



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MAHANA PREMIERE SUPPORTS A CAUSE CLOSE TO HOME

Internationally acclaimed director Lee Tamahori's first New Zealand film in 20 years, MAHANA, will have its New Zealand premiere on February 22, 2016 at Hoyts Sylvia Park, Auckland.

The film depicts a profound and enduring tale of rural family life based on the book *Bulibasha* by Witi Ihimaera, who also wrote *Whale Rider*.

The premiere will be held in partnership with Variety – The Children's Charity, with proceeds benefitting Kiwi kids living in deprivation.

Producer Robin Scholes explains: ***"We are delighted that a portion of ticket sales will go to Variety to support their work with children and families. Mahana is all about family, so it's a very welcome and appropriate alliance."***

MAHANA is an evocative family drama based on Whale Rider author Witi Ihimaera's novel, *Bulibasha*. Set in 1960's rural New Zealand, two Māori sheep-shearing families, the Mahanas and the Poatas, battle for supremacy in the shearing sheds and in their own hearts. The youngest Mahana, 14-year-old Simeon, is troubled by the rivalry and begins to unravel the truth behind the longstanding feud.

Stacey Morrison, will be MC for the evening which will feature a performance by the acclaimed Western Springs College Kapa Haka group - Nga Puna o Waiorea, before MAHANA Director Lee Tamahori and *Bulibasha* Author Witi Ihimaera introduce the film.

Key cast members of MAHANA will attend this special screening. Temuera Morrison (*Once Were Warriors*) returns to the big screen to play Tamihana Mahana; the proud, traditionalist patriarch. Young newcomer Akuhata (Augs) Keefe who was plucked from Tolaga Bay Area School to play Simeon will attend, as will Jim Moriarty (*The Strength of Water*) stars as Tamihana's arch-rival, Rupeni Poata.

What: New Zealand Premiere of MAHANA

When: Monday 22 February 2016

Where: Hoyts Sylvia Park, Mt Wellington, Auckland

Time: 7.00pm – Light refreshments and entertainment

8.00pm – Introduction by Director Lee Tamahori and *Bulibasha* Author Witi Ihimaera

8.15pm – Film begins

Tickets: \$40.00

Premium Tickets: \$80.00 (Includes Hoyts LUX seating and a copy of *Bulibasha* signed by Witi Ihimaera)

Private Cinema: Two cinemas of 28 guests each with access to a private bar area are being auctioned on [Trade Me](#) with all proceeds going to Variety.

To purchase tickets visit www.iticket.co.nz or call 09 361 1000

All proceeds will support Variety – The Children’s Charity to create brighter futures for Kiwi kids living in deprivation.

- END

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NOTES TO EDITORS

A hi-res image of the Mahana family is available on request.

Caption: ‘From left: Joshua Mahana (Regan Taylor); Huria Mahana (Maria Walker); Tamihana Mahana (Temuera Morrison); Simeon Mahana (Akuhata (Augs) Keefe) and Ramona Mahana (Nancy Brunning)’

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OFFICIAL SYNOPSIS

1960s, East Coast of New Zealand. Two Maori sheep-shearing families, the Mahanas and the Poatas, are longstanding enemies and commercial rivals.

14-year-old Simeon Mahana, the youngest son of the youngest son is in conflict with his traditionalist grandfather, Tamihana. As Simeon unravels the truth behind the longstanding family vendetta he risks not just his own future prospects but the cohesion of the entire tight-knit society.

From the author of "Whale Rider", the screenwriter of "Master and Commander" and the producer and director of "Once Were Warriors" comes a profound and enduring tale of rural family life.

ABOUT VARIETY – THE CHILDREN’S CHARITY

Variety - The Children's Charity is a champion for Kiwi kids; and with nearly 1 in 3 New Zealand children growing up in deprivation our work is essential. Every year we help over 13,000 local children to have brighter futures.

Variety offers Kiwi kids and their families targeted, flexible support to meet their specific needs. We help by providing the basic necessities, much-needed medical equipment, life-changing mobility needs, and innovative educational initiatives.

Variety works alongside schools, community agencies and healthcare professionals, tackling child deprivation so that one by one, Kiwi kids who urgently need our life-changing assistance are set up to reach their full potential in life.

MAHANA OPENS IN NZ CINEMAS MARCH 3, 2016.