

THE BIGGEST

TIKAPA PRODUCTIONS
CO-PRESENTED WITH AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL
WRITTEN + DIRECTED BY JAMIE MCCASKILL
AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND



PHOTOGRAPH: LARISSA WARREN, FINELINE PHOTOGRAPHY

FREE PROGRAMME



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THE BIGGEST

TIKAPA PRODUCTIONS

Q THEATRE, RANGATIRA

THUR 9 MAR 7.30PM
FRI 10 MAR – SAT 11 MAR 6.30PM
SUN 12 MAR 5.00PM
MON 13 MAR 7.30PM
WED 15 MAR 6.30PM
THUR 16 MAR – SAT 18 MAR 7.30PM
SUN 19 MAR 6.30PM

POST-SHOW TALK FRIDAY 10 MAR
TOUCH TOUR MONDAY 13 MAR 5.30PM

NAU MAI, HAERE MAI KI TE AHUREI TOI O TAMAKI WELCOME TO AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL 2017

Great artists cause controversy, start revolutions and little by little change the world. Festivals like ours are a catalyst for change creating opportunities for artists to communicate with audiences and audiences to respond to artists' work. Throughout the Festival you will find small threads that deal with our world today. We hope that the work in the Festival can make you think, laugh, scream a little and perhaps even cry.

With *The Biggest* Jamie had intended to write a comedy, but what he ended up writing was a drama. *The Biggest* is a story of small town NZ, a story of mates, a story of illness, a story of love and whānau, a story of wanting to be accepted – laced with humour. We're taken on a personal journey from the pub to a fishing competition – all the ups and downs of every day life. Congratulations to Jamie and the whole Tikapa whānau for creating an everyday story about us that we can all relate to. A special note: Jim Moriarity and I started out in the festival business together in 1989 – and it is wonderful he is here at my last Festival. Kia kaha to you all.

The Festival's CEO David Inns (my partner and collaborator of many years), our Board and staff, hope you have a fabulous Festival. We hope that you enjoy the beauty and complexity of the art presented and value its importance in our society. Join the revolution.

Carla, David and the Auckland Arts Festival team

WITH SUPPORT FROM

COMPANY

Writer/Director
Jamie McCaskill

Producer
Sonia van der Heyden & Jamie McCaskill for Tikapa Productions

Lighting Designer & Technical Operator
Jennifer Lal

Set & Costume Designer
Tony De Goldi

Sound Designer
Gil Eva Craig

Stage Manager
Karena Letham

CAST

Nick Dunbar
Tim Gordon
Peter Hambleton
Kali Kopae
Jim Moriarty
Apirana Taylor

THE BIGGEST

The Biggest follows the adventures of a bunch of mates living some of the best years of their lives in small-town New Zealand.

The prestigious Hauraki fishing competition is coming up and Poppa, Pat and Mick meet at the local pub to welcome back wheelchair bound Stu, who has been absent for months after writing off his new boat in a car accident. The men seize the opportunity to enter the fishing competition to try to win Stu a new boat. Standing in their way is the town's hottest fisherman, Jan Martin, who makes it his mission to get in the way of their prize.

BY ARRANGEMENT WITH

A NOTE FROM THE WRITER/DIRECTOR – JAMIE MCCASKILL

The Biggest is a representation of my experience in small town New Zealand from 2011 to 2014. I wanted to represent the rural male voice and how the men interact with each other. I was fascinated by the relationships they had formed over the years and wanted to explore possible stories behind them. I want it to ring true with New Zealanders and even be complex enough to challenge stereotype. At the same time I think everyone will know one of these characters.

I dedicate this season of *The Biggest* to my Poppa, Wally McCaskill, and the inspiration he has given me to write this play.

On behalf of Tikapa I would like to thank Auckland Arts Festival for having us once again and for their support in the creation of this work.

I would also like to give a huge thanks to Carla van Zon whose amazing career has inspired artists like me to think big and work hard. Carla has been a big advocate of my work as a director, writer and actor and has always gone the extra mile for Māori Theatre. I can't thank you enough Carla for the tireless work you do and the advice you have given to an aspiring artist and producer like me.

Kā nui te aroha. Kā nui te ora.



SPONSORED BY



COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES



Jamie McCaskill Writer/Director + Producer

Ngāti Tamatea

Since graduating from UCOL Theatre School in 2000 Jamie has worked in the arts industry as a writer, actor, director, musician and producer. Most recently he performed in *Dog and Bone*, directed by Jim Moriarty. He is also the founding member of *The Māori Sidesteps*. In 2015 he was awarded Best Supporting Actor for his role in *Seed* at Circa Theatre and also won the award for Best New, New Zealand Play with *Not in our Neighbourhood*. Jamie was the recipient of the Bruce Mason Award in 2013 for NZ Emerging Playwright of the Year and is a producer/director of Wellington based production company, Tikapa Productions.



Sonia van der Heyden Producer

Sonia joined Tikapa as a producer in 2014. Sonia has 14 years' experience in theatre production, stage and technical management which she is now putting to use by producing Tikapa's excellent repertoire of work—helping to put Tikapa on NZ and world stages. Sonia is also the Associate Producer in Capital E's Live Theatre team – an organisation that creates professional theatre work for children and young people.



Jennifer Lal Lighting Designer & Technical Operator

Jennifer has been the lighting designer for an extensive number of shows around New Zealand and has toured many of them throughout the country and overseas. She is a multi-recipient of the Chapman Tripp/WTA Lighting Design Award.



Tony De Goldi Set & Costume Designer

Tony has been designing for theatre for over 20 years focusing on contemporary Māori and Pacific productions for companies including Taki Rua, Tawata and Te Raukau. Tony designed *Hohepa* for NZ Opera in 2010. This year Tony designed Miria George's *The Vultures* at BATS Theatre, he also worked on Nathaniel Lees' workshopped production of *Fale Sa* for the Pacific Arts Festival in Guam, and most recently for Capital E National Theatre for Children's production of *Hinepau* which has just finished a NZ tour. Tony tutors at Massey University's College of Creative Arts and is a member of The Kava Club a Māori and Pacific arts collective.



Gil Eva Craig Sound Designer

Gil Eva Craig is an Audio Engineer and Sound Designer from Wellington. *The Biggest* is her first sound design in over six years as she has been primarily working as a live sound engineer. She has been nominated for several Chapman Tripp Awards for both design and original music, and won Best Sound Design in 2010 for *The December Brother*. She has also mixed numerous albums, including two Tui award winners. Gil is also a bassist, currently playing in a duo with Charlotte Yates, and regularly exhibits as a photographic artist.



Karena Letham Stage Manager

After graduating from Toi Whakaari : NZ Drama School three years ago, Karena has enjoyed following her passion of stage management in many different capacities. Karena has toured nationally, worked on the World of Wearable Arts, the Rugby World Cup Opening Ceremony and many other projects. In 2015 she was stage manager for Nancy Brunning's *Hikoi* at the Auckland Arts Festival.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Kelly Pinfold
Keith Hardie
Craig Geenty
Wesley Dowdell
Cam Clayton
Handy Rentals
Challenge 2000**

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



JAN - Nick Dunbar

Nick Dunbar trained at Toi Whakaari: NZ Drama School graduating in 2003 following a BA degree in German, Modern Lit. and Film, and a DipGrad in Theatre Studies from Otago University. Originally from Dunedin, Nick has worked extensively in theatre, TV, film and radio throughout New Zealand, and currently resides in Auckland. Recent credits include *Ivy* for the Awesome Festival in Perth, *Romeo and Juliet* for The Piknik Festival in Colorado, *Peninsula* and *Hound Of The Baskervilles* at The Fortune, *The ACB* and *King Lear* at Circa, *Super City 2*, *Wanted* and *Shortland Street*.



STU - Tim Gordon

Tim has been a performer, actor, actors' agent, producer, director, writer, publicist, administrator, communications coach and marketer. On screen, Tim's highlights include *For Good*; *Fracture*, *Beautiful* - for which he won Best Actor at the Drifting Cloud International Short Film Festival, *Until Proven Innocent*, *Home by Christmas*, *War News*, *The Kick* and *Barry* in the soon to be released tele-feature *Catch the Black Widow* and the Country Cop in 2016 remake, *Pork Pie*.

Tim has appeared on the stage at Circa Theatre: *Soulmates*, *Gunsmoke*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Wait Until Dark*, *Four Flat Whites in Italy*, *A Shortcut to Happiness* and at Downstage: *Up for Grabs*. For his roles in the 2010 International Festival of the Arts' *The Letter Writer* he was nominated for the Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards Supporting Actor. Tim was one of the original founders and artistic directors of The Improvisors.



PAT - Peter Hambleton

Peter is a highly experienced and acclaimed theatre actor and director. His performance as Werner Heisenberg in *Copenhagen* won him the 2002 Chapman Tripp Theatre Award for Actor of the Year. In 2010 he received critical acclaim for his role in Juliet O'Brien's *The Letter Writer* at the New Zealand International Arts Festival, and the Chapman Tripp Theatre Award Accolade for Outstanding Performance. He was an S.G.C.N.Z. Artistic Fellow to

Shakespeare's Globe in 2002, and a 2007 Winston Churchill Fellow investigating Shakespeare productions in the UK.

Most recently Peter toured the South Island in Tikapa Production's *Not In Our Neighbourhood*. TV appearances include *Stolen*, *Paradise Cafe*, *Tangiwai*, *War News*, and *The Brokenwood Mysteries*. He also starred as the Dwarf Gloin in *The Hobbit*.



CASSIE - Kali Kopae

Te Arawa/Ngāti Whakaue/Ngāti Awa/Ngāti Pukeko

Kali graduated from the National Academy of Singing and Dramatic Art in Christchurch in 2005. She has enjoyed an exciting career in theatre and music including a 6-month acting internship at Downstage where she met Jamie McCaskill and got a taste for professional theatre. Since then she has performed in productions with Tawata Productions, Centrepont Theatre, Circa Theatre, Capital E and Taki Rua. She is also a singer with The Beatgirls.

With Tawata Productions, Kali devised *He Reo Aroha*, a production that showcases her original music, and soon after, she and Jamie formed Tikapa Productions. Tikapa brought *He Reo Aroha*, *Manawa*, *The Tale of Three Lonely Men And Their Quest For An Audience With The Elusive Moa*, *Not in Our Neighbourhood* and *The Biggest* to the stage.

Most recently Kali was on stage in *Hīkoi*, Nancy Brunning's work for the Auckland Arts Festival 2015, Tawata Production's *The Beautiful Ones* and Taki Rua's production of *All Our Sons* by Witi Ihimaera. In 2015 Kali was also awarded Best Actress at the Wellington Theatre Awards for her performance in *Not in Our Neighbourhood*.



POPPA/WALTER - Jim Moriarty

Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Koata, Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Pākehā

Kia Ora Koutou Katoa. Good on Jamie for such acute powers of observation in creating some really cool old guys and their kids swimming around in life's fishing basket.

I'm having a ball and I'm grateful to everyone involved and thanks to my family for letting me off the hook for a bit so I could go fishing in *The Biggest*. Mauri ora. Enjoy.



MICK - Apirana Taylor

Apirana Taylor is a nationally and internationally published poet, short story writer, storyteller, playwright, novelist, actor and painter. He was a founding Member of Te Ohu Whakaari - a Māori theatre co-op. He has performed in work written by foremost Māori writers and played lead in *Broken Arse* by Bruce Stewart, *Ngā Tangata Toa* by Hone Kouka, *Whakapakari raua ko Whakawaea*, which toured New Zealand, and in *Taku Raukura*.

Apirana was named best debut actor by the *Dominion* and *Evening Post* for his role in *The Kuia and the Spider* by Patricia Grace.

ABOUT TIKAPA PRODUCTIONS

Founded in 2011 Tikapa Productions is one of Wellington's leading independent production companies. In the last 12 months they produced a trilogy of plays, *The Biggest* is the third instalment. Tikapa have presented in the NZ International Arts Festival, The NZ International Comedy Festival and Auckland Arts Festival and are the company behind the award winning show *Not in our Neighbourhood*.

Tikapa Productions aims to promote Te Ao Māori, advocate for social change and create stories to change the world.

Directors of Tikapa Productions are
Jamie McCaskill & Sonia van der Heyden.

THE BIGGEST RECEIVED DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FROM
MATARIKI DEVELOPMENT FESTIVAL AND PLAYMARKET.



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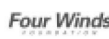
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