

Media release



New Zealand Institute of Architects Incorporated

Significant Maori building on show in historic Venetian palazzo

An acclaimed documentary about the design and construction of a unique cultural building for a Maori tribe or iwi in New Zealand will be screened on 28 May at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia during the Vernissage of the Biennale Architettura 2016.

Ever the Land tells the story of the building of Te Wharehou o Tūhoe in the remote forests of the Urewera district. The project was of huge importance for the Tūhoe people, who have successfully struggled to maintain their traditions and rights to their land during 150 years of colonisation.

The new building, which was designed by architectural practice Jasmx to meet the stringent criteria of the international Living Building Challenge, serves as the headquarters of the Tūhoe tribal authority and meeting place for the Tūhoe people.

Over a two year period *Ever the Land* director Sarah Grohnert was granted extensive access to Tuhoe people and the building site. The film, which was produced by Alexander Behse, was made against the background of ongoing negotiations between Tuhoe and the New Zealand government, which have resulted in the government's apology for historic wrongs and a compensation settlement.

Te Wharehou o Tūhoe is also represented in *Future Islands*, the New Zealand exhibition at this year's Biennale Architettura. The exhibition is being staged by the New Zealand Institute of Architects.

"We are thrilled that this powerful film telling the story of Te Wharehou o Tūhoe will be presented to an international audience in Venice," said Teena Hale Pennington, the New Zealand Institute of Architects' Chief Executive.

"The Biennale Architettura is the leading forum for discussions about architecture and its place in the culture of countries," Ms Hale Pennington said. "In this context, *Ever the Land's* messages about caring for the land, respecting the environment and nurturing the community are especially resonant."

Ms Hale Pennington said the venue for the film's two screenings in Venice is also very appropriate.

"It is a pleasure to show this film about an innovative New World building at the Querini Stampalia, one of Venice's most significant cultural and architectural sites, which was restored by Carlo Scarpa, one of Italy's most important modern architects."

Representatives of Tūhoe are travelling to Venice for the film's screenings, as are *Ever the Land's* director and producer, and a Jasmx architect who was closely involved with the project. After the screenings, the visitors will discuss the film in a short question and answer session.

Ever the Land will be screened at 10.30am and 3.30pm on Saturday 28 May 2016 in the auditorium of the Fondazione Querini Stampalia.

A limited number of tickets are available for the two screenings. For booking information go to: venice.nzia.co.nz/events.

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