

waiata

MĀORI MUSIC AWARDS

National Waiata Māori Music Awards now an online event for 2020

September 16, 2020

Organisers of the [National Waiata Māori Music Awards](#) have made the tough decision to move the 2020 event online, with safety of the people being the priority.

It comes after the Government announced Auckland will stay in alert level 2.5 for now while the rest of the country is likely to stay in alert level 2 until next week.

The awards gala event was due to be held on October 2 in Hawke's Bay.

Traditionally, a large number of guests and finalists would come from all over Aotearoa, as well as some from overseas.

National Waiata Māori Music Awards Executive Director Ellison Huata said there would still be an awards event for 2020, an online version, to be held at the later date of October 9.

"We're about to announce the finalists for this year's awards and we still want to have an event to let people know who the winners for 2020 are and to celebrate our Māori artists and music in what has been a very difficult year.

"We plan to run it as an online, virtual event but still have a presence at Toitōi - Hawke's Bay Arts & Events Centre, the venue where we planned to run the awards event this year."

Ellison said it would be a mixture of pre-recorded material and live performances for the virtual event which will be streamed online via YouTube and the [Waiata Māori Music Awards Facebook page](#).

"We know a lot of people will be disappointed, we wanted this year's awards event to be a positive way to bring people through the challenges of 2020.

"We were also looking forward to returning to Toitōi, the venue where we had our awards event in 2008."

The awards event had been run at the Hastings Sports Centre since 2014 and then Clubs Hastings, while Toitoti was being redeveloped.

“We still want people to tune in to watch this year’s awards event, to recognise and celebrate the achievements of our Māori singers, song-writers and performers.”

TikTok Whānau Challenge

The change to an online event was made following the inaugural TikTok Whānau Challenge, an event to support Te Marama Pūoro Waiata Māori - Māori Music Month during August.

Māori Music Month is also run by the National Waiata Māori Music Awards.

People were challenged to come up with a dance, performed to a waiata by any of the many Māori music performers.

Ellison was happy with the results.

There were about 400 videos submitted and 540,000 views of the TikTok Challenge over the month which showed the reach Māori music had globally.

Six winners were selected who will now attend the National Waiata Māori Music Awards as VIPs in 2021.

“We know TikTok is really popular not just in New Zealand but around the world and so it’s a really good way to promote Māori music at home and to the rest of the world.

“We were impressed with the videos whānau submitted, with lots of creativity and humour to promote our Māori artists and songs.

“We had planned to have the winners of the TikTok Challenge appear as VIPs at this year’s National Waiata Māori Music Awards, but because the event is going online, we will host the winners in 2021.”

Ellison said the event’s TikTok host Te Atakura Huata-Harawira made a [video compilation pulling together all of the winners of the inaugural Whanau TikTok Challenge](#).

“Every day we asked people to think about what was their favourite waiata, by a Māori artist and then to create their own video and dance to share, to celebrate Te Marama Pūoro Waiata Māori,” Te Atakura said.

“The response was really amazing, we had people not just from Aotearoa but also from Australia, America, Guam, from the UK, Canada and more.

“We had a few people from Italy jumping on board to support Māori Music Month and in the end got about 540,000 views of the challenge over 30 days, which is pretty amazing.”

There were also some people writing their own songs and performing to them on TikTok which added another dimension to the challenge.

“The judges were looking for creativity, for singers, dancers that supported the kaupapa.”

The list of entrants was narrowed down to 25 and from there six winners were selected.

Among the winners was Stephanie Awheto from Hamilton who said she felt “lucky to be one of the winners”.

“I’m a New Zealand Sign Language interpreter so all my content is in NZSL.”

She selected the Karakia Whakakapi sung by Maisey Rika for her waiata.

“I chose my waiata because my whāngai brother Patrick, who was deaf and I created all the signs for it.

“He passed in 2016 so it was a way to honour him as well as whakanui Māori Music Month.”

Dominique Smith, Auckland, entered the challenge because she wanted to showcase the outstanding music Māori artists make, both in Māori and English reo.

She enjoys being a TikTok dance creator and has recorded a few dances for songs made by the likes of Six60, Sons of Zion and Kingz.

It was her performance to a Sons of Zion song that caught the judge’s attention.

Miquelle Blake, from Flaxmere, Hawke’s Bay, wrote and performed an original song, Ko Tōku Reo, a blend of Māori proverbs and her own thoughts.

“I love being Māori and am very proud to be part of Māori Music Month and seeing our language thrive,” Miquelle said.

Te Atakura Huata-Harawira said it was great to see how people got involved to champion Māori Music Month.

“It was a great way to support our Māori artists and whānau during this crazy time,” Te Atakura said.

“Music gives so much to the mind, body and soul and its one reason for this we should celebrate our own during this month of August.”

We would also like to congratulate all of the Māori artists who released new work during the Te Marama Pūoro Waiata Māori - Māori Music Month.

“To all our TikTok Whānau Challenge entrants, thank you for supporting our Māori artists and sharing their waiata with your awesome TikTok moves,” Te Atakura said.

The other winners of the Whānau TikTok Challenges included Tarsh Green from Hamilton, Manaia Canterbury from Hastings, Miquelle Blake and Micheal Kenny from Huntly.

National Waiata Māori Music Awards 2020

August 1-31: Te Marama Pūoro Waiata Māori – Māori Music Month

August 1: Nominations open for National Waiata Māori Music Awards.

August 31: Nominations close.

September 17: Finalists announced.

October 9: Winners announced at the National Waiata Māori Music Awards online event.

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