

Aronui Indigenous Arts Festival 2024

'THE MARIO SANZA VALENTINES FANTASY'

Written and directed by Siliga Sani Muliaumaseali'i

Saturday 21 SEPTEMBER 2PM & 7PM 2024

Haere mai, Afio mai, Welcome

3spresents LTD-The Courage to Art

Based in Rotorua 3spresents LTD was formed in 2023 for creationships of Samoa and Moana A Kiwa Nui art. We 3SP facilitate cross-cultural meetings in galleries of genre and produce provocative works of excellence, quality, and daring. Creative Matai & founder Siliga Sani Muliaumaseali'i proudly presents works that are moulded with a Samoa and Moana A Kiwa Nui sensibility.

We are celebrate the courage to art.



for more info and to join our mailing list go to

www.3spresents.com

DIRECTORS NOTES

I'm thrilled to be a part of the Aronui Indigenous Arts Festival and return to the Sir Howard Morrison Centre with our current creationship. I am not indigenous to Aotearoa being Samoan, but I was born in Tamaki where I spent the first two decades of my life. I have lived abroad for thirty years. One of the places I call home is London where. Alongside my mainstream work in the arts, I created the GAFA arts collective. GAFA the first Samoan arts entity in the UK & Europe. My expression of the indigenous, my indigenous spirit found life within GAFA in works I created from 2012 - 2022.

Groundbreaking and reassuring my creationships for GAFA called forth my indigenous soul. Genetically I am Samoa but culturally I am a blend of where I've lived and who I've been, was and will be. I speak Samoan and my movements are of Samoa but the majority of my environments have been of colony and its miasma is omnipresent. The Mario Lanza valentines Fantasy creationship speaks to this with clarity. I first came across Ana Hato when I was presenting my show on RNZ Concert in 2023. Any tenor worth his salt knows Mario Lanza but how I brought them together in this fantasy is a recollection that escapes me! I claim divine intervention and the odd muse. In any case the possibilities of what could occur should they meet proved irresistible. I just started writing and a story unfolded. It seemed to want to set itself on St Valentine's Day with loads of Aroha inspired music and in Rotorua, (since covid I spent more time there) and in a time of the Maori Battalion though in the fantasy, time is an invention as said Einstein. The creationship unites Maori culture and the culture of Italian Opera on the shores of Rotorua.

Theres a sense of the familiar in this local story.

A local story with universal appeal and a bit of fantasy thrown in for good measure.

Thank you, fa'afetai for Coming.

Siliga Sani Muliuaumaseali'i

*Mo Cathy Laban, maguia
Lou Malaga pele...*



'THE MARIO LANZA VALENTINES FANTASY'

written & directed by Siliga Sani Muliaumaseali'i

starring

*Maisey Rika as Ana Hato
Siliga Sani Muliaumaseali'i as Mario Lanza*

*Rapata Biddle - Mechanic
Manaia Mercep - Pilot Marcus
Tewaru Mahutonga - Singer Tabi
Kahu Piripi - Singer Rua
Evar Thomas - Singer fa
Awatea Mahutonge - Betty Lanza, Singer Fa
&
Penny Dodd as Linda the Pianist*

Chorus master/arranger/ assistant director - Dan Ieremia

Lighting - Kevin Green, Sound Dan Blasoni, Sound design- Olaminas Jones, Slide Design - Siliga Sani

*Stage Manager - Olivia Muliaumaseali'i ASM Dolly Thomas, Makeup- Cheyla Samuels,
Wardrobe - Ans Hoyle,*

executive producers Peter Rice & Siliga Sani Muliaumaseali'i

Presented in partnership with

3 SPRESENTS, ARONUI INDIGENOUS ARTS FESTIVAL & SIR HOWARD MORRISON CENTRE

SOMEWHERE IN TIME...





Part ONE

A freak summer storm lands American superstar tenor Mario Lanza and his pianist Linda in Rotorua. He is anxious to get home to his beloved wife Betty and to his Valentines day concert, but his storm damaged plane says otherwise. A misunderstanding with local singing legend Ana Hato, who is preparing her concert party for a fundraiser initially produces a geyser like reaction in both - tempered only by a mutual aroha, love of music.

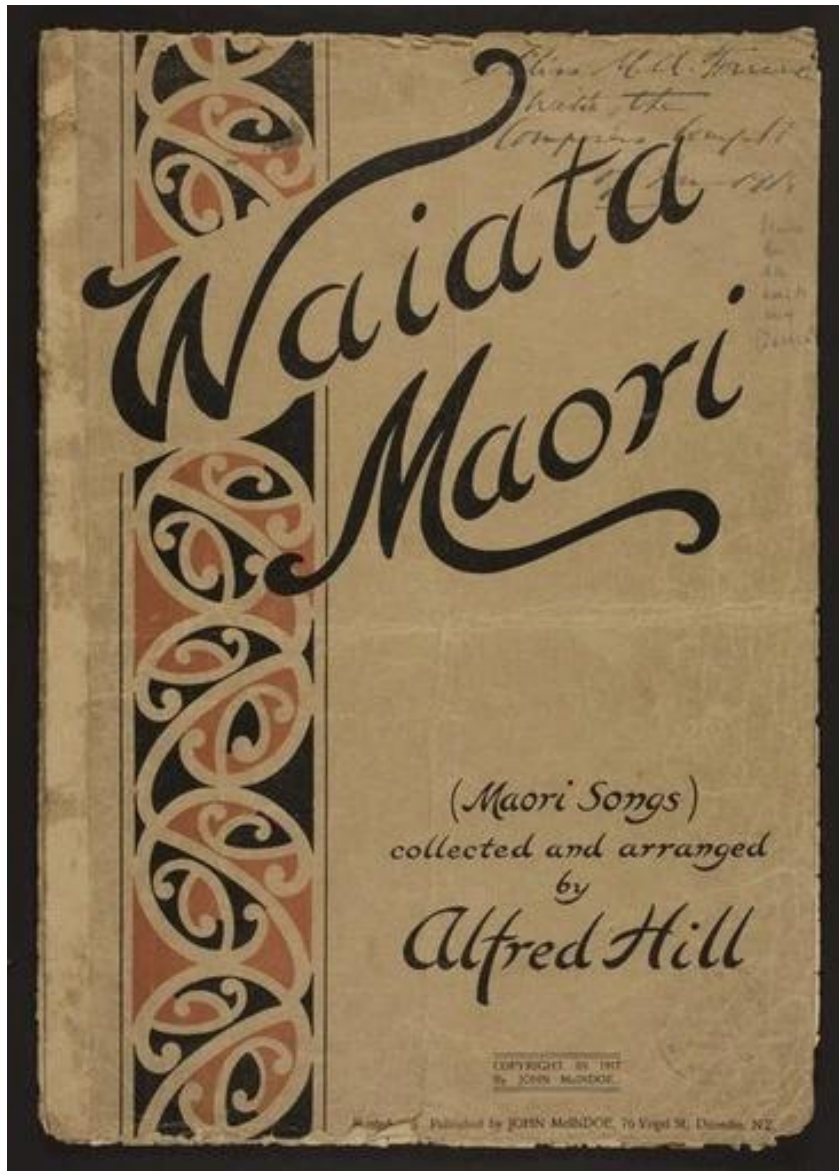


Part TWO

Intermission

The ebb and flow of Rotorua and her legends suggest a cultural exchange could be on the cards. Will the two songsters unite in harmony and live up to the true meaning of Valentines? Meanwhile the plane remains grounded though there are signs of life...

WAIATA, ARIAS & MUSIC



Part One

Overture to *I Pagliacci* (excerpt) *Leoncavallo*

Because you're mine *Brodzsky/Cahn*

Granada, Lara

Waiata Poi, *Alfred Hill*

Hoea Rā Te Waka Nei, *Tomoana*

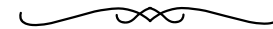
Excerpts *Ako ako i te rangi*, *Kaiha*

Mattinata *Leoncavallo*

Hine e Hine Princess Tu Rangai Pai

Donkey Song, *Stothart*

Nessun Dorma, *Puccini*



Part two

Pokarekare Ana, *Tomoana*

Vesti la Giubba & *Bell Chorus* from *I Pagliacci*

Leoncavallo

Po atarau, *Scott/Kaihau*

Be my love, *Brodzsky/Cahn*

Pokarekare Ana reprise

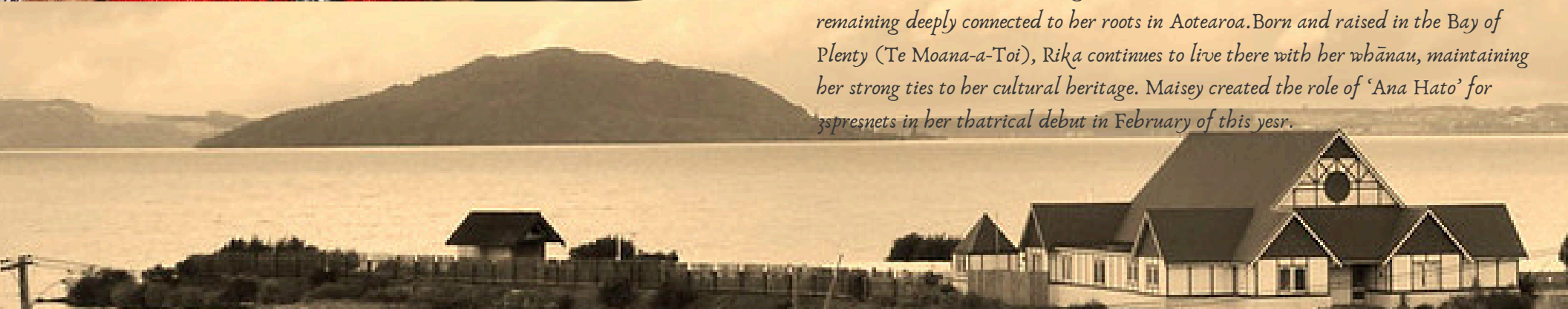
MAISEY RIKA

Ngati Awa, Te Arawa, Ngai Tuboe, Te Whānau a Apanui



Ana Hato

Maisey Rika is a distinguished Māori artist known for her profound and reflective musical expressions rooted in Māori culture. As a 2021 Arts Foundation Laureate, Rika received the Jillian Friedlander Te Moana-nui-a-kiwa award, highlighting her significant contributions to the arts. Her music reflects her Māori worldview and embodies key cultural values such as Whānau (family), Kaitiakitanga (guardianship), Aroha (love), Rangatiratanga (leadership), and Tūkuhiotanga (uniqueness). Her career began early, influenced by singing with her mother and aunts. At just 13, she started her professional journey, and her first recording, E Hine (1997), a collection of traditional Māori songs with her school choir, achieved double platinum status. The album won the Mana Reo Best Māori Language Album award at the 1998 New Zealand Music Awards, and Rika was nominated for Best Female Vocalist, marking her entry into the music industry with remarkable success. Rika has since released five acclaimed original albums, each making it to New Zealand's Top 40 Album Chart and earning various music awards. Her debut E.P., Maisey Rika (2008), was followed by Tohu (2009), Whitiora (2012), Tira (2016), and Ngā Mata o te Ariki Tāwhirimātea (2020). The latter was crafted during Aotearoa's COVID-19 lockdown and focuses on the sacred Māori stories of the 9 Stars of Matariki. To bring this album to life, Rika collaborated with ten of Aotearoa's top music producers. Her tracks "Hiwa-i-te-rangi" and "Waiti Waitā" received notable recognition, with the former being a Top 20 finalist for the APRA Silver Scroll Award and the latter a Top 5 finalist for the APRA Maioha Award in October 2021. Rika's musical prowess extends beyond national borders. She has toured internationally, performing alongside Grammy Award winners such as India Arie, John Legend, Blind Boys of Alabama, and George Kahumoku Jr. Domestically, she has shared stages with prominent local artists like Stan Walker, Teeks, and Rob Ruha. Her style, which blends Te Reo Māori, folk, acoustic, soul, and easy listening, has cemented her status as an international star while remaining deeply connected to her roots in Aotearoa. Born and raised in the Bay of Plenty (Te Moana-a-Toi), Rika continues to live there with her whānau, maintaining her strong ties to her cultural heritage. Maisey created the role of 'Ana Hato' for 3spresnets in her theatrical debut in February of this year.



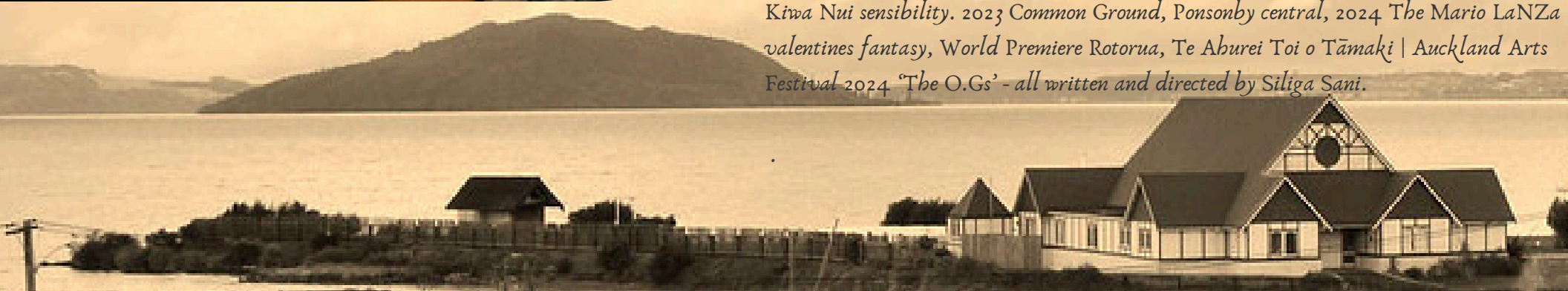
SILIGA SANI MULIAUMASEALI'I

*Vaiala, Vaima, Fasito'o-Uta (Upolu) Pu'apu'a
(Savai'i) Tamaki Makaurau*



Mario Lanza

Born and raised in Tāmaki Makaurau, Samoan tenor Siliga Sani Muliaumaseali'i studied singing at Queensland Conservatorium of Music before embarking on a career that has seen him perform on stages around the world including Covent Garden, the Sydney Opera House and Theatre an der Wien in Vienna. He has also performed extensively in musical theatre, radio plays for BBC4 film and television. Sani has written, directed and produced his own work and for others. A polyglot Sani speaks Samoan, English, Italian, German and rudimentary French. In 2012, Siliga Sani co-founded the GAFA Arts Collective, the UK and Europe's first Samoan arts entity, whose ethos to re-form western art structures with Samoan centric shapes saw a genuinely interesting opus emerge from Sani's creative vision. Siliga Sani wrote, produced, composed, directed and performed in several works presented by the GAFA collective including 'R'Otello the rugby opera' at London Opera in the City Festival in 2019, the Sunday MASSive 2018 Festival which programmed the Verdi & Brahms Requiems and Elgars Dream of Gerontius, his play Talune about Samoa and the 1918 Influenza Pandemic; and his syncretic rendering of Richard Wagner's entire ring cycle in 2021 RinGAFA: The Power of Love of Power, orchestral concerts with movement. RinGAFA received 5 star reviews across the international operatic media. Siliga presented the breakfast show for RNZ Concert 2022 - 2023 and is the first Moana a Kiwa person to do so. In 2024 Sani founded 3spresents LTD whose head quarters are in Rotorua. 3SP facilitates cross-cultural meetings in galleries of genre and produce provocative works of excellence, quality, and daring. Creationships moulded with a Samoa and Moana A Kiwa Nui sensibility. 2023 Common Ground, Ponsonby central, 2024 The Mario LaNZa valentines fantasy, World Premiere Rotorua, Te Aburei Toi o Tāmaki | Auckland Arts Festival 2024 'The O.Gs' - all written and directed by Siliga Sani.



ANA HATO



The Maori Nightingale

Ana Matamahāura Hato (30 December 1907 – 8 December 1953) was a pioneering New Zealand singer, celebrated for her role in early Māori music recordings. Born in Ngāpuna, Rotorua, Hato was of Ngāti Whakaue and Tūhourangi descent. She grew up in Whakarewarewa, where her parents, both singers, influenced her musical path. Hato, with only primary school music lessons, became renowned for her precise pitch and ukulele skills. By 16, she was performing with Guide Rangi's Māori concert group and later toured with Maggie Papakura and solo in Australia.

In 1927, she performed for the Duke and Duchess of York and recorded with her cousin Deane Waretini. These recordings, including "Hine E Hine" and "Waiata Poi," were highly successful. Despite her fame, Hato worked various jobs and did not profit from her recordings. Hato married Pāhau Rāpōni in 1931; he died as a POW in 1942. She led her own concert party, supported charities, and performed at significant events, including early Māori music radio broadcasts. Despite battling cancer, she continued performing until 1950, passing away in 1953. Her recordings remain valuable, with some reissued on CD and rare finds occasionally surfacing.



MARIO LANZA



The American Caruso

*Mario Lanza (1921-1959) was a renowned American tenor and Hollywood star famed for his powerful voice and emotional performances. Born Alfredo Arnold Cocozza in Philadelphia, he showed early promise in opera, eventually studying under notable conductors and adopting his stage name from his mother's maiden name. Lanza's operatic debut in 1942 at the Berkshire Music Festival led to critical acclaim. However, his career was interrupted by World War II, during which he served in the U.S. Army Air Corps and performed in wartime shows. Post-war, Lanza resumed his career with radio appearances and a successful concert tour. His breakthrough came with a film contract from MGM, where his roles in movies like *That Midnight Kiss* and *The Toast of New Orleans* boosted his fame. His portrayal of Enrico Caruso in *The Great Caruso* (1951) was particularly celebrated. Despite his success, Lanza faced challenges, including financial issues and health problems. He moved to Italy in 1957, where he worked on several films and planned further opera engagements. Tragically, Lanza's health deteriorated, leading to his death in Rome in 1959 at age 38. His legacy endures through his influential recordings and the inspiration he provided to future opera stars and musicians.*

FEATURED ENSEMBLE

Mechanic



Rapata Biddle

Pilot Marcus



Manaia Mercep

Betty Lanza/Singer Fa



Awatea Mahutonga

Singer Tabi



Te Waru Mahutonga

Singer Rua



Kabu Piripi

Singer Toru



Evar Thomas

PENNY DODD



Linda the pianist

With over forty years of experience in New Zealand and the UK, this seasoned music professional currently freelances in Auckland, NZ. This year's work includes serving as Music Director and Conductor for a staged concert of CHESS at the Aotea Centre, assisting with the orchestration of a full-length ballet, CINDERELLA, and touring as a keyboardist with local orchestras across Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. Other projects involve performing in orchestra concerts, including tributes to John Williams, K-Pop, and the film The Princess Bride, as well as workshops for new musicals, and orchestrating and arranging for various ensembles. Notable past highlights as Music Director include productions such as Phantom of the Opera, Les Misérables, 42nd Street, Cats, and Chicago. On keyboards, the individual has contributed to Wicked, Mary Poppins, Jersey Boys, and others. Additionally, they have arranged and conducted symphonic rock concerts, musical theatre, and light repertoire performances, including 21 years of Coca-Cola Christmas in the Park. Penny made her debut with 3spresents as repetiteur on 'The O.Gs a concert in motion' for Te Aburei Toi o Tāmaki | Auckland Arts Festival 2024.

DAN JEREMIA



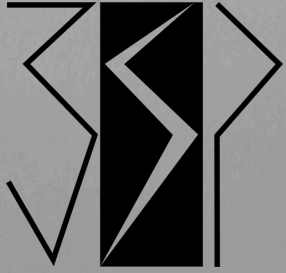
Chorus master & Assitant Director



Dan Jeremia joined 3spresents in 2024 as part of the creative team of the Mario creationship. As well as chorus master he also produced vocal arrangements of Waiata. Testiment to his skills Dan was opted as assistant directing on Mario the creationship. In March of 2024 Dan joined the creative team of 'The O.Gs a concert in motion' for 3spresents as assistant director for Te Aburei Toi o Tāmaki | Auckland Arts Festival. Described as 'the jewel of the festival' the concert featured some of the pioneers of Pasefika opera in a three hour extravaganza culminating in a standing ovation. A medical Doctor, Dan is currently musical director for the Rotorua Musical Theatres production of 'Hairspray' other work for the company includes 'The colour purple'.

A black and white photograph featuring two individuals. On the left, a man (Mario Lanza) is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark suit jacket, a light-colored shirt, a dark tie, and a dark fedora hat. He is looking upwards and to the right with an expressive, open-mouthed look. He holds a dark folder or book under his left arm. On the right, a woman is shown from the chest up, wearing a white, feathered costume. She has a serious expression and is looking towards the man. Her right hand is raised, palm facing forward, in a gesture. The background is dark and indistinct. The entire image is set against a light-colored, woven, herringbone-patterned background.

*'THE MARIO LANZA
VALENTINES FANTASY'*



Fa'afetai to our partners



*Fa'afetai to Aronui Indigenous Arts Festival, Cian White, James Willie-Miln & team,
Sir Howard Morrison Centre, Janelle Bish, Kirsty Wilson & team, Dress For Success, Ans Hoyle & team*