talune* was originally a moving poem or a modified maulu'ulu, which I wrote for our inaugural work *A Family called Samoa* (2012).

Tonights presentation follows the form of the poem, but interweaves different perspectives throughout. This full length 'playing' was developed for the centenary of the pandemic.

Siliga Sani Muliaumaseali'i
Creative Director & Producer,
GAFA Arts Collective

**So pray,
pray for
me my
friends,
who
have not
strength
to pray...**

The Dream Of Gerontius,
Cardinal John Henry Newman.

Scenes

Scene 1

Sauni [ready]

Scene 2

La'u miti, Teine (1)
[My dream, Girl]

Scene 3

Race

Scene 4

La'u miti, Teine (2)

Scene 5

Warships

Scene 14

La'u miti, Teine (5)

Scene 6

NZ Soldier

Scene 7

You Can Pass

Scene 8

La'u miti, Teine (3)

Scene 9

Too Much Esi
[papaya]

Scene 10

La'u miti, Teine (4)

Scene 11

Ocean Kings

Scene 12

Kiss Me

Scene 13

Lotu [prayer]

Scene 14

La'u miti, Teine (5)

Scene 15

Business as Usual

Scene 16

NZ Soldier (2)

Scene 17

Makeshift

INTERVAL**Scene 18**

Ruta [Ruth]

Scene 19

Azure

Scene 20

On Deck

Scene 21

Mau

Scene 22

Star Spangled

Scene 23

La'u miti, Teine (6)

Scene 24

Armistice Day

Scene 25

La'u miti, Teine (7)

Personae Dramatis

Teine (Girl)

Jasmine Leota

Mele (fa'afafine)

Rohan Reckord

Tausili

(Mele's brother)

Jamal Renaldo

Mose

(Mele's brother)

Kian Oconnell

Papa

Richard Keane

Mama

Aivale Cole

Peniva

Lena Tutuvanu

Eseta

Aivale Cole

Ruta

Bronwen Stephens

Colonel

Alan Mosely

Captain

Rohan Reckord

Captain

Martin Baker

Bosun

Jamal Renaldo

Headmistress

Lori Isley Lynn

Colonial Wife

Theda Lehmann

Colonial Wife

Bronwen Stephens

Doctor

Sara Taukolonga

Doctor

Lori Isely Lynn

Soldier

Martin Baker

Lover

Theda Lehmann

Lover

Jamal Renaldo

The SS Talunes Tragic 1918 Polynesian Voyage



Programme notes by
Masina Maleapai Frost

In the Autumn of 1918, the ship SS Talune departed from Auckland on one of its regular Pacific voyages. At the time of the ship's departure from Auckland, pandemic influenza was spreading rapidly in New Zealand. By 4th November, several crewman had influenza upon the ship's arrival in Suva on Fiji, where the ship was quarantined. On 7th November 1918 the SS Talune arrived in Apia, Samoa. Despite Fijian labourers having been taken on in Suva becoming ill, there was no mention of the ship's quarantine and, unaware of the epidemic in Auckland, passengers from the ship were allowed to disembark in Samoa. The SS Talune's captain told the medical officer that there was no serious sickness on board. By 31st December 1918, barely seven weeks later, more than 7,500 Samoan people had died from the influenza. The final death toll exceeded 8,500 people – nearly one-quarter of the entire population. The proportion of deaths make the Samoan influenza epidemic among the most disastrous ever recorded worldwide. The deaths in Western (now Independent) Samoa are particularly poignant in view of the success of the American authorities in preventing pandemic influenza from gaining a foothold in the Samoan islands under their administration, a mere 37 miles away (now American Samoa). The SS Talune went on from Apia to Tonga (Neiafu, Vava'u, and Ha'Apai) and Nuku'Alofa in Tongatapu. Within days of the SS Talune's arrival disease had spread with heavy loss of life, estimated at 8-10% of the Tongan population. After Tongatapu the Talune sailed for Nauru where again the first cases of influenza appeared within days of her departure.

Bioographies



Siliga Sani Muliaumasealii

A layered art exponent, Sani studied singing at Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Australia, where he gained his BMus and Post Graduate Diploma. He has appeared opera, music theatre film and television all over the world. Sani has toured with the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, performed with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra under Kent Nagano and sung Wagner with Longborough opera, the British Bayreuth. In recent years Sani has taken up writing his inaugural piece *'A family called Samoa'* was featured at the Origins Festival 2013 and represented Samoa at the 12th Festival of Pacific Arts in Guam in 2016. Other works include 'The Third Country' for the Royal Court in 2015, his play with songs *'Kava Girls'* was 'Pick of the Edinburgh Fringe' 2014. *R'Otello the rugby opera'* 2015 *'Baba the Bad baboon'* 2017, a musical for younger audiences. Sani has directed, produced and curated all his work. Tenor Sani is currently appearing in *Porgy and Bess* and Britten's War Requiem, for the English National Opera and will tour with them the Netherlands, to the Dutch National Opera in 2019. Sani co- founded the GAC in 2012.

Supporters



Sara Taukolonga

Sara is a British born London-based artist of mixed Tongan and Jewish-Latvian parentage. A mezzo-soprano, this is Sara's fourth appearance with GAFA Arts Collective. She toured with them to Guam for their staging of *'A Family Called Samoa'* at the 2016 Pacific Arts Festival and sang in their Mezziah Pazifik semi-staged production of Handel's Messiah in 2017.



Lori Isely Lynn

Whilst still enjoying singing professionally, Lori works as a Speech and Language Therapist, specializing in voice rehabilitation and transgender voice. She has enjoyed a solo singing career in concert, opera, oratorio and West End musicals, in such venues as The Royal Albert Hall, Opera Holland Park and Her Majesty's Theatre.



Aivale Cole

London based Samoan Soprano Aivale Cole was born and raised in New Zealand. Formerly a student of the late Elizabeth Connell, Miss Cole now studies with Mirella Freni. Aivale's performances on the concert platform include Verdi's Requiem, Strauss's Four Last Songs Handel's Messiah and the world premier of *The Passion* according to St Mark (Richard Mills). On the operatic stage she has been seen in the title roles in *Aida*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Madama Butterfly* and many more. Aivale is a founding member of the GAC appearing in *'A Family called Samoa'* 2012, *'Pacific Voices'* Chelsea Town Hall 2014, and as Mona in *'R'Otello the rugby Opera'* 2015.



Alan Mosley

Alan's work includes all aspects of theatre: classical, modern, musical: in Repertory, West End and National/International Tour highlights include The King in the *'The King & I'*, The Private Secretary in Matthew Bourne's *'Swan*

Lake;³ Stephen Sondheim European Premiere's & most recently John in David Moore's acclaimed *"Lisa & John Slideshow"*.



Martin Baker

Martin is a Chartered Surveyor by profession but has had a long association with music and drama. He sings with the ENO Community Choir and the Brandenburg Festival Chorus singers. In 2017 sang with Opera Holland Park in the Verdi Requiem performance in tribute to the Grenfell Tower victims. He performed in the role of Avram in Fiddler on the Roof, amongst other productions, with Beaconsfield Amateur Operatic Company and more recently with GAFA was in the chorus in 'R'Ottello - the Rugby Opera' and 'Messiah Pazifik



Bronwen Stephens

Bronwen, a Mezzo-soprano, performs regularly as a soloist in the UK and Europe. Opera roles include 'Carmen', 'Dorabella', 'Orlofsky' and 'Suzuki'. She is also the Director of Rogue Opera - bringing intimate opera productions to new spaces and

audiences - and a member of That! Ensemble, creating new acapella works. www.rogueopera.co.uk / www.bronwenstephenssings.co.uk



Theda Amenda-Lehmann

Theda studied music and voice in London. She has travelled around the world to performing from the Royal Albert Hall to Hagåtña Stadium in Guam. Theda's mixed media collaborations with contemporary artists such as Pippa Drummond, Adam Donen and Sani Muliaumaseali'i are adding an exciting new dimension to her work.



Rohan Reckord

Rohan made his debut with the GAC as Tasio, 'R'Otello, the rugby opera', 2015 he appeared as Tuna, in the 'Third Country'. He toured to GUAM with GAFA 'A family called Samoa' 2016. Talune is Rohan's fourth outing for the GAC You can find our more about Rohan on Facebook at Rokame.



Jasmine Leota

Jasmine is A graduate of Whitireia Performing Arts, born and raised in Wellington New Zealand. Jasmine recently moved to London to play rugby union for Old Boys Elthamians. Jasmine is a practitioner of Contemporary Pacific dance and theatre. Her own company LeMau, have presented at a number of festivals including the Pacific Dance Festival held in New Zealand.



Jamal Renaldo

Jamal trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art completing the foundation course in acting from 2010-2011. Since finishing his training he's appeared in an award winning short film (more hate than fear), several high profile commercials (Right Move, confused.com, Giff Gaff etc...) and a number of intriguing fringe theatre pieces.



Lena Tutuvanu

Lena is a compliance specialist by trade but an arts enthusiast by hobby. 'Talune' is Lena's debut on stage and honoured to have her debut with GAFA Arts Collective. She looks forward to the many opportunities and learnings through her time with GAFA.



Kian O'Connell

Kian is a 17 years old drama student who loves all performing art and loves to entertain and make people smile. This is Kian's first ever role outside of school and his debut with GAFA Arts Collective.



Richard Keane

Hailing from Aotearoa Richard Keane is not only an actor, but a director, writer and a great advocate of his Maori culture. Richard made his debut with the Gafa Arts Collective GAC, in 2013 in a multitude of roles.

SUNDAY MASSIVE

CHORAL WORKS

EDWARD ELGAR'S THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS, OP. 38

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Sunday, 11 November
2018

Often regarded as

Elgar's finest choral

work and masterpiece,

The Dream of

Gerontius tells the

story of a pious

man's soul through

death, judgement

and settlement into

Purgatory. A large-

scale piece for chorus

and orchestra, the

work is inspired by

and set to the text

from a Victorian poem

of the same name by

Cardinal John Henry

Newman.

Sani Mulioumaseali'i Tenor, Felicity Buckland mezzo-soprano, Rodney Earl soprano, Rodney Clarke, Baritone, and the LeogaFA Voices.

GIUSEPPE VERDI'S MESSA DA REQUIEM

Sunday November 18, 2018

Containing beautiful writing for chorus and soloists, Verdi's Messa da Requiem is noted for its religious splendor,

operatic spectacle and emotional depth. Inspired by the

memory of Rossini and the death of the writer Alessandro

Manzoni 1873, the work premiered at the Church of San

Marco in Milan in 1874, conducted by Verdi.

JOHANNES BRAHM'S A GERMAN REQUIEM

Sunday November 25, 2018

Johannes Brahms' A German Requiem, to Words of the

Holy Scriptures, Op. 45 (German: Ein deutsches Requiem,

nach Worten der heiligen Schrift)

Grief following the loss of Brahms' mother and close friend

Robert Schumann in 1865-6 are thought to have been

potential motivations for this composition. Whereas the

Requiem Mass in the Catholic liturgy begins with prayers

for the dead ("Grant them eternal rest..."), Brahms' A German

Requiem begins with the living ("Blessed are they that

mourn..."). The theme of comfort recurs in most of the

movements. Brahms' longest composition, the work was

composed between 1865-8 for chorus, orchestra, and

soprano and baritone soloists.

IntraMASSive

scenes written and directed by Sani Mulioumaseali'i will emerge at differing points of the choral works.

Featured artists:
Alan Mosley, Theda Lehmann, Bronwen Stephens, Lena Tutuvanu, Martin Baker and the GAFA Arts Collective (GAC)



ELGAR. VERDI. BRAHMS.

The following works will be performed by the GAFA Arts Collective on November 11th, 18th, and 25th at the National Army Museum from 7:30-9:30pm.

"Sunday MASSive at the NAM" combines Samoan dance and theatrical scenes in tribute to the influenza victims in the Pacific and around the world.



Rosenu Sinfonia conducted by Maestro Stephen Anthony Brown, and Maestro Andrew Strange (Verdi Requiem) Mardiyah Tucker, leader and orchestral contractor.

**STUN
DAN
MASS
WE
ELGAR.
VERDI.
BRAHMS.**

PROGRAMME