

TAU DANCE THEATER

Pacific Island and Contemporary Dance Fusion



MEDIA KIT 2023

booking: andre@indigenousperformance.org



ABOUT TAU

“A light synchronized romp...high-energy choreography with technical precision and airy grace.”

-Dance Magazine



Tau Dance Theater(TDT) based in Honolulu and founded in 1996 by Native Hawaiian Peter Rockford Espiritu, honors the ancient traditions of Hawaii while focusing on the responsible evolution of culture through dances viewed through a Pacific island lens.

Pōhuli, TDT’s original movement modality, anchors Pacific island technique and western art influences within Indigenous consciousness, storytelling and values. Throughout its 26 year history, TDT is recognized critically, nationally and globally by prominent arts entities and community leaders as Culture Bearers whose integrity and innovation evokes indigenous identity and pride through the creative arts, leaving an inspired brown dance footprint for future generations.

TAU BIO



Tau Dance Theater is a 2022 National Endowment for the Arts – Challenge America Grant recipient supporting the exploration of Pōhuli, decolonization through codification. TDT is developing a movement identity, based on the established technique of hula, ballet and modern dance, producing a hybrid byproduct unique to its artistic and creative voice. TDT's Artistic Director is a 2022 Western Arts Alliance - Advancing Indigenous Performance - Native Launchpad recipient. The work maintains cultural identity in the face of globalization and urbanization, and functions as an artistic mirror, reflecting the impact of what Oceania was, has become, and where it is headed. TDT is anchored in indigenous consciousness, traditions, ceremony, and ritual through dance. The focus is on present day, real time, native identity and spirituality, while supporting responsible evolution and global village awareness through neo-Oceanic fusion, indigenous futurisms, and Niu-Pasefika evolution. This native movement-based viewpoint produces specific artistic images through storytelling, music and theater that are unique to Hawaii's geographical location, Pacific Island and Oceanic culture that gives a platform for native pluralism. TDT's productions celebrate indigenous intercultural community building with productions like INDIGENUITY gathering Native Hawaiian and Native American together with Native Alaskan cultures, hosting a platform that supports native pride. POLIAHU: Goddess of Mauna Kea, NAUPAKA: A Hawaiian Opera and Hānau ka Moku: An Island is Born, all speak to the legacy that is Tau Dance Theater.

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" The Audience was awed."

-Honolulu Magazine

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PERFORMANCE highlights

- The Lincoln Center, Festival of Firsts, *Indigenuity* NY, NY, 2022
- Hawaii Theatre, Honolulu, HI
- Cache Valley Center for the Arts -Ellen Eccles Theater, Logan, UT
- Hawaii Convention Center, IVAT (Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma) 35th Anniversary - Honolulu, Hawaii
- Crazy Horse Memorial, Crazy Horse, SD
- Leeward Theater, Ho'ina, Pearl City, HI
- Smithsonian NAMI, Washington D.C.
- Maui Arts & Cultural Centre, Kahului, HI
- Kahilu Theatre, Kamuela, HI
- Mondavi Centre for the Arts, Sacramanto, CA
- University of Hawaii Theater, Hilo, HI



HONORS

recent



- Dance/ USA Artist Fellow/Peter Rockford Espiritu
- Western Dance Alliance Native Launchpad Artist/Peter Rockford Espiritu
- Banff Centre for the Arts Indigenous Creation Lab Selection/Peter Rockford Espiritu
- NEA Challenge America Grant Recipient/Tau Dance Theater
- APAP Arts Forward Grant / Tau Dance Theater
- Congressional Certificate of Recognition/ Tau Dance Theater
- Mayoral Proclamation June 2021 Tau Dance Theater Silver Anniversary Month
- Bunnell Center for The Arts Residency /Peter Rockford Espiritu

PRESS highlights



- UTAH PUBLIC RADIO
- THE UTAH STATESMAN
- BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
- BROADWAY WORLD
- HONOLULU MAGAZINE
- HONOLULU STAR BULLETIN
- HILUXBURY
- DANCE MAGAZINE
- PBS HAWAII

“

A Company of dancers breathing life into nuanced choreographics but also costumes and headpieces that wow...”

HILuxury Magazine

”

ON

Tau Dance Theater, presents excerpts from the best of INDIGENUITY. An artistic celebration of gifts from our ancestors, native pride, cultural and spiritual awakening to transform the arts through the respectful evolution of Indigenous dance, music and theater. Oceania is rich with mana-the powerful and healing life force that runs through everything and everyone-INDIGENUITY is created with a vision to unite us as one artistic tribe through the celebration of our cultures. What we create and share today makes for a better tomorrow. Indigenuity features Native Hawaiian and Oceanic themes and features musical sensation; Pōmaika'i; and Native Hawaiian storyteller uncle Kealoha Kelekolio.

TOUR

Running time: Approx. 80 minutes, no intermission (Performed with live music)

Choreographer: Peter Rockford
Espiritu, Allan Alo (The late)

Composer: Amy Hanaiali'i, Te Vaka,
Charly Lowry, Shelley Morningsong

Lighting Design: Don Ranney Jr., Cora Yamagata

Costume Design: Puamana Crabbe,
Manaola, Fabian & Shelley Fontenelle

TOUR PERSONNEL : 14

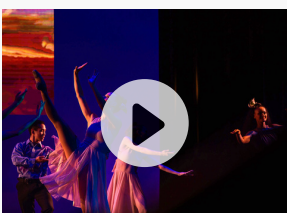
Stage Manager (1)

Dancers: 9

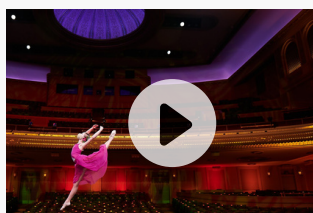
Musicians: 3

Story Teller: 1

INDIGENUITY



Preivew



Gallery

ON INDIGENUITY

“Indigenuity is an artistic celebration of gifts from our ancestors, native pride, cultural and spiritual awakening. It transforms the arts through the respectful evolution of indigenous dance, music and theater. Indigenuity is created with a vision to unite us as one artistic tribe, celebrating our cultures.” Peter Espiritu, Tau Dance Theater Founder, *Cache Valley Daily*.



Peter Rockford Espiritu is the Executive and Artistic Director of Tau Dance Theater, the only professional dance company founded by a Native Hawaiian based in Honolulu. A lifetime hula practitioner and progeny of the Ka'imikaua, Puku'i/Luahine/Hoakalei ('olapa) and Holokai ('auana) lines, with 'ūniki papa kaula for oli (chant) with kumu (master) Dr. Pualani Kanaka'ole Kanahale. Mr. Espiritu western form training includes: The School of American Ballet in New York City, modern dance with Betty Jones, founding member of the José Limón Company, scholarships to the American Dance Festival (Duke University) and Colorado Dance Festival in Boulder with foundational roots from DANCEWORKS (Honolulu) Simeon Den & Marie Takazawa, Honolulu Dance Centre, Nolan Dingman (Ballet).



DIRECTOR

Mr. Espiritu, served as Artistic Director of (ECHO), Education for Cultural and Historical Organizations; at the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture & Pacific Studies at the University of South Pacific in Fiji; and the Western Arts Alliance's Indigenous Roadshow residency. Mr. Espiritu co-choreographed the Starlit Hui Show at the Disney Aulani Resort and served on panels for the National Endowment for the Arts, The Irvine Foundation, Dance America and served for almost a decade as a Commissioner for Culture & the Arts for the City and County of Honolulu, spanning four administrations.

Mr. Espiritu, has spent over 30 years directing, choreographing, and teaching globally as a master teacher with a recent focus on dramaturgy for the premiere to the world tour of MINOWÍN in Canada for Vancouver based indigenous company Dancers of Damelahamid.

Full evening length works of note: Hanau Ka Moku: An Island is Born (2002); NAUPAKA: A Hawaiian Opera (2006); POLIAHU: Goddess of Mauna Kea (2009); MOANA: The Rising of the Sea (2015).