



I, GEORGE NEIA

TAWATA PRODUCTIONS

AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND



PHOTOGRAPH: from the CLIFF PORTER COLLECTION

**AUCKLAND
ARTS
FESTIVAL**

FREE PROGRAMME

POST-SHOW TALK
THU 14 MAR
Q THEATRE, LOFT

I, GEORGE NEPIA

TAWATA PRODUCTIONS

MAHURANGI COLLEGE, WARKWORTH

Friday 8 March, 7.30pm

Q THEATRE, LOFT

Wednesday 13 March – Friday 15 March, 7.30pm

Saturday 16 March – Sunday 17 March, 5.00pm

Monday 18 March, 6.30pm

MANGERE ARTS CENTRE – NGĀ TOHU O UENUKU

Thursday 21 March – Friday 22 March, 7.00pm

Saturday 23 March, 1.30pm & 7.00pm

Writer Hone Kouka

Sound Design Karnan Saba

Director Jason Te Kare

AV, Lighting, Set Design Robert Larsen

Actor Jarod Rawiri

Projected Still Illustration Thomas Hanover

Technical Operator Laurie Dean

Processing Programming Ben Jack

Production Manager Ulli Briese

Researcher Challen Wilson

Dramaturg John Vakidis

Costume Cara Louise Waretini

Composer Miriama Ketu-McKenzie

Producer Miria George

Production of the Year Theatre Award 2011

Director of the Year 2011: Jason Te Kare

Actor of the Year 2011: Jarod Rawiri

Most Promising Director: Jason Te Kare 2011

CORE FUNDERS

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COLENSOBBDO



“When I hear others debating who will play fullback for the Kingdom of Heaven versus the rest I turn to stone. It is not me to question of whether Nepia was the best fullback in history. It is a question of which of the others is fit to lace up his Cotton Oxford boots.”

Denzil Batchelor, English Rugby Journalist



PHOTOGRAPH: ANETA RUTH

It is 1924 and the All Blacks are touring the United Kingdom. There are 32 games and New Zealand wins every single one. The Invincibles – as they became known – were a side of stars. But one outshone them all. Leading the team in the Haka as well as in the points tally, George Nepia played every game of the legendary tour and wrote himself into the history books as one of our greatest players.

I, George Nepia describes the life of an East Coast boy who rose from

humble beginnings and became one of world rugby’s first superstars. It’s a production that brings rugby fans and theatre-goers together. The spiral punt, the crash tackle, the highs and lows of a legend in a time of flux – this graceful play reveals the player, the husband, the father, the farmer, the singer, the rebel, the Invincible.

I, George Nepia features production design by Robert Larsen (*Apollo 13*), original compositions by Miriama Ketu-McKenzie (*The Lonesome Buckwhips*), costuming by emerging designer Cara Louise (*Tu*) and sound design by Wellington musician Karnan Saba (*The Mourning After*).

**‘In Nepia’s eyes I see promise, and also sadness.
Not invincible, vulnerable. A man, not a legend.
But this play? Legend.’
James Wenley, TheatreScenes**

For more information, visit George Nepia on allblacks.com (<http://stats.allblacks.com/asp/Profile.asp?ABID=650>)

MAJOR GRANTS



Biographies

Hone Kouka, MNZM (Ngati Porou, Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Kahungunu)

Writer

Hone Kouka is an acclaimed Maori writer, winner of the Bruce Mason Award and multiple Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards, he has had plays produced in South Africa, Britain, Hawaii, Canada, Australia, New Caledonia, as well as throughout New Zealand, with two plays being translated into French and Russian. Kouka has published five books, with his first novel due for release in 2013. Kouka founded theatre production house Tawata Productions, producing the works of emerging Maori playwrights, including the controversial and what remains. He has worked as Development Executive at the New Zealand Film Commission. Kouka became a member of the New Zealand order of Merit for his services to Contemporary Maori Theatre in June 2009.

Jarod Rawiri (Ngati Whanaunga, Ngati Tuwharetoa, Ngati Hine)

Actor

In 2002 Jarod graduated from Toi Whakaari NZ Drama School and has been busy working as an actor for film, theatre and TV ever since.

He appeared in the award winning short films Tama Tu, Kerosene Creek, and Taua; and feature films *Jinx Sister*, *A Song of Good*, and *Matariki*, which premiered at the Toronto Film Festival in 2010. Jarod's theatre performances include *Flintlock Musket* (2009), Massive Company's *Whero's New Net* (2008/2009), Silo Theatres *The Brothers Size* (2011) *The Cut*, *Lobby Hero* (2007) and *Take me Out* (2006), and *The Arrival* by Red Leap Theatre (Auckland Festival 2009) which toured to the Sydney, Hong Kong and NZ International Festivals in early 2010.

In 2009 Jarod performed in *A Streetcar Named Desire* at the Tennessee Williams Festival in Provincetown, USA. His television work includes *Korero Mai*, *Jackie Brown Diaries*, *Almighty Johnsons* and the telefeatures *Billy*, *Stolen* and *What Really Happened-Waitangi* where he played Hone Heke.

His first collaboration with Hone Kouka was on his play *The Prophet* which premiered at the NZ International Festival in 2004 and went on to tour New Zealand and Hawaii. Jarod would like to acknowledge the Rawiri whanau, the Wehipeihana whanau.

Jason Te Kare (Ngati Maniapoto, Tainui)

Director

Jason has been working in the theatre industry for the last twenty years. Originally from Glen Innes, Auckland, Jason's first experiences of the stage were all through Kapahaka. In the early nineties Jason stumbled into theatre by way of Maidment Youth Theatre (M.Y.T.) who gave youth a chance to work with established theatre practitioners and learn by doing. This exposure to creative, working, theatre practitioners opened Jason's mind to the possibilities that existed for working in the industry and lit the pathway he would eventually take himself. After doing every season of M.Y.T. while at Tamaki College, then a year at Selwyn College Performing Arts, Jason made his professional acting debut in Hone Kouka's *Waiora* in Wellington, something Jason still counts as a true career highlight. Others include; working behind the scenes to help Sharon Duncan, Willa O'Niell and Katrina Chandra establish the original Basement Theatre under the old Water Shed in the mid-nineties, graduating from Toi Whakaari: NZ Drama School and being given the honour to direct *I, George Nepia*. Jason currently lives in Wellington where he works as a drama producer for Radio New Zealand.

Robert Larsen **Designer, Technician**

Robert is a designer and inventor of integrated audio/visual and lighting systems for live performance and installations. He is also a touring technician, production manager and technical consultant for theatre, dance and music in New Zealand and Australia. As part of the innovative company HACKMAN, responsible for *APOLLO 13: Mission Control*, Robert designed the interactive electronic, video, lighting and audio systems for this successful production which has recently performed in the United States, Sydney Opera House and the Perth International Arts Festival.

Cara Louise Waretini (Te Atihaunui a Pa-parangi, Ngai Te Rangi, Ngati Kahungunu) **Costume**

Cara Louise Waretini is a Wellington based Costumer working in theatre and film. Cara last worked with Tawata as costumier for the Chapman Tripp award winning Production of the Year *I, George Nepia* in 2011 and has been working with the company in the development and world premiere of *Tu* since 2010. Costumier credits include *Footballistic* (2007), *Hypnotastic* (2008), *Y&H Festival of New Theatre* (2008), *Wellington Circus Proms* (2008-2009), *Real Hot Bitches* *The Fierceness* (2010) *Eternity* for Eternity Productions (2011) and The Chucklebees latest music video *Amazing* (2011).

Cara is a recent graduate of Toi Whakaari Costume Construction diploma.

Miriama Ketu-McKenzie (Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa) **Composer**

Miriama is a graduate of Toi Whakaari: The NZ Drama School and a less recent graduate of UCOL's Performing Arts School in the Manawatu. Since entering the entertainment industry she has had regular work in NZ theatre and film as an actress *Hinepau* (Capital E) & *Until Proven Innocent* (Lippy Pictures), musician ('Ground' - Quartett Co-Operative), singer and songwriter ('The Lonesome Buckwhips' & 'Vinnie Septic and the Princesses' -

Buckwhip Enterprises).

Miriama has performed as a musician for theatre audiences in Berlin, Romania, Glasgow & England and her compositions with 'The Lonesome Buckwhips' have been broadcast on National radio and television. She has toured extensively throughout the country as a performer and musician and currently plays the violin in her local symphonia. She can regularly be seen performing as a singer/guitarist and much like some of the characters mentioned in the play, she too comes from a family of Maori singers and musicians.

Karnan Saba **Sound Designer**

Karnan Saba is based in Wellington and has been involved with music over the last 10 years as a producer, performer and event organiser. Karnan's work in the local music scene began as a Saxophonist and founding member of the band 'Moksha'. He has since worked in live music, local community events, recording and production, and theatre.

Karnan's involvement in theatre started in 2004 with *The Untouchables Collective* 'Yatra'. More recently, he has worked on Tawata Productions' *I, George Nepia* and *The Mourning After*. Karnan currently produces his own solo work under the name K*Saba with new releases due out in 2013.

Miria George (Te Arawa, Ngati Awa, Aotearoa; Rarotonga, Atiu, Cook Islands) **Producer**

As a producer, Miria specialises in the international touring of Maori theatre, with her producing credits including seasons at *Honouring Theatre Festival* (Western Australia, New Zealand); *The Dreaming Festival* (Australia); *Maoli Arts Festival* (Hawaii); *Weesageechak Festival* (Toronto, Canada); *Talking Stick Festival* (Nancouver, Canada); *Planet IndigenUS Festival* (Toronto, Canada) and the *Pasifika Styles Festival* (London, Cambridge).

Miria has also produced theatre works for New Zealand festivals including Auckland

Arts Festival; New Zealand International Festival of the Arts; Taranaki Arts Festival; Christchurch Arts Festival; Nelson Arts Festival.

Wellington's acclaimed *Matariki Development*

Festival was founded and is curated by Miria and produced by Tawata Productions. New works developed through the festival include *Hui* by Mitch Tawhi Thomas, *I, George Nepia* by Hone Kouka, *Manawa* by Jamie McCaskill.



PHOTOGRAPH: ANETA RUTH

TAWATA PRODUCTIONS

Tihei mauriora!

E nga mana, e nga reo, e nga karangatanga maha o nga hau e wha!

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa!



Tawata Productions is a Maori production house established in 2004 specialising in the development and production of new work from Aotearoa New Zealand. We proudly present the diverse voices of writers from Aotearoa New Zealand to the world beyond.

Our work includes the epic *Tu*, multiple award-winning *I, George Nepia*, the drama *Sunset Road*, the charming solo *The Mourning After* and boutique musical *He Reo Aroha*.

In 2013, Tawata will present the return of *Tu* by Hone Kouka, in Wellington and Auckland; the debut stageplay *Neak's Legacy* by Sarita So; the annual international new works festival *Matariki Development Festival 2013*; the Rotorua season of *Sunset Road* by Miria George; as well as the multi award winning production of *I, George Nepia* by Hone Kouka, presented throughout Aotearoa. Tawata Productions has presented work throughout New Zealand, Australia, Hawai'i, Canada and the United Kingdom.

<http://tawata.wordpress.com>