



# A Frigate Bird Sings

by David Fane, Oscar Kightley  
& Nathaniel Lees



AUCKLAND  
THEATRE  
COMPANY

# Welcome

## Notes



Dave Fane, Oscar Kightley and their bros are superstars of Pasifika Kiwi comedy with shows like THE NAKED SAMOANS, BRO'TOWN and SIONE'S WEDDING. But there's more to them than meets the eye – and the work they created, together with Nathaniel Lees for the 1996 International Festival of the Arts in Wellington caused quite a stir. These kings of comedy had produced something very different from their usual fare.

A FRIGATE BIRD SINGS is an affecting and deeply human portrayal of a young fa'afafine torn between breaking free to explore her own life choices and her love and commitment to her family. It's a very particular story – but in its call for tolerance it's also a universal one.

I'm thrilled that we are reviving FRIGATE BIRD and it's great to be back at Mangere Arts Centre as part of the Southside Arts Festival.

Huge thanks to the Festival organisers for inviting us, the ATC Participate team who've driven this project - and of course to our supremely talented cast and creative team, led by Director, Alison Quigan.

Colin McColl  
Artistic Director

Auckland Theatre Company

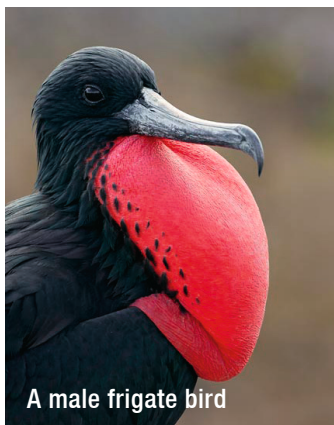
# Director's Notes



A frigate bird is a bird that many have come to love – and respectfully fear – within the Pacific. It means many things to different islands. It is known as a long-distance traveller that helps with navigation – to see how far from land you are. A huge bird, with a wingspan of 2.15m, that can cover 223 km before landing. In Samoa, it is an omen. When you see an atafa (frigate bird) you know a storm is coming.

In this play, we explore the world of fa'afafine. A bird of uncertain origin with its own particular storms. We also explore what it is to be different in a complex world that, on the one hand values tradition, and on the other accepts and celebrates a third gender.

A FRIGATE BIRD SINGS has been a great experience for me. Not only in working with these unassuming but very talented writers, Dave and Oscar, but also working with this wonderful cast. Every one of them brings something unique to the production. Every one of them can make me laugh, cry and stop me in my tracks; in awe of their skill and courage.



A male frigate bird

We have explored musical styles together, teasing out moments and underlining emotions and sometimes just for the hell of it.

I hope you enjoy this insightful play, told with love and care, and that you are inspired to come to the theatre again to hear your own stories and to celebrate the differences we all share.

With love,  
Alison Quigan QSM



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## Cast

**David Fane** — *Kapili* | **Taofia Pelesasa** — *Vili*  
**Amanaki Prescott** — *Shaniqua* | **Shimpal Lelisi** — *Dejavu*  
**Peter Coates** — *Hugh* | **Troy Tu'ua** — *Sione*

## Creative

*Direction* — **Alison Quigan**  
*Playwrights* — **David Fane, Oscar Kightley and Nathaniel Lees**  
*Set Design & Costume Design* — **John Parker**  
*Lighting Design* — **Paul Towson**

## Production

*Production Manager* — **Paul Towson** | *Technical Manager* — **Paul Nicoll**  
*Senior Stage Manager* — **Fern Christie**  
*Stage Manager* — **Gabrielle Rhodes**  
*Lighting Sound Operator* — **Rochelle Houghton**  
*Wardrobe Technician* — **Gayle Jackson**  
*Make-up Artist* — **Adrian Mackie**

By arrangement with



*A Frigate Bird Sings was commissioned by NZ International Festival of the Arts 1996*

AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR HELP WITH THIS PRODUCTION: The Four Winds Foundation, Kristy Jones, Phoenix Cosmetics, Heidi Kauta, Suzanne Sturrock, Unitec, Western Caskets, Tony's Wellesley Street, New Zealand Opera and Phoenix Renata.

A FRIGATE BIRD SINGS is approximately 1 hour 40 minutes with no interval.  
Please remember to switch off all mobile phones, pagers and watch alarms.

# Rehearsal Photos





**David Fane**

**Dave Fane** has been working as a professional actor for nigh on 20 years. He has worked on stage, television and film over this period winning countless awards and accolades along the way as well as getting some nice compliments from old ladies at the supermarket. Stage credits include: THE TWITS, GOD OF CARNAGE, NIU SILA, FRESH OFF THE BOAT, LADIES NIGHT, A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, SERIAL KILLERS, SONS and A FRIGATE BIRD SINGS (co-writer).

Dave is well known for his work as one of the *Naked Samoans*, creating and performing several stage shows which have been a great success both here and overseas. This led to the animated series, BRO'TOWN which Dave co wrote and played seven lead roles in. He also teamed up with many of the same team for the hit movies SIONE'S WEDDING and SIONE'S II UNFINISHED BUSINESS.



**Taofia Pelesasa**

A graduate of Unitec School Of Performing and Screen Arts, **Taofia** first appeared with Auckland Theatre Company in MARY STUART and the 2011 Young and Hungry season of Tom Sainsbury's DISORDER. Other recent theatre work includes: 4 THE LOVE OF LOSI, M. I. T. P, TABITHA TALMUS, and THREE SISTERS.



**Peter Coates**

A graduate of Unitec School Of Performing and Screen Arts, **Peter** is proud to be one of the founding members of The Outfit Theatre Company. Peter's theatre credits include: THE OFFICE XMAS PARTY, THE SUBURBAN MURDER, TREASURE ISLAND, BOYS' LIFE, LITTLE WHITE MEN, THE SEX SHOW and a North Island primary school's tour with THE DUFFY SHOW. A FRIGATE BIRD SINGS is Peter's debut performance with Auckland Theatre Company.

**Shimpal Lelisi** is a Niuean-born actor, writer and presenter and is a member of the *Naked Samoans* comedy group. His theatre credits include: DAWN RAID, ROMEO AND TUSI, ROSENGRANTZ AND GULDENSTERN ARE DEAD, NGA TANGATA TOA and LADIES NIGHT. He is also one of the writers and performers of BRO'TOWN, the series which won Best Comedy at the 2005 New Zealand Screen Awards. At the same event, Shimpal also shared the award for Best Script, Comedy, with Oscar Kightley, Dave Fane and Mario Gaoa.

He also teamed up with many of the same team for the hit movies SIONE'S WEDDING and SIONE'S II UNFINISHED BUSINESS. Shimpal has also for many years worked as a presenter on TAGATA PASIFIKA and currently works on TV2's Pacific youth series FRESH.



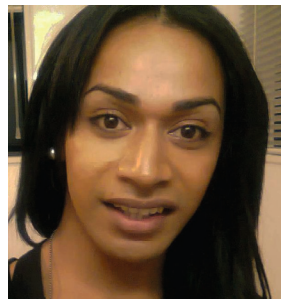
**Shimpal Lelisi**

A graduate of the Pacific Institute of Performing Arts (PIPA), **Troy** first appeared with Auckland Theatre Company in the ATC/PIPA collaboration POLLY HOOD IN MUMULAND (2011) and this year played the Duke in SINARELLA. Troy's other theatre credits include DUFFY BOOKS IN HOMES tours and he has recently appeared on FRESH.



**Troy Tu'ua**

A graduate of the Pacific Institute of Performing Arts (PIPA), **Amanaki** first appeared with Auckland Theatre Company in the ATC/PIPA collaboration POLLY HOOD IN MUMULAND (2011). Amanaki is a member of Lima Dance Theatre and recently choreographed CHECKOUT CHICKS - THE MUSICAL for ATC's NEXT BIG THING Festival.



**Amanaki Prescott**

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## Principal Funders

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ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND TOI AOTEAROA



Te Kauhthera o Tamaki Makaurau

## Core Funders

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ASB Community Trust

Te Kaitiaki Patea o Tamaki o Tai Tokerau

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## Production Partners

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