**NOT IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD – reviews and interviews**

Radio interview

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/concert/programmes/upbeat/audio/201757534/jamie-mccaskill-%27not-in-our-neighbourhood%27> \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
Tikapa Productions' Not in Our Neighbourhood reinforces that theatre is one of the greatest ways to bring communities together, to help us to understand issues that are difficult to talk about and to empathise with fellow human beings.
All elements of this production: the text, direction, acting, set and lighting design work together to communicate the complexities of the story.

A lot of work that deals with violent topics enacts that violence on stage which questions whether putting the audience through something traumatic is a safe thing to do and what it really achieves.

In Not in Our Neighbourhood only a few short moments of violence break through what is otherwise still and calm storytelling built on a commitment to truth. It is a powerful and effective way of communicating key messages about domestic violence to the public.

This is theatre for social change. *Fiona McNamara, Theatreview* (adapted) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Director Jamie McCaskill wrote Not In Our Neighbourhood after working at the Hauraki Women's Refuge for over a year; an experience which gave him “a brief glance into the world of domestic violence.”

His ‘tell it like it is' approach to profiling three ‘guests' of a Refuge's Safe House – plus the woman who runs the Refuge, a woman making a documentary about it and the husband of one ‘refugee' – produces the sort of drama and comedy-of-insight that can only come from ‘warts-and-all' authenticity.

The array of household lamps that line, light and define the traverse acting space – making Jennifer Lal's lighting design the set design too – could belong to any neighbourhood. Likewise the women found in the play's Women's Refuge may have fled from domestic abuse within any socio-economic, cultural or geographic ‘hood'.

Kali Kopae plays all five women with extraordinary flair, introducing each in a silent prologue of postures before going on to flesh out their idiosyncratic personalities and heartfelt behaviours. *John Smythe, Theatreview* ( adapted) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Over the years I have seen three or four plays designed to promote awareness of the blight that disfigures our society: domestic violence against women. None that I can remember has been quite as effective theatrically as Jamie McCaskill's *Not in Our Neighbourhood*.

There is truthfulness in the way this hour-long play unfolds, with its occasional touches of humour in the characterisations, while the violence presented is verbal violence in one short, intensely dramatic and powerfully performed scene by Paul McLaughlin.

It takes place in the Hauraki Women's Refuge where Maisey Mata, a film-maker has been invited to make a documentary in a bid to raise awareness. We meet the kindly and long suffering staff and three women finding a temporary haven in the safety of the Refuge.

We meet the stroppy, volatile, angry Sasha, who says what she thinks and is not afraid to tell the local MP in no uncertain terms what she thinks of him in her attempt to retrieve her children. Then there's Cat and the quietly spoken Theresa who has come to the refuge because her businessman husband is a bully.All the characters, bar one, are played by Kali Kopae who moves swiftly from character to character with skill. she captures marvellously the wild, out of control anger that drives Sasha, but she also captures perfectly the confusion and fear of the comfortable middle-class Theresa coming face to face with an alien world.**- Stuff**