

**Spring  
2026**

Honolulu Theatre  
**HTy**  
for Youth



**By Annie Cusick Wood**



# Aloha!

This season we travel! We journey from the mountains of the Philippines to the plains of Africa, from old Hawai'i to outer space, and even into abstract worlds of shapes and colors. The theatre is the perfect place to imagine ourselves in another's shoes, to try on new stories, and to build empathy and curiosity. It is also a place to remember what we already share—what makes growing up as children of this amazing land so special. Young and old alike, these plays are for nā keiki o ka 'āina.

We hope you will consider becoming an HTY Member this season. A month of Family Membership costs less than a single adult ticket, and your entire family can enjoy professional theatre, receive great perks, and know that your support will help HTY to thrive, especially in these challenging times.

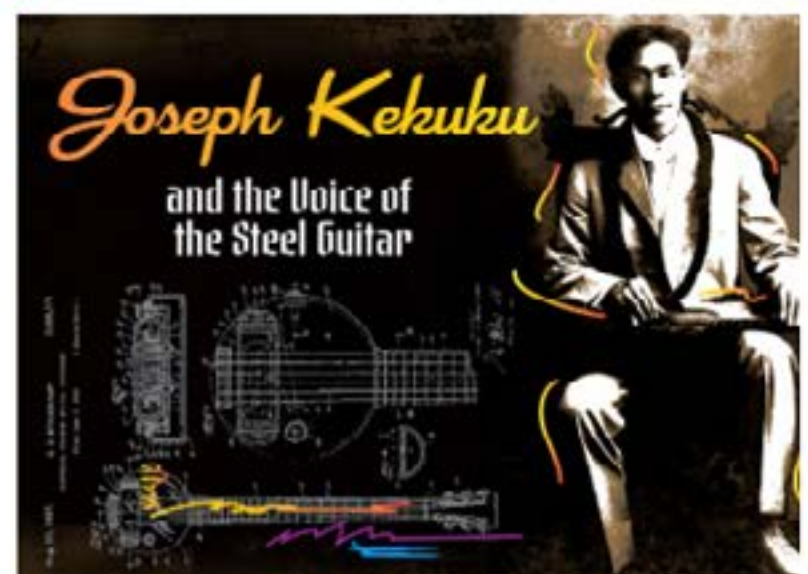
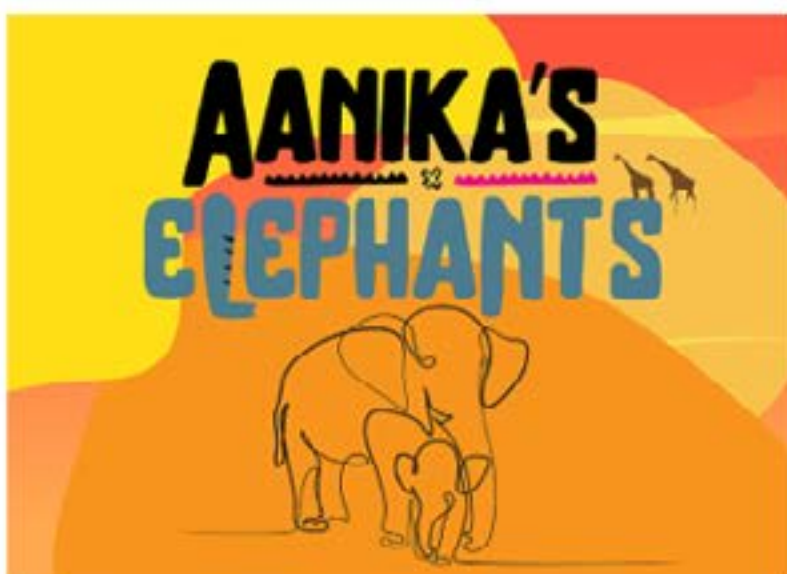
Most of all, we hope you have a fantastic time at today's performance and that we see you back soon—in a class, at a show, or in your own homemade spaceship. After all, there is no limit to where your imagination may take you!

Information on shows and tickets at [www.htyweb.org](http://www.htyweb.org).

Click the link below to check out our membership options:  
[HTY Membership](#)

**Mahalo,**

**Eric Johnson**  
Artistic Director





## OUR SPONSORS

A special mahalo to our generous sponsors.  
We are very grateful for your support!

**Zilber Family Foundation**  
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## Production Credits

**Written and Directed by**  
Annie Cusick Wood

**Set, Costume and Prop Design by**  
Karen Kiefer

**Lighting Design by**  
Chesley Cannon

**Music and Sound Design by**  
Mattea Mazzella

**Performed by**  
Hermenigildo Tesoro, Jr  
Mattea Mazzella

Sean-Joseph Choo (Understudy)

**Technical Direction**  
Eric West

**Stage Manager**  
Sarah Danvers



## Message from Creator, Annie Cusick Wood



It's a rare and special experience to return to a piece years later and rediscover it with fresh eyes. I first created this show in 2016, at the same time I also planted an indigenous hala tree with

Healthy Climate Communities on Hāmākua Marsh in Kailua. Both the tree and the play have grown in ways I could never have imagined.

*The Tiny Tree* play evolved into a puppet film that went on to win Best Fantasy Film at the San Diego Children's Film Festival, and the hala tree is now a beautiful strong tree surrounded by many new native trees that we hope, one day, becomes a forest. At HTY, we are lucky to be able to care for our stories in this way, to revisit them, nurture them, and share them with new audiences. What I love most about this process is the longevity of the work — how a story can take root, grow, and be reimaged over time. Like seeds in a forest, stories need tending. They need care, patience, and the right environment to thrive. In the same way, we are reminded to care for the world around us, and for one another just as the trees do.

We are delighted to bring this show to a new generation of space adventurers, forest guardians, and planet protectors. May it spark imagination, deepen connection, and remind us all of the role we each play in caring for our world. And if you feel inspired, go plant a tree — it's a beautiful place to begin.

Mahalo for being part of its continuing journey.

**Annie Cusick Wood** was born in Scotland and now resides in Kailua, Hawai'i. Annie has forged her way as an award-winning children's theatre director, playwright, and producer for the past 30 years. She worked extensively across the UK for leading companies such as TAG, Citizens Theatre, Leicester Haymarket, MacRobert Arts Centre, and Northern Stage, and was the Artistic Director of Polka Theatre in London before moving to Hawai'i in 2006. Since moving to Hawai'i, she has written and directed an array of thought-provoking shows for Honolulu Theatre for Youth (HTY), including *Blue*, *The Red Balloon*, *Home*, and *Sparkle*. She has also written and directed for HTY's Emmy® award-winning TV show "The HI Way."

## Show Synopsis

**E**mbark on an unforgettable cosmic adventure with Matt and his dad aboard Roger Rocket Ship as they explore distant galaxies. When their spaceship malfunctions, they land on a mysterious planet and discover a magical blue seed. Filled with upbeat songs, delightful creatures, and exciting adventures, this enchanting tale teaches the importance of caring for our planet and each other.

## About the Cast



**Mattea Mazzella** is a creator from Kāneʻohe, Hawaiʻi, who loves making art and sharing stories. Matt's first instrument was the Kawai piano at his grandma's house on the windward side of the island of Oʻahu. With a camcorder and a laptop, Matt's been making music and films since he was a kid. This is Matt's 12th season as a member of HTY's resident ensemble.



**Hermenigildo Tesoro, Jr.** is in his 30th season with HTY! Junior has performed as a cockroach, crocodile, hula mula dancer, mongoose, monk, demigod, evil stepsister, swordsman, snake, juggler, fish general, fairy, mouse, monkey, ogre, caribou, blacksmith, surfer, p'ansori singer, a rock, a rock wall (twice), King of Troy, musubi, Maui, Aladdin, Spartan knight, dolphin, paleontologist, a fire-breathing sea dragon (three times), Wilbur the pig, a nēnē, Peter Rabbit, a culinary drill sergeant, a kamikirigami artist, goldfish vendor, B-boy, Robin Hood, a cloud, an invisible reindeer, Inky Blue, star-nosed mole, Xi Xia King, Uncle Billy, a pink unicorn, the red balloon, a Philippine eagle, a garbage truck, Gepetto, a hair brush, a salt farmer, carp, woodcutter, snail, spam musubi, Japanese cumulus cloud, and a cockroach (again).

## About Our Guest Designer

**Karen Kiefer** (Set, Costume, and Prop Design) has been creating HTY shows for many years. Previous collaborations include *Happy Sad Sad Happy*, *The Tiny Tree*, *Blue*, *Shhhh*, *Ouch!*, *Sparkle*, *Happy*, *Peter Rabbit*, and *Forest Flutters*. Karen is a prolific artist who works collaboratively and extensively with the performing arts community including both stage and screen. When she's not creating theatre, she is teaching and creating fine art at her Kailua studio, riding horses, or out on the beautiful ocean canoe paddling.





# Mahalo

The Cathedral of St. Andrew

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Hermenigildo Tesoro Jr.  
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