PRESENTS

MANA
WAHINE

2014 Okareka MATARIKI UNDER THE STARS TOUR WORLD PREMIERE
OVERVIEW

Inspired by the true story of Te Aokapurangi, a young maiden from Rotorua, influences the storyline of this production. She was captured in battle by a tribe from the Far North and many years later she returned and single handedly saved her people from slaughter. The story of Te Aokapurangi has been the pivotal inspiration behind this work. Her courage, determination and fearlessness fuels the choreographic style explored in this exciting new piece.

Mana Wahine has been inspired by Tūī Matira Ranapiri-Ransfield having a conversation with Taiaroa Royal over three years ago. The stories shared in this dialogue reflect two ancestresses and their greatness from the Ngāti Ohomairangi people of Te Arawa. They are Keaona matriarch and wife of the great navigator and high priest Ngātoroirangi, and Te Aokapurangi of the Ngāti Rangiwewehi and Tapuika kinships. Although under very different circumstances, these courageous women are responsible for saving their people. It is their legacies that have enthused this piece of work.

Collaboratively, the dancers have interpreted these stories through a culmination of physical dexterity, control, balance, strength and grace. Their own intimate stories regarding the women they descend from and who have sculpted them as Mana Wahine are embedded in this work. Driving the imagery, defying the impossible, exploring and evolving potentiality and imagining the invisible is what these precious vessels bring to this forum of Mana Wahine.

Tūī has brought a vast knowledge and lifetime of Māori cultural performing artistry to this piece. Woven throughout the performance is evidence of her expertise and special knowledge. We witness skills like ‘karanga’, ‘waerea’ and ‘pātere’ for Okareka Dance Company (translations can be found on the Okareka Dance Company website). Her voice features throughout the performance and her face is portrayed audio visually screened in the background of Mana Wahine. She has been our Cultural Advisor, Mentor, Guide and a strong advocate for this work.

KO TE WHARE TANGATA HE WAKA WHAKAHETANGA A TE TINI MAIOIO, PO PO TE UKAPIO O TE WHARE O TINTINIRAUHINOMANO ANO

A WOMAN’S SACRED VESSEL IS THE SPRING OF MULTITUDES, NURTURING MOTHER OF THE HOUSE OF INFINITUDE
From conception to the present day, Mana Wahine has been one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever encountered. Developing the arch of this work has enabled the entire creative team to invest whole heartedly and with an open mind allowing the journey of Mana Wahine to unfold each day. Sharing cultural values and practices on a daily basis strengthens the foundations of Okareka Dance Company and in turn permeates into the performance onstage.

Dance is a living language that changes on a daily basis. Watching these Wahine craft their skill and embody information during this exploration has deepened their own understanding of who they are as woman and who they are as dancers.

TAANE METE

This production came to me at my Aunty Ria’s tangi at the family’s Pikirangi Marae, where I caught up with my cousin Tūi Matira Ranapiri-Ransfield. She asked me how Okareka Dance Company was going and then proceeded to tell me the story of Te Aokapurangi and how she saved her people from slaughter. Instantly it struck a chord with something inside me! A woman who out-smarted the chiefs of the tribe by thinking laterally - by thinking like a 'woman'!!!

So after pondering more about it, the idea of taking the inspiration from this story and creating a work that encompasses the amazing essence of women came to me - MANA WAHINE was conceived. More pondering made me realise that in order to create this essence of women we had to have an all-female cast. Then why not take it further and have an all-female creative and production team as well!!! To this we run pretty true apart from 4 men - Rowan Pierce (Audio Visuals), Jonny Cross (Production Manager/Operator) and Taane and myself... and I know at least 2 of these men are VERY much in touch with their feminine side!!!

With a 3 year gestation period that covers 2 x 2 week research workshops and a 5 week construction rehearsal period, what you see tonight is the incredible collaborative result of huge amounts of creativity that journey together, arriving at the world premiere birth of this production, MANA WAHINE. I hope when you see this you remember, honour and love the woman or women that are your mana wahine. Enjoy!

TAIAROA ROYAL

Mana Wahine has been an incredible journey for the entire team. A journey of discovery, history, cultural exploration, uncovering, interpretation and dance. Early on in the discussions it was decided this work would be a co-authorship process between the three choreographers and that the dancers would contribute strongly by bringing in their own material and also their choreography. Having Tūi Matira Ranapiri-Ransfield present throughout the entire process has meant she had a significant role in the direction the work has taken and has been a pivotal figure for us all, being not only the origin of the source of the stories and information but a constant guide and leader within the process. This work has been constructed intuitively; it defies narrative, instead unfolding in a way that displays a journey of energies and personal interpretations of the woman’s responses to the many concepts that were explored by all three choreographers. I would like to acknowledge the strength of the female dancers contributions to this work and to Tūi’s performance, song and guidance. I would also like to thank the team on a collaborative process that has been very rewarding and fulfilling for me as a dance artist.

MALIA JOHNSTON
“Mana Wahine is an absolutely gorgeous work to watch, and it’s one that will linger long afterwards.”

Sam Brooks 8th July 2014
TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

SET
To be supplied by Okareka Dance Co:
• 8x Free Standing Fabric Coated Legs (4m x 3m)
• 1x 12m Steel Frame with Fabric Attached
• 1x 11m Steel Frame with Fabric Attached (Drops at start of show)

To be supplied by Venue:
• 12x Sand Bags

STAGING
• Stage must be a wooden sprung floor suitable for dance.
• White Tarkett or Marley dance floor required for entire visible stage area.
• Standard masking, legs and boarders
• Black Tabs with a 1.5m opening in centre about 10m upstage
• Black Leg hung 1m upstage of the black tabs masking the opening
• Cross over upstage of leg
• A flying batten is required 500mm upstage of setting line
• A flying batten is required 9m upstage of the setting line

VENUE REQUIREMENTS
• Proscenium arch Theatre
• Stage size (minimum) 12m wide, 10m deep. Plus wings and upstage cross-over, shallow rake accepted
• Proscenium height (minimum) 7m

LIGHTING
• GrandMA2 Console
• 105x 10amp Dimmers
• 28x 1.2k Fresnels
• 4x 1.2k PCs
• 12x 2k Fresnels
• 6x PAR64 CP62s
• 3x 19º Source 4 Profile
• 2x 26º Source 4 Profile
• 34x 36º Source 4 Profile
• 4x 15º-30º Source 4 Zoom Profile
• 2x 45º-75º Pacific Zoom Spot
• 10x PAR16 Birdies
• 2x 1.2k Fresnel (With No Lens)
• 8x Boom Poles, based on arms
• 16x B size Source 4 gobo holders
• 2x A size Pacific gobo holders
• 1x Source 4 Iris
• Gel as per lighting plan

AV
To be supplied by Venue:
• 1x Barco SLM R12+ Performer Projector or similar (Rigged on Circle Rail)
• Suitable Lens required for the venue (Projection size 11m x 6.2m)
• 1x ImagePRO-II or similar
• All necessary Cabling

To be supplied by Okareka Dance Co:
• 1x Qlab play back laptop

SOUND
To be supplied by Venue:
• Full Range PA with Subs
• Stage Monitors
• Small Sound desk with 4 input Channels (2 Main inputs and 2 Back up inputs)

To be supplied by Okareka Dance Co:
• 1x Qlab play back laptop
• 1x Pavey USB-P Audio output box (2x XLR)

PACK IN
• Minimum of two days with opening on the Evening of the Second day

Schedule:
Day 1
• Morning: Rig LX
• Afternoon: Rig Set
• Evening: Focus LX and Projector

Day 2
• Morning: Technical Time
• Afternoon: Dress
• Evening: Performance

PACK OUT
• Evening of the closing night - approx. 2 hours

Local Crew required:
• 4 technicians to assist with pack out, plus extra if required to de-rig lighting and AV.

OTHER
• Hazer required (oil cracker preferred)
• Minimum 2 dressing rooms with benches, adequate make-up lighting, mirrors, toilets, basins, showers, heating.
• Production (tour manager) office required with internet access point/Wi-Fi and telephone.
• The dancers need access to a rehearsal space/dance studio for 3-5 hours each day.
• 1x Costume Steamer
“Okareka Dance Company has hit the jackpot with this exploration of the strength, the spirit, the wiles and primal beauty of woman, specifically Maori woman. Five extreme dancers, three choreographers at the top of their game, a totally in-tune composer, exquisite lighting and audio visual design and a wealth of cultural wisdom come together in one of the best contemporary dance performances we have seen in years.”

Bernadette Rae NZ Herald July 3rd 2014

“Woman’s power, authority, energy and essence, sisterhood and maternity, authority and anger, playfulness and presence of mind are celebrated in Okareka in Okareka Dance Company’s aptly named Mana Wahine”

Raewyn Whyte 3rd July 2014

“Never had I seen an audience so transfixed, so attentive, so mesmerised, so moved all at the same time. And the audience erupting in a spontaneous standing ovation clearly depicted that the crowd was itching to show their delirious euphoria”

Sharu Delikan 3rd July 2014

“The fabulous set, costume, exceptional choreography and skill of its cast and directors makes this piece really stand out. Add the masterful use of music, from traditional, haunting waiata through to electronic funk, and you have a hugely enjoyable theatrical performance”

Natalie Ridler 2014

“Okareka’s directors Tai Royal and Taane Mete are committed to collaborative process, and this Mana Wahine, co-authored with the mistress of wearable art, Malia Johnson, is a complex and intriguing, intelligent, honest and celebratory beacon of success.”

Bernadette Rae NZ Herald July 3rd 2014

“Fabrics twist, rustle, fold, gather, and billow in so many ways through this amazing performance without ever deferring to familiar tropes. From the breathtaking opening when video of the dancers is projected onto their same shrouded forms, we are able to appreciate the stage as a space of playful and imaginative transformation. The ghostly figures flicker, sometimes in time with their doubles, while at other times falling behind or racing ahead of each other. There are numerous other moments like this: a beautiful dance on woven mats that drift over the surface of a lake, or the sweeping of the large shroud across the floor in surging liquid folds. Tracy Collins’ sparse but beautifully considered space, Elizabeth Whiting’s mobile costumes, Rowan Pierce’s precise and ethereal video work all weave beautifully with the performance, the electrifying beats of Victoria Kelly’s music, and Vanda Karolczak’s equally dynamic lighting.”

Sam Trubridge Theatre Review 14 August 2014

“Victoria Kelly and Tui Matira Ranipira-Ransfield’s hauntingly poignant soundscape helped heighten the amazing dramatic journey even more dies to its subtle nuances and variety of genres that were very cleverly woven together.”

Sharu Delikan 3rd July 2014

“The audio-visual effects employed in Mana Wahine were some of the best I’ve ever seen for a dance performance, adding quirk and depth to the dynamic and rich choreography of the work.”

Natalie Ridler 2014

“Even if you’re not into dance – and honestly I can take it or leave it most of the time – Mana Wahine is an essential experiences. It’s one that I can see having a long life through tours and festivals across the country and the world. It is a show about woman, largely by woman, the insight it provides about woman from all backgrounds and cultures is not to be missed, and are to be discussed about at length in the foyer and on the way home.”

Sam Brooks 8th July 2014

“Okareka Dance Company has poured into this project is evident in every inch of the work. And the love undoubtedly flows from audience to stage to audience and back again”

Anna Bate 12 July 2014

“Fabrics twist, rustle, fold, gather, and billow in so many ways through this amazing performance without ever deferring to familiar tropes. From the breathtaking opening when video of the dancers is projected onto their same shrouded forms, we are able to appreciate the stage as a space of playful and imaginative transformation. The ghostly figures flicker, sometimes in time with their doubles, while at other times falling behind or racing ahead of each other. There are numerous other moments like this: a beautiful dance on woven mats that drift over the surface of a lake, or the sweeping of the large shroud across the floor in surging liquid folds. Tracy Collins’ sparse but beautifully considered space, Elizabeth Whiting’s mobile costumes, Rowan Pierce’s precise and ethereal video work all weave beautifully with the performance, the electrifying beats of Victoria Kelly’s music, and Vanda Karolczak’s equally dynamic lighting.”

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