

Iti paints film's poster

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Maori affairs reporter

SARAH Grohnert remembers the first time she met Tame Iti.

Dressed in a pair of non-descript overalls with a paint-brush in one hand, Mr Iti was joking around with other men contracted to paint the inside of the building that would become Tuhoe's headquarters in Taneatua, Te Kura Whare.

This memory was on the German film-maker's mind when she asked the Tuhoe artist to develop a painting that could be used as the poster for her feature documentary – *Ever the Land*.

The film explores the Tuhoe relationship with its land through the building of Te Kura Whare, which has achieved the tough Living Building certification.

Framed against ongoing negotiations with the Government, which culminated in the Crown's historic apology and settlement in 2014, the film has been described as an "observational sketch of New Zealand's most fiercely independent tribe".

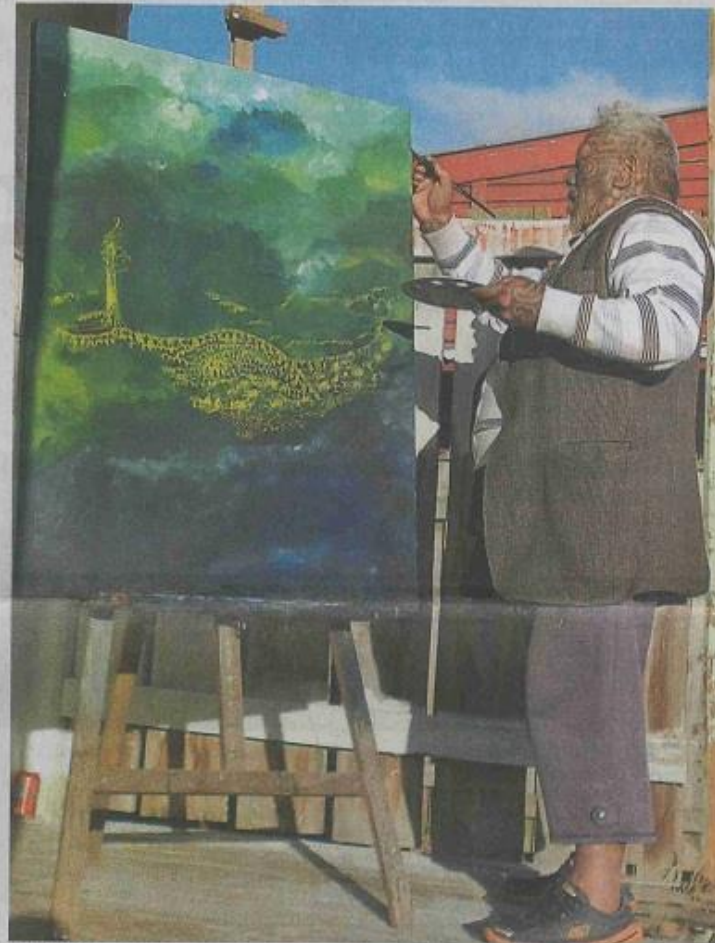
Ms Grohnert said she got to know Mr Iti during the filming of the documentary and believed he was the best man to capture the meaning of the film with a poster image.

"Over cups of tea I'd also get a glimpse of Tame's paintings, he has a little studio at home, and his paintings just spoke to me.

"Tame has a signature style, which he tells me took him years to develop, and that is of crowds of outlines or silhouettes of people, set in and against abstract Te Urewera landscape.

"Ultimately, it's about the relationship between people and their land. And although my film is about Tuhoe and Tame is also a Tuhoe artist, I feel both the film and his paintings have a universal quality, you can relate to it regardless of whether you are Tuhoe or not.

The film will have its world premiere in Auckland today when



EVER THINE: Tame Iti painting the artwork that would be made into the poster for the feature documentary *Ever the Land*.
Photo supplied

it screens as part of the New Zealand Film Festival. The festival will move to Wellington, then Christchurch.

Ms Grohnert said once the festival was completed, she hoped it would be screened in the Eastern Bay.