



Ruiha Turner

Rongoa Puoro Practitioner
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Ruiha Turner of Ngāti Pāhauwera and Ngāti Kahungunu ki Te Wairoa iwi is a full-time Taonga Puoro Practitioner / Performing Artist. Together with her partner Jerome Kavanagh (Puoro Jerome), they are reviving the rongoā of taonga puoro - into kura, marae and community throughout Aotearoa and abroad with Oro Atua: Wānanga Rongoā Puoro. They also specialize in revitalizing tipuna practices of utilizing Taonga Puoro during hapūtanga. The duo work in balance as Taha Wahine & Taha Tane.



**A more specific name
for Porotiti within
our whakapapa is
'Te Reo o
Rongomaiwahine'**

• **How do you connect to Ngāti Pāhauwera?**

My grandfather was George H. Hawkins, his mother Tureiti Aranui and her mother Ruiha Aranui was one of the Henrici sisters - she is who I am named after.

• **Where did you grow up?**

I grew up in Halcombe, Manawatū. As kids we spent a lot of time in the Wairarapa as our grandparents (George and Polly Hawkins) were an integral part of setting up Hau Ariki Marae in Martinborough, a Ngā hau e whā marae.

Ruiha



What was your favourite subject at school and why?

My favourite subject was PE. I am a visual hands-on learner who loved being outdoors, so to me this was the place where I felt I could be myself.

How did you get into your mahi?

I've always wanted to be in a space to help whānau, but nothing that I was being exposed to was quite the right fit. It wasn't really until I met Jerome that my journey with Taonga Puoro began - then I took the leap, left my day job and became a Taonga Puoro practitioner. In saying this though, taonga puoro has always been in our whānau, but the depth of mātāuranga hadn't been unlocked yet. The wonderful thing is that we both have had Taonga Puoro be introduced to us through our Kuia.

Over the years I've had many light bulb moments where it has always been there, just waiting to be uncovered - one beautiful tohu being our Whare Porotiti. Porotiti is a general name for a type of Taonga Puoro that can be used throughout hapūtanga and can also be used for pēpi when constipated or for a sore puku, amongst other uses. A more specific name for Porotiti within our whakapapa is "Te Reo o Rongomaiwahine".



‘Puoro Atu, Puoro Mai’

**The sound we send
out to the universe
is the sound
that is returned.**

*Ruiha and
Jerome*



- **Have you ever failed at something?**

Of course! We don't start off being experts at anything. Yes, we may pick up things easier than others, but I think it's really important to remember not to prioritize western ideologies and knowledge. Don't base your worth off a system that wasn't designed for you. We each have our own superpowers and there are many many things that are still to be uncovered and discovered.

- **What do you recommend to get through a bad day?**

Karakia. Talk to your tīpuna - we are never alone. Getting out into our taiao and having a laugh with our tamariki and of course, playing taonga puoro. Ka uu, Ka haa. A big part of our mahi and ORO ATUA wānanga is putting Puoro back into the hands of our people and sharing how they can be used for rongoā, so we have the tools to help heal ourselves and our taiao - sound travels where light cannot. Each Taonga Puoro hold the resonance and vibration of the different parts of our taiao. When we connect back to the natural world, we open the door to ourselves and ultimately create time and space for reflection, self healing and for solutions to arise in this fast-paced, time-poor, modern world we live in.

- **Can we check out some of your mahi?**

- Article: <https://www.teakawhaiora.nz/en-NZ/news/oro-atua-healing-hearts-and-minds-through-the-power-of-taonga-puoro>
- The Hui 2023: <https://youtu.be/4pXte2uEV0Q?si=V-04dB7KhKxvNh2i>



“Failure is the package that growth is wrapped up in.”

Ruiha