



**CASTING BEGINS ON TE REO MAORI LANGUAGE VERSION OF WALT DISNEY ANIMATION STUDIOS' MOANA**

**Writer Taika Waititi (*Thor: Ragnarok*, *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*) and *Moana* Actress Rachel House ("Gramma Tala") Made the Announcement on behalf of the Matewa Media Trust, in Collaboration with The Walt Disney Studios**

**Actors Rachel House ("Gramma Tala"), Temuera Morrison ("Chief Tui"), Jemaine Clement ("Tamatoa") and Oscar Kightley ("Fisherman") will Reprise their Roles**

**BURBANK, Calif., June 8, 2017** – Casting has begun on the Te Reo Maori language version of Walt Disney Animations Studios Academy Award®-nominated animated feature *Moana*. The Maori language version is being created by Taika Waititi's Matewa Media Trust, in collaboration with The Walt Disney Studios. A Casting announcement was posted by Rachel House and Taika Waititi today on [www.adrenalingroup.com/casting](http://www.adrenalingroup.com/casting). The recording process will take place over the next few months with actors Rachel House ("Gramma Tala"), Temuera Morrison ("Chief Tui"), Jemaine Clement ("Tamatoa") and Oscar Kightley ("Fisherman") reprising their roles. Rob Ruha, multi-award-winning composer and solo artist, has joined the team as both Musical Director and as an integral part of the translation/adaptation team. Release details are to be announced, with the goal to have the film shared both in festivals and on DVD for educational purposes in Aotearoa (New Zealand) and beyond.

"It's been a big dream of mine to see mainstream movies translated into te reo Maori," says Waititi. "For indigenous audiences to hear films in their own language is a huge deal, helping to normalize the native voice and give a sense of identification. It also encourages our youth to continue with their love and learning of the language, letting them know their culture has a place in the world."

"A few years ago, as we worked on the *Moana* script with the incredible Taika Waititi, he expressed a deep interest in creating a Maori language version of the film," said *Moana*

producer Osnat Shurer. “We are so excited for Disney Character Voices International Team and the Matewa Media Trust to work together to make this a reality.”

### **ABOUT THE MOVIE:**

For centuries, the greatest sailors in the world masterfully navigated the vast Pacific, discovering the many islands of Oceania. But then, 3,000 years ago, their voyages stopped for a millennium – and no one knows exactly why. From Walt Disney Animation Studios comes “Moana,” a sweeping, CG-animated feature film about an adventurous teenager who is inspired to leave the safety and security of her island on a daring journey to save her people. Inexplicably drawn to the ocean, Moana (voice of Auli'i Cravalho) convinces the mighty demigod Maui (voice of Dwayne Johnson) to join her mission, and he reluctantly helps her become a wayfinder like her ancestors who sailed before her. Together, they voyage across the open ocean on an action-packed adventure, encountering enormous monsters and impossible odds, and along the way, Moana fulfills her quest and discovers the one thing she’s always sought: her own identity. Moana is directed by the renowned filmmaking team of Ron Clements and John Musker (“The Little Mermaid,” “Aladdin,” “The Princess & the Frog”), produced by Osnat Shurer (“Lifted,” “One Man Band”), and features music by Lin-Manuel Miranda, Mark Mancina and Opetia Foa’i.

### **ABOUT MATEWA MEDIA TRUST:**

Established in 2017 by founders Taika Waititi, Tweedie Waititi, and Chelsea Winstanley, the Matewa Media Trust is a non-profit organization whose goal is to help preserve the Maori language, culture and indigenous stories.

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