

I am the youngest child of 5 children of Tipene and Sandra O'Regan. Raised in the family home in Wellington, I was the only one to attend Māori Boarding School in Auckland, before leaving New Zealand for Thailand as an exchange student in my 7<sup>th</sup> form year.

I have always loved te reo Māori, and as far back as I can recall, yearned to speak it. As I grew and learnt more, I fell in love with its poetry, and in my secondary schooling years I began to explore it through my own little compositions. I found that metaphor could often help me explain, in a few words or sentences, what my knowledge of grammar or lack thereof, made difficult.

My first proper composition was a patere on the taniwha Poutini, that I composed as part of my 6<sup>th</sup> form internal assessment project at the age of 16. My te reo teacher then was Mr Tom Roa, a wonderful language teacher, who was passionate about the role of metaphor and moteatea in one's language development.

It would be another two years before I composed my next waiata for my father in my first year at University, another patere that journeyed around the Kāi Tahu rohe. Since then I have found many more opportunities to indulge myself in the world of moteatea, and extended beyond patere to explore other genre, including waiata tangi, waiata aroha, taurere, waiata-aranga and haka.

I am now a mother of two young children whom I am raising in te reo Māori in Christchurch. Hearing them speak, sing and experience life through te reo is an amazingly rewarding feeling. I still love te reo Māori in all of its poetic glory, and as such have dedicated my professional career to its revitalisation within Kāi Tahu and wherever else I can influence. Since 1995 I have been working within my people to support others to compose as a way of promoting ownership in the waiata and an appreciation for its role and meaning.

Kāti au i kōnei

Nāhaku noa nā

Hana O'Regan