

Island Rhapsodies

The Cast

Salama is an award-winning high-energy music and dance group featuring Indian Ocean natives from La Réunion, Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Australia and natives from New Caledonia, West Africa (Mali, Guinea, and Benin), England and France. This bunch of joyous artists sing in Malagasy and Creole languages. Salama is proud to pioneer the sharing of the majestic Maloya in Australia. Born from slavery, developed clandestinely, and banned by authorities until 1981, Maloya today is associated with ancestry and freedom. Expect vibrant singing, swirling dances, and captivating traditional percussion in this uplifting expression of joy and celebration.

Salama is led by Dr. Muriel Hillion, who completed her PhD on Maloya dance and music at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). Her research informs the performances, which comprise storytelling, visuals, and songs written and composed by the band to share island rhapsodies in Australia and promote harmony in diversity.

Synopsis

Discover "Island Rhapsodies," a captivating production by Salama that takes audiences on a memorable journey through the enchanting Indian Ocean islands. Following their acclaimed award at Fringe Perth 2023 for Best Music/Musicals, Salama presents a revolutionary fusion of music and dance, celebrating ancestral Creole rhythms and vivid storytelling.

This ground-breaking production weaves together tales of emancipation, womanhood, and childhood against a backdrop of self-written and composed traditional melodies and infectious dance movements. Adorned in colourful costumes reflecting the region's multicultural heritage, "Island Rhapsodies" resonates with themes of resilience, empowerment, and joy found in island life.

From the love of nature and the playful innocence of childhood games to stories of love itself, experienced and seen through the lens of women, 'Island Rhapsodies' invites audiences to explore the beauty and challenges of island living. It's a heartfelt journey that embraces the spirit of unity and hope for a brighter future, resonating deeply with viewers of all ages and expanding cultural horizons.

Target audience: General public, culturally and linguistically diverse public, families, community groups, art enthusiasts and aficionados.

Theme: Womanhood, childhood, emancipation, love, nature, cultural heritage and joy

Artform: Music, dance, storytelling, visual arts

Content warning: this performance contains loud percussions

SALAMA



Dr Muriel Hillion Toulcanon

Artistic Director / Manager

Origin: Réunion Island (with African, Indian and Madagascan ancestry)

Lead singer, musician, choreographer and songwriter

15 years+ performing arts experience (African, Brazilian, Spanish dance and Creole music and dance) in Australia and Internationally. Graduated from WAAPA in Maloya Dance and Music studies.



Oumou Bah

Vocalist / Dancer

Origin: Mali and Guinea in West Africa

10 years+ African dance and singing



Emmanuelle Dupart

Vocalist / Dancer

Origin: Benin in West Africa and France

25 years+ experience in Samba, Bellydance, Kizomba, Creole dance and singing



Brigitte Legeron-Underwood

Vocalist / Dancer

Origin: the Seychelles islands

14 years+ experience in Australia as a Samba dancer and drummer, African dancer and vocalist



Kirsten Symczyk

Accordionist / Pianist

Origin: Australia

20 years+ experience in various genres. Graduated from WAAPA



Jeremy Goinden

Sound Designer / Composer / Musician

Origin: South Africa and Mauritius

10 years+ performing arts experience (Jazz, Creole Sega and Maloya, and Afro -Beats). Graduated from WAAPA



Adrien Giraud

Sound Designer / Percussionist

Origin: New Caledonia

20 years+ experience in Samba, Creole Sega and Maloya, Reggae and Jazz



Benjamin Bulla

Guitarist / Percussionist

Origin: Australia

10 years+ performing arts experience (Blues, Country music, Reggae , Brazilian and Creole music). Graduated from WAAPA



Joshua De Silva

7 String Guitar player / Bass

Origin: Sri Lanka

15 years + experience performing in Jazz, Brazilian, Sega and Maloya.
Graduated from WAAPA



Maxwell John

Sound Engineer

Origin: England

Also drummer and singer

20 years + experience in sound engineering and drumming