



Pacific Coming-of-Age Musical Premieres in Brisbane

Brisbane Powerhouse and Armstrong Creative present

where we once belonged

"a thrilling journey full of laughter and emotional jolts as fragments of Western pop culture collide with the rigid authoritarianism of village tradition"

New Zealand Herald

A new all-singing, all-dancing Pacific musical celebrating 1970's Samoan culture will hit the stage when *where we once belonged* comes to Brisbane for **World Theatre Festival 2012**. The show is an award-winning coming-of-age story performed by 14 Pacific Institute of Performing Arts Graduates from **15 –18 February 2012**.

The show features Pacific-inspired musical numbers and is based on the novel of the same name by Sia Figiel. It has been adapted for the stage by leading New Zealand playwright Dave Armstrong and explores issues of family violence, religion and colonisation, against the backdrop of 1970's Samoa.

"We've deliberately blended elements of comedy, music and drama to tell the story," says Armstrong. "When I adapted the novel I thought it was important to keep the original story intact, and to ensure the spirit of Figiel's story was included, which has a similar blend of light and shade."

where we once belonged shows the issues facing Samoan culture through the eyes of Alofa – a 13-year-old girl, 'so there's plenty of teenage gossip, misbehaving at school and dance numbers as well as serious drama," says Armstrong.

Sia Figiel's novel won the 1997 Commonwealth Prize and Armstrong's adaptation received the 2008 Chapman Tripp Theatre Award for Best New New Zealand Play.

where we once belonged is performed by 14 young graduates of PIPA (Pacific Institute of Performing Arts), based in Auckland. PIPA programmes combine contemporary teaching with a genuine Pasifika flavour, resulting in a hilarious yet poignant production brimming with life.

Directed by Goretta Chadwick and Anapela Polataivao, *where we once belonged*, has garnered critical acclaim. Theatrereview described it as "a colourful piece, bursting with life; wonderfully familiar to those who know this world and a charming revelation to those who don't. By turns moving, hysterical and thought provoking, *where we once belonged* deserves to have another life. If it comes to a town near you, make sure you go."

Armstrong Creative is a leading New Zealand theatre producer with a focus on developing and touring new work, especially by playwright Dave Armstrong. The company has toured his plays *King and Country*, *Niu Sila*, *Le Sud* and *Rita and Douglas* around New Zealand and overseas.

Brisbane Powerhouse is Brisbane City Council's leading arts performance venue helping to deliver a vibrant and creative city. World Theatre Festival is supported by Queensland Government, through Arts Queensland and Events Queensland.

-ENDS-

Date	Wed 15 – Sat 18 February
Time	Wed, Thur, Fri 10.00am, Thur, Fri 1.00pm, Sat 12.00pm
Venue	Visy Theatre, Brisbane Powerhouse
Tickets	Adult: \$25 Conc: \$20 Student: \$15
Bookings	07 3358 8600 or brisbanepowerhouse.org

**For more information, images and interviews please contact
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