



## Latai Taumoepeau

Repatriate  
AUSTRALIA

Water – a scarce commodity for some, while for others too much threatens their very existence.

Onscreen a woman dressed in a black bikini and yellow floaties performs dances of her Pacific Island heritage inside a Perspex tank. The dance resonates with myriads of celebratory welcomes, danced by Pacific Islanders.

The dance initially limited to hand gestures when the artist was seated. As the tank fills with water, the movement becomes more frenetic and eventually the dancer is completely submerged.

Australian artist Latai Taumoepeau is known for her stoic performance art. Her powerful video *Repatriate* draws attention to the devastating impact of rising sea levels on vulnerable communities in the Pacific Islands. With her own body as the central focus, Taumoepeau probes existing power structures that perpetuate violence and lead to the devastating loss of cultural heritage.

## Latai Taumoepeau biography

Latai Taumoepeau is an artist, performance maker, cultural activist, provocateur and Punake.

Her story is of her homelands, the Island Kingdom of Tonga and her birthplace; the Eora Nation – Sydney, and everything far and in-between. Taumoepeau mimicked, trained and un-learned dance, in multiple institutions of knowledge, starting with her village, a suburban church hall, nightclubs and a university.

Latai activates Indigenous philosophies and methodologies; cross-pollinating ancient practices of ceremony with her contemporary processes & performance work to re-interpret, re-generate and extend her movement practice and its function in and from Oceania. She engages in the socio-political landscape of Australia with sensibilities in race, class & the female body politic; committed to bringing the voice of marginalised communities to the frangipani-less fore ground. Taumoepeau has been making works that address climate change in the Pacific for some years now.

Latai is also a project worker for 'Radio Skid Row' a community radio station in the inner west of Sydney, engaging with communities in creative digital media projects that are under-represented in mainstream media. She also works for 'PlayWriting Australia, facilitating an introduction & intermediate playwriting workshop program to communities and schools of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

**Fremantle Arts Centre**  
**7 Feb – 4 March**

**Video:** <https://vimeo.com/lataitaumoepeau>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/latai101>

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*Wendy Martin is the Artistic Director 2016 – 19.*

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