



For Immediate Release

KIWI MUSICIAN ROCKS THE BOAT FOR MERCY SHIPS

Kiwi musician Peter Woolston doesn't want fame and fortune, he wants to rock the boat. Mercy Ships' boat, to be exact.

Mercy Ships is Africa's medical God-send. Since 1978, the floating hospital has performed more than one billion dollars' worth of life-changing medical services on hundreds of thousands of the world's poorest people – all for free.

Yup, you read that right. Mercy Ships is powered by voluntary medical professionals from more than 40 nations all over the world, including New Zealand. The crew pay their way and perform vital – often life-saving – medical services including cleft lip and palate corrections, cataract removals, straightening of crossed eyes, and orthopaedic and facial reconstruction, all at no charge to the patient.

But making a difference doesn't come cheap. And that's where Peter Woolston comes in.

To help Mercy Ships continue to provide free surgeries and life-changing medical care to some of the poorest people in the world, Woolston is 'rocking the boat' with his new album, *Hope On My Horizon*, by donating 50% of all EP, CD and iTunes profits from the track to the floating hospital.

Drawing comparisons to artists like Jon Foreman, Bono and Martin Smith, *Hope On My Horizon* counts its blessings and sees the glass as half full rather than half empty. Recorded in Sydney and due for release in June 2015, this album is characterised by Woolston's melodic and guitar-powered alternative rock. Each track draws on his knack for deep-thinking, and is consistently introspective and serious-minded – and memorable.

Influenced by bands like U2, Switchfoot, The Police and Larry Noman, Woolston's music-making has taken him all over the world, including far-flung nations like China, Romania, Bulgaria and Russia. His love for music isn't something Woolston takes lightly, though, which is why he took up the role of Musical Ambassador for Mercy Ships NZ in 2014.

"My first connection with Mercy Ships was in 1983 and I was amazed at how practical Christianity aligned with caring for the poor and needy," says Woolston.

"My wife worked with Mercy Ships before we met, and we have stayed engaged with Mercy Ships since, eager to hear about the radical impact being made in the lives of the poorest of the poor."

“My songs tell the stories of life – the good and the bad – pointing to hope and courage with lyrics that are distinctive to how I write as a songwriter. I connect with fans one person at a time in an honest and authentic way, trying to see how I can encourage them or inspire them to take what they’ve got and make a difference in the lives of people around them.”

Mercy Ships New Zealand Director Graeme Walls says a partnership with a musician like Woolston is invaluable.

“Mercy Ships works because of the dedication of volunteer professionals to provide world-class healthcare services to the poorest of the poor, free of charge. Peter Woolston’s determination to join us in using his skills to highlight both the needs in Africa and the opportunities for Kiwis to roll their sleeves up and get involved is a gift we are delighted with.”

The title track from *Hope On My Horizon* will be released on 8th June 2015, followed by the five-track EP on 29th June 2015.

For more information about Mercy Ships, visit www.mercyships.org.nz. For more information about Peter Woolston and *Hope On My Horizon*, visit www.peterwoolstonmusic.com/hopeonmyhorizon.

ENDS

About Mercy Ships

Since 1978, Mercy Ships has performed more than \$1 billion worth of free medical services, directly impacting more than 2.35 million of the world’s poorest people. Mercy Ships providing surgeries, dental work, well drilling, and other capacity building services free of charge to the most destitute in Africa’s most impoverished nations, and all volunteers pay their own way. Mercy Ships has 16 national offices worldwide, including one in Auckland. More information at www.mercyships.org.nz

Mercy Ships have:

- Performed 78,000+ life-changing operations such as cleft lip and palate, cataract removal, straightening of crossed eyes, orthopaedic and facial reconstruction. All operations are free to patients.
- Treated over 183,000 patients in village dental clinics and educated 5,800 local health care workers, who have in turn trained multiple thousands in primary health care.
- Trained over 35,300 local professionals in their areas of expertise, including anaesthesiology, midwifery, instrument sterilisation, orthopaedic and reconstructive surgery, and leadership.
- Completed over 1,100 community development projects focusing on water and sanitation, education, infrastructure development and agriculture.

About Peter Woolston

Peter Woolston has loved music since he was about 10 years old. Originally from Wellington but now based in Auckland with his family, Woolston has performed all over New Zealand and throughout the world, including the US, China, Bulgaria, Romania and Russia. Influenced by bands like U2, Switchfoot, The Police and Larry Norman, Woolston has studied under teachers like Pat Pattison and Jason Blume, completed a Certificate in Songwriting at Boston’s Berklee College of Music, and produced distinctive melodic and guitar-powered alternative rock.