LaMaMa



NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Council on the Arts

Spiderwoman Theater's programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

TE POU THEATRE

LaMaMa

Ellen Stewart Theatre, The Downstairs and Community Arts SPace
East 4th Street, NYC, 10003
October 30- November 7, 2026

La MaMa
in association with Spiderwoman Theater
Present

A Global Indigenous Theatre Festival
Celebrating 50 years of Spiderwoman Theater
In Collaboration with Loose Change Productions

Land Acknowledgement

We would like to recognize and acknowledge the Indigenous people who respected the spirit of the earth before us. Wherever we are at this moment, the land below our feet has been maintained by others, before us. I would like to honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who cared for it through many generations. We know significant events took place, that took the protection away from the land where we sit or stand now. We also know the sweetness from the berries and the love and joy shared between the ancestors. This is why we are still here! We cannot change the past, but can acknowledge it, and the contributions and experiences of Native peoples, and in tribute to them, pay homage, and learn how to be in better relationship to the land we all inhabit.

Dedication

The Global Indigenous Theatre Festival is dedicated to our beloved sister Elizabeth (Lisa Mayo) who passed in 2013 and who we miss every day; David Harris, Lisa's husband, who was always dedicated to the Spiderwoman family; Josephine Mofsie Tarrant who brought us our first stories and fingerweaving and to our son-in-law Kevin Tarrant.

KŌPŪ

By

Te Pou Theatre

Written by Tuakoi Ohia (Kaituhi)
Directed By Amber Curreen

Performers
Tuakoi Ohia (Kaiwhakaari)
Brady Peeti (Kaiwhakaari)
Jane Leonard (Kaiwhakaari)
Ngakirikiri Kershaw (Kaiwhakaari)
Te Arohanui Way-Korewha (Kaiwhakaari
Te Huamanuka Luiten-Apirana (Kaiwhakaari)

Design & Production Team
(KŌPŪ)

Jane Hakaraia (Kaihoahoa tūrama)
Lighting Designer

John Verryt
Set Designer

Paige Pomana
Sound Designer

Teiaro Taikato
Stage Manager

Bekky Boyce
Operator

John Gibson
Musical Consultant

Show overview:

She is Kōpū i te ao, Parearau i te pō and if her teke could talk it would sound like this.

KŌPŪ calls you in to a cheeky ballad of a show, sharing the songs of our young wahine Māori as they navigate this world, hairy nipples first, following in the footsteps of our naughty nannies from the kāuta.

Our kāhui whetū of multi-talented performers weave live music, performance, poetry, and poi to share a hilarious honest and no hold barred account of their experiences of wahinetanga now; The day and night duality of being fiercely everything at once.

So, kindly unpeg yourself from the patriarchy, check your white feminism at the door and join us in a hearty musical celebration of the ira Wahine in us all. Is that my nipple hair between your teeth? You're welcome.

Te Pou Theatre and the team of KŌPŪ are honoured to be presenting this show in celebration of Spiderwoman Theater's 50th Anniversary Global Indigenous Theater Festival. We look to the Aunties of Spiderwoman Theater as those who've laid the foundations for Indigenous Theatre around the world. We follow in their bold footsteps and look forward to bringing this joyful and cheeky celebration to their party at La Mama Experimental Theatre.

KŌPŪ is a debut work written by Tuakoi Ohia, and developed in collaboration with six talented wahine Māori. This comedic play celebrates the importance of 'ira wahine' through the artforms of theatre, dance, music and kapa haka.

KŌPU was developed in 2021 and originally commissioned by Auckland Arts Festival for a planned presentation in 2022 before being cancelled due to COVID 19 restrictions. After a year of further wānanga and workshop KŌPŪ hit the stage at Te Pou Theatre in 2023 followed by a season at Kia Mau Festival in Wellington. Since its debut the show has presented around venues and festivals throughout New Zealand.
Not shying away on their thoughts on white feminism, embarrassing sex stories and their divinity shown through fierceness and humour. By seeing these talented wāhine on the stage being whoever they want to be, KŌPU was made to empower our audience members to do the same in their everyday life.

You will laugh, cringe, ponder and you may even shed a little tear. Nevertheless this theatre piece is an ode to our daughters, mothers, aunties, and naughty nannies.

From the Director

The desire to create KŌPŪ came from looking around at our incredibly talented wāhine artists and wanting a work for them all to shine. Tuakoi Ohia, had been working with us as a performer for a year and we were keen for her to sink their teeth into some writing. At the same time, there was a lot of loud clamoring in the media and social media around Waitangi 2021 and NZ Pākehā Politician Judith Collins's complaints about not being able to speak on the marae. Others piled in about gender inequality and outcry about how "far behind" Māori are in equality for women. It was frustrating to still see this lack of understanding of tikanga Māori and a blanket view from a European perspective applied to our tikanga. What was most frustrating was that the voice of wahine Māori on the matter was being drowned out by Pākehā. Marama Davidson put forward her clear, articulate commentary, explaining how Collins was clearly ill informed about tikanga Māori and women's places of power within Te Ao Māori beyond the front row of the paepae. This comment should have been a full stop, ira kati, moment where the attention changed to the wahine Māori voice on the subject. Instead, it barely made a dent in the rhetoric. Following this Tainui and I were dismayed - in this discussion about wāhine in te ao Māori, whose voice was the loudest? It wasn't wahine Māori.

We brought seven wāhine together to conceive of and create this show, the six wāhine you will see on stage and Annette Tahitahi Field who has gone on to be a contributing writer with her beautiful poetry closing the show. KŌPŪ is a celebration of the ira wahine and makes a clear statement about telling our own narratives regardless of how contrary, idiosyncratic or peculiar they may be to the dominant narrative. Directing this work has been a joy filled experience, supporting these wahine to bring their experiences and stories to the stage with the expertise and dedication of a stellar design and production team

Nōku te whiwhi. Amber Curreen, Te Pou Theatre

Acknowledgements:

E rere kau ana te tai o mihi ki ngā mareikura o Spiderwoman Theater. We would like to thank Aunty Muriel, Aunty Deb and the whole Spiderwoman Theater whānau for inviting us to present at their incredible festival, celebrating a legacy of fierce Indigenous feminist theatre that has blazed a trail for us all to follow. We thank our friends at Moogahlin Theatre, Aunty Lily Shearer and our fairy godfather Natano for making this happen! We acknowledge our new friends from Aanmitaagzi, Ikidowin Theater Ensemble and thank the teams at Parrish Productions and La MaMa Experimental Theater for taking such good care of us. We would like to acknowledge the many people who have contributed to supporting KŌPŪ in its development. Many thanks to Ataahua Papa and the Auckland Arts Festival team for commissioning the work and believing in the kaupapa, Tainui Tukiwaho who brought the team together and supported the development of the script as this rōpū and to our incredible creative team who has been part of the Kōpū development for such a long time, ka nui te mihi.

We acknowledge our babies at home Tiare, Kiato, Mia, Popai, Lennox, Kauri & Rick Astley, our long suffering partners at home on the road (Simon and Rei, we appreciate you!) and our whānau, our families who make it possible for us to be here celebrating this incredible milestone for Spiderwoman Theater.

Amber Curreen (Ngāpuhi, Te Roroa & Te Rarawa) is a Kaupapa Māori centered theatre maker based in Tāmaki Makaurau. A co-leader of Te Pou Theatre and Te Rēhia Theatre Company and festival director of Kōanga Festival, Amber has been developing and presenting professional theatre since 2010. Amber began her career as a performer, well known for her work on Shortland Street as a teen as well as other New Zealand screen (Kōrero Mai, Billy) & film work (Waru). Amber has been producing and programming live performing arts for most of her career as well as creating new stories for the stage.

Tuakoi Ohia - Writer & Actor is a wahine Māori and Pākeha hailing from Ngati Hine, Tainui Waka, Ngati Pukenga, Ngaiterangi, Ngati Ranginui, Te Ati Awa and Te Arawa. She is an actor, writer, theatre maker and music artist who is passionate about sharing indigenous stories through her multiple art forms. She has been involved in a number of projects on screen and stage. From playing Pepa on Disney Encanto Reo Māori as well as Fiona in Dreamworks Shrek Reo Māori. KŌPŪis a very special kaupapa to be a part of and a privledge to make work alongside her talented friends. She is passionate about positive Māorirepresentation on stage and screen.

Brady Peeti - Actor is an experienced actor in theatre, film, television and is an award winning lyricist. Passionate about advancing trans representation, Brady hopes her success will pave the way for more transgender actors in diverse roles, shedding light on both Transgender and Māori communities.

Te Huamanuka Luiten-Apirana (Tainui, Tūhoe)- Actor is a performer, artist and award-winning playwright based in Auckland, New Zealand. She was the recipient of Creative New Zealand's Emerging Artist Award in 2021. Te Huamanuka is an advocate for Māori storytelling and constantly looks for ways to develop her skills and deepen her connection to other creatives. You can also find her music on spotify under 'Manuka'
IG@manukaluitenapirana

Te Arohanui -Korewha - Actor Kapa Haka has been the foundation to all of my performances as an actor so it's only fitting to mihi to Ngā Puna o Waiōrea, Te Kapa Haka o Hokianga, Te Iti Kahurangi, Angitu. Nei tēnei mokopuna na Waimirirangi e tūpou ana ki a koutou. Tēnei punua āku, Kiato Te Aurere kura o Taotao-rangi, being your māmā has been the deepest experience I now have access to when I'm performing. I only hope to inspire you to get together with your mates and throw shit at a wall to make something beautiful and funny and deep as I have with mine. Kōpū. Not just a show, but a space that creates life. Te Arohanui Korewha's acting bug kicked-in in 2018. She's since graduated from The Actors Program, performed in multiple theatre shows, Ahikāroa S5 S6 and S7 continues to "throw shit at a wall" lol.

Jane Leonard (Ngāpuhi/Ngāti Hine) - Actor is a graduate of NASDA with a Bachelor of Performing Arts. Her theatre credits include Amadeus; Mary Poppins; Vivienne in Legally Blonde the Musical; alternate Velma in Chicago; Jesus Christ Superstar; Lorraine in Jersey Boys, Crystal in Little Shop of Horrors and Maureen in RENT. Kate Sheppard in That Bloody Woman, Songs for New World, Scaramouche in We Will Rock You; Elphaba in Wicked; Diva in Priscilla, Queen of the Desert; Mistress in Evita and Meg Giry in Phantom of The Opera. She has performed in national tours of South Pacific, H.M.S Pinafore and Madagascar and recently Matāio with NZ Opera. Commercially, Jane has worked as a singer for events such as the Westpac Business Awards and Super Rugby. Alongside her creative work, she continues to thrive as a facilitator and educator of the performing arts creating new generations of storytellers. Jane's next ambition is to write and produce more new works of her own, watch this space! Jane is a proud member of Actors Equity.

Ngakirikiri Kershaw - Actor is a kāwai whakaheke of Te Rārawa, Waikato-Tainui, Ngāti Ruanui ki Taranaki & Ngāti Porou. She grew up in Auckland and is a Raukura ō Hoani Waititi Marae & Ngā Puna o Waiōrea. Ngakirikiri has been the Kaitātaki wahine for her kura Ngā Puna o Waiōrea in her last years of school 2011-2012 & has since lead her adult Kapa Te Roopū Manutaki from the years 2016-2023. She has been very lucky to have travelled the world doing Kapa Haka as well. Ngakirikiri is also a māori performing arts performer for the company Hawaiki Tū. She landed the lead role for the show "Te Manawa" back in 2016 & 2017 & has done various shows at different theatres around Auckland since then. Ngakirikiri was selected by Tuakoi Ohia to join her amazing whakāturanga KŌPŪ back in 2020 I think it was & have been blessed to perform along side these mana Wahine at various different locations around Aotearoa show casing our Ira wahinetanga. Ngakirikiri is now a Mama to a beautiful little pepi who is 4 months old and named Tiare.

Jane Hakaraia (Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga, Ngāti Kapu) - Lighting Designer is a freelance lighting and set designer based in Tāmaki Makaurau. Jane is a recipient of the Excellence in Theatre award at the 2014 Auckland Theatre awards and in 2023 was a recipient of the PAANZ Fame Mid-Career award. Last year she worked on a record 14 shows including Kōpū (Te Rēhia Theatre Company), The Valentina (The Rebel Alliance), Te Tangi a te Tūī (A co-pro between Te Pou Theatre and The Dust Palace) The Effect (Auckland Theatre Company), I Love You G (Massive Company), The Handlers (Te Rēhia Theatre Company), Scenes from the Climate Era (A co-pro between ATC and Silo) and Neke by Scotty Cotter.

Paige Pomana (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Rakaipaaka, Rongomaiwahine)- Sound Designer is a musician, audio engineer, and sound designer originally from Te Tairāwhiti. Graduating with a Bachelor of Recording Arts from SAE in 2021 has seen Paige dabble in the realms of film, television and theatre - working on 'Ru Paul's Drag Race' and 'Celebrity Treasure Island' as well as Silo Theatre's 'Seven Methods of Killing Kylie Jenner', 'The First Prime-Time Asian Sitcom' and Tuakoi Ohia's 'Kōpū'.

Glossary of Māori words

Here's a bit of a glossary of some of the kupu, or words, you'll hear in this show:

Kōpū:
The belly, womb and Venus

Wahine / Wāhine:
Often translate to 'Woman / Women' - in the show we'll share our perspective on this lol.

Aotearoa:
The land of the long white cloud or New Zealand

Pākehā:
White person or Settler

Teke:
Vagina

Tore:
Also vagina

Ure:
Penis

Atua:
God / Goddess, higher or supernatural being who is often also considered an ancestor with continuing influence and the personification of natural phenomena

Whenua:
Land

Whānau:
Family

Whakapapa:
Lineage

Tupuna:
Ancestors

Whare:
House

Waka:
Canoe but also car - basically any mode of transport

Whaea:
Mother or aunty, a term of respect for an older woman

Poi:
A light ball on a string that is tossed in dance

Porangi:
Crazy

Kapa Haka:
Māori performing group

Ngā mihi
Thanks and acknowledgements

Kia ora
Be well and hello

Nau mai haere mai ki Kōpū
Welcome to Kōpū

Artistic and Production Team (Spiderwoman Theater)

Artistic Director	Muriel Miguel
Founder - Artistic Associate	Gloria Miguel
Production Manager	Lauren Parrish
Associate Production Manager	Brianna Coccia
Assistant Production Manager	Mackenzie Trowbridge
Production Electrician	Audrey Robinson
Production Carpenter	Carly Genovesi
Production Audio	Derek Stevensen
Production Video	Patrick Mahaney
Associate Electrician	Stanley
Associate Carpenter	Dana Aveta
Associate Audio	Dante Giganto
Associate Video	Sinjin Reinhard
A2	Xavier Vassallo
Stage Manager (Downstairs Theatre)	Celina Revollar
Stage Manager (Ellen Stewart Theatre)	Dailee Morrone
Production Stage Manager (Gala)	Lily Cox
Stage Manager (Gala)	Terysa Malootian

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Spiderwoman Theater
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

LOOSE CHANGE PRODUCTIONS

TE POU

About the Companies

Te Pou Theatre

Te Pou Theatre is a kaupapa Māori performing arts company and venue for all that supports the presentation and development of contemporary and community performing arts locally, nationally and internationally from our home in Waitākere, Tāmaki Makaurau. The whakapapa of Te Pou Theatre starts with our tūpuna and taonga they have passed down to us, the political movements and work of the leaders in Māori arts over the last six decades and the path they have laid for us to be able to do the mahi we do. Te Pou Theatre was named in 2015 in a collective national process where Māori artists from around the motu put forward name options which were decided on by kaumātua in the industry. Te Pou stands as a support post for Māori performing arts in Aotearoa.

Spiderwoman Theater

The award-winning Spiderwoman Theater is the oldest, continually running, Native feminist theater company in the Americas and is situated in the NYC Indigenous and arts communities. Activism, self- determination and storytelling are at the core of Spiderwoman's programming and is rooted in an urban Indigenous sensibility. Live theater performance and production are the vehicles by which those core principles and values are shared with our communities and audiences. Since 1976, our body of work has addressed critical cultural, social and political issues in the Indigenous and women's communities. Our work is informed by traditional artistic expression, teachings and values which bridge traditional cultural practice and Western theater sensibilities. The practice of creating our theater is "storyweaving", where personal and traditional stories are layered with movement, text, sound, music and visual images. This weaving of stories is the foundation upon which we build Spiderwoman productions and a framework for our training and outreach activities. www.spiderwomantheater.org

Loose Change Productions

Loose Change Productions, founded in 2009, creates transnational, crosscultural theatre and performance exploring new creative, moral, ethical, and political territories. They develop work within the company itself, and coproduce with outside venues. Their interest is in innovative structures; they seek stories that entertain but, more importantly, spur social awareness and empathy between diverse cultures and sectors. www.loosechangeproductions.org

Spiderwoman Theater is grateful for the generosity of our friends and supporters: Madeleine Easley, Ann Haugo, James Crabb, Teresa Baum, Kathey Perkins, Jeanne Gutierrez, John Stoltenberg, Laura Foner, Meghan Hickey, Romanie Garcia-Lee, Ann Hairston, Tara Magner, Cole J Alvis

Special Thanks

SND Broadcasting, Mia Yoo, Sarah and Violeta and the entire LaMaMa family for their unwavering support over 50 years. Carey Lovelace.

A full program with information on this
production can be found on the
La MaMa website page of
KŌPŪ

In addition you can scan the
QR code Poster located in the theatre lobby
for access to the digital program.

LA MAMA

RESTORE A BUILDING
REMAKE A WORLD



Rendering: 74 East 4th St.

La MaMa's historic, landmark building at 74 East 4th Street underwent an urgently needed complete renovation and restoration to preserve the historic façade, create building-wide ADA accessibility, and provide much needed performance, exhibition and community space for decades to come.

La MaMa, founded by Ellen Stewart in 1961, has been on east 4th Street since 1967. La MaMa embraces every person in its community and is legendary as the place where new artists of all nations, cultures, races, and identities are given opportunities. It is the place where art begins.

To learn more about the renovation, or to make a donation please visit www.lamama.org/remakeaworld

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We thank our supporters who are indispensable to La MaMa as we continue to expand and strengthen our artistic community. You help make space for artists to create and share new stories, present diverse perspectives, and keep us all connected in our 65th Season!

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July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

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The Club

Kōpū
Global Indigenous Theatre Festival
Oct 30-Nov 1, 2026
Ellen Stewart Theatre

Invisible Shadows
Global Indigenous Theatre Festival
Oct 30-Nov 1, 2026
The Downstairs Theatre

Maayuma li Mubirr (Healing Scars)
Global Indigenous Theatre Festival
Nov 4-6, 2026
Ellen Stewart Theatre

All My R(el)ations
Global Indigenous Theatre Festival
Oct 30-Nov 1, 2026
The Downstairs Theatre

Spiderwoman Theater Gala
Global Indigenous Theatre Festival
Nov 7, 2026
Ellen Stewart Theatre

COMING SOON

La MaMa Kids: Kinding Sindaw
Nov 7, 2026
Community Arts Space

La MaMa Puppet Festival
Nov 11-Dec 6, 2026
All Venues

Endless Forms
La MaMa Puppet Festival
Nov 11-14, 2026
The Downstairs Theatre

New Weird Furyre
Nov 12-15, 2026
The Club

The Undercity
Nov 14-16, 2026
The Downstairs Theatre

Everything That Follows
Nov 19-23, 2026
Building 74a E 4th Street

Where Did You Go Connie?
Nov 19-24, 2026
The Downstairs Theatre