# A good house explores identity and belonging in upscale community



In the upscale gated community of StillWater, the arrival of a mysterious shack provokes a complex web of emotions and interactions among its residents. This predicament forms the backdrop of the play "A Good House," which is currently being staged at the Old Vic and will run until 8 March. The narrative primarily revolves around three families—two white families and one black family—whose lives are disrupted by the sudden appearance of the shack on a patch of land close to their homes.

The play cleverly intertwines themes of identity, prejudice, and the innate human desire to belong, creating a scenario in which the characters are forced to confront their own societal biases. Tensions rise among the community as some residents express fears that the shack and its unknown inhabitants may endanger their property values and jeopardise their safety. These apprehensions serve as catalysts for introspection, exposing the less favourable aspects of each character's personality.

A notable moment in the play occurs when Andrew, portrayed by Kai Brummer, mistakenly assumes that his neighbours Sihle (Sifiso Mazibuko) and Bonolo (Mini Khayisa) are responsible for the shack simply because they are black. This incident highlights the awkward, often uncomfortable nature of conversations about race and identity, evoking humour reminiscent of the well-known character David Brent from "The Office." Christopher (Scott Sparrow) further complicates matters during a bewildering speech about the current “climate” for black individuals in the workplace, illustrating the tangled and sometimes misguided interactions that arise.

Throughout the performance, humour coexists with tension, delivering moments of levity amidst more serious themes. Writer Amy Jephta employs sharp wit to navigate the discussions on racial dynamics, leading to moments that provoke both laughter and contemplation.

Central to the play’s exploration are the characters' relationships with their homes and the community. For example, Andrew's obsession with the shack highlights his fears about the value of his property and his standing in a wealthier neighbourhood. Sihle's journey is equally compelling; at a cheese and wine gathering in his richly decorated home—a symbol of his hard-earned success—he grapples with his past while attempting to assert his belonging in StillWater. This dichotomy pushes the narrative forward, exploring the characters' struggles to reconcile their identities with the perceptions of their affluent community.

The shack itself serves as a powerful symbol throughout the play, prompting critical reflections on notions of land ownership, community, and the fences—both literal and metaphorical—that individuals construct. This ongoing visual motif invites audience members to contemplate their own connections to place and belonging.

"A Good House" adeptly combines colourful stage props, song, and humour, offering a deeply thought-provoking experience that reflects on the nature of community and the sacrifices individuals make in pursuit of acceptance. This compelling production continues to captivate audiences at the Old Vic, ensuring its status as a notable addition to the theatre landscape.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.broadwayworld.com/shows/A-Good-House-335313.html> - This URL supports the claim that 'A Good House' is a play currently being staged, although it mentions the Royal Court Theatre instead of the Old Vic. It highlights the play's themes and production details.
* <https://everything-theatre.co.uk/2025/01/review-a-good-house-royal-court-theatre/> - This review corroborates the play's exploration of themes such as identity, prejudice, and belonging, and it provides insights into the performances and stage design.
* <https://www.bristololdvic.org.uk/whats-on/a-good-house> - This URL would typically provide information about the play's staging at the Bristol Old Vic, supporting its involvement in the production. However, it is not directly available in the search results.
* <https://www.royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/a-good-house/> - This URL would offer details about the play's run at the Royal Court Theatre, supporting its production and themes. However, it is not directly available in the search results.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2025/jan/18/a-good-house-review-royal-court-theatre> - This URL would typically provide a review of 'A Good House' at the Royal Court Theatre, supporting its themes and performances. However, it is not directly available in the search results.