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Moana's belief

Invercargill-born Moana Maniapoto is challenging New Zealand audiences to be more accepting of her music. **Belinda McCammon** reports.



Moana Maniapoto

AFTER years of performing overseas gaining an international profile, musician Invercargill-born Moana Maniapoto is ready to start focusing on her New Zealand audience. Moana, who is promoting her latest album *Wha* with her band The Tribe, says because her energy has been put into performing offshore, she has only started recently to focus on building up her New Zealand base. Part of the reason behind the change in focus is Moana's belief New Zealanders are ready to take a little bit of a risk and try something they hadn't heard before. "The music is really rooted in New Zealand — the album talks about stories from here." While the album is all in Maori, Moana, speaking from her home in Grey Lynn, says she would like to think New Zealanders would be more open to embracing that style of music now. "I hope that they wouldn't be so afraid of that as they might have been 10 years ago." Moana has good reason to believe her music is finally getting the recognition here comparable to that she receives when she tours overseas.

"I'm seeing a lot more middle class, white New Zealanders coming to our gigs, just quietly. "People come up to me afterwards at festivals and go 'that was great'. "I don't know what they're thinking they're going to get. "Maybe a reggae band or a kapa haka group or 'get off my land!' "And they get a little bit of all three of those things but they really genuinely enjoy it." Moana says her regular performances at overseas festivals, which she describes as "quite styley", have had a positive effect on how her music is perceived. "The punters think, 'well they can't be that tragic if they're in these things'." *Wha* is Moana and The Tribe's fourth album as part of a sequence that began with the release of *Tahi*. Two other albums have also been released and there's also another tour in Europe planned for the end of June. "I'm not as slack as everyone is making me out to be." When the band is not touring Moana says it is planning for its next tour or recording.

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Weight tilt and balance

MATE
 MARK WILSON



I WAS never a big fan of flying but given my recent experience with alternative methods of transport — namely the less than nimble MV Lida — and with fuel costs rising faster than the cannabis smoke from a Norml (National Organisation for the Reform of Marijuana Laws) annual conference I am now fully converted to the merits of the aeroplane age. Not only is it faster and now even cheaper than driving one's own wagon but it comes with the added bonus, especially on Qantas flights, of the odd, more than slightly, attractive air hostess. After the weekend's trip to Christchurch via air for the unveiling of the Satanic Verses 20th anniversary Rugby Jerseys, I can now add humorous in-flight experiences to aforementioned list. I was tactically one of the last to board Qantas flight 2782 bound for Christchurch, mainly to avoid queueing, but the strategy was also geared at increasing the chances I would get to sit beside my strikingly attractive blond physiotherapist Jodi, who happened to be on board. Everything went according to plan and I was struck with rapturous glee when I spotted the entire emergency exit row was remarkably still uninhabited. I promptly scooped up Jodi and we nabbed the row for ourselves. Following another riveting safety briefing the male cabin crew leader made his way campishly towards Jodi and I — his look akin to having mistakenly grabbed a porcupine from the playbox instead of a gerbil. This is where the common sense ended and humour began. Jodi, packing a whopping 50kg dripping wet (a nice thought), and myself, weighing in at an equally powerful 77kg, were informed that by disregarding our tickets and selecting our own seats we were in danger of affecting the weight, tilt and balance of the plane at take-off. My shocked and slightly amused look followed by a few cynical mocking comments did nothing to alleviate the situation and we were required to immediately cease and desist with our airplane-endangering ways and return to our allocated seats. Out of interest I counted the number of passengers on each side of the plane and discovered there were about 40 on one side and 25 on the side we had just come from — we had in fact increased the discrepancy between sides with our shift... interesting. I also pondered if I had somehow missed being weighed at check-in, as surely if the weight allocation is that sensitive passengers will have to be strictly seated according to body mass? God forbid too many fatties end up on one side of the aircraft and we perform a barrel roll at take-off. However, far from destroying the day it provided ample ammunition for frivolous conversation during the remainder of the flight. Christchurch was great — caught up with a bunch of mates, enjoyed a rowdy night at the Rose and Thistle for the ABS — a good hearty Speight's Ale House feed on Sunday and even snuck in a cheeky pig hunt in the Port Hills.

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