

AUCKLAND
THEATRE
COMPANY

Vol. 1 No. 10
Oct 2015

ON— STAGE



MY OWN DARLING

BY GRACE TAYLOR
MUSIC BY ANONYMOUZ



WELCOME

Colin McColl

Talofa lava!

It's a pleasure for Auckland Theatre Company to be back at Mangere Arts Centre with *My Own Darling*, featuring the talents of award-winning spoken word poet, Grace Taylor.

Last year Grace spent her Creative New Zealand Pasifika Arts Internship with us at Auckland Theatre Company. That culminated in Grace directing *Skin*, a spoken-word poetry theatre piece, as part of the *Next Big Thing* - a festival of work presented by and celebrating Auckland youth. It seemed a natural progression to commission Grace to create a new theatre work that could premiere in Mangere and then take on the world, spreading Grace's unique take on Auckland urban life.

My Own Darling started out as a solo show but during the workshops the team introduced other actors - so Fasitua and Gaby now share the stage with Grace. My huge thanks to the three of them, to our creative team, director Mia Blake, to Anonymouz for the music and sound design and to designers Jessika Verryt, Laura Marsh and Rachel Marlow. Big ups too to Lynne, Philippa, Whetu and Tanya from ATC who have championed Grace's talents and nursed this new work along the way. Enjoy.



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Mia Blake

Poetry has always held a special place in my heart. When I was a kid I would read poetry with my drama teacher and together we would cry at its beauty. When I was a teenager I would write my own poetry and sob at the drama of it all. And now I'm a pseudo grown-up the poems find me again and there are tears of joy as I connect with these beautiful images and these wonderful characters.

Thank you Grace for your words - I am blessed to hear them everyday. Thank you Philippa & Lynne for the opportunity - I'm a lucky wee lass.

This piece is for my drama teacher, Mrs Nancy Coory, and my Grandmother, Meleane Kafoa Latu, who sits with me always.



WRITER'S NOTES

Grace Taylor

There are many origins for *My Own Darling*. Her roots are planted in poetry but have been fed by the dynamics of theatre.

All the characters you meet in the show were discovered over the last two years through my obsession with writing found poems. They are all characters of Auckland that, however briefly, have caught my attention. I realised that I could not shake these characters out of my imagination because they each have a shade of me that until this point has been unseen or unheard. Even Auckland is a character in this show, my muse, my lover . . . we have a love/hate relationship. Bubbling underneath the narrative of the show are my observations of the social landscape of Auckland, her faults, wonders and contradictions. It is my hope that even for a moment, you are forced to place yourself in the shoes of a person, environment or situation you never would have before.

The poems in this show are unconventional in form and shape, which I found as a writer was perfect. This has enabled them to bend and stretch and transform into the theatre space. I chose to come into this creative process with a desire to experiment - there was no room for being 'precious'. This is my first attempt at writing in character, and I love it. It gives me permission to say things I would not usually say. I was pushed to breaking point as a writer and I want to acknowledge those that challenged and held me during this process; Philippa Campbell, Lynne Cardy, Mia Blake and Fasitua Amosa.

I would like to acknowledge inspirations for this mixed genre of work by writers/performance poets Lemon Andersen, Tusiata Avia and Jess Holly Bates. The concept of *My Own Darling* was inspired by the poem *Be Nobody's Darling* by Alice Walker.

Fa'afetai tele lava firstly to my son, Darae, for putting up with mummy in her "I'm in the zone don't interrupt me" moments, Auckland Theatre Company for believing in me, my mother for keeping my mummy spot warm, all my friends and family for your constant support, the amazing ATC team behind making this production happen, the cast of MOD - I freak'n love y' all thank you for bringing these characters to life. Most importantly, Mia, my director, my friend, my afakasi sister - there is no way I could have or would wanted to have done this work with anyone else. You pushed me, challenged me and held me during this work in the way it needed to be. I am a better writer, performer, creative and woman for it..... deep alofas.

It took a village . . . but finally . . . I am my own darling.

Afakasi Speaks | *By Grace Taylor*
Published by Ala Press out on Amazon.com



My Own Darling

BY GRACE TAYLOR
MUSIC BY ANONYMOUZ

CAST

GRACE TAYLOR – Teuila

FASITUA AMOSA –

Man from the Maunga, Lady Next Door

GABY SOLOMONA –

Grit-Girl, The Patron

CREATIVE

Writer – GRACE TAYLOR

Direction – MIA BLAKE

Script Consultants – PHILIPPA CAMPBELL & LYNNE CARDY

Set Design – JESSIKA VERRYT

Sound Design – ANONYMOUZ

Costume Design – LAURA MARSH

Lighting Design – RACHEL MARLOW

PRODUCTION

Production Manager – ANDREW MALMO

Company Manager – ELAINE WALSH

Stage Manager – ELIZA JOSEPHSON-RUTTER

Technical Operator – JOSH BOND

Education Pack Co-ordinator – AMBER McWILLIAMS

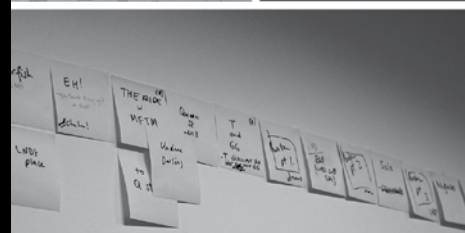
MAC Technicians – MARK DE JONG & JOHN LEPPER

Set Construction – 2CONSTRUCT

AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY THANKS THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS FOR THEIR HELP WITH THIS PRODUCTION:

REHEARSAL READER - LYNCIA MULLER, BARBARA TEE FROM THE UNITEC COSTUME DEPARTMENT, SAM, ISLA AND LEO CHAPMAN, BRIDGET TAUMOEPEAU, ROB AND DON SEWELL, TODD, KIP, ANDREW AND DONNA, SOPHIE ROBERTS, AMANDA NEALE, ALEX WHITMAN, BALMORAL BOWLING CLUB, ALI KNOTT, HELEN, MIA & MELE TAUMOEPEAU, MAKA TAUMOEPEAU, SIFA, RACHEL AND BEN TAUMOEPEAU.

My Own Darling opened on 17 October 2015 at Mangere Arts Centre - Ngā Tohu o Uenuku, and is approximately 50 minutes with no interval. Please remember to switch off all mobile phones, pagers and watch alarms.





GRACE TAYLOR | Teuila

31 years old of English and Samoan decent and born and raised in South Auckland. Grace is a mother, poet, performer and teaching artist. Grace views poetry as a form of expression and a contemporary evolution of storytelling that allows the poet to cross barriers and impress the power of words. Grace is co-founder of the South Auckland Poets Collective, the first spoken word poetry collective in NZ with poets of Pasifika and Maori descent. Grace is also the co-founder, producer and creative director of the *Rising Voices* Youth Poetry Movement. In 2013 Grace was a featured speaker at TEDx Auckland. Grace moved into the world of theatre in early 2014 with her directorial debut of *Skin* with the Auckland Theatre Company - a spoken word poetry theatre show that explored themes of skin politics with young people. Grace published her first collection of poetry *Afakasi Speaks* with Hawaiian publisher Ala Press in November 2013 and is currently working on her second collection of poetry. Grace was the recipient of the Creative New Zealand Emerging Pacific Artist Award 2014.



FASITUA AMOSA | Man from the Maunga, Lady Next Door

A graduate of the Unitec School of Performing and Screen Arts, Fasiua has been acting in Auckland for 13 years and has worked for all the city's major theatre companies. Most recently he appeared as Kinesias in Auckland Theatre Company's production of *Lysistrata*. In 2014 he played the role of Ralph D in the Basement Theatre's smash hit *The Motherfucker with the Hat* and also completed a successful season at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Victor Roger's *Black Faggot*. He occasionally pops up on screen featuring on shows such as Maori Television's *Find Me A Maori Bride*, TVNZ's *Auckland Daze* and TV3's *Harry*. Later this year he will appear in the remake of that classic Kiwi show *Terry Teo*. He is the voice of a major hardware store and the narrator for TV1's rescue helicopter show *Code 1*. He has also dabbled in stand up comedy, having performed two successful shows for the NZ International Comedy Festival. He loves motorcycles and is studying to be a bike mechanic and also has aspirations to do postgraduate study in New York.



GABY SOLOMONA | Grit-Girl, The Patron

Gaby Solomona is a recent graduate of PIPA. Since graduating in 2014 she has had a variety of behind the scenes roles including co-producer for *Club Paradise* by Victor Rodger which debuted in July at The Basement Theatre with a sell out season. She has been an actor in three play readings for Pacific Island Theatre Movement FCC formed by Victor Rodger. Gaby was also part of the working titles project for Silo Theatre as an actor for Courtney Meredith's *Rushing Dolls*. *My Own Darling* is her debut theatre show and she says; "It is a dream come true working alongside industry greats such as Mia, Fasi and Grace. The process has been challenging but a good challenge, and one in which I will be forever grateful for as an aspiring actress. Everyday I am learning more about the craft and I am learning more about myself through these characters and their stories. Thank you Grace for your beautiful work and Mia for all you have taught me! My soul has come alive again. xxx."

MIA BLAKE | Director

Mia Blake is a Tongan/Scottish/English/Irish/French actress who is thrilled to say that this production is her directorial debut. Prior to this Mia has been a professional screen and stage actress for the last 19 years. Productions she's held roles in include; *The Book Of Everything*, *Angels in America*, *Pure and Deep* and *Private Lives*.



ANONYMOUZ | Sound Design

Anonymouz is a versatile South Auckland music producer who has worked widely within the NZ urban music scene, scored for numerous commissioned Film, Television and Radio projects, as well as musically directed many large live events. He has taught workshops all over NZ and in Australia and Samoa, and is also the Music Director for Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra's International Award winning Hip Hop and Classical Music Programme *APO Remix*.



JESSIKA VERRYT | Set Design

Jessika Verryt is an Auckland based set designer. Her work includes the 2013 set design for Auckland Theatre Company's *Like There's No Tomorrow*, *Grease* with the National Youth Theatre Company and for the AUSA's summer Shakespeare production of *King Lear*. In 2012 she designed *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* and *My Son Pinocchio* with the National Youth Theatre Company, and the Duffy Books in Homes schools tour. She has worked with the New Zealand Opera as the set and costume designer for *The Magic Flute* schools tour. Jessika has also worked as a props maker with Red Leap Theatre on *The Arrival* and *Paper Sky*.



LAURA MARSH | Costume Design

Laura has worked in the costume departments of several TV and Film productions and has recently turned her hand to theatre. She was initiated into props making with the production *Bed* as part of The Next Big Thing, and was the Costume Designer for *The Events*. She is currently working on sourcing props for *Hudson & Halls*. Laura graduated from the Ilam School of Fine Arts with a film degree and also has a Masters of Art & Design from AUT University where she majored in Visual Arts. Laura is still a practising artist, you can see her work at www.lauramarshartist.co.nz



RACHEL MARLOW | Lighting Design

Rachel Marlow is an Auckland based lighting designer. She enjoys collaborating to produce beautiful theatrical productions and light installations. In the past year she has particularly enjoyed creating: a 90s rave meets slasher film for Fractious Tash's *Not Psycho*, a stormy cloudscape for Blackbird Ensemble's *Dreams*, a magic realism inspired desert for Red Leap Theatre's *Dust Pilgrim*, and a pop up karaoke bar for Silo Theatre's *The Blind Date Project*. Rachel's lighting was last seen at Mangere Arts Centre in PIPA's *Rhinoceros* and last year's Auckland Theatre Company production of *Sons*. Rachel had the joy of lighting Grace Taylor's *Skin* for ATC's Next Big Thing Festival in 2013. Rachel is thrilled to be illuminating Grace's work once more.



THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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XYTECH LIGHTING



MĀNGERE STORIES PART 1

A CONVERSATION WITH THE LATE
KAUMĀTUA MAURICE WILSON (1991-2014)



MĀNGERE FREQUENCIES

CELEBRATING THE STORIES AND
SOUNDS OF MANGERE

Māngere Stories Part 1 and *Māngere Frequencies* are a reflection of Māngere; past and present. The first exhibition includes a recorded kōrero with the late kaumātua Maurice Wilson, complemented by historic photographs of Māngere from Auckland Libraries heritage image collections. *Māngere Frequencies* showcases three soundscapes created by students from local schools compiled from recordings at significant Māngere sites facilitated by ATC Participate. Both exhibition soundtracks were produced by Anonymouz, and both exhibitions support Auckland Theatre Company's forthcoming performance of *My Own Darling* by Grace Taylor.

30 SEPTEMBER - 24 OCTOBER

EXHIBITION OPENING: TUESDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER, 6PM

