

Villains and their victims

Michelle Burge (left) and James Walkom star in *#NotAllMen*.



Play explores the dangers of dominant cultural gender constructs

Caryn Metcalfe

THE theatre festival might be called Short+Sweet, but *#NotAllMen* could be anything but.

Two north shore residents star in the play this week, where, in the interrogation room of a police station, an alleged victim and perpetrator give wildly different accounts of an encounter that took place earlier that evening.

Michelle Burge, 30, of Artarmon, plays the victim Bernadette.

#NotAllMen



» **When:** Until February 12, 7.30pm
 » **Where:** The Depot Theatre, 142 Addison Rd, Marrickville
 » **Tickets:** \$30/\$25 concession
 » **Details:** shortandsweet.org/sydney

“It’s a reflection or observation on the way women have to protect themselves in general in society,” Burge said.

“To be honest, the things Bernadette does in the play are things I do every day.

“I hope it opens up the eyes of the audience to think ‘oh, I do that on the street’, because it becomes second nature to protect yourself.”

Burge said it was the first play she had performed in as an adult and she was finding the experience exciting.

James Walkom, 33, of Pymble, has performed in many Short+Sweet shows but said he wanted to do *#NotAllMen* as it allowed him to play a villain.

“I always get the nice guy roles and being a villain is kind of fun,” he said.

“It’s really different and outside my box.

“My character kind of stalks this girl and once he finds out what she’s all about, he tries to clear his name.”

Walkom said the play was very timely with events being played out across the world and hoped that audience members would realise that “not all men are murdering rapists” and not to judge on face value.