



Le Iunivesite Aoao o Samoa
The National University of Samoa

PRESS RELEASE

"NUS and University of Auckland, NZ unite to celebrate Pacific Literature, Music and Art: Talanoa Fogafala-Pacific Identities Book Launch Marks a Prominent Highlight of OCIES Conference Programme 2023"

Apia, Samoa – Thursday 16th November 2023.

Talanoa Fogafala – Pacific Identities Poetry and Art Anthology was launched yesterday at the National University of Samoa. The event, organized by the National University of Samoa and the University of Auckland brought together local and international artists, musicians, academics, and poetry enthusiasts to celebrate the power of Pacific talanoa through literature, music, and visual arts.

The programme, held at the Aoa Conference Room, began with welcoming remarks from the Editors of the Talanoa Fogafala-Pacific Identities Art and Poetry Anthology. Leua Latai and Tim Baice, representing the National University of Samoa and the University of Auckland respectively and the esteemed editorial team Silafau Professor Sina Va'ai, Associate Professor Masami Tsujita and Tavu'i Dr. Niusila Fa'amanatu-Eteuati. They expressed their gratitude for the collaboration between the two institutions and their commitment to promoting Pacific voices.

Tim Baice then introduced the editors of the anthology, Silafau Professor Sina Va'ai, Associate Professor Masami Tsujita, Leua Latai and Tavu'i Dr Niusila Fa'amanatu-Eteuati. Guests invited to launch the book included NUS Pro Chancellor Letuimanu'asina Professor Emma Kruse-Vaai and Professor Carol Mutch from the University of Auckland. The editors shared their insights on the creation of the anthology and the significance of Pacific identities in literature, music, and art.

The highlight of the 51st OCIES Conference was the official book launch of the third edition of the Talanoa Fogafala-Pacific Identities book series where Professor Carol Mutch officially launched the anthology, followed by a presentation of the books by NUS Pro-Chancellor Letuimanu'asina Professor Emma Kruse-Va'ai.

Prominent authors including Professor Silafau Sina Va'ai, Helen Tanielu, Professor Susana Tau'aa, Associate Professor Jacoba Matapo – Pro Vice-Chancellor of Auckland University of Technology, Dr Moeata Keil and Dr Jean Allen, among others, took the stage to read excerpts from their works, further immersing the audience in the richness of Pacific literature. The event also featured an introduction to the artists involved in the anthology, including Tiana Elijah and the youngest contributor Roderick Latai-Niusulu a four-year-old from Samoa Primary whose artworks depicted the beauty of the environment and complexity of Pacific identities.

Associate Professor Masami Tsujita introduced a captivating performance, featuring lyrics by Teleuli Mafoa, music by Tofilau Dr. Niulevaea Siliva Gaugatao from the University of Auckland and vocals by Dr. Tavita Lipine from the Faculty of Education. The performance showcased the fusion of poetry, music, and visual arts.



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As part of the book launch, another book was launched on the exhibition titled "Reflections of a Maestro" by Ernesto Coter, featuring artworks by Lealofi Toleafoa, Pelenato Liufau, Lalovai Peseta, and Leua Latai.

The event concluded with an open mic poetry reading session led by Dr. Niusila Fa'amanatu-Eteuati, allowing aspiring poets and enthusiasts to share their poetry. Attendees had the opportunity to have their copies of the Talanoa Fogafala – Pacific Identities Poetry and Art Anthology signed by the editors and authors.

The Talanoa Fogafala – Pacific Identities Book launch was a great success, strengthening partnerships between the University of Auckland and the National University of Samoa in promoting and supporting the voices of Pacific communities through initiatives such as this anthology, where creative writing and creative arts practices can support and enhance further transoceanic dialogue and engagement.



Group Photo: Back Row: Left to Right – Teleuli Mafoa, Louise Mata'ia, Susau Solomona, Roonie Mariner, NUS VC Tuifuisa'a Professor Patila Amosa, Silafau Prof. Sina Va'ai, Tavui Dr Niusila Faamanatu-Eteuati, Leua Latai, Associate Prof. Masami Tsujita, Tofilau Dr. Siliva, Sarai Faleupolu

Front Row: Left to Right: Robert, Asueru, Tim Baice, Prof. Emma Kruse-Va'ai, Professor Carol Mutch, Associate Prof. Jacoba Matapo, Judy Pouono-Alexander



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From Left to Right: NUS Vice-Chancellor – Professor Tuifuisa’a Patila Malua Amosa, NUS Pro-Chancellor – Professor Letuimanu’asina Emma Kruse Vaai, Professor Carol Mutch from Auckland University.



From Left to Right: Professor Letuimanu’asina Emma Kruse Vaai, Professor Carol Mutch from University of Auckland & the Youngest Contributor – Roderick Latai-Niusulu



Group Photo ***

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For more information please contact:

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