MC / Entertainer Biography

Johnson&Laird

Bruce Hopkins

Height 182 cm

It 's safe to say that few crayfishermen would dream of becoming professional dancers. Bruce Hopkins did though–and in the space of six months the fourth-generation Stewart Islander went from cray pot hauler to fully fledged member of a dance company.

Lord of the Rings fans will recognise Bruce as Gamling, commander of the horse riding armies of Rohan and talkback lovers will know him as 'Les'from his top-rating Sunday night radio show on Newstalk ZB. He has entertained at brewing baron Douglas Myers wedding and sung at Dame Kiri Te Kanawa 's 50th birthday in her Bay of Islands home; Bruce's CV needs more pages than the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Quick with a quip, and a master of improvisation, Bruce's musings on the human experience make him a sought-after MC, speaker and entertainer.

He 's wrangled the crowd at the World Dairy Summit and kept the 1200-strong crowd laughing at the hairdressing industry Oscars, the L 'Oreal Colour Trophy awards. And he's clearly a hit with software company Advanced Professional Solutions which has hired him for the past 13 years to MC its client conferences. In 2010 he won the Corporate Events Guide People's Choice Award for best MC.

After ditching the ocean life, Bruce spent eight years dancing with Impulse Dance Theatre in New Zealand and Australia, touring with the New Zealand Ballet Company and dancing for the acclaimed Limbs Dance Company.

Legendary theatre actor and director Raymond Hawthorne asked him to perform in Auckland 's Mercury Theatre production of West Side Story and after a sell-out season, Bruce gave up dance and became a full-time Mercury member. He has trod the boards in countless productions, most recently as the psychologically tortured lead in a sell-out season of the Silo Theatre's Macbeth. He was also on the winning team of the inaugural New Zealand Theatresports championships and represented New Zealand in Brisbane at the international competition.

Not shy of taking a stand for what he believes in, Bruce has used his voice to good effect at anti-GE rallies and spoken up about actors' equity issues. He's also an active member of Amnesty International and belongs to Greenpeace.

A father of three, Bruce has a special interest in at-risk youth. While in Los Angeles on Lord of the Rings business, Bruce started working on a reading programme with at-risk youth, and has since been awarded a commendation from LA County for his efforts. He has a few similar projects on the boil in New Zealand and hopes to set up a visiting programme between rest homes and primary schools. He has also sponsored children through CCF (the Crippled Children's Fund)for more than a decade.

His youth is littered with sporting acclaim: he won a bronze at the national surf lifesaving championships, captained the Otago

under-20s rugby team, and toured Australia in the New Zealand secondary schools waterpolo team.

To relax, Bruce heads out west with his surfboard to catch the waves at Piha, or clears his mind with yoga. He dreams of buying a Triumph Bonneville motorbike and riding off into the horizon to become a nomad.

Testimonials.

Having met Bruce in his capacity as a volunteer at a Hospice, I engaged him as the MC for a large fundraising event at Ellerslie Race Course.

Bruce did a thoroughly professional job of relating to our 250 guests and promoting our charity. Bruce is a polished performer with a life time of experience in front of an audience. His MC skills would be hard to beat, as would be his expert approach to the task in hand. Bruce's easy going persona set our minds at ease, whilst in the process of organising the event AND in his contribution to the spirit and atmosphere on the day. I might add that when spontaneously asked to auction an item, his skills here, also excelled!

I would not hesitate to recommend Bruce for any MC role. He is so very versatile and eloquent.

Viv James

Race4Life Trust

General Manager

December 2016

- Race4Life Trust

"Bruce was a very welcome addition to our conference team this year. He allowed us to focus on looking after our members, while he looked after all the front-of-house MC duties, including our conference dinners. In addition, he pitched in with a large number of those little behind-the-scenes organisational tasks that pop up all the time, that someone needs to do, but no-one really owns. He invited us to toss those jobs to him, we did, and he took them in his stride. We had the usual share of last minute fine-tuning of the speakers and programme, and Bruce responded quickly and effectively. As hosts and organisers we had a much easier time with Bruce's professional help, his easy manner and his attention to detail. "

Kevin Ward - Chief Executive of NZ Airports Association;

- NZ Airports Association

'Bruce has worked with us as MC at two recent association conferences. At both events Bruce arrived to open the conference having researched not only the speakers but also the association and the target audience. This preparation meant that he could begin each

Testimonials continued...

session with a confident knowledge about who he was introducing. Bruce was also invaluable in helping to keep the conference running to schedule and making sure everyone was where they were meant to be. '

Malcolm Blakey - ICM Events

- ICM Events

As Chair of the Civil Engineering Testing Association of New Zealand (CETANZ)from 2010 to 2016, I have been privileged to work alongside Bruce who has been the MC for the last four CETANZ conferences. Bruce is a professional and talented speaker who is well organised and easy to work with. Bruce has a naturally inquisitive mind and was therefore able to pick up on and understand many of the heavy technical aspects of the presentations which he then included in his introductions and summaries, greatly helping the friendly but professional feel of our conferences. Being a good communicator and people person, Bruce took the time to get the feel for our industry and people and was then able to lighten the day with just the right balance of appropriate humour and banter. Bruce is a great time keeper and kept the conference program on track, he used his organisational skills to ensure we were all at the right place at the right time. If you are looking for an MC then Bruce is your man, hence as an organisation CETANZ continue to invite Bruce back to each of our conferences. On behalf of the management committee, we thank Bruce for all his help and support at our events. - Jayden Ellis, Past Chair

- CETANZ CONFERENCE - MC - 2016

CETANZ CONFERENCE - MC - AUGUST 2014

"As a Professional Conference Organiser (PCO), I recently organised a two day conference in Hamilton where the organising committee re-engaged the services of Bruce Hopkins as MC –he had previously undertaken this role at other conferences for the same group and they liked the dynamics between him and their group.

As a PCO, it is imperative that a conference runs smoothly through all stages of planning and execution–working with Bruce ensured that this happened to ensure the best possible outcome for the client. Through thorough communication, professionalism and dedication to the clients 'needs and expectations, I believe we each enabled the other to do our roles successfully.

I would recommend other organisations and associations to consider utilising the services of a professional MC such as Bruce Hopkins –he is a fabulous conduit to tie the various aspects of a conference together to obtain a slick and professional, yet welcoming and supportive environment for speakers, delegates and sponsors alike. "Kathryn Hunter, Forum Point2

- CETANZ CONFERENCE - MC - AUGUST 2014

GREEN PARTY - MC - 2014

Testimonials continued...

"On the recommendation of a friend we asked Bruce to MC our important fundraising Quiz Night. He was great - he cleverly manoeuvred his way around all the pitfalls of the event, effortlessly entertaining and organising the 150 or so attendees, and generally creating a really relaxed and positive mood. We were so pleased that we asked him to do it again - so a week later he MC'd another fundraising event involving some very high profile people, and again his charm and humour set the tone for the evening. He also presided over a very successful and hilarious auction. He was professional, very well prepared and a delight to work with. " - Margie Thomson, Auckland City Branch, Green Party.

"Bruce has been an exceptional MC at every event. Bruce is a unique character, able to mix professionalism with his down to earth and hilarious sense of humour. Our audience of Chartered Accountants is the ultimate test for an MC. Bruce is loved by our clients as much as he is by our staff, a testament to his energetic personality and the fantastic job that he's done for us over many years. "-APS Conference

- APS Conference