Rugby World Cup (RWC) 2011 was held in New Zealand over September and October. The Opening Ceremony on 9 September was a spectacular display with Māori tikanga imbued throughout. National and international media coverage of the event was full of praise. The following samples from a range of media outlets in New Zealand and overseas.

Show held crowd entranced A “spectacular” opening ceremony did New Zealand proud … Tasman Rugby Union chairman Nick Patterson was particularly impressed with the changing light displays, the dancing and hakas, and a lone Māori woman calling a karanga whose “incredible voice filled right across the stadium … It was just an unbelievable sort of experience.” NZ, Nelson Mail

Huge crowds celebrate RWC opening “A traditional Māori call of welcome, known as the karanga, opened the ceremony, followed by a highly energetic performance featuring dancers, singers, fireworks and a dazzling light show.” NZ, RNZ

Almighty ceremony opens RWC “… A grand city-wide ceremony .. traditional Māori welcome .. the crowd was wowed by an almighty display of kapa haka ..” NZ, Newstalk ZB

Majestic waka make stunning impact “Māori culture proudly to the fore in an unforgettable start to the tournament” NZ, NZ Herald

World Cup ceremony a Winner with the World They loved the drama, the rumble of the haka and that young man in red and black – through the world’s eyes, our opening ceremony was ka pai. Media reports from around the globe bandied about words like spine-tingling, mesmerising, spectacular and dazzling to describe the much anticipated opening event. NZ, NZ Herald

A spectacular Kiwi welcome “Earlier, the crowd were treated to an at times spine-tingling opening ceremony that drew on New Zealand’s Māori and rugby heritage. Anyone tuning in would have been in no doubt about New Zealand’s cultural heritage.” NZ, Nelson Mail
Kiwis say Kia Ora to the world  The World received a traditional Māori welcome in New Zealand today as the Rugby World Cup 201 was officially opened. UK, The Independent

Spectacular opening ceremony ticks all the boxes  “...a string of events ... arrival of a fleet of 26 waka (traditional Māori boats) .. week of spine-tingling flash mob street haka .. most potently by Te Matarae I O Rehu whose stadium filling performance was highlight of an event that was mesmerising, spectacular ..” UK, The Guardian

London 2012 Olympics: New Zealand's All Blacks have their haka – but dare we unleash our Morris Dancers?  “What [NZ] have is something of huge worth: a defining cultural pivot around which the whole event could spin ... How [Boyle, Olympics 2012 coordinator] must have envied [NZ’s] cultural coherence... the haka is one of the grand sights of world sport ..the haka was at the heart of the whole opening ceremony...” UK, Telegraph

Opening ceremony wows at Rugby World Cup NZ  “1 billion saw an incredible spectacle as the event unfolded .. the karanga, a traditional Māori call of welcome kicked off the ceremony ... unbelievable ceremony” UK, Only Kent: Breaking World News

Time is now for our golden generation  “ABSOLUTELY sensational — and that was just the opening ceremony. Leaning heavily on Māori culture and protocols, Eden Park was electrified for the most incredible spectacle I have ever witnessed on a rugby pitch. As an opening statement from the tournament organisers, it could not have been more striking” IRELAND, Irish Examanier

Minister’s traditional welcome  He said “It is fascinating to gain an understanding of the work that New Zealand does to promote indigenous culture and bilingualism ... share stories regarding our experiences ...” WALES, South Wales Evening Post

RWC off to spectacular start  “... Dazzling ... spectacular .. a traditional Māori greeting was followed by a dazzling light display that traced Māori motifs and the country's landscape .. the world’s largest Pacific city ...” CHINA, Xinhua News

Spectacular fireworks and pageantry herald rugby world cup opening  “... Rugby World Cup Limited Chairman Bernard Lapasset welcomed the world to New Zealand in the language of the Māori ...[the opening] culminated in a massive, intense and passionate haka, devised with the input of Māori throughout New Zealand ...” SRI LANKA, The Sunday Leader

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