

LAUNCH CONCERT:

7.30pm, Saturday 23 May, Adam Concert Room
New Zealand School of Music, Victoria University of Wgtn

SNAP HAPPY by Taniwha

Jayrem Records & shameless ! promotions, March 2009

This new album from well-known singer-songwriters Hinemoana Baker and Christine White features intimate alt.country ballads, hooky pop-songs and laid-back Māori language reggae. There's even some folktronica flavours courtesy of their Casiotone MT-65, and an entirely new instrument made out of a Black & Decker workbench.

Snap Happy is welcomed as a wonderful venue for two enormously talented vocalist-wordsmith-composers to blend and bend their own and others' expectations. As the duo *Taniwha*, these two accomplished soloists bring a new 'power of two' to this latest live-in-studio adventure.

Full of heart and at times very moving, the songs on *Snap Happy* deliver a brave, delicate and delightful romp, full of momentum, through many musical moods.

Fresh from WOMAD Taranaki, *Taniwha* plan a launch tour in 2009, and will be appearing in an unexpected location near you any moment...so be unafraid.

Be very unafraid.



TANIWHA: A fabulous monster supposed to reside in deep water. A chief, a prodigy, the human body. A bold, poetic figure.

(from *A dictionary of the Māori language*, H W Williams, 1971)

Taniwha – Rhythm, Rhyme and Recycling

Taniwha is a Paekākāriki phenomenon, a duo making sweet music with anything and everything they have to hand. As singer-songwriters in a folk/pop tradition, their guitars and beautifully woven voices are still their mainstay. But as all artists do, they've been experimenting. Many of their recent instruments have been acquired from Trash Palace, their local recycling station in Tawa. They are particularly thrilled to have acquired their Casiotone keyboard for \$1.00, and their cheese grater, oven grills and steel wine rack for free.

And what use would musicians have for sundry kitchen utensils on stage? Well...The real taniwha in the band is an instrument Christine has built out of a Black & Decker WorkMate (Registered Trade Mark). The ambient sounds you hear in 'Day After and 'Dumb White Girl' are produced by this fabulous monster, inspired by sonic artist Eric Leonardson's 'Springboard', which is made out of a modified zimmer frame.

The taniwha's secret lies in a steel plate bolted to the workbench's surface, and a few contact microphones which amplify very small sounds and the soft draw of a cello bow into the groans of icebreaking ships, the clicks and sirens of whales, the roar of industrial machinery or the haunting ache of a koauau or a pūtātara. When the duo perform live their sound engineer Andrew Dalziel helps keep the workbench's massive dynamic range in hand.

'We take a lot of pleasure introducing the taniwha to audiences. It's about inviting people to listen differently to their surroundings, and to the sounds of ordinary daily objects. When we performed at WOMAD we gave the ducks on the lake a solo.'

Both artists have very much enjoyed the collaboration involved in making this album, and in forming their new duo. The production decisions for their debut album *Snap Happy* have revolved around wanting to capture as much of a live take for every track as possible.

'We've made several studio albums as soloists,' says Hinemoana. 'We both wanted to make something different, to go for the performance rather than the perfection. What this means in practice is that we'd go into the studio and do several takes of a song, performing it live, with all the microphones open to all instruments and voices. That way we'd be limited with how much prettying up of things we could do afterwards. And we wanted those limitations – this album was about prioritising the feel of a take rather than spending hours on a computer afterwards trying to make things perfect.'

shameless ! promotions

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Hinemoana Baker

Ngāti Raukawa / Ngāti Tukorehe, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Te Āti Awa / Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Kiritea (Europe)

Hinemoana has performed as a musician and poet since the early 1990's in New Zealand, Indonesia and Australia. Her first album 'puāwai' was a finalist for the Folk category of the NZ Music Awards in 2005, and the title track 'puāwai' was a finalist for the Te Reo Maioha award (the Māori language category of APRA Silver Scrolls) that same year. Hinemoana has performed in many national and international festivals, including the New Zealand International Arts Festival, WOMAD and the 'Tuwhare' concerts.

Hinemoana is also known for her work as a music features producer at Radio New Zealand, and as a writer. She is a graduate of the prestigious Masters in Creative Writing course at Victoria University. Her first book of poetry, 'mātuhi | needle' (2004) was published in Aotearoa by Victoria University Press and in the US by Lord of the Rings star Viggo Mortensen's publishing house, Perceval Press.

Hinemoana's songs and shows are loved by those who love language - in particular Te Reo Māori and the impactful, no-waste language of poetry. However it's Hinemoana's voice that still draws most of her audience:

'It's a fine wine of a voice...the sort you might buy once in a lifetime, just for a taste of how the other half lives...'
(Nelson Evening Mail)

'This was an utterly spellbinding performance.' (Oamaru Mail)

'You have been warned of a major talent.' (Graham Reid, NZ Herald)

Hinemoana says her varying creative pursuits 'are really just story-telling – coupled with a passion for sound. The sound of words, music, waiata tawhito, my diving gear, whatever. It's just the delivery mechanism that changes.'

As well as the new *Taniwha* album, Hinemoana has completed a new collection of poems called 'I'm sick of this place let's get back on the canoe.' In July 2009 Hinemoana will head to Australia to take up a position at the Queensland Writer's Centre as Poet in Residence 2009.

Christine White

Ngāi Tahu, Pākehā

Those who've enjoyed Christine's gigs in Auckland and the rest of New Zealand over the last 20 years will testify that Christine's live performances have to be seen to be believed. An accomplished composer, arranger and multi-instrumentalist, Christine has also been honing her production and recording skills: she has three solo albums to her name (most recently 'Pirouette'), plus a long list of composing credits for other artists and organisations.

'...with vocal power, presence and songs others would kill for...' (New Zealand Herald)

'...cut from the same cloth as any of Neil Finn's best...' (New Zealand Musician magazine)

Christine moved to Wellington in 2005, and her well-deserved reputation is already growing at this end of the island. Her current passion is her degree in Sonic Arts and New Music (think John Cage, Laurie Anderson, David Downes, John Cousins). She was placed first equal in the New Zealand School of Music Composer's Competition 2008. Past winners include Dugal McKinnon, Miriama Young and Dylan Lardelli.

Christine's prize-winning composition, 'Dancing Slow', featured in the 8th Annual New Music Festival at California State University. Her enthusiasm for New Music has led her to building an instrument using an old Black and Decker workbench and some contact microphones. The onstage effect can be anything from eerie hums and haunting whistles to funky, industrial beats and metallic tick-tocking. As usual, Christine and her instruments make an impressive impact on audiences - she is, musically at least, always much larger than the sum of her parts. Her full, open voice and warm, winding, sometimes whacky guitar styles - electric and acoustic - bring a sparkle and a shout to the stage.

Christine has graced many stages in her 20 year career, including Sweetwaters, Radio New Zealand's 'Live at Helen Young' series and the Femme Funk festival in Noumea. In 2008 she composed and performed vocal arrangements for Jack Body and Lilicherie McGregor's 'The Seven Ages of Man'.

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