



Solo Otea

O Tahiti E / Margueritte Lai

PEHEPEHE

A pehe pehe is a declamation punctuated by percussion, generally pahu tupai (skin drums). In this instance, the music is offered in the Otea solo category. This poem is the introduction to the piece “Te Roimata o Oro”. It is declaimed by Margueritte Lai,

The piece was written at the turn of the century on commission, to accompany the promotion of Tahiti's black pearl.

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This declamation introduces the story's protagonists:

Vahua who was the Ari'i vahine commander of the shipping vessels to Makemo,
Oro was Tahiti's high priest and warlord.

The latter had asked Vahua for an alliance she couldn't refuse.

To honor this alliance, 'Oro had given her two large pearls of perfect lustre.

But Vahua didn't want to meet 'Oro.

To discourage him, her nanny took her place the day the suitor came to Makemo.

Vahua had gone into hiding at the other end of the island. Her advisors asked her to reverse her decision.

Vahua presented herself to 'Oro wearing the pearls he had given her.

She named these pearls “Oro's Tears”.

Ko Vahua

Ko Vahua e ariki vahine

Ko Oro, Ko Oro e tu ana ki te anuanua

Ka pu, ka pu e ariki ko Tuporo

Tatarahapa ake

Tatarahapa ake ko Vahua

Ki te fakainaina

Ki te atua ia 'Oro

Ka poro atu ai

E kiriti ana koe i na poe kura

Kapiri taua

Ko oro e tu i te anuanua

E fatu ana i te tahere kanaenae

Ko vahua e ariki te nuku tivaka

O Makemo, Makemo roa i te tai tu gata !

Koia to roimata e Oro !

We don't offer a full translation here, as this piece is offered in the Otea solo category. It is a theme only. Each candidate is free to honor it as he or she or he sees fit. It is in the Paumotu language.