

March- April  
2024



nothing micro about

# MICRONESIA



By Leilani Chan and Ova Saopeng

With support from Cultural Navigator Innocenta Sound Kikku  
and members of the Micronesian community



## Aloha from Artistic Director, Eric Johnson

Aloha, Konnichiwa,  
Ran anim, Ni hao,  
Howzit?!



No matter how you say it,  
we are delighted to have you and your family  
returning to HTY!

Our love of sharing local stories and laughter  
with you and your family is our greatest joy, and  
we hope that today's show is filled with opportuni-  
ties to do just that.

Our 2023-24 Season offers a collection of  
wonderful stories from here at home and around  
the globe. We'll share the story of the children of  
Hawaiian Ali'i, explore what goes on under  
the ocean, meet some amazing local super heroes  
and cheer on the animals of the Chinese Zodiac.

We want to make coming to see a show at HTY  
a part of your ohana's story. An HTY membership  
makes it easy and affordable. HTY members can  
come back and see shows multiple times for no  
additional charge. Sign up at [www.htyweb.org](http://www.htyweb.org).

Let us share our stories with you!  
Eric Johnson



## Production Credits

**Written by** Leilani Chan and Ova Saopeng, TeAda Productions

With support from Cultural Navigator Innocenta Sound Kikku and members of the Micronesian community

**Directed by** Leilani Chan and Ova Saopeng

**Songs by** Stephanie “Soultree” Camba

**Music by** Derek Cannon and Daniel Bambaata Marley

**Projection Design by**

Joan Osato

**Set & Prop Design by**

Eric West

**Lighting Design by**

Maximilian Urruzmendi

**Costume Design by**

Iris Kim

**Sound Design by**

Stephanie “Soultree” Camba  
Jonny Chang  
Sarah Danvers

**Videography**

**& Sound Recording by**

Leilani Chan  
Jonny Chang

**Acting/Movement**

**Coaches**

Misa Tupou  
Kiki Rivera  
Jackie Pualani Johnson  
Justina Mattos

**Stage Manager**

Sarah Danvers

**Performed by**

Keaula “Lala” Faifili  
Tristan Henry  
Kathy Martin  
Ova Saopeng  
Koa Shope

**Our Sponsors**

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MAP Fund

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New England Foundation for the  
Arts

Pacific Ethnic Island Arts Museum

Pacific Voices / Kokua Kalihi  
Valley

Pacific Resources for Education  
and Learning

UH Hilo Performing Arts Center  
Waan Aelōñ in Majel (WAM)



## About the Show

**H**TY welcomes TeAda Productions back to Tenney Theatre with the world premiere of *Nothing Micro about Micronesia*. The show is an expansion of TeAda's touring show *Masters of the Currents* that HTY premiered in the Fall of 2017. Audiences will enjoy the original songs, movement, and thought-provoking scenarios that take place in this coming-of-age story about three youths who meet at a high school in Hawai'i and are magically transported on an adventure across islands of Micronesia. The characters must navigate between life in Hawai'i and the traditions of their ancestors while facing the rising tides of their uncertain futures.

## About TeAda Productions

**T**eAda is a nomadic theater of color rooted in the stories of immigrants and refugees. The company is committed to healing and honoring the lives of the displaced, exploited and overlooked. TeAda's artistic process starts and ends with conscious listening, community building, and creative courage. Through theater workshops and performances, TeAda offers acts of service that are transformative and impactful. For more about TeAda, go to [www.teada.org](http://www.teada.org).



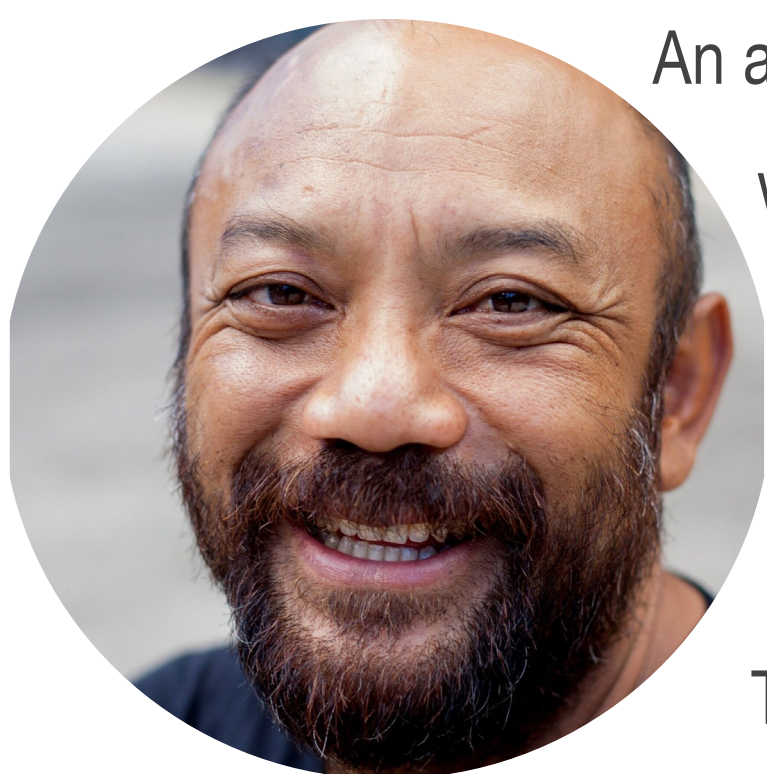
## About the Co-Creators

### Leilani Chan, Founding Artistic Director of TeAda



An award winning performance artist, actor, playwright, director, and cultural worker, Leilani grew up in Wai'alaie and Kaimuki, attended Wilson Elementary, Kaimuki Intermediate, Kalani High School. Leilani says, "I grew up going to shows at Honolulu Theatre for Youth and UH Manoa. I would get all the actors to sign my program. I was in the first Summer Program for the Enhancement of Basic Education program at UH Manoa. We studied acting, theater history, set and costume design with UH professors and got to perform on the Kennedy Theater stage. I LOVED It! I wasn't very confident that a local girl like me could do Shakespeare, but I got cast in the lead female role in The Comedy of Errors! And I was hooked. My Hawai'i theater roots have carried me all over the country." Leilani is the Founding Artistic Director of TeAda Productions and is Co-Chair for the 7th National Asian American Theater Festival and Conference to take place at UH Mānoa May 24-28, 2024 hosted by The Consortium of Asian American Theaters and Artists [www.caata.net](http://www.caata.net). She is a graduate of Hampshire College and UC Irvine.

### Ova Saopeng, Associate Artistic Director of TeAda



An actor, writer and teaching artist from Los Angeles, Ova was born in Savannakhet, Laos and raised in Honolulu. He grew up in Kalihi Valley ("Kalihi Pride!") and attended Kalihi Elementary, Dole Intermediate, and Farrington High School. Ova says, "In the 8th grade, I saw T-shirt Theatre performing at Dole Intermediate. My teacher Mrs. Watanabe told me to go to the cafeteria after school. I did not know that it was an audition/recruitment for T-shirt. George Kon and Walt Dulaney opened the doors of self-expression and the theatre. From that day forward...it's been a ride. I remember singing as Sanjar, a hero, for my first production of The Lady and the Tiger with T-shirt Theatre and my voice cracking trying to reach a really high note. It was embarrassing and exciting at the same time."



## About the Cast



**Kealaula “Lala” Faifili** was last seen onstage at Palikū theatre in the world premiere of Lee Cataluna’s *Kimo the Waiter*. Previous acting credits include *Machinal* and *Aloha Attire*. Lala also studied at E15 and with the RSC and SBT as part of the Footholds UK Shakespeare Study Abroad program at Windward Community College. Lala is currently pursuing an AA in Liberal Arts with a Concentration in Theater with the Hawai’i Conservatory of Performing Arts, at WCC; she has been awarded Commitment to Excellence Award, Exemplary Performance Award and is a current Irene Ryan acting candidate. She is proud of her indigenous heritage and hopes she has more chances to play Hawaiian and Samoan characters.



**Tristan Kasy Henry** was born and raised on the island of Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia. He graduated from Kaimuki High School where he served as an English TA- advocating for the Micronesian community. He is a leader in the Madau Project and is part of a cultural dance group based in Kaimuki High School. Tristan is currently pursuing a degree in Natural Science (Environmental Science).



**Kathy S. Martin** is from the island of Piis Paneu Island in Chuuk, Micronesia. She holds a bachelor’s and master’s degree in social work. Kathy has been a community activist for the Micronesian population both in Hawaii and Guam. She advocates for the community in many areas including, housing, health, and education. Kathy was featured and played as the cultural consultant for the film, *Breadfruit and Open Spaces* (directed by Lola Q. Bautista). Her work in the field also made her a long time interpreter and translator at the Bilingual Access Line with Helping Hands Hawaii. Kathy works at the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) as Migrant Education Specialist. She was a former adjunct instructor at the University of Guam and a quality assurance coordinator at the Chuuk Health Department.



## About the Cast



**Ova Saopeng** (he/him) is associate artistic director and producer with Los Angeles based TeAda Productions. He is an accomplished actor, teaching artist and playwright. He is a refugee from Laos and is passionate about elevating the refugee and immigrant experience on the American stage. Community and ensemble based creations include: Masters of the Currents, Refugee Nation, Global Taxi Driver and Native Immigrant. These critically acclaimed plays received numerous development and touring awards including NEFA, MAP, NEA, NPN Creation and NET funds. He has worked with national theatre companies: The Children's Theater Company in Minneapolis Dragonwings and Center Theater Group's Wondrous Tales of Old Japan and East West Players Twelf Nite O'Wateva and has toured colleges and universities with Asian American led hereandnow theater company, and Southern California primary schools with children's theater companies We Tell Stories and Waters Edge Theater.



**Koa Shope** is a Micronesian actor and student in the Acting Conservatory at Windward Community College. He was featured in the following theater works ;Kahahawai/Massie, Machinal, She Kills Monsters, Aitu Fafine, and Aloha Attire. He is trained in Stage Combat, Voice and Movement, and Improv. Koa participated in the Shakespeare Summer Study Abroad Program in 2023 and was a nominee of the KCACTF Irene Ryan competition 2023-2024. Koa aspires to write more stories for the Micronesian community to amplify their voices along with his own and would like to give back all he has learned to his community.

## **Note from Co-Creators Leilani Chan and Ova Saopeng**

**T**heAda Methodology is based on a devised theater practice that is inspired by many other theaters of color from across the U.S. including Urban Bush Women, Teatro Campesino, Great Leap, and many others. Our process is to collect stories from the community and put them on stage, which means that we spend a lot of time building trust in the community. Starting with our first play centering Micronesian community and stories, *Masters of the Currents*, we have been working for over a decade with the Micronesian community in Hawaii.

**W**e were lucky enough to travel to Micronesia as part of the research development of this show. On that trip, we conducted workshops in multiple island nations including the Marshall Islands, Pohnpei, Chuuk, Guam and Saipan. We also did workshops with the Micronesian community in the Los Angeles Area in Long Beach and Pasadena. It took us over a year of collecting additional stories to create *Nothing Micro about Micronesia*. By investing time with the community, we have woven relationships across Micronesian communities in the diaspora. In turn, the community has contributed to our process by sharing their stories, inviting their networks, and being part of the development, production, and uplifting of both *Masters of the Currents* and *Nothing Micro about Micronesia*. As a result of this multi-year commitment, we are proud to say that the majority of the performing ensemble are Micronesian and Pacific Islander.

**T**he themes that have resonated throughout our journey with the Micronesian community is the importance of upholding your culture and navigating what you want to hold on to, especially for those who leave their home islands. We have learned that the community is forced to compromise between staying or leaving home and navigating between tradition or modernity. Our roots as people who grew up in Hawai'i and represent a long list of ethnicities, has helped our theater practice in working with communities that we may not be a part of. It has helped us to create work that promotes a better understanding of each other's experiences. What's happening with the Micronesian community here in Hawaii and the pressures that this community is feeling is something that connects to what has happened for many generations in Hawai'i and across the U.S.--whether it's dealing with racism, over-policing, climate change, migration, and militarism. These are all the things that are not only affecting the Micronesian community, but if we work with the Micronesian community, we could actually reflect on what's happening across the planet.



# TeAda Productions Staff



**Leilani Chan**  
Founding Artistic Director

**Ova Saopeng**  
Associate Artistic Director

**Taloo Carrillo**  
Development Director

**Jonny Chang**  
Marketing and Local Programs Manager

**Stephanie Camba**  
Operations and Diaspora Programs Manager





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**James Kellett Tam**  
**Steve Trecker**

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Managing Director

**Stu Hirayama**  
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**Brad DeCaires**  
Box Office

**Fay Ann Chun**  
Grants Manager

**Jian Gu**  
Accounting

**Eric Johnson**  
Artistic Director

**Reiko Ho**  
Artistic Associate/Marketing

**Moses Goods**  
Artistic Associate/Actor

**Annie Cusick Wood**  
Artistic Associate

**Artistic Team**  
Jarren Amian  
Chesley Cannon  
Sarah Danvers  
Serina Dunham  
Iris Kim  
Lokomaika'i Lipscomb  
Matt Mazzella  
Kaonohikalaealohihinei Muller  
Hermenigildo Tesoro Jr.  
Eric West  
Emily Wright

**Daniel A. Kelin, II**  
Director of Drama Education

**Tamara Smith**  
Drama Ed. Administrator

**Clara Whippy**  
Teaching Artist

**Ana Narrajos**  
Teaching Artist

**Chloe Tower**  
Teaching Artist