

MAORI POET

ANYONE who has even a slight acquaintance with Maori culture knows of its long lineage. Even before the first English version of the Bible, Maori poet; in a land which Europeans hadn't heard of were composing laments that were poignant and expressive, and direct and economical in their communication of severance and grief. This Maori tradition has persisted, even though it is now embodied in a new form, the action song, which was born at the time of the cultural revival stimulated by the Young Maori Party.

In a talk, *Tuini Ngawai*, to be heard from 2YC at 8.18 p.m. on Wednesday, September 5, and later from other YC stations, Eric Schwimmer, the editor of the magazine *Te Ao Hou*, talks about the action song and its outstanding modern exponent, Miss Tuini Ngawai, of Tokomaru Bay. Miss Ngawai belongs to Te Whanauarua Tauperi, a sub-tribe of Ngati Porou. She wrote her first song—"He Nawe Kei Roto"—in 1933, a conversation piece between two lovers, which was performed informally as an entertainment action song at the opening of the meeting house at Tokomaru Bay. Since then she has written over two hundred original songs—songs on love, death, religion, songs of welcome and of everyday things—which are performed by hundreds of groups all over the country.

Tuini Ngawai sometimes composes her own music, but more often uses existing melodies. Mr. Schwimmer says of this much-criticised aspect of action songs that "Miss Ngawai uses the popular hits because they suit her purpose—to bring her message to the people of her own Tokomaru Bay, people who love musical hits and like to have them mixed with the traditional feelings, phrases and dances."

Three of Miss Ngawai's compositions are played in this programme—a welcome of war veterans to the marae, written for the Ngārimu hui, a welcome to the Queen, composed for the Royal Visit, and one of her most famous compositions, *The Shearing Song*.

Jazz Festival

AT the seventh Festival of Jazz in Wellington, *The Listener* joined the audience and settled back for an evening of accomplished playing. On stage Don Richardson's Band looked cool and relaxed in their blue sweaters, and the show started with the band in its usual good form. The crowd, on the other hand, was not its usual self, and turned out to be the noisiest of the year. The Dixie group showed some ingenuity this time and added a B flat bass, very old and battered, and a guitar to their ensemble. Mike Gibbs's numbers on the trumpet were obviously highlights for the audience, and Dorsey Cameron (trombone) and Laurie Lewis and Johnny Williams (saxophones) were also popular soloists. Two vocal numbers with new soloists were well received—the Vikings, a male quartet, and Johnny Summers, who will probably climb much higher in the next few months. Selections from this show can be heard from 2YD on Thursday, September 6, at 9.0 p.m., and later from other stations.

Empire Games Commentary

IN *Scriptwriter Turned Novelist*, printed in our last issue, it was incorrectly stated that William Austin spoke the commentaries beamed to South Africa from the 1950 Empire Games. They were actually spoken by Don Donaldson.

N.Z. LISTENER, AUGUST 31, 1956.

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