

# MEDIA RELEASE



25 September 2019

## For immediate release

### [Fresh Off the Boat](#)

Written by Oscar Kightley and Simon Small

Directed by Tanya Muagututi'a

Dates: 19 October – 9 November 2019

Location: The Court Theatre's mainstage

Show Sponsor: PWC

In collaboration with: Pacific Underground

By arrangement with: Playmarket

### Short show description:

Charles isn't just arriving into New Zealand – he's arriving into another life. But the reality of Christchurch ain't the fantasy he was promised. Alternately hilarious and sobering, this milestone Pasifika play tells a culturally challenging yet universally Kiwi story about family, culture shock and what we owe each other.

## NEW GENERATION ARRIVES, FRESH OFF THE BOAT

### IN-BRIEF:

25 years after its debut, ground-breaking Pasifika play *Fresh Off the Boat* is being reborn for a new generation at The Court Theatre.

Set in 1990s Christchurch, this affecting comedy follows Charles as he emigrates from Samoa to New Zealand to join his sister and her family for a new life that he soon realises doesn't match up to the fantasy he was promised...

Directed by original cast member Tanya Muagututi'a, whose arts organisation Pacific Underground first presented *Fresh Off the Boat* in 1993, this production milestone is a real family affair. Muagututi'a is not only directing her two daughters, Talia-Rae and Josephine Mavaega, but her husband Pos Mavaega (Pacific Underground's Musical Director) is the sound designer and brother-in-law Tony De Goldi (the partner of Mishelle Muagututi'a, who was also in the original production) is the set designer!

"It's special because I'm working with my daughters – and they're playing the sisters that I played with Mishelle 25 years ago!"

Alongside her two children, Muagututi'a's cast includes Sela Faletolu-Fasi, Jake Arona, Roy Snow and Albany Peseta.

"I think it's amazing that we get to put this story on The Court Theatre's mainstage, back home with and for a new generation," explains Muagututi'a. "Audiences will enjoy the humour, then realise there are actually serious issues still relevant today. People are still coming to New Zealand with the expectation of arriving in the land of milk and

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money; coming here for a better life. But is it really a better life?"

***Fresh Off the Boat runs at The Court Theatre from 19 October – 9 November 2019.***

## IN-DEPTH:

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"It's special because I'm working with my daughters – and they're playing the sisters that I played with Mishelle 25 years ago! Who knew that was ever going to happen? When I was in the production, I wasn't even thinking about children... It's amazing."

Alongside her two daughters, Muagututi'a's cast includes Sela Faletolu-Fasi, Jake Arona, Roy Snow and Albany Peseta, all of whom performed in the rehearsed reading of the production last year.

"It's special, because *Fresh Off the Boat* is being performed by and for a whole new generation," explains Muagututi'a. "Back in the '90s, we were presenting one of the first contemporary Pasifika plays. This production is really about honouring the writers' intentions – because the simplicity of the play and the messages in it really speak to the writing."

Written by Oscar Kightley (*bro'Town; Sione's Wedding*) and Simon Small, the play found rave success around the country in 1993, before embarking on a tour of both Australia and Samoa, with Muagututi'a playing the role of Ula from 1993 – 1995.

"I think it's amazing that we get to put this story on The Court Theatre's mainstage, back home for a new generation who may have never come across this play before," explains Muagututi'a. "It's very nostalgic for me."

With plenty of '90s throwbacks to look forward to, audiences can expect an uproarious comedy that will also be extremely affecting.

"Audiences will enjoy the humour, then realise there are actually serious issues still relevant today. It's not like it's a new story – people are still coming here to New Zealand with the expectation of arriving in the land of milk and money; coming here for a better life. But is it really a better life?"

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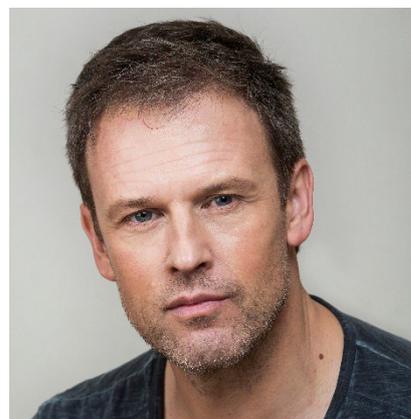
## Cast



*Elizabeth*  
[Sela Faletolu-Fasi](#)



*Charles*  
[Jake Arona](#)



*Mervyn*  
[Roy Snow](#)



*Evtia*  
[Talia-Rae Mavaega](#)



*Ula*  
[Josephine Mavaega](#)



*Samoa*  
[Albany Peseta](#)

## Creatives

Director

[Tanya Muagututi'a](#)

Set Designer

[Tony De Goldi](#)

Costume Designer

[Amy Macaskill](#)

Lighting Designer

[Giles Tanner](#)

Sound Designer & Composer

[Posenai Mavaega](#)

Stage Manager

[Jo Bunce](#)

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THE  
**COURT**  
THEATRE

## Ticket Prices

Adult	\$56 - \$64
Senior (65+)	\$49 - \$57
Group (6+)	\$49 - \$57
Supporter	\$47 - \$54
Child (under 18)	\$27 - \$30
30 Below	\$30

## Show Times

- Monday & Thursday 6:30pm
- Tue/Wed/Fri/Sat 7:30pm
- Forum 6:30pm Monday 21 October
- Matinee 2:00pm Saturday 2 November

**Bookings:** phone 03 963 0870 or visit [www.courttheatre.org.nz](http://www.courttheatre.org.nz)

Images can be found at The Court Theatre's [Media Centre](#)

**For more information or to arrange an interview please contact:**

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