



VOICES NEW ZEALAND

# FAONGA MOANA

A love letter to the oceans

**Governments have just a few months left to agree to a Global Ocean Treaty. If they get it right, it will open the door to vast network of ocean sanctuaries, which could protect over a third of the world's seas**



**Text the word OCEAN to  
5806 to demand a  
Global Oceans Treaty**

**GREENPEACE**



## Tēnā koutou

We are delighted to be presenting *Voices New Zealand Chamber Choir* (Voices NZ) in a spectacular multi-media programme, *Taonga Moana* which tells the story of the threat posed to our beautiful oceans, now and into the future. *Taonga Moana* features compositions from around the world, including a newly commissioned work by distinguished New Zealand composer Warren Maxwell, accompanied by a landscape of evocative projected moving images created by multimedia artists Tim and Mic Gruchy.

With an international reputation for vocal excellence. Voices NZ, directed by Dr Karen Grylls, have created this inspiring programme which celebrates our oceans as taonga.

Underlying *Taonga Moana* is an important and timely message for each and everyone of us about preserving our world for future generations to come.

We are very grateful for the support we have received towards this tour by the Lion Foundation, Invercargill Licensing Trust, Community Trust South, TSB Community Trust, Otago Community Trust, Trust Waikato and the Rata Foundation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Catherine Gibson**  
Chief Executive  
**Chamber Music New Zealand**

# Taonga Moana

A Love Letter To The Oceans

## Prologue

The Call Of The Kuaka

## David Hamilton (New Zealand)

Karakia Of The Stars

## James Gordon Arr. Diane Loomer (Canada)

Frobisher Bay

## Jaakko Mäntyjärvi (Finland)

The Seafarer\*

## Jeff Enns (Canada)

The Sorrow Song Of Whales (newly arranged for SATB)

## Improvisation

[on 'Lacrimosa' from Mozart's 'Requiem' and 'Dies Irae' plainchant]

## Warren Maxwell (New Zealand)

Hind Mahaasaagar\*

## Ken Steven (Indonesia)

Henkatan Jiwa

## Eriks Esenvalds (Latvia)

A Drop In The Ocean

## Mason Bates (United States)

Observer In The Magellanic Cloud

## Warren Maxwell (New Zealand)

Te Tai Uka A Pia\*

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\* World Premiere

DURATION: 80 minutes with no interval

# Voices New Zealand

Chamber Choir

## Conductor

Karen Grylls

## Director/Storyboard

Sara Brodie

## Script Development

Briar Grace-Smith

## Audio Visuals

Tim and Mic Gruchy

## Language and Vocal Coach

Catrin Johnsson, Choirs NZ

## Sopranos

Rachel Alexander Sotherland

Pepe Becker

Ella Ewen

Shona McIntyre-Bull

## Altos

Helen Acheson

Morag Atchsion

Hazel Fenemor

Andrea Cochrane

## Tenors

Matthew Bennett

Phillip Collins

Jared Corbett

Albert Mataafa

## Basses

James Butler

Gregory Camp

Nick Forbes

William King

## Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand Trust

Arne Herrmann, Chief Executive

Karen Grylls, Artistic Director

Emma Billings, Operations Manager

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Anna Bowron, Manager NZSSC

choirs.nz

The artists reserve the right to make changes to the programme.



Please kindly remember to switch off all cellphones, pagers and watches. Taking photographs, or sound or video recordings during the concert is prohibited unless with the prior approval of Chamber Music New Zealand. Thank you.

# Synopsis

From their northern breeding grounds the kuaka [godwits] who can fly between the past and future, cry out for the great navigator of old, Ui-Te-Rangiora to rise up. From the ancient seabed he appears on a waka made of dead men's bones. The kuaka call for him to journey southwards with them to speak to future generations.

As the Arctic sea ice melts it releases the voices of seafarers past (trapped in the ice) who pursued the mighty whale. Yet, Ui-Te-Rangiora discovers the whale-paths are silent. Each time he casts his net across the expanse of the Atlantic it comes back empty.

The people of the coming days will know about the casting out of nets. But, how will they eat? At the earth's equator the navigator casts again with the last of the strength he has. The ocean churns the colour of milk. From the foam appears a giant serpent, the mythic World Serpent who encircles the oceans and contains the poisons of the waters by biting its tail. It offers of its flesh to enable Ui-Te-Rangiora to hear the whale's song; the memory of the melody of the earth and abundance of oceans connecting all beings.

The World Serpent speaks of the rising toxicity which has caused him to adapt, and like the Indian Ocean's sea snakes he has lost his brilliant yellow stripes. He warns of a tipping point that cannot be contained.

Shells of the sea's creatures are weakening in acid waters and breaking up. Ui-Te-Rangiora's waka of bones begins to disintegrate. Is this the day of wrath, where man will be judged, and dissolve?

The sinking bones awaken Kurma the sea turtle, who appears in the time of crisis to restore equilibrium. He catches Ui-Te-Rangiora on his back, migrating like the crayfish to cooler water.

At the Pacific Gyre they encounter another serpent, this one created by man, an attempt to clear the waters of what has been discarded.

Reaching Aotearoa Ui-Te-Rangiora's escort can travel no further. He is transferred onto the back of the mighty Tohorā; to ride the whale south to the rāhui, the sanctuary in the Antarctic Ocean. There, proclaim it for generations to come; let all who hear of it rise up.

Synopsis by Sara Brodie

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Voices New Zealand is managed by Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand Trust, a charitable trust that also looks after the New Zealand Youth Choir and the New Zealand Secondary Students Choir in order to create, nurture and promote vocal excellence in choral singing.

# Taonga Moana

## Programme Notes

The initial idea of Taonga Moana was an inspiration drawn from conversations with many people about how our oceans must become sanctuaries and the need for us all to care of them. “Aranga, Aranga” comes the cry; perhaps, if we followed the kuaka [godwit] on its Spring journey south from its breeding nests in the great Siberian and Alaskan tundra to the rich feeding grounds provided by Aotearoa’s tidal flats and coastal marshes, we could embrace the oceans and thank them for allowing the earth to exist. Taonga Moana is just that; a love song to the oceans.

The journey, sung, staged and with audio and visual design, is a series of musical and visual snapshots from the Arctic Ocean in the north to the Southern Oceans and Antarctica. In response to the kuaka, Hamilton’s Karakia of the Stars, to the Sacred One, to the magellanic cloud, cries out for the new year’s growth to flourish, the Matariki, for the waters to provide.

## The Seafarers and Whales

The kuaka takes us first from an inlet on Baffin Island in the North Atlantic. Frozen in Frobisher Bay is the tale of the captain of a whaling ship who decides to push the late summer season to catch “one more whale”, but finds himself and his crew frozen in for the Winter. The sailors may never see their families again. In Mäntyjärvi’s work, commissioned for this programme, the tenth century text speaks about the spirit of The Seafarer who journeys over the whale’s path across the waves of the northern seas; in his song, expressed in folk and contemporary style, he warns “I do not believe the world’s riches will last for ever.” And as we “listen closer to the water” we hear *The Sorrow Song of Whales*. In his piece, arranged for Voices NZ, Canadian composer, Jeff Enns asks us to seek forgiveness from the whales in the waters of the Atlantic, to listen and learn from them, to stop the blasting and slow the ships, for “we are all connected.... Right whales and dolphins, we sing for you”.

## Lament and guilt:

A lament from the “Lacrymosa” our own guilt “homo reus”, and the horrific tales from Warren Maxwell’s *Hind Mahasagaar*, from the Indian Ocean take the journey onward; the waters glow with the sinking bones of men upon the ocean floor. From the edges of the Indian and Pacific Oceans there is a human response, the Malay dance, inspired by an Indonesian Malay scale, explores the sounds of the human voice and the beat of our souls, Hentakan Jiwa. But what is our response? “We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.” Mother Teresa’s words expressed so eloquently in Ešenvalds’ *A Drop in the Ocean*, remind us of our inadequacies and yet at the same time the necessity for us to act.

## The Whales Navigate

The kuaka is exhausted, as it has travelled the eight thousand kilometers from Alaska and reaches Aotearoa, “Home at last” The Observer in the Magellanic Cloud looks down from the heavens upon the Matariki, and the new growth. And Warren Maxwell’s final thoughts are of the tides of icy shards, Te Tai Uka a Pia, of the frozen southern sea; of “the intrepid seafaring protagonist Ui-Te-Rangiora [650 AD] who sailed from the Arctic Ocean, though the lifeless Atlantic Ocean across to the acidic Indian Ocean, to the plastic-filled Pacific and to the last sanctuary on the planet, the great Southern Ocean. The kuaka can go no further south, so she hands over the role of navigator to the baleen whale [Tohorā] who traverses the southern continent. Ui-Te-Rangiora follows Tohorā south looking for the deity Hine Moana who dwells in the Southern Ocean. It is she who will give Ui-Te-Rangiora the final stanza of the ancient karakia needed that will prevent Vishnu from unleashing destruction on the world.”



***“... The oceans are under threat now as never before in human history. We can now destroy or we can cherish. The choice is ours.”***

*– Sir David Attenborough*

# Voices New Zealand

Voices New Zealand Chamber Choir, with Music Director Dr Karen Grylls, made its début at the 1998 New Zealand International Arts Festival and later that year won awards at the Tolosa International Choral Competition in Spain.

As a nationally selected choir of the highest calibre, VOICES is a chamber choir that is flexible in size, and capable of performing a wide repertoire. Many of the singers are alumni of the New Zealand Youth Choir.

Recent highlights include the 2018 European Tour to London, Hamburg, Berlin, Aix-en-Provence and Barcelona, appearances in Jack Body's *Passio*, Tippett's *A Child of our Time* and Britten's *Requiem for the Fallen* (all Auckland Arts Festival), and Ross Harris' *Requiem for the Fallen* (also NZ Festival and Dunedin Arts Festival). A sell-out gala concert with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa was one of the classical highlights in the 2016 New Zealand Festival. Voices performed an especially commissioned work

*The Unusual Silence* by Victoria Kelly at the WW100 commemorations in Le Quesnoy, France in November 2018.

Critically acclaimed recordings include *Spirit of the Land* (winner of a 'TUI', a New Zealand Music Award for Best Classical Album), and *Voice of the Soul*.

With its distinct New Zealand sound, performing music from Aotearoa/ New Zealand and infusing the qualities of its Pacific origins into the classic choral repertoire, VOICES has established itself as the country's premier national and professional choir. VOICES regularly performs at Arts Festivals around the country, collaborates with orchestras, Chamber Music New Zealand, Taonga Puoro musicians and other artists across creative genres.

VOICES tours internationally and is the choir-of-choice for arts festivals and special projects.

## Sara Brodie (director/storyboard)

Sara is a director and choreographer from New Zealand. She has a MA in theatre from Victoria University, Wellington and is a New Zealand Arts Laureate.

She has directed the opera premieres of: *The Bone Feeder* (Auckland Arts Festival/New Zealand Opera), *Hohēpa* (New Zealand Opera/NZ International Arts Festival) *Iris Dreaming* (Grimebourne Festival), *L'Oca del Cairo* (Days Bay Opera, NZ) and *Kia Ora Khalid* (Capital E National Theatre for Children, NZ). Productions include: *Aindamar* (New Zealand International Arts Festival), *Nixon In China* (Auckland Arts Festival), *Don Giovanni*, *Die Zauberflöte* (New Zealand Opera) and most recently the spring Opera Highlights tour for Scottish Opera.

She has developed and directed new work such as: *Gao Shan Lui Shui*

(High Mountain Flowing Water) which has toured China, New Zealand and Australia, *Fault Lines*, a dance-theatre production for the Leshan Song and Dance Company of Sichuan, China for the Melbourne and Christchurch Arts Festivals' (which toured to Canada, China, New and Australia), *Tracing Hamlet* – a community based immersive deconstruction of Hamlet (Wanaka Festival of Colour, Erupt Festival Taupo, NZ) and *Skydancer* featuring the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra to introduce young people to the symphony. She was the Artistic Director of Stage Left Company from 2008 - 2012, which focused on interdisciplinary works including *The Kreutzer* and *North/South*. For Auckland Theatre Company, NZ, she directed the premiere of *Under The Mountain* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*.

## Karen Grylls (conductor)

Karen Grylls is Associate Professor in Conducting and Head of Choral Studies at the University of Auckland and is Artistic Director of the Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand Trust, the managing body for the NZ Youth Choir and Voices New Zealand Chamber Choir. Karen was Conductor and Artistic Director of the New Zealand Youth Choir from 1989 to 2011, and Artistic Director of Toronto's Exultate Chamber Choir from 2011 to 2013.

Karen is much in demand as an adjudicator for competitions

worldwide, including the Marktoberdorf International Chamber Choir Competition, Bavaria, and The World Choir Games in Xiamen, China. She is sought internationally as a choral clinician and regularly conducts masterclasses and workshops in the UK, North America and Canada.

In 1996 Auckland University honoured her with a Distinguished Teaching Award in Music and in 1999 she became an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for her services to choral music.





**Tim Gruchy** [Visual Musician, Multi-Media Artist]

Tim Gruchy's extensive career spans the exploration and composition of immersive and interactive multimedia through installation, music and performance, whilst redefining its role and challenging the delineations between cultural sectors. He has exhibited multimedia works, photography, video, music and performance since the early 1980s as well as his larger expressions in the public art arenas. His works are held in private, corporate and museum collections.

His installations and performances feature in many international and Australasian institutions, festivals and public spaces including WOMAD [2018/7], Wenzhou Bienalle [2016], Dak' Art Dakar [2016], Auckland Arts Festival [2015 & 2009], New Zealand Arts Festival [2014], SCOUT Auckland [2012], Biennale of Sydney [2012] [collaboration], Beijing 798 [2011], Shanghai Expo [2010], 2nd Asian Art Biennial Taiwan [2009], Melbourne International Arts Festival [2009], Adelaide Festival [1986-2008], and

Sydney Festival [2004]. Theatre and opera credits include *AIDA* Sydney Opera House and touring Australia [2009-2013], *Ainadamar*, Adelaide Festival [2008], *The Leningrad Symphony* [2006].

He is currently Art Director and Distinguished Professor of the Digital Art Department, Shanghai Academy of Fine Arts and an Adjunct Research Professor at the University of South Australia.

His research has extended into areas of interactivity, the human computer interface and performative interactives.

He has also been extensively involved in museum design and various projects at the intersection of architecture and multimedia.

**Mic Gruchy** (video designer)

Mic works across stage, screen and video art. He is a pioneer of video design for theatre, designing shows for all the major companies and festivals around Australia for over 30 years. He has edited TV, documentary, feature films and his video artworks are included in private collections and museums around the world such as MOMA in New York. Commissioned works include for the video installations for the Sydney Opera House, Sydney Olympic Park and the Biennale of Sydney. His shows have won Helpmann Awards and he was awarded an Australia Council Established Artist's Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Practice in 2012. Mic teaches Digital Media Design and Vision Technologies Production at the National Institute of Dramatic Art in Sydney and has lectured in media at University of NSW and University of Wollongong.

***I am very honoured and proud to be conducting Taonga Moana with Voices NZ. With new touring initiatives for the choir and intentionally innovative programming, we invite and challenge more audiences to be part of our journey, in New Zealand and globally. As artists, we are lending our voices to relevant and contemporary issues that demand our attention and action at every level.***

-Karen Grylls

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Tuesday 10 March

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Friday 13 March

For more, visit [chambermusic.co.nz/2020](https://chambermusic.co.nz/2020)



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