

DIRECTORS NOTE - Jim Moriarty

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā iwi, tēnā koutou katoa,

This is Te Rākau's 18th year of presenting *The Battalion* in partnership with communities throughout Aotearoa and the world. This production with Ōtaki College and rangatahi from the wider Wellington region stands alongside previous productions in terms of its challenges, it's hard work, it's community support and ultimately the taonga we offer you in viewing this work with us. The rangatahi have learnt through the Te Rākau way of creating theatre and we should all be proud of their cumulative effort. We offer our sincere thanks and gratitude to Andy Fraser the principal and his staff and in particular Joanna Devane and Tamsin Dashfield-Speight. We also thank the parents of the rangatahi who have supported them in going the distance through rehearsals over Term 3 and the school holidays.

My deep appreciation extends also to the Te Rākau team including the writer Helen, key choreographers Jeremy and Kimberly, producer & production Lisa and facilitators Dylan, Ari and Jewel as well as your local heroine Oriwa. I thank Jo and Rodney the choreographers and coaches for the swing dance who have a long association with Te Rākau.

To make the play happen I also acknowledge with thanks Creative New Zealand, the Ministry of Education - Creatives in Schools and the Ministry of Youth Development with additional support from some private sponsors.

The biggest thanks must go to the rangatahi who in these covid times have committed over 250 hours of their out-of-school time to honour the stories in the play, their ancestors and their futures.

TŪPATO / WARNINGS:

This play contains loud noises, flashing lights, and references to war violence and historic sexual trauma. This production is frequently performed in partnership with secondary schools, and features performers aged from 13 years old. Experienced mental health practitioners of Te Rākau, Jim Moriarty and Helen Pearse-Otene attend each performance and facilitate the kōrero / conversation at the end of the play.

Safe to Talk: 0800 044 334 or text 4334 | Youthline: 0800 376 633 or text 234

ABOUT TE RĀKAU THEATRE

Te Rākau Hua o Te Wao Tapu was established in 1989 by Jim Moriarty and Jerry Banse with a trust deed inherited from the Māori Theatre Trust and is Aotearoa's longest surviving independent Māori theatre company. It is led by Jim Moriarty and Helen Pearse-Otene who use the unique Te Rākau Theatre Marae model to create theatre productions, run workshops and build capacity and health within groups and the communities they sit within.

