Audio Described Introduction - te reo Pākehā

Thoroughly Modern Māui

# Audio



# Transcript

Kia ora tātou katoa. Nau mai haere mai ki Te Māui o Nāianei, Thoroughly Modern Māori. *Greetings all. Welcome to Thoroughly Modern Māui.*

Many moons ago, a superhero of a different kind ruled this side of the Pacific. His name was Māui-Tikitiki-A-Taranga – MĀUI. A warrior and demigod, his adventures are woven into the fabric of Pacific history. In Aotearoa, this ‘Māori Superman’ was fast, fit, and funny. He was the total package. He slowed the sun, fished up the North Island and brought fire to the world – to name just a few of his feats!

Burgeoning music theatre star Rutene Spooner will channel this Māori hero into a modern-day icon – complete with rhinestones and glitter. This ‘haka-boogie-hori’ will be pulling out all his tricks from the past and reincarnating Māui into a living breathing musical rock star before your very eyes.

We’re excited to have you join us for this bilingual cabaret featuring charmingly quick-witted songs, hilarious antics, and heart-felt storytelling. We hope you enjoy the show.

## Set

The first impression of the setting is of floor to ceiling red drapes, some of which are looped in swags across the top. The overall environment created is that of a cabaret show. The stage is shallow, with small footlights at the front of the stage, and access to the audience via two steps in the centre. Most of the movement occurs laterally across the stage, though occasionally the performer comes down the steps, and interacts with the audience. When this happens, Rūtene is lit wherever he wanders by a follow spot. During some audience interactions, the participants from the audience are also individually lit. These audience interactions create warmth, ease and humour, and set the ‘vibe’ for the show.

In the centre of the stage, the curtain is heavily swagged across the top. The light above this gap has an orange glow. Eight fluorescent tubes hang vertically, two thirds of the way up the curtains, four on each side of the centre, they have a pale violet light, and contrast strongly with the red curtains and generally warm lighting. They are turned on and off for dramatic emphasis occasionally throughout the performance.

At the start of the show, the band takes their time to set up, to the right of the stage. There are four band members, each has a microphone and a music stand in front of them, with a discreet light illuminating their sheet music. The bass guitarist sits closest to the centre of the stage, with a foldback speaker in front of her, and a silver, old school speaker behind her. Her bass guitar is blonde wood. She is dressed in a long black dress, with her hair tied back, and spectacles. To the right of the bass guitarist, there is a black and silver drum kit, the drummer sits behind this, dressed in black. He also wears spectacles. On the extreme right hand side of the stage are two other chairs. They are occupied by two male musicians, one plays a guitar the other, a banjo. All the musicians are all dressed in black.

The audience is seated at tables, cafe style, with a candle on each table.

At the beginning of the show, Rūtene enters from the audience, striking a pose in the metre-wide gap in the curtains. The set is suffused with a warm red glow, which is a dramatic contrast to the slender shafts of white light that radiate out from above, centre. Use of smoky haze in the space makes the beams of light stand out as they slant down diagonally towards either side of the stage.

Once he makes his entrance to the stage, and the show starts, the light level rises, and violet side lighting adds glamour to the stage.

There are three plinths to the left of the stage, each with a woven kete on top. When Rūtene first approaches the nearest plinth the lights change to mysterious violet colour. This is intensified by a spotlight on the kete. From the first kete he takes a shell, from the second he reverently removes a tāniko tīpare (woven headband), with long black wavy hair cascading from it. When he puts it on, slowly and carefully at first, then with a flourish, the lights snap to deep, opulent purple-blue. They snap back to their ‘normal’ red cabaret state just as quickly when he takes the headband off. Magic! Subsequently, the third kete on the far left, will provide a pounamu mere, which Rūtene wields with strength and grace. Towards the end of the show Rūtene picks up a red, electric guitar from the right of the stage, and plays it passionately.

Later in the show, the light on the red curtains becomes more orange, and later still, the light level drops to a dark blue-purple. A mirror ball also plays during one of the later songs.

Voice over is heard from a range of characters during the show.

## Costume

Rūtene is a tall well built Māori man, wearing a smart black three piece evening suit, with a sparkly black waistcoat underneath. The suit jacket has a low cut front with rounded lapels. The shoulders of the jacket are decorated with red, white and black weaving, which sparkles under the light. The decoration runs across the breadth of the top and back of the shoulders, and down the front, to the waistline of the jacket. The weaving tucks under the suit lapels, and ends with loose white fringes around the edges. A crisp white shirt and shiny black dress shoes complete the cabaret singer look. Later in the show, he takes off his jacket to be in waistcoat and shirt sleeves.

Rūtene’s hair is slicked back from the forehead with a significant elevation at the front, and lots of brylcreem. He uses a red cloth to wipe perspiration from his face during the show, which is tossed to him several times by the drummer. This is a ‘running gag’ - he keeps missing the catch, saying under his breath, ‘Its going to be a good show’ - until he doesn’t. This ‘running gag’ generates some physical humour.