

Kākahu Coughlan, Voice  
Year 11, Age 15

## BIOGRAPHY

With several years of immersion in kapa haka culture and performance, Kākahu began her journey into classical voice as a member of the Auckland Girls' Choir (AGC) in 2021. This venture ignited her passion for classical singing and opera, leading her to pursue further training and performance opportunities. Dedicated to balancing her love for kapa haka and classical singing, she continuously strives for excellence in both disciplines.

## PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

- Performed in numerous concerts with AGC, including Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with Bach Musica Choir & Orchestra at Auckland Town Hall. (March 2021)
- Invited by John Rosser (Viva Voce) to perform the intro and outro of *Here Comes the Sun* for World Singing Day 2021, translating her contribution into Te Reo Māori. This performance is available on YouTube.
- Placed in the top three in six classes at her first competition, the West Auckland Performing Arts Competitions (WAPACS), earning the **Pae Tawhiti Scholarship** for promising singers from Dr Morag Atchison. (June 2022)
- Concert soloist and ensemble performer at the *Earth Sea Sky* closing ceremony, Art Exhibition at Lopdell House, Titirangi. (April 2024)
- Featured vocalist in the choral concert *New Horizons* (March 2023) and performed as a soloist in the concert *On Your Bike*. (June 2024)
- Performed in numerous choir concerts for Clevedon Artistic and Musical Adventures (CAMA Choir, 2024).
- Appeared in *The Addams Family* school production. (2024)
- Concert Fundraiser 'Te Manu Waiata' at Te Pou Theatre (Dec 2024) with 8 fellow artists.



## EDUCATION

Currently attending a Rumaki Kaupapa at Waitakere College, Kākahu is bilingual in Te Reo Māori and English. She embraces the acquisition of European languages through song, considering it a natural extension of her linguistic abilities, and is currently learning Latin, German, Italian and French. She has been under the tutelage of soprano **Gina Sanders** since May 2022.

## MUSICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

### Scholarships & Bursaries

- **Pae Tawhiti Scholarship** – Awarded for promising singers at WAPACS (June 2022)
- **Clevedon Valley Music Trust Scholarship** – Recognised for vocal excellence (May 2023)
- **Bursary Recipient** – NZ Voice Programme Summer School. (January 2025)
- **Kings College** – Music Scholarship for 2026, 2027 (awarded in May 2025)
- **Jeanette Kingsford Memorial Scholarship** – IRMTNZ Auckland Vocal (September 2025)

### Examinations

- **New Zealand Music Examinations Board (NZMEB)** – Achieved 'A with Distinction' in Performance Singing, Grade 5 and Grade 6. (December 2022 & 2023). Grade 7 (August 2025).

### Competitions & Awards

- **South Auckland Performing Arts Competition** – Achieved top placements in solo and group categories (July-August 2023)
- **South Auckland Performing Arts Junior Champion** – Awarded:
  - Young Performer Award
  - Gwenneth Short Challenge Cup
  - Valley Voices Vocal Recital Intermediate Young Performer
  - Majors and Minors Trophy for Intermediate Vocal Duet (July 2024)
- **Waitakere College Arts and Culture Award – Music** – Recognised for excellence in music. (September 2024)
- **WAPACS Junior Vocal** – Top 3 winner in the 14-15-year-old category. (September 2024)
- **Te Awamutu Competitions Society of the Performing Arts** – 12-15-year-old Vocal Class Winner, receiving:
  - NJ Phillips Scholarship
  - O'Brien Edmonds Cup
  - Waitomo Music Society Cup
  - C. Jacobs Cup
  - Vocal Duet Gardyne Trophy (September 2024)
- **New Zealand Aria Competition** – Prize winner in:
  - 13 & Under 16 Years: Traditional, Own Selection & Light Entertainment
  - 14 & Under 21 Years: Māori Song (original arrangement by Kākahu) – 3rd Place (October 2024)

## GOALS 2025

- **Fundraiser concert** held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2025 in partnership with [Te Puna Creative Hub](#)
- Undertake **NZMEB** Level 6 Musical Theatre and Music Theory examinations.
- Audition for **the Performing Arts at Kings College** for 2026.
- Audition for the **New Zealand Secondary School Choir** for the 2027/28 cycle.