

 **Digital Media Trust**  
Pae Hāpai

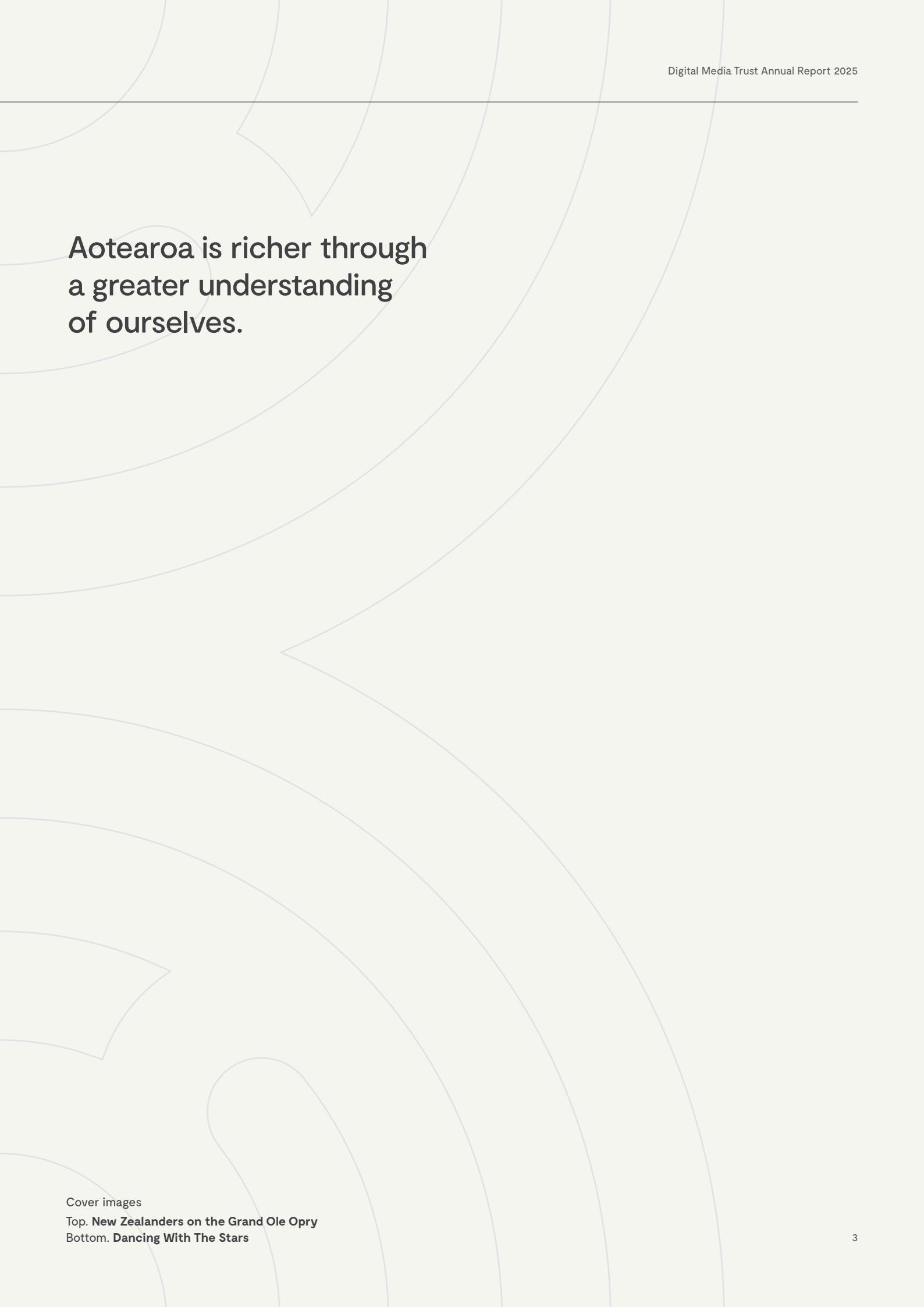
# **Annual Report 2025**

## Pūrongo ā-tau 2025

**NZ On Screen**  
Iwi Whitiāhua

**AudioCulture**  
Iwi Waiata

**Ka tū teitei  
a Aotearoa  
nā tō tātou  
āta kite i a  
tātou anō.**



**Aotearoa is richer through  
a greater understanding  
of ourselves.**

Cover images

Top. **New Zealanders on the Grand Ole Opry**

Bottom. **Dancing With The Stars**

Don't Be Shy

**02**

Our Vision.

**06**

Our Purpose.

**08**

Message from  
the Chair.

**10**

About Digital  
Media Trust.

**14**

Our Performance.  
AudioCulture:  
Develop Content.

**16**

Our Performance.  
AudioCulture:  
Marketing.

**18**

Our Performance.  
AudioCulture:  
Most Visited Content.

**20**

Our Performance.  
NZ On Screen:  
Develop Content.

**22**

Our Performance.  
NZ On Screen:  
Marketing.

**24**

Our Performance.  
NZ On Screen:  
Most Visited Content.

**28**

Our Performance.  
Site Statistics:  
AudioCulture

**29**

Our Performance.  
Site Statistics:  
NZ On Screen

**30**

Our Performance.  
Strengthen  
Collaborations.

**32**

Our Performance.  
Maintain Site Performance.

**34**

Financial Statement.  
Statement of Financial  
Performance

**36**

Our People.  
Our Teams.

The Digital Media Trust's purpose is to provide **access, bring context and understanding** and enable **enjoyment** of New Zealand's popular culture and its history.

Te kaupapa o te Digital Media Trust he hora **urunga, he whakarato hoki i te horopaki me te māramatanga**, kia piki ake te ngahau ki te ahurea o te marea me ngā tātai kōrero o Aotearoa.



Waiata Anthems

# Message from the Chair

**Kia ora tatou and welcome to the 2025 Annual Report for the Digital Media Trust. It's my first report as Chair following the retirement of Sarah Bacon. I'd like to acknowledge Sarah's service to the Trust over the past eight years and welcome Sandra Kailahi to the Board.**

As signalled last year, a key focus for 2025 has been finalising the development work and fundraising for a new NZ On Screen website and streaming platform. Securing this funding in the current climate represented a major achievement for the team and is testament to the value our sector sees in the work we do. The site's updated functionality will enable NZ On Screen to offer full streaming services, providing access to an even greater volume of screen taonga. The project build began on the 1st June and the new site is due to launch in the first half of 2026.

While the focus for the NZ On Screen team has been on preparing for the new website, business as usual was maintained. A couple of particular highlights were the huge increase in social media activity and the increase in unique user numbers (6.5% year on year). In an environment with a multitude of platforms and competition of "eyeballs", this increase was particularly pleasing. Aotearoa New Zealand produces a vast volume of screen content each year. Balancing the needs of our audience with the resources available is an ongoing struggle, but one the team manages very well.

Last year the AudioCulture team introduced collections to its stable of content. During the year they added the Pacific Music collection to the list. The collection was really well received and proved once again, the value of this type of content curation. While still on the subject of collections, it was wonderful to see the Māori Music Collection at number four on the list of most popular content during the year.

The Digital Media Trust team, led by our Executive Director Stephanie Hopkins, continues to do a wonderful job of enhancing these two cultural resources and building enduring relationships across the New Zealand screen and music sectors. I would like to extend my thanks to the team for the care and dedication in which they continue this crucial work and to my fellow Trustees for their advice and guidance in setting the direction of the Trust.

Finally, our work would not be possible without continued funding from NZ On Air and the support of the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Our thanks go to each of these organisations and we too are committed to enhancing the discoverability of both screen and music taonga produced in Aotearoa.

Ngā mihi nui,



**David Wright**  
Chair  
Digital Media Trust



Duelling Banjos

# About Digital Media Trust

**We provide access, bring context and understanding and enable enjoyment of New Zealand's popular culture and its history.**

NZ On Screen and AudioCulture are essential guides to New Zealand's screen heritage and popular music history. The websites are produced by the Digital Media Trust (DMT).

NZ On Screen is the online showcase of notable New Zealand television, film, music video and web series. It makes screen content freely available to the people of New Zealand and supports and celebrates the screen industry.

AudioCulture (the noisy library of New Zealand music) tells the definitive story of New Zealand popular music history – its people, labels, scenes and places. Its vision is to be the go-to place for New Zealand's popular music history. It commissions and publishes in-depth stories about New Zealand's popular music history that would otherwise be untold.

We are supported by NZ On Air's Platform funding, as an online content discovery hub that creates and delivers 'public media content of particular cultural and social value.'

We showcase screen content and stories of our popular music history that otherwise may not be easily accessible to the public. Content is sourced widely, and considerable effort goes into obtaining necessary rights, as well as researching and writing background information.

We continue to strengthen our position as essential guides to New Zealand's popular culture and its history. Our audiences enjoy and value NZ On Screen and AudioCulture content, as evidenced by regular feedback to our inbox, comments to the website, and through social media. We respond to many enquiries, as our sites and their creators continue to be go-to information sources.



Ten moments in New Zealand drumming

Haka Life

**“AudioCulture is such a great site – everything you need to know about the history and current state of New Zealand music.”**

Karyn Hay  
on 95bFM

**“... I always appreciate the care with which you write things up, keep up the great work.”**

Peter Young  
Fisheye Films

# AudioCulture

## Develop content.

Adding new material aligned with the annual content strategy; maintaining the accuracy and relevance of existing content.

AudioCulture surpassed its goals for 2024–2025, publishing 156 pages during the year. Significantly, we added two new “Collection” pages, focusing on Māori and Pacific music-making. These gather together all the articles on these musicians, providing one-stop locations to explore their contribution to New Zealand music. Both Collections contain over 100 artist profiles or articles. AudioCulture’s goals include a determination to cover all types of popular music from New Zealand, no matter the genre, era, or gender.

During the year this has included a foray into original children’s music, more on electronic dance music, and articles that show the early history of the industry. The Collections, Story Maps, and pages of song analysis all help make the site useful and appealing to the education sector as well as the general reader.

Musicians whose careers are still active are continually having their profiles updated, and we also serve a research function for other media when prominent musicians die. The site also includes articles about the industry; two of the most popular this year were an overview of how MP3s and streaming changed the way people enjoy music, and Renee Brennan’s personal account of being a woman in a working, touring band. AudioCulture takes the long view to the subjects it covers, and has grown into the definitive source for information about New Zealand’s popular music history.

### New Pages



Achievement      Target  
**156/150**

### New Profiles



**39**

### Female Pages/Profiles



**20**

### Māori Pages/Profiles



**23**

### Pasifika Pages/Profiles



**09**

### Major Profile Updates



**13**

### Articles



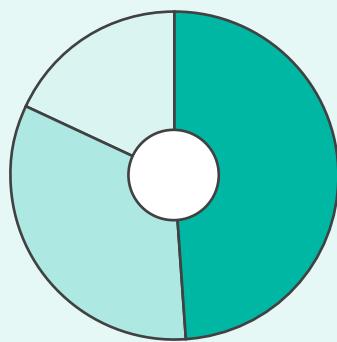
**101**

### Collections



**02**

**2315**  
Total Pages



Profiles	1098
Articles	816
Other	401

# AudioCulture

## Marketing.

AudioCulture's marketing and publicity efforts this year have been defined by strategic collection launches, sustained relationship building, and impressive social media growth.

The introduction of AudioCulture collections proved highly successful. The Festivals Collection soft-launched in June, generating strong results. Building on this success, the Ngā Puoro Arotini (Māori Music Collection) launched in September, timed with Te Wiki o te Reo Māori. Supported by a Meta campaign, Student Radio Network advertising, and bespoke social content from Māori musicians created in exchange for a small koha, the collection delivered strong engagement.

Social media growth accelerated significantly as the year progressed, with followers growing by 20% — well above the annual target of 5%. After a period of slower growth between September and November 2024, Facebook rebounded strongly, with some posts reaching nearly 300,000 people — 97% of whom were not existing followers. In January, AudioCulture also launched on Bluesky, quickly building an engaged following.

Publicity remained strong throughout the year, with AudioCulture consistently referenced by media outlets covering significant moments in New Zealand music.

The deaths of Martin Phillipps, Doug Hood, and Eddie Low saw AudioCulture featured across RNZ, The Herald, and the Otago Daily Times. Multiple earned media opportunities on RNZ National included discussions on Shihad's farewell gigs and the New Zealand music industry's shift to streaming and digital platforms.

Media relationships expanded with the addition of RDU's breakfast slot sponsorship, Audio Antiquing, joining our established segments on Radio Active and 95bFM, now in its fourth year. We continued as sponsor of the SRN Top 10 Award at the Mighty Aotearoa Alternative Awards.

Education content continued to strengthen, with Matt Hoyes adding ten new songs to Counting the Beat: Analysing Aotearoa Pop Songs. Newsletter performance remained excellent with average open rates of 47%.



Zwines and The Idle Idols

## AudioCulture Most Visited Content

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01 AudioCulture Classic NZ Album Readers Poll 2023



02 Jason Harding



03 Wellington nightclubs in the 1980s



04 The Māori Music Collection Ngā Puoro Arotini



05 Renée Brennan on the realities of a musical life



06 Māori Volcanics



07 Martin Phillipps Remembered: Brave Words, 1 – The Chills



08 Paul Crowther's Hotcakes



09 John Rowles



10 New Zealand made Guitar Amps



11 Stan Walker



12 Ten house hits of the early 2000s

# NZ On Screen

## Develop content.

Adding new material aligned with annual content strategy; maintaining the accuracy and relevance of existing content.

Audiences are increasingly spoiled for content choice across a myriad of streaming platforms. It has become harder than ever for local storytelling to cut through the noise. Despite this, NZ On Screen has held its own this financial year, with a 6.5% increase in users compared to the previous 12 months. This is an encouraging result for a platform that exclusively celebrates local content. Reflecting the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Aotearoa is the cornerstone of what we do.

All agreed targets were met, with some slightly exceeded. There were three new collections published throughout the year, each showcasing an aspect of the New Zealand screen sector. A celebratory three-decade collection for funding agency Te Māngai Pāho was timed for Matariki 2024, and kicked off our mahi for the financial year. A treasure trove of Ao Māori content was added to the site in support of this milestone, and by year's end, nearly 30% of our published titles were of Māori and/or Pasifika content. Greenstone TV also celebrated a 30-year milestone. We highlighted the significant factual output of this production house with many new titles licensed specifically for this collection. Our 'Behind the Scenes Collection' gave audiences a look behind the lens at local television, film and commercial production. This decades-spanning collection of documentaries and factual programmes has proven to be one of the most popular collections launched this financial year.

The focus on adding full-length titles and more full series to the site continues, as we strive to match our audience's expectations and provide a more satisfying viewing experience. Highlights this year include the drama series Dear Murderer, which is based on the life and career of Mike Bungay QC, New Zealand's first 'celebrity' lawyer.

Our revamped Food Collection allowed us to add a spread of Kiwi kai series, including Kiwi Kitchen, Marae Kai Masters, Alison Holst's Microwave Menus and Kai Ora. Multiple series of book panel show, The Good Word have also been published in the last 12 months. NZ On Screen was proud to support the factual web series Breaking Silence at the funding application stage this year. Three series of this important series on domestic abuse are now published on NZ On Screen.

Keeping on top of candidates for profiles continues to be a giant task. We have slightly overshot our short profile targets this year while also ensuring that older profiles, and the older site content at large, are continually audited and brought up to date as required.

Planning for the replatforming of the NZ On Screen website has been a constant alongside our 'business as usual' this year. A long time in the making, we're incredibly excited to bring added functionality and a better user experience to the website next year. It will be a big win for users and local content creators alike!

### New Titles



Achievement   Target  
**171/170**

### Title Updates



**50/50**

### New Profiles



**45/40**

### Updated Profiles



**60/60**

### New & Updated Collections



**05/05**

### Māori Titles



**42**

### Pasifika Titles



**08**

# NZ On Screen

## Marketing.

This financial year has been transformative for NZ On Screen's marketing and publicity efforts, marked by exceptional social media growth and the development of new marketing initiatives.

Our continued focus on vertical video content delivered outstanding results. Facebook followers increased by 154% over the year, while Instagram followers grew by 141%. TikTok, launched in April 2024, gained strong momentum reaching 10,000 followers. This growth significantly expanded our brand awareness, with NZ On Screen consistently reaching over 1.5 million people monthly on Facebook alone. Social media growth translated into increased website traffic, particularly in the final quarter following tactical adjustments including diversifying content types and strategically engaging with popular Facebook communities. YouTube delivered a standout moment in January with 92,000 views — well above our usual monthly average of 20,000 — driven by renewed interest in a John Clarke video.

Collection campaigns were a key driver of engagement throughout the year. Notable launches included the Te Māngai Pāho Collection in July, aligned with Matariki; the ScreenTalk Legends interview series in August; The Food Show Collection in March; and Behind The Scenes in June, which was our best-performing collection, attracting almost 10,000 active users. These campaigns also strengthened relationships with key industry partners including Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision, The Spinoff, and Flicks.co.nz.

Publicity highlights included our branded In Memoriam reels screened at both the SPADA Awards and NZ Television Awards. Our relationship with ShowNews strengthened, with the screen industry website now featuring NZ On Screen content in their Tuesday news section and Friday newsletter as earned media. Collection launches generated coverage through The Spinoff and Seven Sharp.

We continued our fourth year supporting the OnScreen short film competition for high school students, with branded presence across their communications, at the finals event, and publication of the winning film.

A comprehensive marketing strategy has been developed, with initial implementation underway. Full rollout will align with the website relaunch planned for April/May 2026.



The Strangest of Angels



Taki Rua Theatre - Breaking Barriers

## NZ On Screen Most Visited Content

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01 Tinā – trailer



02 Collections / Ngā Kohinga



03 Blue – short film



04 Jude Dobson



05 Dawn Raids



06 Tama Tū – short film



07 Ka Whawhai Tonu – trailer



08 The Top 10 NZ Television Ads



09 Marlon Williams: Ngā Ao E Rua – Two Worlds – trailer



10 Behind the Scenes Collection



11 What Really Happened – Waitangi



12 Kōkā – trailer

James Irwin  
on Newstalk ZB

**“I go down a rabbit hole  
reading the website  
AudioCulture...if you’re into  
NZ Music, arts and culture,  
AudioCulture is fantastic.”**

THE CLEAN



The Clean Part One 1978 - 1988

Rosie Hole  
Hinterland NZ  
(Screen Media Finance)

**“Just wanted to reiterate what I mentioned to you about how valuable the NZ On Screen site is. I use it regularly as a trusted source of information about NZ screen industry practitioners... Keep up the great mahi!”**



# AudioCulture

## Total Users



**309,511**

## Female



**15%**

Unknown - 73%

## Devices - Desktop



**47%**

## Devices - Mobile



**49%**

## Growth



**3%**

Target Growth

**-4%**

Actual Growth

## Male



**12%**

Unknown - 73%

## Devices - Tablet



**3%**

## Age Groups



18-24	01%
25-34	03%
35-44	02%
45-54	04%
55-64	06%
65+	10%
Unknown	74%

# NZ On Screen

## Total Users



**1,279,524**

## Growth



**Maintain**

Target Growth

**6.5%**

Actual Growth

## Female



**16%**

Unknown - 75%

## Male



**09%**

Unknown - 75%

## Devices - Desktop



**42%**

## Devices - Tablet



**3%**

## Devices - Mobile



**55%**

## Age Groups



18-24	03%
25-34	03%
35-44	03%
45-54	03%
55-64	04%
65+	07%
Unknown	77%

## Strengthen Collaborations

Strengthen collaborations with complementary organisations, finding opportunities to share resources and reach new audiences.

### Helped share their content and activities



### Provided our content – blogs, links, embeds and images

The New Zealand Herald



## Celebrated their artists and members



directors & editors guild of nz



WIFT NZ



## Other partnerships



# Maintain site performance

Ensuring sites are performing well and secure for the future.

**AudioCulture** was available to the public for

**99.99%**

of the time.

**NZ On Screen** was available to the public for

**99.99%**

of the time.

## Overview of the year.

With the balance of the funding for the new NZ On Screen website and TV app secured, work officially commenced in June. This replatforming project will ensure that the site is built on modern, scalable infrastructure, providing a robust foundation for future growth and enhancements.

A large amount of both the Technical Discovery and Design phases were undertaken during the year with the build phase to begin in earnest in the new financial year. The TV app design and build will be progressed in parallel with the new website build.

With the new NZ On Screen website project underway, our efforts on the current platform have focused on maintaining stability — managing bug fixes, implementing minor enhancements, and carrying out regular maintenance and security updates. Additionally, work was undertaken to merge the NZ On Screen and AudioCulture Mailchimp databases.

Throughout the year, continuous improvements have been made to the AudioCulture website, through regular bug fixes, minor enhancements, and security updates to ensure reliable performance and an improved user experience. One of these improvements was the successful updating of the rich text editor used on the site, TinyMCE, from version 3 to version 6. This upgrade has improved security, compatibility with all the modern browsers and provides a better user experience for the AudioCulture team.



ScreenTalk Legends - Murray Grindlay

## Statement of Financial Performance 2024/2025:

A copy of the full audited Statement of Performance report can be found on our websites.

Total Income.....	\$1,759,115
Less Total Expenses.....	\$1,750,087
Surplus for the Year.....	<b>\$9,028</b>

## Expenses 2024/2025:

● Special projects .....	\$46,788
● Technology .....	\$104,467
● Overheads .....	\$298,575
● People and content.....	\$1,300,257
 Total Expenses.....	 <b>\$1,750,087</b>





Big Day Out in pictures



## Our board.

Digital Media Trust is an independent charitable trust. The Board provides direction and advice and oversees the work of our websites. Our Trustees have backgrounds in business, finance, law, strategy, screen and music production, technology and administration. They share a commitment to championing our screen and popular music heritage.

**Sarah Bacon** (Chair).

Company Director, Black Bear Limited – Resigned March 2025

**David Wright** (Chair).

Consultant – Appointed Chair April 2025

**Allanah Kalafatelis**.

Head of Communications & Research, NZ On Air

**Tracey Bridges**.

Company Director, Portchester Consulting

**Damian Vaughan**.

Consultant

**Julia Parnell**.

Producer/Director, Notable Pictures

**Sandra Kailahi**.

Producer/Company Director – Appointed May 2025

## Professional services.

Accountant – **Darvill Mellors & Co**

Auditor – **Moore Markhams**

Lawyer – **Crengle, Shreves & Ratner**

Bank – **ASB Bank Ltd**

# Our teams.

Our people have extensive experience in our screen and music industries. They are subject enthusiasts and share a deep respect for New Zealand's content creators and musicians.

**Stephanie Hopkins**, Executive Director.

Stephanie manages, on behalf of the Digital Media Trust, both sites.

**Leanda Borrett /Alice Casserly**.

Marketing and Publicity Manager for both sites.

**Hollie Cullen**.

Digital Marketing Executive. She works with Alice on both sites.

In addition to those listed, both sites continue to be enriched by the expertise of freelance music and screen history writers.

## NZ On Screen

Content Director – **Kathryn Quirk/Leanda Borrett**

Site Editor – **Ian Pryor**

Rights & Sourcing Executive – **Judith McLaren**

Data Wrangler/Video Editor – **Erin Murphy**

Writer/Editor Assistant – **Alexandra Paterson**

Writers – **Rosie Howells**

## AudioCulture

Content Director – **Chris Bourke**

Site Editor – **Steven Shaw**

Edit Assistant – **Anna Kalatcheva**

Publicist – **Renee Jones**

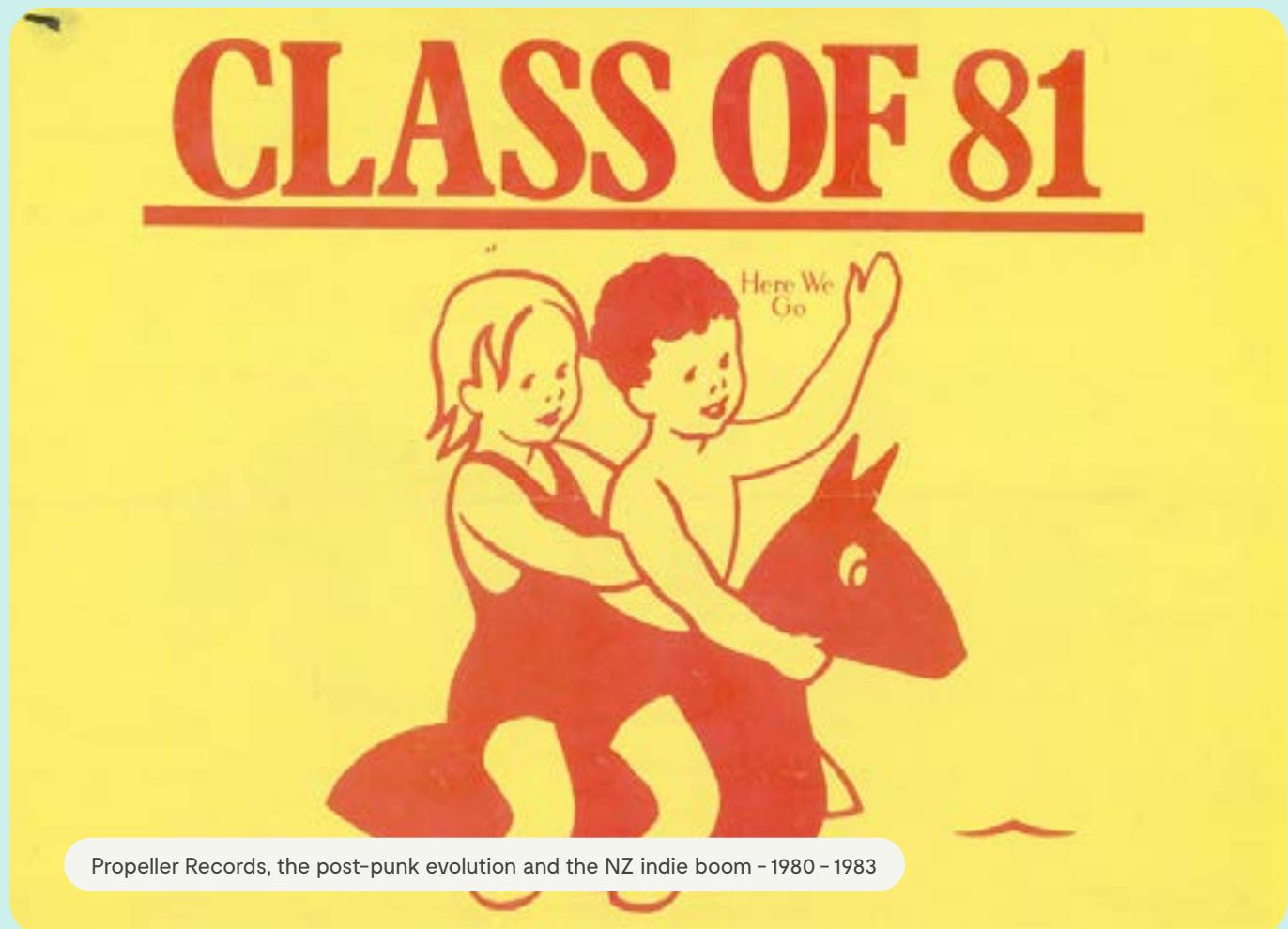
Consulting Editor, Founder – **Simon Grigg**

Consultant – **Chris Caddick**

Editorial Assistant – **Gareth Shute**

Tony Brunt  
Facebook

**“AudioCulture, a taonga in our  
contemporary historical universe.  
What we would have missed  
without them.”**



Sara Stretton  
Producer

**“... Your meticulous attention to detail has certainly created a most credible resource. After this exercise I know Nzonscreen is absolutely the last word on nz screen history...In this new world of misinformation it's great to know you can trust something!”**



Game of Two Halves - Series 1, Episode 6

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