



**Te Puni Kōkiri**  
REALISING MĀORI POTENTIAL

## Te Reo Waiata Hou Māori in Contemporary Music



### KEY FACTS

- The number of New Zealand artists in the singles and albums charts has grown substantially since 1999.
- In 2003 and 2004 the top selling albums in New Zealand were by New Zealand artists.
- In 2003 the top selling album in New Zealand was *Beautiful Collision* from Bic Runga who is of Chinese and Māori heritage.
- Contemporary Māori artists such as Whirimako Black are receiving international praise.

In the past 5 years New Zealand music has increased in popularity. New Zealand artists are now regularly in the charts and Māori artists are at the forefront. The uniqueness of Māori culture permeates the music and makes it a true "New Zealand sound". This fact sheet is produced in conjunction with New Zealand Music Month 2005 and provides key information on the contribution made by Māori to contemporary New Zealand music.

### KIWI MUSIC IN THE CHARTS

At the start of New Zealand Music Month 2005, a quarter of the songs in the New Zealand Top 20 singles chart<sup>2</sup> were by New Zealand artists. This included the song *Moonshine* by Savage which remained in the top spot for four weeks. At the same time, in the New Zealand Albums chart there were three New Zealand albums in the Top Ten (at the end of April 2005 the band Goldenhorse had two albums in the Top 40). This situation contrasted with 1999 when, by the end of the year, there was no New Zealand music in the Top 50 singles or albums chart (see Table 1).



Figure 1:  
NZ Music Month 2005<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF NEW ZEALAND MUSICIANS IN NEW ZEALAND MUSIC CHARTS<sup>3</sup>

Year	Number of NZ Artists		
	Singles (at end of April)	Singles (year)	Albums (year)
1999	3	0	0
2000	4	4	5
2001	5	5	7
2002	5	8	9
2003	6	8	10
2004	5	11	16
2005	7	N/A	N/A

Source: Recording Industry Association of New Zealand (RIANZ). Note: NZ Music month introduced in 2000, in 2004 chart changed from Top 50 to Top 40.

The first week of May saw a New Zealand single (*Stop the Music* – PMoney & Scribe) in the top ten of the Australian singles chart. Scribe's debut album, *The Crusader*, was also in the Australian top 40 album chart.

Not surprisingly New Zealanders are buying proportionally more New Zealand music.

TABLE 2: ORIGIN OF MUSIC SALES IN NEW ZEALAND

Year	Popular		Classical
	Domestic	International	Domestic and international
1998	6.0%	86.0%	8.0%
1999	5.4%	87.8%	6.8%
2000	5.8%	90.0%	4.1%
2001	7.2%	89.1%	3.7%
2002	11.1%	85.1%	3.7%
2003	11.5%	82.5%	6.0%
2004	12.6%	82.9%	4.5%

Source: RIANZ<sup>4</sup>

In 2003 and 2004 the number one selling albums in New Zealand were by New Zealand artists: *Beautiful Collision* by Bic Runga (of Chinese and Māori heritage) and *What to do with Daylight* by Brooke Fraser.

Some Māori artists whose albums have been in the Top 40 albums chart<sup>5</sup> in the last six years include Che Fu, Kiri Te Kanawa, The Herbs (Best of), Anika Mōa and Salmonella Dub. These established artists are being joined by new talent including The Black Seeds, Katchafire, Trinity Roots, Dallas Tamaira, Nesian Mystik and Fat Freddy's Drop<sup>6</sup>. This does not include the many individual Māori musicians playing in various New Zealand bands.





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*Māori musicians are now working in the genres of hip-hop, dub, reggae, blues, junk, soul, classical, contemporary, electronica and rock. In many of these genres Māori musicians have joined with Pasifika artists to create a unique "South Pacific sound".*

## ■ MĀORI CULTURE IN MUSIC

Te reo Māori<sup>7</sup> itself is emerging in popular music now, such as in the two Trinity Roots' albums and the work of The Upper Hutt Posse and Ill Semantics. This is an idea pioneered by the late Dalvanus Prime in his work with the Patea Māori Club and the breakthrough single and album *Poi E*.

On Trinity Roots' albums, *True* and *Home, Land and Sea*, te reo Māori is used extensively throughout many tracks and even on the album sleeve, which lists each band member's iwi.

Contemporary Māori artist Whirimako Black gained international recognition on the compilation album *One Giant Leap* with two tracks: one with REM frontman Michael Stipe and Indian movie legend Asha Bhosle; and the other, called *Tā Moko*, in which she sings solo in te reo Māori.

Other Māori artists well known overseas include Moana Maniapoto, Hinewehi Mohi (*Oceania*) and the late Hirini Melbourne, who played his music on taonga pūoro.<sup>8</sup>

## ■ PRODUCTION AND PROMOTION

There are a number of Māori artists who are also working in the production of music such as music producer DLT. The Dawnraid Entertainment record label from South Auckland has signed many Māori and Pasifika artists and in 2001 started a community trust in order to foster new talent.

The Urban Pasifika label has, over the last eight years, played a major role (in combination with Dawnraid Entertainment) in the creation of a music genre unique to New Zealand which is a fusion of Māori and Polynesian Hip Hop and RnB<sup>9</sup>. Urban Pasifika created a company called Gifted and Māori. This company was set up to showcase New Zealand's new te reo Māori Hip Hop and RnB artists.

Loop Recording Aot[ear]oa has strong links to Māori music. Loop's new compilation release, *The Green Room 001*, is described as: "a CD that reflects upon the state of New Zealand now. An era of creative evolution has seen a fresh sound emerge from Aotearoa. A sound focused on education, whānau and fun.

Aotearoa is a unique place on this planet. We have our own special blend of technology, cultures and traditions bound together within one of the most inspiring geographical landscapes in the world".<sup>10</sup>

The Māori Television Service is a strong promoter of Māori music and the show *Coast* offers a nationwide live television audience for bands to showcase their talents. The music television channel C4 also brings New Zealand and Māori talent to the fore with the show *Homegrown* and various guest appearances on other shows. DJ Sir Vere's television and radio shows are another strong source of promotion for Māori music in the hip-hop genre.

## ■ AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

The New Zealand branch of the Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA) presents annual awards. In 2004 Māori artist Warryn Maxwell of Trinity Roots was a finalist for the overall Silver Scroll award with the song *Home, Land and Sea*. Also Hareruia Aperahama won the Maioha Award, for the best Māori waiata of the year, with his song *E Tae*.

At the 2004 NZ Music awards (also known as the Tuis), Salmonella Dub's *One Drop East* won Best Dance/Electronica Album and Ruia's *Hawaiki* won Best Māori Album.

In 2003 Moana Maniapoto won the International Songwriting Competition with her song *Moko*.

## ■ TE MĀNGAI PĀHO

Te Māngai Pāho, the Māori Broadcasting Funding Agency, was established in 1993 under the Broadcasting Amendment Act in recognition of the Crown's responsibilities regarding the Māori language and Māori culture in broadcasting. Te Māngai Pāho makes funding available to providers for the production of Māori language television programmes, Māori language music CDs and to the national network of Māori radio stations.

In 2003-04 Te Māngai Pāho funded the production of eleven albums, eleven singles and one music video. In total Te Māngai Pāho provided \$498,000<sup>11</sup> in music funding alone (not including funding given to Māori radio stations).

**FOOTNOTES** 1 © 2005, Image used with permission of New Zealand Music Industry Commission. 2 Monday 25th April 2005. 3 Chart entries are determined by sales. 4 Export sales are not included. Domestic repertoire is defined as a product where the artist is signed to a NZ company. This is different to the radio airplay content definition which is based on the nationality of the artist. From 2001 music video sales have been included. 5 Albums are a more reliable indicator for music preference than singles in wider New Zealand. 6 At time of publication (May 2005) Fat Freddy's Drop's debut album *Based on a True Story*, occupies the number one position on the New Zealand album charts. 7 Māori language. 8 Traditional instruments. 9 RnB is soul and funk influenced pop music and is used to describe the modern version of Rhythm and Blues. 10 Loop Recordings Aot[ear]oa 2005. 11 Te Māngai Pāho Annual Report 2003-04.

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