



BOTH WORLDS: The new contemporary wharemate at Tanatana Marae in Waimana sits alongside the traditional meeting house.

Photo supplied

Tuhoe marae wins another design award

THE architect behind the contemporary-styled wharemate at Tanatana Marae in Waimana has won another award for his work.

Aladina Harunani, of APA Architects and Project Managers in Rotorua, was named the supreme winner at the ADNZ Resene Architectural Design Awards at a ceremony in Auckland on Friday night for his design of the wharemate—beating 149 other entries.

Tanatana marae is home to Tuhoe hapu Ngati Rere and according to tribal tradition the deceased are mourned in a wharemate, a building separate to the meeting house.

The brief for Tanatana Marae called for a sleeping area for immediate family members alongside the deceased and additional space for extended whanau.

Marae committee representative Martin Rakuraku said the temporary shelters used in the past were no longer suitable and a permanent building was required.

“Traditionally, the oratory takes place outside, whether it’s rain, hail or sunshine. But we do occasionally get bad weather here and it’s important for people to be warm and comfortable,” Mr Rakuraku said.

“We decided we wanted this new building to house the mourning family and to be a symbol of the future.”

Mr Rakuraku said the new wharemate was an “awesome” blend of old and new, with a look “almost spaceship like”.

“As well as offering his architectural expertise, Aladina’s background is similar to ours in terms of culture, which he

also brought to the project. Now we are much better positioned to carry out our tikanga [spiritual practice] and we’ve got an incredible building as well.”

ADNZ judge Duncan Joiner said the symbolism within the building’s basic structure was particularly meaningful.

“You can see the big shallow arches, which end like fingers stretching out and grasping the land, as well as the pou (posts) reaching up to the sky. It’s simple but enables quite complex emotions to take place. Both practically and metaphorically the design is now an integral part of the marae process. It’s not something that’s hidden away – it’s there, and the idea is boldly but very sensitively presented.”

ADNZ chief executive Astrid Andersen said designing for specific and complex cultural requirements demanded considerable skill and sensitivity from an architect.

“It is inspiring to see a striking contemporary design, which is beautiful in its simplicity, fulfil the requirements of a complex brief. The design is a celebration of life, death, traditional life and a nod to the future.”

Held annually, the ADNZ Resene Architectural Design Awards celebrate the most innovative, creative and aesthetic architectural designs across the country.

Presented to architectural designers in both residential and commercial sectors, the awards acknowledge outstanding design in the categories of new homes, interiors, alterations and additions, commercial and industrial design.