

festivals. Museums play their part in this arena by actively supporting what might be called “heritage” (exhibiting historical photographs more than artifacts and collecting tape recordings of stories and oral history). They also become involved in campaigns to preserve local sacred sites and ritual practices dispersed across ethnic groups.

Weiner, in a concluding afterward, summarizes the basic themes of the book and reflects on the difficulties indigenous people have in nurturing and retaining the creative vitality of their traditions without having them appear contrived on the one hand or keeping traditions so inflexible that they become ossified and require artificial support on the other.

The comparative intent of this book is present through most of the papers, and this, together with the wide range of Aboriginal and Melanesian groups discussed and the multiple concerns of the authors with issues of change and historicity, provides a rich mixture of material to provoke vigorous seminar discussions both of traditional ethnographic issues, and the problems of encounter with modernity.

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*Love 3 Times*. Play written by Vilsoni Hereniko. Directed by Megan Evans. Kumu Kahua Theater, Honolulu, Hawai‘i, 17 May to 17 June 2001.

Playwright Vilsoni Hereniko generally allows himself more aesthetic distance than he does in *Love 3 Times*, performed in May–June 2001 at Kumu Kahua Theater in Honolulu under

the capable direction of Megan Evans. Like Hereniko, the play’s central character is a forty-something Rotuman playwright-professor in Honolulu who is increasingly drawn toward cinema (a trajectory with multiple implications). The trials of Tomasi Amanako therefore feel like a “counter-life” through whom, with forthrightness and wry self-consciousness, Hereniko dramatizes a range of issues. These center around the complexities of inhabiting western institutions without betraying Pacific roots, and the obstacles to intimacy with those who do not share those roots.

Such concerns inform the play’s opening scene, where Tomasi’s wife Cindy videotapes him, his sister La, and his fourteen-year-old son from a previous marriage, Duncan, as they pay respects to his departed father, Hapati. The camera records Tomasi instructing his son Duncan in commemorative customs, and carrying the heavy tombstone for his father’s grave. (As with many works that begin with funerals, such as Witi Ihimaera’s *Tangi*, the burying of an elder relative suggests the passing away of something larger.) The delayed return to Rotuma for the ceremony, twenty years after Hapati’s death, provides an occasion for Tomasi to come to terms with the three central “loves” in his life. These loves are both personal and representative of values and temporalities: Hapati, who in a sense represents Rotuman tradition; Cindy, a film producer who suggests at one level the bustling presentism of the film world; and the child Duncan, whose upbringing in materialistic London sets him in a situation common to the next generation of diasporic Islanders of mixed

ancestry. Set in Rotuma and then Honolulu, the play proceeds through scenes contrived to generate and then resolve pressures Tomasi faces.

The autobiographical feel and emotional economy of *Love 3 Times* intensify as the play's main relational plots revolve around Tomasi. All three accuse him of abandoning or neglecting them, and this pressures him to articulate (and harmonize) his feelings toward each. Hapati, a hungry ghost who follows his son like a guilty conscience from Rotuma to Honolulu (where his marvelings at and coming to terms with contemporary American culture provide fine comic moments), reproaches Tomasi for not perpetuating the culture through Duncan. Duncan paradoxically accuses Tomasi of loving Rotuman culture more than him, and of not equipping the boy to participate in that culture. Cindy resents Tomasi's preoccupation with his father and son, and wishes he'd "stop feeling guilty" and "start paying attention" to her emotional wants.

By having the audience look over the characters' shoulders as they conspicuously document these personal relations with a digital camera, *Love 3 Times* thematizes authorial self-consciousness and the paradoxical senses in which the camera creates both distance and intimacy. The omnipresent camera also functions as a suggestive image into which the audience might read any number of meanings. At one level, the displacement of writing (or even live performance) by the camera, suggests new opportunities for representation, and an altered relation between artist and audience (perhaps a wider audience, given less context). As a tool of representation,

its power has in a sense been seized back from all those anthropologists prying into island "life ways" (sati-rized in *Last Virgin in Paradise*), and can now be used for any number of ventures, from commercial films to home movies.

And yet for all its webs of relation and probings, the "picture" that emerges from *Love 3 Times* seems rather simplistic at times. For instance, in accentuating the distance between the disrespectful, materialistic, distrustful values of Duncan's London upbringing, and the values of traditional island culture, *Love 3 Times* turns to an unworkable schematicism, uncharacteristic of Hereniko's previous plays (and critical articles). Tomasi's sister La seems an underdeveloped embodiment of Rotuman women and values, utterly without selfishness, discontent, or aspiration—living a simple, caring, precapitalist island life. Had Tomasi not pursued higher education, presumably he would have ended up with a woman like La. Questioned by Hapati about his lack of romantic interest in Rotuman women, he answers that they are not interested in him because he is over-educated: "They want someone like them, just as I want someone like me." That "someone like me" turns out to be a white film producer, however, seems something Tomasi does not want to explore as a question of desire. In contrast, perhaps, Cindy repeatedly refers to Tomasi as "island boy," implying both her desire to diffuse stereotypes and an awareness that Tomasi's being an "island boy" contributes to her attraction to him.

Such delicate issues require nuance and specificity, and aspects of the

script worked against that. Directing a diverse, accomplished group of Hawai'i actors (none Rotuman), Megan Evans used the Kumu Kahua space effectively, making good theater of the play. Yet the performance lacked the "Pacific feel" of Hereniko's *Last Virgin* and *Fine Dancing* in both of which dance, music, chant, clowning, and aspects of Pacific performance were vital components. This production of *Love 3 Times*, and to some extent the script, moved toward performing generalizable features of contemporary fragmentation. Or as Evans phrased it in her program notes, "Now we live more and more like branches of an urban banyan tree—our roots dangling in the air." The danger of this approach in (and to) the play is that it will be haunted by the bad faith of becoming an instance of the phenomena that trouble it, rather than art genuinely haunted and passionately driven to envision alternatives.

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*Ka'ililauokekoa*, 76 minutes, VHS (NTSC), color, 2000. Director, screenwriter, and composer: Kala'iokona Ontai; producer and distributor: 'Aha Pūnana Leo, P O Box 1265, Kea'au, Hawai'i. US\$19.95.

"Empowerment for Hawaiians" described it all. At the 3 November 2000 Hawai'i International Film Festival screening, the audience was a who's who of the Hawaiian community. There were faces of all colors, people from all walks of life. In a way it was a "reunion," a reunion of

language. Hawaiian was being spoken by eager children and animated adults looking for their seats; the audience was abuzz with excitement. Outside, the stars of the film were taking still photos alongside their film poster. This was a historic moment for film in Hawai'i—the debut of the first feature-length film done completely in the Hawaiian language and created by a Hawaiian-speaking cast and crew.

People produce images with many goals and purposes. In *Ka'ililauokekoa* the purposes are manifold. According to the film's introduction, the creators hope that it will create "new venues where [our] ancestors' [stories] can be shared." At the debut, composer Ontai explained, "If we have touched the hearts of our *kūpuna* then we have succeeded." The sentiment is clear within the Hawaiian community—we want all the images we produce of Kānaka Maoli to be done with both respect and honor; we want to create something that our *kūpuna* will smile down on and be proud of. Creating such a film, even with notions of how it should be done, introduces certain pressures and difficulties, however.

The film opens with such beautiful imagery—scenes of gorgeous mountains, sky, ocean, and birds in flight—that one can't help feeling proud of being Hawaiian. Contemporary Hawaiian music plays in the background, enhancing the range of emotions portrayed throughout the film, guiding the viewer's senses along with the imagery.

The story of *Ka'ililauokekoa* is taken from a Kaua'i legend that has been passed down from generation to generation. As explained in the