

Media release – 13 May



**New Zealand
Institute of Architects
Incorporated**

Opening of the New Zealand Room at the Venice Architecture Biennale

Design-oriented New Zealand companies will this year be able to tell their stories to a large and informed international audience at the world's leading architecture event, the Venice Architecture Biennale.

A group of companies and business organisations have joined an initiative to promote New Zealand as a centre of innovative design and manufacture at the six-month long Biennale, which is launched over 26 and 27 May and runs until the end of November.

The campaign, which is supported by the New Zealand Government through Manatū Taonga, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage's Cultural Diplomacy International Programme, focuses on the specially curated New Zealand Room at the Palazzo Bollani.

The palazzo is the venue of *Future Islands*, New Zealand's national exhibition at the Venice Architecture Biennale.

The New Zealand Room (Te Koha) and the national exhibition, which are organised by the New Zealand Institute of Architects, share an ambition to present New Zealand as a creative and enterprising country with a distinctive design identity.

Curated by leading young New Zealand designer Rufus Knight, the New Zealand Room is furnished with products and materials that showcase this country's design capability.

Contributors to the promotional effort around the New Zealand Room include Campaign for Wool New Zealand, boat builder Core Builders Composites, high-end yacht and commercial fit-out fabricator Robinson Interiors, paint manufacturer Resene, natural cladding material maker Rockcote, furniture group Resident, sustainable timber supplier Abodo, textile design company Nodi, and rainwear designer Okewa.

Rufus Knight, with the support of New Zealand Room partners, has also designed a Reading Room (Te Mātau) at the Palazzo Bollani. The Reading Room gives visitors to the exhibition and the New Zealand Room a further opportunity to experience New Zealand design, and to read about the country's design culture.

New Zealand Institute of Architects Chief Executive Teena Hale Pennington said the Venice Architecture Biennale is a unique opportunity to present New Zealand as a dynamic design environment.

“The Biennale attracts more than a quarter of a million visitors and over 3,000 media representatives,” Ms Hale Pennington said. “This is a highly attentive and influential audience, and it’s great to see that New Zealand companies with a strong design focus appreciate the opportunities the Biennale offers.”

“For our part, the New Zealand Institute of Architects is pleased to co-operate with the government and industry in an initiative that holds such promise for New Zealand Inc.”

The New Zealand Room will be available as a hosting space for New Zealand enterprises over the course of the Venice Architecture Biennale.

The New Zealand Institute of Architects, again with the support of Manatū Taonga, has published a special newspaper that will be available to visitors to the New Zealand Room. Titled *Koha* – it will be free – the publication features stories about New Zealand design and architecture, and profiles the companies that have contributed to the New Zealand Room initiative.

The New Zealand Room will be officially opened by New Zealand’s Consul-General and Trade Commissioner in Milan, Ann Clifford, on Friday 27 May at 1pm.

For more information about the New Zealand Room, and *Future Islands*, go to venice.nzia.co.nz

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For enquiries about the New Zealand Room (Te Koha) please contact:

Teena Hale Pennington, New Zealand Institute of Architects

thalepennington@nzia.co.nz

+64 27 527 5273

For media enquiries about the New Zealand Exhibition contact:

John Walsh

Communications Manager, New Zealand Institute of Architects

jwalsh@nzia.co.nz

+64 21 276 7447