

# (m) ORPHEUS



N Z O P E R A

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR



**Brad Cohen**

NZ OPERA GENERAL DIRECTOR  
TE TUMU WHAKARAE O NZ OPERA

Tēnā koutou. Thank you for joining with us in experiencing the story of Orpheus, the first singing storyteller, and his voyage across time and space. I am proud to include this powerful retelling of the myth led by Māori and Pasifika artists, directed by Neil Ieremia, in my first season as General Director.

At New Zealand Opera we are engaged in a process of making work which reflects us here in Aotearoa, either telling new stories or infusing existing stories with our distinctive sensibilities. A third priority for me is for us to provide opportunity for local and regional artists. On all of these measures, *(m)Orpheus* triumphs, and I cannot wait for the storytelling to begin. Ngā manaakitanga.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES | NGĀ TUHINGA A TE KAIHAUTŪ



**Neil Ieremia (ONZM)**

*(Vaie'e, Matautu Falealili,  
Lepea & Faleata)*  
DIRECTOR | KAIHAUTŪ  
CHOREOGRAPHER  
| KAITITO NEKEHANGA

Kia Ora, Greetings and Talofa Lava,

When I was asked to direct this opera by Thomas de Mallet Burgess in 2019, I was initially reluctant. The idea of retelling a well-known opera didn't particularly interest me, that was until I started listening to the music and thinking more deeply about the central themes of enduring love and of great loss and how they relate to the present. Gluck's idea to "reform" opera inspired me even more to change my approach and to try to see this love story in a unique way. In my version, Orpheus is a talented young man who has lost the feminine side of himself - represented by Eurydice. Orpheus could be any young man growing up in Aotearoa, where the ideas of what it means to be a "real man" are older than the opera itself. Where qualities associated with femininity such as compassion, empathy and sensitivity fall victim in the struggle for cultural and societal acceptance.

It has been my distinct pleasure and privilege to work with such an exciting and accomplished group of artists and creatives. In this collaboration between NZ Opera and Black Grace. I am particularly grateful to my creative team for running headlong with me into the unknown and designing a world where dreams can conquer death.

# CONDUCTOR'S NOTES | NGĀ TUHINGA A TE PŪKAWĒ



**Marc Taddei**  
CONDUCTOR | PŪKAWĒ

Gluck's magnificent opera was his response to what he saw as the excesses of the day, whether by the florid embellishment of singers, or (as Gluck himself said) the "composers, which have so long disfigured Italian opera and made the most splendid and most beautiful of spectacles the most wearisome"! Gluck strove to "reform" opera, condensing the musical gesture to the ultimate service of the drama - nothing about this score detracts from the story told, and the resultant, almost processional nature of the music brings a gravitas to the retelling of the Orpheus tale that is overwhelming in its impact and beauty. I am overjoyed to be working with a gifted cast, the visionary Neil Ieremia as director, and the extraordinary Tracy Grant Lord.

The chorus sets the tone for the entire opera, Black Grace will add their stunning contributions to the many dance sequences in the opera, and Gareth Farr has reimagined the original 18th century orchestral sound world into something uniquely of Aotearoa. And wait until you see the set!

# DESIGN NOTES | NGĀ TUHINGA WHAKAHOAHOA



**Tracy Grant Lord**  
DESIGNER | KAIHOAHOA

Our creative discussions for the design for *(m)Orpheus* began around setting the work inside a highly recognisable and very sub-urban world. The family garage was Neil's starting point. Growing up in South Auckland in the 60s and 70s I had been inside garage spaces all my young life watching my Dad and uncles work, living and playing with family and partying with friends. Alongside this the ideas of descent were inspired by stories of passageways and images of laser-mapped caves underneath our suburbs, that, in some cases, could be accessed from beneath these homes. The tragedy of a loss could then be very readily understood with the introduction of a vehicle into the landscape.

The palette was informed by straightforward principles of light and shade plus the explosive and infectious injection of light and colour that love can bring to this world. As always, I thank all our makers inside this production with a special shout out to Ray Calcutt and his brilliant knowledge and love of both cars and stages.



# SYNOPSIS | TUHINGA WHAKARĀPOPOTO

## ACT I

In a suburban home where mourners spill out onto the front yard and under the carport, a traditional island ceremony to mark the passing of a loved one is creeping to a close. Orpheus has lost a part of himself - Eurydice.

Lamenting his loss, Orpheus' cries rebound off the stark white clothing shielding the mourners and hang in the cold night air like the sweet scent of frangipani. The echoes of his pain escape down the streets searching for their next home as he collapses further into himself.

Amor appears to him like an explosion of colour and hope from the wreckage of his life and offers him a way to recover his loss - to bring Eurydice back from the dead. But there are conditions.

## ACT II

Having accepted the conditions, Orpheus descends into the crevices and valleys of his own mind. Like the volcanic caves beneath parts of Tāmaki Makaurau, there are hidden dangers. He must quell the rising fear and subdue the Furies if he is to rescue Eurydice.

Having succeeded, he finds Eurydice in a place of beauty and peace - Elysium.

## ACT III

Without looking at Eurydice and without explanation, he leads her on their journey towards the surface. His refusal to turn and look at her causes Eurydice to doubt his love. In desperation, he finally turns to her, breaking the conditions of his agreement with Amor. Much like losing a part of himself, Eurydice dies, again.

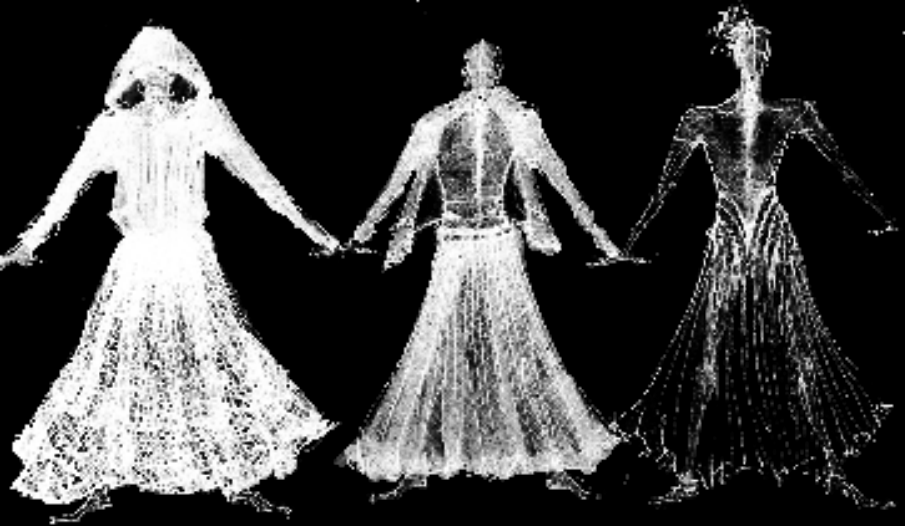
Grief-stricken, Orpheus wonders how he can continue and decides life has lost all meaning.

But before he can take his own life, Amor reappears and restores life to Eurydice, to that part of himself.

Orpheus returns to the surface, emerging from the caves of his own mind he realises it had all been a dream.

**- Synopsis written by Neil Ieremia**

*\* Please note - this production contains themes of suicide. For resources on where to get help visit [nzopera.com](http://nzopera.com)*



*Costume drawings by Tracy Grant Lord*

# CREATIVE TEAM | TE RŌPŪ AUĀHA



**Neil Ieremia (ONZM)**

(*Vaie'e, Matautu Falealili, Lepea & Faleata*)  
DIRECTOR | KAIHAUTŪ  
CHOREOGRAPHER  
| KAITITO NEKEHANGA



**Marc Taddei**

CONDUCTOR | PŪKAWĒ



**Tracy Grant Lord**

DESIGNER | KAIHOAHOA



**JAX Messenger**

LIGHTING DESIGNER  
| KAIHOAHOA TŪRAMA



**Jacqueline Coats**

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
| KAIHAUTŪ TUARUA



**Gareth Farr**

REORCHESTRATION

# CAST | NGĀ KAIWHAKAARI



**Samson Setu**

(*Fogapoa, Salelologa, Fasito'outa, Vaimoso, Manurewa*)  
ORPHEUS



**Deborah Wai Kapohe**

(*Te Ātihaunui-a-Pāpārangī, Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki & Ngāti Rua (Te Whakatōhea)*)  
JURYDICE



**Madison Nonoa**

(*Lufilufi (Samoa), Hakupu (Niue), Hamilton*)  
AMOR



**Alfred Fonoti-Fuimaono**

(*Malie, Samatau, Falealili*)  
ENSEMBLE - SINGER



**Emeline Mafi**

(*Tatākantotoŋa, Vaini, Felemea & Hā'aito (Fonga)*)  
ENSEMBLE - SINGER



**Pāamanu Fonoti-Fuimaono**

(*Malie, Samatau, Falealili*)  
ENSEMBLE - SINGER



**Jordan Fonoti-Fuimaono**  
*(Malie, Samatau, Falealili)*  
 ENSEMBLE - SINGER



**Lemauseafa Sio Lolesio**  
*(Fasito'otai, Lotofaga, (Samoa))*  
 ENSEMBLE - SINGER



**Stella Alofa**  
*(Fasito'outa, Upolu, Samoa)*  
 ENSEMBLE - SINGER



**Taylor Wallbank**  
*(Te Whānau-ā-Apanui)*  
 ENSEMBLE - SINGER



**Te Ohorere Williams**  
*(Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahungunu  
 ki Heretaunga, Waitaha,  
 Ngāiterangi, & Ngāti Pukenga)*  
 ENSEMBLE - SINGER



**Demi-Jo Manalo**  
 ENSEMBLE - DANCER



**Rodney Tyrell**  
*(Moata'a, Lefaga  
 & Matautu-tai)*  
 ENSEMBLE - DANCER



**Fuaao Tutulu Faith Schuster**  
*(Nofoali'i & Satuiatua)*  
 ENSEMBLE - DANCER



**Sione Fatuaa**  
 ENSEMBLE - DANCER



**Vincent Farane**  
*(Falevao & Le'auva'a)*  
 ENSEMBLE - DANCER



**Ben Saveasoi**  
*(Salepouae Saleimoa,  
 Samata-I-Tai)*  
 ENSEMBLE - DANCER



**Paula Kahu**  
*(Ngāti Tuwharetoa  
 & Ngāti Whatua)*  
 ENSEMBLE - DANCER



**Chas Mamea**  
*(Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Hine,  
 Matautu Lefaga)*  
 DANCER - UNDERSTUDY

# CREDITS | PĀEINGOA

## CAST | NGĀ KAIWHAKAARI

**ORPHEUS** - Samson Setu  
**EURYDICE** - Deborah Wai Kapohe  
**AMOR** - Madison Nonoa

**COVERS** - Madison Nonoa (Eurydice),  
Te Ohorere Williams (Amor)

**ENSEMBLE** - Alfred Fonoti-Fuimaono,  
Emeline Mafi, Faamanu Fonoti-Fuimaono,  
Jordan Fonoti-Fuimaono,  
Lemauseafa Sio Lolesio, Stella Alofa,  
Taylor Wallbank, Te Ohorere Williams

**BLACK GRACE DANCERS** - Demi-Jo Manalo,  
Rodney Tyrell, Fuao Tutulu Faith Schuster,  
Sione Fataua, Vincent Farane, Ben Saveaso,  
Paula Kahu, Chas Mamea (understudy)

## CREATIVE TEAM | TE RŌPŪ AUAHA

**DIRECTOR/CHOREOGRAPHER** -  
Neil Ieremia (ONZM)

**CONDUCTOR** - Marc Taddei  
**PRODUCTION DESIGNER** - Tracy Grant Lord  
**LIGHTING DESIGNER** - JAX Messenger  
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR** - Jacqueline Coats  
**CO-LIGHTING DESIGNER** - Brian Fairbrother  
**ENGLISH TRANSLATION** - Jonathan Eaton  
**SAMOAN TRANSLATION** -  
Tuilagi Dr Igelese Ete  
**REORCHESTRATION** - Gareth Farr

## MUSIC TEAM | TE RŌPŪ PUORO

**MUSIC STAFF** - Claire Caldwell  
**PRINCIPAL RÉPÉTITEUR** - David Kelly  
**RÉPÉTITEUR COVER** - Ben Kubiak

## ORCHESTRAS | NGĀ TIRA PUORO

AUCKLAND PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA:  
LEADERSHIP TEAM -

**MUSIC DIRECTOR** - Giordano Bellincampi  
**PRINCIPAL GUEST CONDUCTOR** -  
Shiyeon Sung  
**NZ ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR-IN-  
RESIDENCE** - Nathaniel Griffiths  
**CONCERTMASTER** - Andrew Beer  
**ASSOCIATE CONCERTMASTER** -  
Liu-Yi Retallick  
**SECOND VIOLIN** - Xin (James) Jin **aβ**  
**VIOLA** - Julie Park **+**  
**CELLO** - David Garner **#**  
**CLARINET** - James Fry **+**  
**TRUMPET & FLUGELHORN** - Huw Dann **β**  
**TROMBONE & EUPHONIUM** - Grant Sinclair **g**  
**MARIMBA** - Eric Renick **β**  
Dominic Jacquemard **#**  
**SAXOPHONE** - Michael Jamieson **g**  
**GUITAR** - Graham Bell **g**

*β SECTION PRINCIPAL  
+ ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL  
# SUB PRINCIPAL  
a ACTING  
g GUEST*

## ORCHESTRA WELLINGTON:

**CONCERTMASTER** - Amalia Hall  
**VIOLIN** - Vivian Stephens  
**VIOLA** - Susan Fullerton-Smith  
**CELLO** - Jane Young  
**CLARINET & SAXOPHONE** - Mark Cookson  
**TRUMPET & FLUGELHORN** - Matt Stein  
**TROMBONE & EUPHONIUM** - Peter Maunder  
**MARIMBA** - Naoto Segawa, Yoshiko Tsuruta  
**GUITARS** - Gunter Herbig

## PRODUCTION TEAM | TE RŌPŪ WHAKAATURANGA

**NZ OPERA PRODUCTION MANAGER**  
- Hemi Wi-Piti (Te Āti Awa)  
**NZ OPERA COMPANY MANAGER**  
- Inge Teunissen  
**BLACK GRACE PRODUCER** - Abby Ieremia  
**BLACK GRACE COMPANY MANAGER**  
- James Wasmer  
**STAGE MANAGER** - Lucie Everett-Brown  
**DEPUTY PRODUCTION MANAGER**



- Antonia Richardson  
**HEAD OF WARDROBE** - Sophie Ham  
**HEAD OF WIGS & MAKEUP**  
- Karina Sanasaryan  
**HEAD MECHANIST** - Blake Alps  
- Hangup Entertainment Services Ltd  
**HEAD OF LIGHTING** - Zachary Howells  
**LIGHTING SYSTEMS** - Laurie Dean  
- Grouse Lighting Aotearoa  
**DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER** - Michael Clark  
**WARDROBE SUPERVISOR** - Bridget Brian  
**WIGS & MAKEUP SUPERVISOR** - Abi Johnson  
**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER**  
- Tash Hoyland  
**DEPUTY HEAD MECHANIST** - Mike Harford  
**DEPUTY HEAD OF LIGHTING & LIGHTING BOARD OPERATOR** - Tayla Brittliff  
**AV & SX TECHNICIAN** - Abe Fisher  
- Illuminati-NZ Ltd  
**WARDROBE ASSISTANT** - Rosalind Sinel  
**WIGS & MAKEUP ASSISTANT**  
Ari Dayal, Siobhan Ngahuia  
(Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland), Natalie Young,  
Zoe Fannin (Pōneke, Wellington)  
**SET/PROPS CONSTRUCTION MANAGER**  
Andrew Gibson  
- Entertainment Production Services Ltd  
**SET BUILDERS** - Scenic Solutions Limited  
**SET BUILD (CARS) & BUILD ASSIST** -  
Ray's Theatrical Solutions NZ Ltd  
**SCENIC ARTIST & PROPS MASTER**  
- Izabela Ptak - Belatak by Design  
**SCENIC BUILD ASSIST**  
- Callum Stemberidge, Sarah Bodmer  
**SHOW SYSTEM SUPPLIERS**  
- Lighting - Grouse Lighting Aotearoa, Rigging  
Systems - Theatrical Solutions Limited,  
Surtitles LED System - PIXEL  
**SHOW CREW TĀMAKI MAKĀURAU,  
AUCKLAND** - ASB Waterfront Theatre,  
Pilot Productions Ltd

**SHOW CREW PŌNEKE, WELLINGTON** -  
NW Group Ltd, Grouse Lighting Aotearoa,  
Strongback Crewing WGTN (NZ) Ltd  
**SURTITLE CREATOR** - Renee Vincent  
**SURTITLE OPERATORS** - Renee Vincent  
(Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland),  
Christine Pearce (Pōneke, Wellington)

## **SPECIAL THANKS... E MIHI KAU ATU ANA KI...**

ASB Waterfront Theatre  
(Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland),  
The Opera House (Pōneke, Wellington),  
Chanelle Muirhead -  
Stage Management Assist,  
Scenic Elements completed 2021  
(Charlie Baptist, Sara Whittaker,  
Andrew Lusk, Laura Patterson)  
John Herber Limited,  
ShowTex Australia Pty Ltd,  
Holstens NZ Trading,  
Lighting Supply Company, Stage Mechanics,  
WT Distributors Ltd, Toaki Okano,  
Vanessa Preston (Publicist),  
Andi Crown, Jinki Cambronero,  
fiftyone50 Productions, FEDERATION,  
Juggernaut, Lassoo, Pelorus Trust  
(audio description for Wellington),  
Nicola Owen & Kevin Keys -  
Audio Described Aotearoa,  
Foundation North,  
Performing Arts Foundation,  
Ryan Youens,  
Jonathan Alver.

• Cover image by Toaki Okano.

**Nga mihi nui, fa'afetai tele lava.**