

TE RAKAU PRESENTS:

Helen Pearse-Otene
Jim Moriarty



THE BATTALION

The Battalion is a moving story about friendship, loyalty, madness and redemption – seen through the eyes of Paora Matene, a war veteran, and relayed to his wayward charges Rimini and George.



Sent back to their Whanau in the “one cow town” of Tamariri, Rimini and George aren’t interested in any of the locals or their family history – they just want to get back to the city. It was the same for five young men in 1939. Drawn in by the excitement of war, they run away to the army and join the 28th Maori Battalion. Thus begins their adventure of a lifetime...

PAEPAE

Playwright/Director: Helen Pearse-Otene

Director: Jim Moriarty

Producer: Aneta Pond

Stage Manager: Reilly Behrent

Coaches: Jeremy Davis, Kimberley Skipper and Steph Barnett

Lighting Design: Lisa Maule

Sound Design: Busby Pearse-Otene

Lighting Operator: Haami Hawkins

Costume Supervision: Cara Waretini

Swing Dance Coaches: Feet With Heat - Jo and Rodney

CAST

Paora Matene

Brendan English
Ryan Holtham

Sue Lewis

Bella Craig
Sarah Fulbrook
Annie Ashton

Rimi Davies

Emma Bagley
Mia Kilmister
Sophie Pascoe

George Davies

Georgia Cotter
Kate Salisbury

Eleni Poulloi

Shifna Shahabdeen
Anya Lewis
Anya Hanbury-Sparrow

Jo Boy Matene

Nick Rudman
Kahutia Whaanga-Davies
Seb White

Anaru Kingi

Te Ata Tu Patelesio
Nanuma Mafileo

Wiremu Davies

Joeli
Kiann Goonewardene

Charlie Murray

Cason Mundy
Ryan Jennings

Matthias Schwartz

Will Adams

Tai

Kate Benjes

Kara

Jemima Gregory

Chorus

*Members of the 28th Māori Battalion,
Kapahaka rōpū, English singers and
dancers, teenagers from Tamariri*

Will Adams
Annie Ashton
Emma Bagley
Reilly Behrent
Kate Benjes
Georgia Cotter
Bella Craig
Brendan English
Sarah Fulbrook
Kiann Goonewardene
Jemima Gregory
Liam Griffin
Anya Hanbury-Sparrow
Ryan Holtham
Ryan Jennings
Mia Kilmister
Anya Lewis
Nanuma Mafileo
Tamati Moriarty
Cason Mundy
Sophie Pascoe
Te Ata Tu Patelesio
Ehren Quinn
Nick Rudman
Kate Salisbury
Shifna Shahabdeen
Kahutia Whaanga-Davies
Seb White
Joeli

Ehren Quinn

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Kia ora koutou katoa. Greetings and salutations to you all. On behalf of the Creative Paepae we thank you for coming to share your time with us here in the Rutherford Arts Centre at St Oran's College. We mihi to this whare, named after Alexander Mathieson Rutherford who was a medical officer with the NZ Infantry Battalion in the North African Campaign during 1942. He gained the rare distinction of being awarded the Military Cross and Bar when he displayed outstanding courage attending and evacuating wounded while under enemy fire.

So 'The Battalion' story reflects the efforts of Māori soldiers before, during, and after WWII and up to present times through the eyes of some of their troubled mokopuna. At this time we remember the ANZAC effort and express our collective gratitude to all our forebears who have fought on the various theatres of war throughout history to make Aotearoa the unique country it is today.

I thank all the creative team, our Producer, the respective Principals of St Oran's College and St Patrick's College Silverstream, the HODs of both colleges, Helen Jones and Shelley Watson, and especially the rangatahi and their families who have given their best to this journey.

Mauri ora katoa

Jim Moriarty MNZM (Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Koata, Ngāti Kahungunu, Rangitane, Scots, Norwegian, Italian)

PRODUCER'S NOTE

Kia ora koutou.

Thank you to our major supporter and funder The Ministry of Youth Development. Your continued support makes these Theatre Marae projects possible. Thank you to the Colleges for believing that the arts and Te Ao Māori has something special to offer the students in your care and for the time and effort you have put into making this project happen. Particular thanks to St Oran's College for the use of their wonderful facilities.

Thank you to the whānau that have supported their rangatahi to be a part of this experience, and finally thank you to the amazing cast who have worked so hard and given their all. You should be very proud of what you have achieved and I hope you've had some fun along the way

Ngā mihi nui

Aneta Pond



It has been very rewarding to watch this season of *The Battalion* come together. This is the 3rd time that St Oran's has worked with Te Rakau, and it has been great to strengthen that bond and also to welcome St Patrick's Silverstream into the partnership. As always, I have been inspired by the focus and dedication that Te Rakau bring to the work and by the motivation and commitment shown by of the cast of students. The Theatre Marae experience is so much more than a production. It is a holistic and deeply immersive experience which covers all the key competencies in the NZ Curriculum. Learning at its best, it is an embodiment of the whakatauki **Tohaina ō painga ki te ao** - share your gifts with the world!

Helen Jones

Head of Performing Arts, St Oran's College



St Patrick's College is thrilled to be able to work with Te Rakau and St Oran's on this amazing journey. The students have put in around 300 hours on this project. Watching them over the last 12 weeks it is easy to see the new maturity that has come from under taking a project like this one. This has been a very rewarding experience and our college is so proud of the dedication and commitment of our students. This wouldn't have been possible with out the support of all the school's faculty and the student's parents, and of course, Jim and Helen and their amazing team. Thank you.

Shelley Watson

TIC Drama Department, St Patrick's College, Silverstream

FROM THE RANGATAHI

Sophie Pascoe

Far out it's been a long time coming to opening night. Litres of sweat and hard work and Jim and Jeremy have had their fair share of yelling and screaming but all in all, I couldn't be prouder of this ropū and how far we've all come as a whānau and individually. People have stepped right out of their comfort zone into the stretch zone, and some even entered the break zone. It's always a new and different experience with ol' Jimmy and Helen, but it will never be one to forget. I'm so glad I decided to stay with Jim and Helen through this process, with everything that's happened though the 11 weeks work I really don't know where I would be without Jim, Helen or this whānau of amazing, warm people.

Jemima Gregory

It would be great to be able to say that I've loved every moment of rehearsing for The Battalion. However that just wouldn't be true, the physical work was draining and mentally, being at school most nights for hours on end took its toll. But I can see now how all the hours are paying off and the work we've all put in has come together to create something we can all be proud of. I've learnt so much from Jim and Helen throughout the past term and I look forward to hopefully working with them again in the future.

Anya Hanbury-Sparrow

Working with Te Rakau has made such a big impact on my life. It gave back to me in a way I never expected. Te Rakau gave me drive and dedication to the endless hours of training including the dreaded warm-ups that I came to tolerate. Jim, Helen, Jeremy and Kimbo are such wonderful people and I cannot thank them enough for all the work and time they've put into it.

Shifna Shahabdeen

Oh nards, I've been tar'd by that darn brush of creativity for the third time. My mum told me not to do this again because she said I would be exhausted and now I'm exhausted. What motivates me to keep doing this is when Jim says "When the going gets tough, the tough get going". You know I think it's extraordinary how high schoolers are allowed to do this because it's an enormous challenge, it requires extra learning and abolishes any existence of a social life. So, Te Rakau prepares us perfectly for adulthood. Through this journey I have learnt a lot about life in general. Just a lot of useful things. Some of the things I've found on the way are a whānau, some knowledge and a idol (shout out to Jo!). I'm latched to these productions like it's a good soap asmr video. Aroha nui to Jim, Helen, Kimbo and Jeremy for trusting me to be apart of this journey once again. I'll probably say I won't be up for a wero this huge again, but yolo lol.

Kate Benjes

During my time in The Battalion cast of 2018 I have had one of the best experiences of my life. When I first joined at the start of the year, I will admit, I had no idea what the play was even about, let alone what to expect doing it. But I will never regret my decision to be a part of this whanau. This experience has been so surreal to me as I have never had the chance to work with professionals before on such a big project. It has been very time consuming, yet so rewarding. The cast that I got the privilege to work with went from being acquaintances to whānau. I have grown so much as not only an actor, but as a person.

Emma Bagley

My experience doing The Battalion this year has built me stronger as a person, I've made new friendships with so many different people, we are all like a whānau. I don't know why I keep doing these productions with Jim and Helen, but every time I do it's always the best experience even though during the process and doing fitness I wanna drop out lol. At the end it's so rewarding and the best feeling ever, with life long skills. Doing The Battalion has certainly been a life changing experience and taught me new things that I would not have known if I didn't do this production.

These past 12 weeks, 300 hours of full on work, fitness, building bonds, learning new things from Jim and Helen, and becoming more fit physically, mentally and emotionally with Jeremy and Kimbo has really built me into a different person. I feel like everyone is going to leave of this production different from when they first came into the doors of St Oran's College. It's been an unforgettable experience, literal blood, sweat and tears went into it, but I don't regret one bit.

Sarah Fullbrook

If I'm being completely honest then I would say that I regretted auditioning for the role of Sue straight away, but as the weeks went by I was able to become a posh, intelligent and sometimes bossy social worker. This was a challenge in itself because let's be real I am none of the above, apart from a bit bossy at times. Coming from more of a Rimi type background definitely made it hard to channel sue, but with the help of Te Rakau and everyone else involved I was able to get there. I have learnt so much during this process, I learnt what articulation is and even some small things like how to hold a handbag like a normal girl would. The whole experience has been challenging but in saying all of this I am glad I continued on with this play, I have made so many friendships and learnt alot about WWII and our ancestors. I can't wait to come back in year thirteen.

Mia Kilmister

The battalion has been a truly amazing journey. I knew I wanted to do it ever since my older sister participated in dog and bone. I was told it would be an unforgettable experience and it has been just that. I have learned to jump out of my comfort zone thanks to the team Jim, Helen, Jeremy, and Kimbo and I will always be thankful for every note and direction they have given me. Coming back next time 100%.

Georgia Cotter

Tena koutou katoa. I just want to start by saying a huge thank you to everyone who supported us all in this production, Jim, Helen, Jeremy and Kimbo for all the hard work that they've put in to getting us all ready and prepared, mentally, vocally and physically for this production. I have met so many amazing new people and seen us all grow individually and as a rōpū. Before we started Jim promised us he would push us out of our comfort zones, into our stretch zones and towards our break zones and he sure fulfilled that promise. This has been one of the most amazing experiences that I have ever had and I am going to remember this for the rest of my life! Hopefully one day, I will be privileged enough to work with Jim and Helen again! 'Ma whero ma pango ka oti ai te mahi.' Which means "With red and black the work will be complete." This whakatauki is talking about cooperation where if everyone does their part, the work will be complete. This is a strong message of what our production process was like. We all worked as a whanau and didn't leave anyone behind. Overall, this has been one of the best experiences I have had and I don't want it to end.

Bella Craig

Being a part of the battalion this term has been an unforgettable experience. During the term I have grown a lot as a person and have learnt so much. I signed up straight away when I heard that there were going to be auditions and I have never regretted signing up. My cousin, Sophie Craig, was part of dog and bone in 2016 and I knew straight away when I saw it that I wanted to be a part of one of Te Rakau's productions. I never thought I would've got the opportunity to play a bossy social worker but thanks to Jim, Helen, Jeremy and Kimberly I was able to. I've learnt to really push out of my comfort zone and to push through every exercise that we have done because this has helped overall. I will definitely be back in year 13.

Annie Ashton

Every time I work with Te Rakau my love for theatre grows. This is the 5th play of Helen's that I have performed in, all her plays have taught me so much about the history and culture of my country. Te Rakau never sugar coats the raw reality of our past, this makes these plays so powerful and important. During the Battalion I have loved seeing so many people who are new to theatre flourish in it and discover new passions. Working with such a fun and supportive cast made the hours of rehearsing enjoyable and so worthwhile. Each person brings something new to the table and I couldn't have picked a better group to share this experience with. I could not be prouder of what we have achieved together. Ma tini ma mano ka rapa ti whai. (Many hands make light work. Unity is strength). All credit to Jim, Helen, Jeremy and Kimberley for sharing their experience and knowledge with us. They were such passionate tutors that we were so lucky to have. I'd also like to acknowledge KFC for being 2 minutes away and keeping me nourished throughout rehearsals.

Reilly Behrent

Working with Te Rakau has been an amazing experience. When I first joined up I wasn't expecting to be on the stage at all, just stage manager working behind the scenes but Jim convinced me to join in for some of the chorus sections and it has been fantastic. I've made heaps of new friends, and met lots of people who I never thought I would get along with. It's been hard work but this experience was worth every moment.

Anya Lewis

Tena koutou katoa, I would like to start off by thanking everyone who contributed to to make this an incredible experience. To Jim ,Helen , Kimbo and Jeremy who have created such a beautiful piece of theatre, the amount of time and effort they have put into each and everyone one of us has beens so impactful and I am so thankful they shared their passion with us. It has been an honour to work alongside them. To the St Oran's girls, thank you so much for being such an encouraging, supportive, uplifting, fun and accepting group. It has been a privilege to work alongside you girls, grow together, build friendships and make so many lifelong memories. I am honoured to be apart of this amazing Whanau and am dreading having to leave. I have gained so many skills, but most of all I have thoroughly enjoyed learning and experiencing the Māori culture. I have grown such a love for this culture and I'm so happy I was given the opportunity to be immersed in it. I have also been able to understand more about myself, acting, the culture of

my country and those who fought for our country. I have grown physically, mentally, socially and it is amazing! I have come out of my comfort zone, become more confident, even been able to learn the group in warm ups. This has been an experience I will never forget with skills that will last a lifetime. Lastly, thank you to my parents and whanau for supporting me in this journey, I truly would not have been able to encounter these experiences without your love, support, encouragement and being a taxi. I am so privileged to be apart of this project, the results both personally and the performance is astounding! Would 100% recommend!

Kate Salisbury

I am grateful for the opportunity to work with Te Rākau and would do it again in a heartbeat. Through this experience my confidence has grown. I've seen the confidence in others grow as well. Because we have been constantly pushed outside our comfort zone into our stretch zone, the stretch zone has now become our new comfort zone.

Sebastian Watson

It's been amazing working with Te Rakau Theatre and it's been so fulfilling for everyone involved. It's been so cool making new friendships with everyone and the chemistry with each other off-set is so great to see. I will definitely be working with these guys again. I totally recommend it to anyone; you'll never forget the experiences of working with Te Rakau Theatre. Hope you enjoy the show!

Ryan Holtman

My experience with Te Rakau in The Battalion has been an absolutely amazing experience. I have learnt more from Jim, Helen and the rest of the crew than I ever thought I could, and for that I am extremely grateful. My role in The Battalion has helped me to grow as an actor and I have learnt skills that I will use in acting for the rest of my life. Being able to watch everyone including myself grow and learn about theatre and the maori culture has been an incredibly humbling experience that I will forever be thankful for. Doing The Battalion has changed my life and now I have found a new family in the cast and crew, and I have created memories that will last a lifetime.

Liam Griffin

Being a part of The Battalion has been a wonderful experience and hugely challenging at times. I've learnt amazing things about myself and have grown as a performer. I am capable to do anything I put my energy behind and I'm grateful for the opportunity to work with the fantastic crew, cast, Jim and Helen who have become an important part of my heart and are new friends.

Brendan English

The past 12 weeks with Te Rakau has been one of the best experiences I have ever been a part of. The production has given me a layer of confidence not only in the theatre world but also outside of the stage in real life. Working with the Directors, Jim and Helen, and the movement coaches, Jeremy and Kimberley has given me a appreciation for the all the hard work they put in behind the scenes to help us. Being a part of this journey will be an unforgettable experience. I would like to say a big thank you to everyone involved.

Will Adams

My experience with Te Rakau theatre company has been very eye opening and has been an amazing experience. I have made heaps of new friends and stepped out of my comfort zone a lot more than I ever expected to. I feel I have grown in myself and become more confident being myself around people. Doing the battalion has reunited an old friendship between myself and Sophie Pascoe. Also, I wouldn't have joined the battalion group if it wasn't for the support and inspiration of Emma Bagley.

Love from Bill xox

Tamaiti Moriarty

At first I only came to help the boys out as I had heard that their singing was a bit challenging. I thought it wouldn't be fun and a waste of a good holiday, however, through this experience I have met new people, made friends with a couple of stream boys which was a big step especially since I'm from the OG SPC. Throughout my whole life I've grown up surrounded by theatre, but each and every time I do a production the experience is always different and I love it! I've always been confident since I was a little buba, however through working with Te Rakau theatre I have gained a new found respect for theatre and live performance and learnt valuable skills that I will cherish for the rest of my life. Wabalubadubdub RIP.

Cason Munday

My experience with Te Rakau in The Battalion production has been fun. I've met new people who I've never noticed or hung out with before before, there are some boys who I never would've talked to at school if it weren't for this production. At first I didn't want to be a part of the production, even when my drama teacher asked if I was interested I turned the offer down. But it was at a point where I was doing nothing at home and waiting for the football season to start so I decided to give it a try. Since joining, my confidence has improved rapidly and my love of acting. I've loved going to The Battalion rehearsals because my brain is always working to come up with ideas or to remember my lines. I'd like to thank 4 really fun scary, smart, annoying and lovely people and that's Jim, Helen, Jeremy and Kimberly, they help to make the play come alive. If I wasn't pushed by Jeremy, told by Jim, helped by Helen and taught how to sing by Kimberley I wouldn't be as good as I am right now. So the reason I kissed my holidays away and didn't spend my time going to a friends house or going to the turf to play football is because I chose to come and practice for 8 hours a day, 6 days a week. I love it and I wouldn't be here if I didn't love going out and performing a piece of art on stage, forgetting about being Cason and becoming Charlie Murray from the Tamariri Boys Club.

Ehren Quinn

The Battalion production was one of best experiences I have had in the past year. Thanks Jim, Helen, Jeremy, Kimberley, the principal of Saint Patrick's College SilverStream (Mr Duffy) and also the principal of St Oran's College (Mrs Duffy) for giving everyone the opportunity to have this experience. I also would like to give a massive thanks to my pairs for being a part of this once in a lifetime experience. One day at cadets a friend came up to me and asked if I was doing the

production, and I said no, I am not. Then she begged me to do it so I said yes to her. Once we all started to get into doing rehearsals I started to get the feeling that this isn't for me, but I continued with it because of this friend. After a few weeks I noticed that this production had started to change me into something new. It has been stressful and really demanding for time and hard work. But it has all been worth it. I have made new friends that I wouldn't of even thought of been friends otherwise. I have gotten a lot fitter with Jeremy's warm ups we had nearly every rehearsal. Now we are here at the finished product: The Battalion. I am really proud of myself pushing through all the hard work, but I am even more proud of everyone for all the sweat, pain, blood, tears and hard work they have put into the production. Again, thank you all for allowing me be a part of The Battalion

Kiann Goonewardene

My experience with Te Rakau has been a dream come true. I've always wanted to be an actor and to be acting in a big group with a director and everything is a dream for me. A lot of young people don't get this opportunity to act in theatre, and I am so grateful that I took this opportunity. I just want to say a massive thanks to Jim and Helen, for the inspiring teachings they have given me. They gave me a new perspective on how I look at things. To Jeremy and Kimbo, thanks for all the fitness and singing drills, they really made me step out of my comfort zone and I'm grateful. To my brothers and sisters thanks for making this experience magical, I've had so much fun meeting you all, talking to you, and acting with you. I love the development that we have made through this journey. Keep fighting for what you want to achieve and never give up. I know now to never give up on a dream. So I thank you all.

Nick Rudman

My experience with Te Rakau was completely different to what I expected. We started from only doing practices three times a week, two after school and one full day on a Sunday. I thought that was a lot until we got to the holidays. We are doing over 50 hours a week. Thanks to this experience I have made many new friends throughout the past 12 weeks. If I knew how committed you had to be before I joined I still would've done it. I don't regret making this decision. A big part of the experience is the fitness. Over the past 12 weeks, my fitness has improved because of Jeremy, he's done a great job getting us fit for this production. We are performing 9 shows in six days and so our fitness needs to be up to standard. Throughout these 13 weeks my acting skills have improved a lot because of Jim and Helen. I also learnt a few Maori songs during the 13 weeks from Kimberley. This experience changed the way I thought about the Maori culture, I have learnt a bit about Maori and I want to know more now. I'd like to thank Jim, Helen, Jeremy and Kimberley for trying their best to make us the best we can be.

Ryan Jennings

My journey with Te Rakau Theatre has been one of hard work, love and laughter. Over the last thirteen weeks, myself and twenty-six other students from St Oran's College and St Patrick's College have collaborated with Te Rakau on The Battalion. We may be the on stage but we couldn't have done it without all the work from Jim, Helen, Jeremy, Kimberley and everyone else

who helped along the way, thanks whanau. I have many things to take away from this experience, but the greatest of all is the mahi, aroha and kata that we have shared, becoming one big whanau. Last but not least, to whoever gets the opportunity to participate in such an experience, I beg them to do so, as it will change their life for the better.

Nanuma Mafileo

My experience with Te Rakau was a very eye opening, challenging, hard working experience. It challenged me to go beyond my comfort zone and I could definitely feel a lot of pressure. It was also eye opening because I didn't expect the mentality you would have to go through to be in this production. I found the work especially difficult because it was new to me. Working with Te Rakau was epic and I definitely want to work with them again.

Kahutia Whaanga-davies

The Battalion. A great example of incredible and articulate theatre. Over the past 13 weeks working with Te Rakau has been amazing. The Battalion has had a wide variety of acting, singing, and dancing. This has been a once in a lifetime experience which I will always remember. It is easy to say I will find all of the skills I have learnt in the Battalion useful not only in school but later in life. I believe if you are given the option to work with Te Rakau in the future you should definitely take up the opportunity.

Te Ata Tu Patelesio

My experience doing The Battalion with Te Rakau has been an incredible journey with some awesome people. Its been a privilege working under Jim, Helen, Jeremy and Kimberley. Ive learnt so much about not just theatre and acting but tikanga in the way we work with each other in Te Rakau. I would definitely recommend this to anyone else and am looking forward to the performing nights.