

STORYTELLING THROUGH SĀMOAN DANCE

06 September
2022

A WORKSHOP SERIES WITH TEUILA HUGHES
YOUTH PUBLIC PROGRAMME



Creation Stories

The exhibition *Creation Stories*, curated by Simon Denny and Karamia Müller, began with the two creatives talking about their families to one another. By sharing their genealogy, they saw connections between their families in Sāmoa and German-speaking Europe. Revisiting their shared histories allowed them to create maps of creation stories, whakapapa and the passing of knowledge.

Created alongside this exhibition, was a youth programme designed to cultivate storytelling. Teuila Hughes is a dancer based in Aotearoa New Zealand who harnesses her Sāmoan heritage. During a series of workshop with the Sāmoan Bilingual Unit (Years 1 – 6) at Rosebank Primary, Hughes shared how movement can be explored to share Sāmoan histories and traditions.

Technique Sasa

Sasa when translated to English, means “to strike”. The well-known Sāmoan dance tells a story of everyday village life. Its movements can represent climbing trees, getting on a vaa (boat), hunting, fishing, cooking and voyaging.

Try it yourself

Practice, then bring it together!

Sit cross legged on the floor

1. Clap hands above head - 4 counts.



2. Bow head and clap cupped hands in front of stomach - 4 counts.



3. On your left hand side, open arms out like open scissors so one hand is high and one is low. Vertically slide hands toward each other, clap and keep moving hands to alternate a new hand to high and low. Each time you clap, move your arms more to the right hand side of your body - 4 counts (4 claps).

Then, stretch right arm out to right hand side with left still extended.



7. Now repeat, on the right hand side - 4 counts.



8. Clap hands in front of your chest - 4 counts.



9. Put your left hand out as if you are to shake ones hand - 4 counts.



10. Say "Talofa!"

Your story

Explore what movements could represent your story. Think of your culture, shared stories from your whakapa or ancestors and everyday actions shared in your hometown. Repeat each action to 4 counts. See how many movements you can create in your dance. Show it to others and share who you are!

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