

13 August – 3 September 2016

THE
COURT
THEATRE

WAIORA

TE Ū KAI PŌ –
THE HOMELAND

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

HONE KOUKA

WITH WAIATA
COMPOSED BY

**HONE
HURIHANGANUI**

EDUCATION PACK



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WAIORA

TE Ū KAI PŌ | THE HOMELAND

CAST

Hone (John)	Taungaroa Emile
Wai Te Atatu (Sue)	Kim Garrett
Amiria	Maia Diamond
Rongo	Te Awhina Kaiwai-Wanikau
Boyboy	Tola Newbery
Steve Campbell	Phil Grieve
Louise Stones	Hannah Spedding
Tipuna	Sheree Waitoa, Wiremu Waretini, Jared Hiakita, Tania Gilchrist
Director/Writer/Sound Designer	Hone Kouka
Waiata composed by	Hone Hurihanganui
Haka/Waiata Tautoko	Hohepa Waitoa
Set/Costume Designer	Mark McEntyre
Lighting Designer	Giles Tanner
Properties Coordinator	Christy Lassen
Stage Manager	Jo Bunce
Operator	Sean Hawkins
Costume Manager	Sarah Douglas
Construction Manager	Ioan Bramhall
Workshop Supervisor	Nigel Kerr
Production Manager	Charlotte Lloyd
Costume Construction	Sarah Douglas, Louise Gallaway Deborah Moor
Hair Stylist	Sarah Greenwood-Buchanan
Set Construction	Nigel Kerr, Maurice Kidd, Richard Daem, Henri Kerr and Rob Hood

Running time: 2 hours, 5 minutes
including 20 minute interval

Waiora was first produced at the New Zealand International Festival of the Arts, Wellington 1996

Special thanks: Nancy Brunning, Maarire Brunning Kouka, Danielle Colvin Photography, Miria George, Murray Lynch, Rawiri Paratene, Roma Pötiki, Kouka and Waitoa whanau, King whanau in Rangiora

ABOUT THE PLAY

SYNOPSIS

The year is 1965. A Maori family, recently migrated to the South Island from the East Cape, prepares to celebrate the birthday of their youngest daughter with their Pākehā guests.

Sawmill worker John/Hone has moved his family – wife Sue/Wai, daughters Rongo and Amiria, and 'adopted' son Boyboy – to the South Island from their northern homeland for work and improved prospects for his children. During the show they prepare a beach-side hangi to celebrate Rongo's 18th birthday, and John/Hone has invited his boss Steve as a guest, believing that he is to receive a much deserved promotion.

Boyboy's school teacher Louise Stones is present and is a familiar family friend, however once Steve has arrived she is treated more as a distanced Pākehā guest. Family tensions raise to the surface uncomfortably and at times embarrassing moments and the family work hard to perform the role of gracious hosts.

John/Hone and his family are surrounded by the at times seen and at times unseen Tipuna, who watch over the family, physically echoing the living, guiding and challenging their actions.

Off to the side, a part of the 'festivities' but never really fully present, is Rongo, she holds a profound sense of displacement – physical, spiritual, and linguistic – and appears more connected and aware of the Tipuna than the rest of her family.

The play concludes with the near death of Rongo and the family fight to keep her in the present. This battle uses haka and waiata to present the lengths the family will go, to save their daughter.

DISCUSS: As a class talk about your immediate response to the play. What parts do you feel connected to personally? Are there any familiar moments that you recognise from your own family dynamic?



REMEMBERING WAIORA 20 YEARS ON

RAWIRI PARATENE

Rawiri Paratene played Hone in the original production of *Waiora* and toured with the show for four years. In 2013 he was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to film, television and theatre.

In 1995, I was working as a production assistant and script developer in Auckland and hadn't worked in theatre for about 14 years, ever since I left the Fortune Theatre where I was Assistant Artistic Director with Tony Richardson.

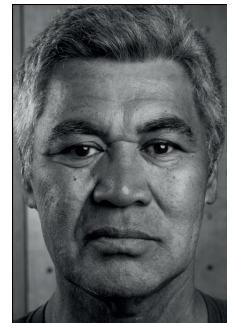
Murray Lynch phoned me to see if I was interested in taking on the role of Hone for the 1996 NZ Festival of the Arts in Wellington.

The offer came absolutely out of the blue, as I had no desire to go back to theatre. I had left that part of my life in the past, I thought. But I let the offer dwell with me a while and said yes to taking part in the workshop process.

I met Hone (Kouka) at the workshop. I had never heard of him, me being very much out of the loop. He struck me as bright and was very open to the process, he took on board lots of what the actors brought. He was good at arguing for his ideas too, which I respected. Sadly he was a delusional *Highlanders* fan – I saw this as a serious flaw.

The workshop put me in cahoots with a new generation of Māori practitioners. They were sharp and impressed me. Without realising it the old theatre bug was at work. Not long after the workshop, I accepted the challenge of taking on my first theatrical role for 15 years in 1996.

One of the most joyous things was to be working with such strong Māori actors and to become properly involved in this new wave of Māori theatre. The new rehearsal room protocol with *karakia* and *mihimihi*, was heartening to me. It represented such a positive progression. Having a *kaumātua* with us throughout the whole process was superb. I pause to pay respects to Bob Wiki now, this beautiful *kaumātua* with a great understanding of the theatre processes.



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He made us all feel very safe as we grappled with a story that had spirituality at its heart.

We had mixed responses through the first season. But the piece has always had a tremendous theatricality so the audience invariably erupted at the end of the show. The play grew stronger as we kept on remounting it, and as we the cast and crew got to grips with its emotional power, I think we earned those eruptions more.

We did *Waiora* in 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999 taking it all over Aotearoa; to the Brighton Arts Festival and to four of the Hawaiian Islands. I think the production grew each time we remounted it.

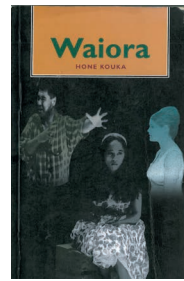
There are several audience reactions that I shall never forget: the Jewish boy in Brighton who told me, "Oh my God that play so got to me. Hone reminded me of my father, that family of my family"; the final performance in Hawaii at Kamehameha School on Oahu where the entire audience came up onstage to place lei upon all of us; the audience at Whangarei, where many from my own tribal homelands had travelled to watch the play, performed karanga and mihi then all stood to the Ngapuhi anthem being led by one of its composers and late great Piripi Cope - an experience that reduced me to shuddering tears; the mad and fun loving times we all shared on our journey with this play...

Waiora introduced me to a Māori theatre movement that is strong and vital. It reignited my love of live theatre. At that stage *Waiora* was the most travelled piece of theatre I had ever been involved with. It is a piece that has at its heart something that has always been of the utmost importance to me: Māori self-determination and its place in the evolution of a true identity for Aotearoa.

Tihei Mauriora!

Rawiri Paratene
Ngāpuhi, ONZM

REMEMBERING WAIORA 20 YEARS ON



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NANCY BRUNNING



Nancy Brunning played Rongo in the original production and the NZ/international tour of *Waiora* until 1999, and has appeared steadily on stage and screen. In 2013 she co-founded Hāpai Productions; a production company dedicated to making theatre works with Te Ao Māori themes.

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā karangataha maha, ngā mihi
matakoakoa ki a koutou katoa.

E te manu kākākura, te whāea Sue Kouka.

Kua whakauruuru koe ki tō hoa rangatira; kua whetūrangihia kōrua.
Haere, haere, haere atu rā Wherokiroki mai i te pō.

Rātou ki a rātou, tātou ki a tātou.

Tēnā koutou katoa

The response to the '96 première of *Waiora* ranged from standing ovations to heated debates. It brought many Māori together and it angered many Pākehā who were turned off by the portrayal of Pākehā/Māori relationships. Some audiences, Pākehā and Māori alike, took offence at a Māori play daring to say Māori were being treated like immigrants in their own country.

On tour there were theatres that welcomed us openly and generously, while others needed more convincing; receiving us politely but through gritted teeth. To establish a peaceful and equal co-existence with our hosts it was important for our touring company to practice rituals such as pohiri or karakia during our time with one another. Most times we achieved this easily and successfully and at other times our presence was so unnatural to some theatre establishments that they needed to remind us of whose theatre we were in; regularly - this was art imitating life.

I played the character Rongo, a young sapling, severed from her roots in *Waiora* and planted in unfamiliar soil in Christchurch. An urban Māori story that so many of my people experienced. There were many nights during performance where Rongo's story of survival was insignificant. Depending on what community we performed in, Rongo could connect strongly to audiences or she became almost - invisible. It will be interesting to see how her journey plays out twenty years on.

Congratulations Court Theatre for programming *Waiora* for its second outing in Christchurch - a city no stranger to fighting for its own survival and significance in this country. I wish that you and the entire *Waiora* team experience a successful and amazing season if not a life changing one.

Mauri Ora ki a koutou.

Nancy Brunning

Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāi Tūhoe

THEMES

The play is about a family, about migration, about identity: it covers a huge range of themes within a domestic story and setting.

DISCUSS: what themes stand out to you? Are these the same as your classmates?

HAVE A GO: Choose a section of the text. Underline or highlight the text using different colours to show when you think the following themes or issue is at the forefront of the action/ dialogue.

- Family
- Belonging
- Migration
- Identity
- Prejudice
- Success
- Power

Are there any other themes that you would add to this list?

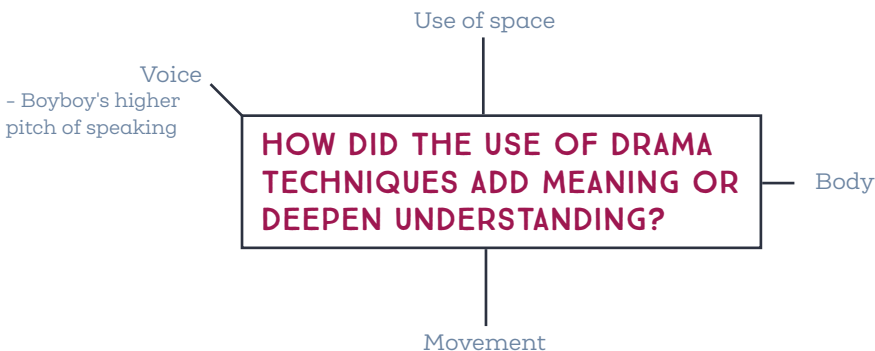
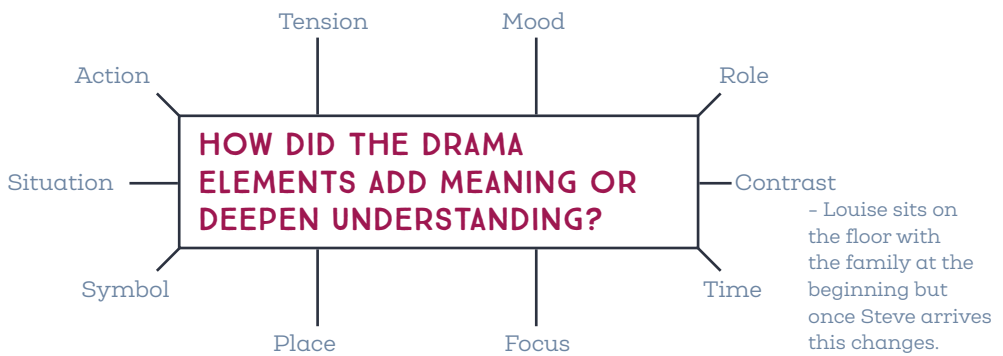
DISCUSS: This play was written 20 years ago, do you still think the story is relevant now?

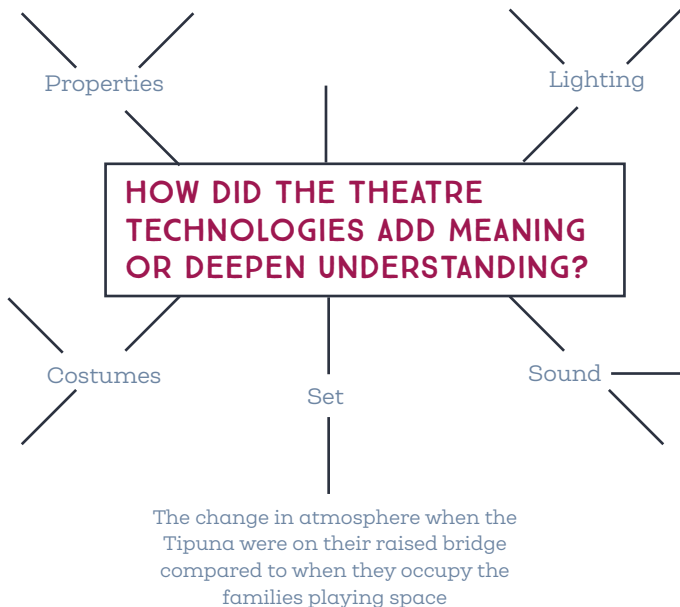
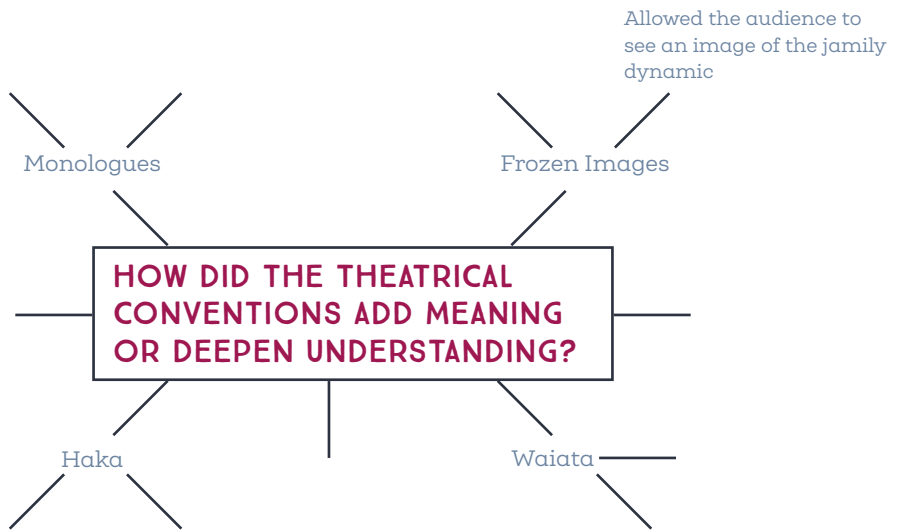
HAVE A GO: Have a debate! Working in two groups, with one group arguing that the play is old fashioned and no longer relevant and one group arguing that it is relevant and important for contemporary audiences. It doesn't matter if you agree or not with your argument, present your arguments as a debate with two or three speakers per side and then accept questions from each other and then the floor. At the end of the debate ask your audience to take a vote.



REFLECTING ON THE PLAY

HAVE A GO: In groups work to complete the brainstorms below, adding your own ideas and thoughts on how The Court Theatre's production of Waiora used drama elements, techniques, conventions and technologies within this performance. Remember to consider why the director/designer/actor made these choices and what impact this had on your interpretation of the play.







THE CHARACTERS

JOHN/HONE - The father of the whānau, head of the household and loving of his wife and children. He has always worked outdoors and impresses in his job at the sawmill, that he has moved South to work in. He has moved to the city for his children and their future.

Hone changes costume during the play, before Steve arrives he is wearing a relaxed shirt and he changes into a white shirt and tie to welcome his boss to the party, then after he learns that the expected offer of promotion is not coming he rips of the shirt and tie and the conclusion of the play is performed in a singlet.

DISCUSS: What does this change in costume signify to the audience?

WAI/SUE - Wife of Hone and mother of the whānau, she will do anything for her husband and children. She loves Hone and understands why he has moved the family, she understands her children's different needs and desires and supports them.

Wai is smartly dressed and well turned out, in The Court Theatre's production she takes her shoes off when arriving at the beach but then puts them back on again when Steve Campbell arrives.

DISCUSS: What does the change in footwear communicate to the audience.



RONGO – the youngest daughter of the whānau, the play is focused around her 18th birthday party. Rongo deeply misses home and her extended family, she has a beautiful voice but has not sung for anyone since the move.

In the production Rongo is the first character to see the Tipuna and they are focused on her and she feels connected to them.

HAVE A GO: Use the speech Rongo makes while standing at the shore and talking to her granny. How would you use the presence of the Tipuna to stage this extract? Put this scene on the stage in groups of 5 with one person playing Rongo and four Tipuna, how do you use the Tipuna to punctuate what Rongo is saying?

The Speech can be found on page 30 of the text, <https://books.google.co.nz/books?id=iGjD2fW5SjQC&lpg=PA42&dq=rongo's%20speech%20waiora&pg=PA101#v=onepage&q=rongo's%20speech%20waiora&f=false>

AMIRIA – eldest daughter of the whānau, not as connected to her Māori identity as her

brothers and sisters. Loves the move to the city and really engaged in popular culture, dating a pākehā boy.

BOYBOY – the youngest member of the family, adopted by Wai and Hone.

DISCUSS: what did you notice about Boyboy's physicality, what could you learn about the character from the way he moved around the space and held himself?

STEVE CAMPBELL – Hone's boss at the sawmill. He can see that Hone is a good worker but can't see a way that he can promote him to a leadership role. He doesn't think the workers would respond well to a Māori as their foreman.

LOUISE STONES – a local teacher and friend to the family, Boyboy is in her class and she tries to support him. Louise has limited experience of Māori culture but enjoys her time with the family and feels connected to them, perhaps because she is also a newcomer to Canterbury.



ASK AN ACTOR

INTERVIEW WITH TOLA NEWBERY

who plays Boyboy in The Court Theatre's production of Waiora.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE PLAYING A CHARACTER THAT IS YOUNGER THAN YOUR ACTUAL AGE?

Boyboy is stuck between being young enough to need guidance but old enough to have his own opinion; he craves responsibility.

The script offers a lot to help with finding a younger voice. Boyboy has been written with his own vernacular, with words like 'wanna' and 'gotta' rather than 'want to' or 'I have to'. I see it as a gift from the writer and a clue for me in discovering/portraying a younger character.

In making Boyboy we thought about things such as how fast Boyboy is compared to the older characters, in both his thoughts and physicality, how much eye contact he makes with other characters, how he shows that he is really listening and giving respect.

WHAT TOOLS DID YOU USE TO CREATE THE PHYSICALITY OF BOYBOY?

Hone's directing style is quite free, he wants the actors to offer things in the room and be comfortable to try things out.

The costume department found the gumboots quite early on, the footwear of a character can influence how a character moves.

The haka style of people from Ngāti Porou is very specific, action songs such as Paikea* helped in the development of the physical traits of Boyboy.

I work from the script and use a personal notebook for pictures, notes, ideas and all things "Boyboy".

HOW DO YOU WARM UP AND PREPARE FOR EACH PERFORMANCE?

I follow a structure warming up, focusing on breath, body and voice. Firstly I do lung exercises, secondly a physical warm up like running up and down the seating block or skipping, and then a voice warm up focused on tongue twisters and vocal exercises. We also warm up as a cast for Waiora. I sit with the script and focus on staying calm and centred before the show starts.

HOW DO YOU MANAGE PERFORMING SUCH AN EMOTIONAL ROLE EVERY NIGHT?

I am surrounded by understanding and supportive performers, we all support each other, we have Jo Bunce our Stage Manager, Hone Kouka the director and the team at The Court Theatre.

I leave the emotion on stage, we Karakia after each performance, that way we finish the evening together.

I warm down once I get home, stretches and breathing exercises.

CAN YOU CHOOSE THREE WORDS WHICH DESCRIBE BOYBOY?

- Ringaraupa (hard worker)
- Manaaki
- Māhaki

*Mikare Pewhairangi, a Tokomaru Bay farmer, composed Paikea as a haka in the 1870s. He also composed other memorable haka; Kura Tiwaka, Taramai Nuku and E Kui E Kui.

Ruepena says that it was given its action-song waltz tune during the 1914-18 war.

RELATIONSHIPS



Waiora tells the story of a family, however within the family dynamic there are multiple relationships between individuals that are all different. Consider the father/son dynamic between Hone and Boyboy, the connection between Lou and Wai as best friends, the sisterly love between Amiria and Rongo and the love between husband and wife Hone and Wai.

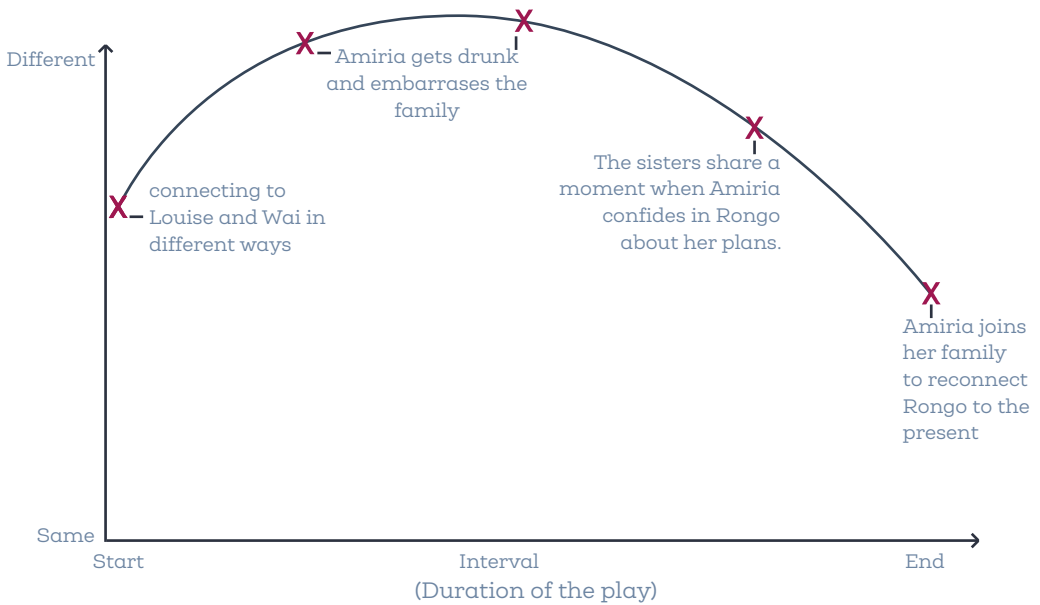
DISCUSS: What other relationships between two characters stand out to you? Working in pairs pick a pair of characters, you could choose one of the pairs mentioned above or choose a different one.

Discuss how you think their relationship changes throughout the play.

Draw a graph, label the x axes as the duration of the play from start to finish. Label the y axes as same to difference. Plot how unified or distanced the characters appear to you at each point in the play - the start, half way through the first half, at the interval, half way through the second half and at the end. Does this change throughout the play? Does this arch tell you anything new about the relationship between the characters? Draw a second graph, label the x axes as the duration of the play again, and label the y axes as dissolving to growing. Using the same pair of characters plot how close or distanced you feel their relationship is presented at the same points in the play. How does this change? How does this compare to your first graph?



AMIRIA AND RONGO - RELATIONSHIP GRAPH



THE TIPUNA

INTERVIEW WITH JARED HIAKITA

who plays one of the Tipuna in the play.

WHAT DID YOU FIRST THINK ABOUT YOUR ROLE WHEN YOU READ THE PLAY?

When I first read the play, before I knew I had been cast, I thought the Tipuna were a cool addition to the storytelling. When we first started working on the play together I started to get quite critical of the Tipuna, I wasn't sure what their purpose was. It really helped me that we made very specific choices about what period in history each of the Tipuna were from, my character was from pre European arrival and this helped me understand the incredibly strong connection to identity and tikanga that the Tipuna need to hold.

HOW HAS YOUR READING OF THE TIPUNA CHANGED THROUGHOUT THE REHEARSAL PROCESS?

My understanding of the role of the Tipuna has clarified so much during the rehearsal process. The script allows for interpretation from the cast and director and so we really fleshed out the purpose and aims of the Tipuna. We decided we were there to protect the whakapapa, to protect our tikanga. We wanted to stop the family from letting go of their connection to their ancestry, constantly reminding them of their culture and warning them of the consequences of losing it. This reaches its climax with the taking of Rongo and the family prove themselves in that moment and Rongo returns to them.



WHY DO YOU THINK YOUR CHARACTER APPEARS IN THE WHĀNAU'S REALITY FOR A MOMENT?

This moment takes the warning to the next level, I feel that the Tipuna joins them to challenge and test their manaakitanga – they pass, they take good care of him.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE MOMENT IN THE PERFORMANCE?

I really like the moment where Wai and Hone are arguing and I am roaming across the bridge at the back of the stage, I get to really tune into the words that Hone is saying and embody and express his frustration physically. We get to heighten the expression of the actors and help build the tension and suspense in a scene.

DISCUSS: There are moments in the play where the Tipuna shadow, repeat or appear to control the family. In groups list as many of these as you can. Discuss what you felt as an audience member in these moments, did everyone in your group have the same interpretation? How many different interpretations can you find for each moment from within your class?



LIGHTING DESIGN

AN INTERVIEW WITH GILES TANNER, the lighting designer for Waiora.



WHAT WAS CHALLENGING ABOUT LIGHTING THIS PLAY?

The challenges can be broken into two distinct types. Firstly, there are the practical challenges. There are many scenes in Waiora where some

characters are central to the action occurring on stage, while others are present but not participating in the scene or are observing the scene from outside. This made it necessary to be able to isolate and highlight the central actors while still being able to be aware of the other peripheral characters. It was also necessary to provide a contrast between the 'real' and the spiritual characters, and much of this distinction was provided by the lighting.

The artistic challenges included using lighting to enhance the stylised set in order to suggest a real but heightened sense of location. Location is a central theme in Waiora, so it was essential to provide a coherent and compelling feeling of location

within a real landscape. However, in order to work with the abstract nature of the set, it was important to take a representative rather than strictly literal approach. This was partly achieved with the use of a slightly heightened colour palette and the extensive use of texture in the lighting. The other major artistic challenge was to use lighting to indicate and enhance the contrast between the physical and spiritual worlds within the play. When the tipuna are present in the physical realm, lighting was used to signal and heighten the setting. Lighting was also used to enhance and contrast the tipuna when they were observing the physical world from the ramp behind the acting area. This space was lit in a manner that is typical in dance, using strong side light and texture. I also used a lighting palette that contrasted strongly with the more naturalistic lighting of the main acting area.

WHAT IS THE MOMENT YOU ARE MOST PLEASED WITH?

I particularly like the parts when the tipuna are on the ramp observing the family. The lighting enhances their other-worldliness and is quite spooky! The other part I love is the final haka sequence where very strong side light is used to provide drama. It is unusual to have the opportunity to use full on side lighting in theatre, so I wanted to exploit this chance to really go crazy with lights!

HOW DO THE LIGHTS HELP TO TELL THE STORY?

The lights help to tell the story in all the ways mentioned above. They are a great tool to

provide a sense of location as well as the passage of time. I took care to use the lights to help show the progression of the day from early morning with cool blues and low angles from stage right in the first scene through to warm ambers from stage left for the afternoon/evening scenes at the end. Lighting provided a key tool to contrast the physical and spiritual within the play while anchoring the action firmly within a north Canterbury setting.

DISCUSS: how did the other theatre technologies work with the lighting in this production to help tell the story?

HAVE A GO: At The Court Theatre the first day of rehearsals always includes a design presentation where the director and designers present their ideas to the cast and company. In groups take on the role of Director, Lighting, Set, Costume and Sound designers and decide a concept for this show. Present your ideas to your classmates, use a mood board, key words and images to communicate your ideas.

Check out an interview with Hone Kouka on the Education - Resources page of The Court Theatre website

WRITER/ DIRECTOR



HONE KOUKA

Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Kahungunu, Kāi Tahu, MNZM.

Hone is an acclaimed Māori director, producer and writer. Youngest winner of the Bruce Mason Playwrighting Award and multiple award winner, he has had plays produced in South Africa, Britain, Hawaii, Canada, Australia, Japan, New Caledonia, as well as throughout New Zealand, with three plays being translated into French, Japanese and Russian.

Kouka, along with Miria George founded theatre and film production house Tawata Productions,

producing the works of Māori and Pacific artists.

He became a member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for his services to Contemporary Māori Theatre in June 2009. He had two films screening at the 2016 Berlin Film Festival - *Born to Dance* (screenwriter) and *Mahana* (Executive Producer).

13 August - 3 September

WAIORA

TE Ū KAI PŌ - THE HOMELAND

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY HONE KOUKA

WITH WAIATA
COMPOSED BY HONE
HURIHANGANUI



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