

Whakarongo

- **Composer:** Ngoi Pēwhairangi **Year:** 1980 -

Whakarongo!
Ki te reo Māori e karanga nei
Whakarongo!
Ki ngā akoranga rangatira
Nā te Atua i tuku iho ki a tātou e
Pupuritia, kōrerotia mō ake tonu
Tirohia!
Ngā tikanga tapu a ngā tīpuna
Kapohia
Hei oranga ngākau – auē
Whiua ki te ao
Whiua ki te rangi
Whiua ki ngā iwi katoa
Kaua rawatia e tukua e
Kia memeha e
Whakarongo!
Ki te reo Māori e karanga nei
Whakarongo!
Ki ngā akoranga rangatira
Tēnā kia purea te hau ora e
He kupu tuku iho mō tēnei reanga
He kupu tuku iho mō tēnei reanga
Whakarongo!
Tō reo whakarongo!

EXPLANATION

'Whakarongo' is a waiata-ā-ringa by Ngoi Pēwhairangi. It is one of Ngoi's most famous compositions and incorporates her beliefs and methodology on teaching te reo Māori.

'Whakarongo' was originally composed at Pākirikiri Marae in Tokomaru Bay. The waiata was composed during a wānanga that Ngoi Pēwhairangi was hosting for the team from Koha television programme. Waihoroi Shortland and Selwyn Muru asked Ngoi to compose a song and 'Whakarongo' was the resulting composition. Ngoi gathered her whānau together to assist her with creating the actions and teaching the people from Koha as the majority of them were Pākehā who had never learnt a Māori song before. Ngoi then took this composition with her to Ngāruawāhia to the last Te Ataarangi hui she attended and adapted some of the words for them. The verse that begins with 'Whiua ki te ao . . .' was the verse she gave the Koha team to encourage them to spread Māori programmes in broadcasting to the nation and to the world. For Te Ataarangi, she replaced that verse with one that begins 'Tēnā kia purea te . . .'. The waiata contains a poignant message which is summarised in the lines 'He kupu tuku iho mō tēnei reanga. Whakarongo! Tō reo whakarongo!' (A language to be passed on for this generation - Listen! Listen to your language).

The popularity of this song spread throughout the nation, and in different Māori communities today, many people sing both distinctive verses she composed for the two groups. In 1995, the Māori Language Commission, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, made 'Whakarongo' the official song for the Year of the Māori Language. This further increased the profile of the song in the nation.

Tāmata Toiere would like to thank the Pēwhairangi Whānau Trust for their permission to share this waiata. The audio for this waiata was recorded by Ngoi's family at Pākirikiri marae, Tokomaru Bay originally for the CD which accompanies the biography on Ngoi. The waiata was mixed and edited at Mauria Mai Productions by Chub Renata.