Late Night Theatre at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa ignites the stage in April with the world premiere of TONY THE FANTASTIC FIREMAN! Live: ONE SHOW ONLY. Written by UH Manoa undergraduate theatre major, Malia Wessel, this new dark comedy shows what happens when a well-known children's television show host sabotages his own career during a live broadcast, despite the efforts of those around him. Filled with silly songs and playful existentialist humor, this original work is sure to leave an impression.

Tony is directed by UHM MFA Directing candidate Tyler J. Haugen. This is Haugen's first time directing for Late Night, but he was recently the Assistant Director for Manoa Valley Theatre's production of Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery. Not unfamiliar with the Late Night stage, Haugen was previously seen as an actor in Late Night's Almost, Maine in November of 2017.

Wessel's new play follows the life of Greg, a middle-aged man who has starred as Tony in the TV show-within-the-play called Tony the Fantastic Fireman! for the last 15 years and has grown disenchanted with his career. Greg longs to ditch his child star persona to become a "serious actor." As his career crumbles around him, by his own hand, the façade of performance collapses. As Haugen notes, "the audience is forced to see the people onstage as who they really are: people, actors, exposing themselves for other's enjoyment." And even as they witness a man fall apart in front of them Haugen would like the audience to acknowledge the answer to the question: "Are you not entertained?"

Haugen has assembled an exciting group of actors to make the story come to life. The cast includes a diverse selection of both undergraduate and graduate UHM Theatre and Dance students. KoDee Martin takes up the lead role of Tony/Greg, assisted onstage by Private Joe the Musician played by Dylan Chace Lee. Tony's manager, Heather, played by Rachael Uyeno, and the House Manager, played by Nick Brown, strive to keep the show in running order. Rounding out the cast are Qalil Ismail and Hepsy Zang as Children in the Audience and Alston Albarado as Silly Willy, an aspiring children's performer who starts off the show.

Performances run April 13, 14, 20, and 21 in the Earle Ernst Lab Theatre inside Kennedy Theatre on the UH Manoa Campus. All shows begin at 11:00pm. Tickets are available at the Kennedy Theatre Box Office one hour before curtain. There will be no intermission. While Tony the Fantastic Fireman! Live: One Show Only does portray a fictional children's show, it may not be suitable for young audiences and contains mature themes and adult language.

TICKETS:$10 Regular; $8 Seniors, Military, UH Faculty/Staff; $5 UH Mnoa Students with valid UHM ID

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